the forum
FOR YOUTH INVESTMENT

OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME POLICY COMMENTARY #2

HIGH SCHOOL AFTER-SCHOOL:
WHAT IS IT? WHAT MIGHT IT BE? WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Issue 2 • January 2003

COMMENTARY AUTHORS
Karen Pittman • Nicole Yohalem
Alicia Wilson-Ahlstrom • Thaddeus Ferber

For information about reprinting this publication and information about other publications, please contact the Forum at:

The Cady-Lee House
7064 Eastern Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20012-2031
T: 202.207.3333; F: 202.207.3329
Email: youth@forumforyouthinvestment.org
Web: www.forumforyouthinvestment.org

THE FORUM FOR YOUTH INVESTMENT IS A DIVISION OF IMPACT STRATEGIES, INC.

The idea of high school after-school programming is an oxymoron if one's image involves 11-year-olds having snacks, getting help with their homework and finding creative outlets for their energy until their parents come at 6:00 P.M. But high schools are eligible to apply for after-school program funding under the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CLC) program and, as elementary school programs are coming into their own and middle school programs are on the rise, high school is becoming the next frontier for after-school advocates. This is certainly the case in California, where state legislation set aside funds especially for programs proposing to serve high school students.

In most communities across the country, after-school programs for high school youth are an afterthought. While a range of independent programs exists for teens, we know opportunities decline with age and that access and participation are inconsistent.[1] The conceptual and practical leaps from programming for middle school and high school students are significant. And the marketing challenges are huge. After-school advocates, by their own admission, have not focused on high school. Arguing persuasively for investments in this population requires revisiting almost every strategic decision made, from public education to policy framing to partnership development.

What do teenagers do after school and what are barriers to engagement? Why promote high school after-school? What do effective programs for high school youth look like? What's the long-term vision? For this commentary, we began by talking with Kathy Lewis, deputy superintendent for Child, Youth and Family Services in the California Department of Education, to gain a better understanding of the challenges facing policy makers, and with Milbrey McLaughlin of Stanford University, whose research on youth programs and high school reform provided insights into the current and future programmatic landscape.

WHAT DO TEENAGERS DO AFTER SCHOOL?
WHILE MANY WORK, SERVE AND PARTICIPATE, MANY OTHERS LACK CONSTRUCTIVE OPPORTUNITIES

There is a popular perception that even when young people have positive alternatives, they still go directly from school to unstructured environments like shopping malls or friends' basements. While many youth do spend significant amounts of time "hanging out," time during which they could benefit from structured enrichment opportunities, idleness is not generally the norm:

- **Work.** Data suggest that 60 percent of U.S. 12th graders are employed for seven or more hours per week during the school year.[2]
- **Extracurricular involvement.** Eighty percent of high school seniors report participating in at least one school-based extracurricular activity, including sports, performing arts and academic clubs.[3]
- **Community service.** Sixty-seven percent of high school students report being involved in community service, through church and other community-based organizations (CBOs).[4]

Between work, school and family responsibilities, many teens' schedules are quite full. But while young people in some neighborhoods have so many positive opportunities that they can in fact be "overscheduled," far too many youth find they have no place to go, nothing to do and no one to be with. Extensive research by Public/Private Ventures in Austin, Savannah and St. Petersburg demonstrated that while two-thirds of 13- to 15-year-olds reported having constructive things to do during their out-of-school hours, only half of 16- to 17-year-olds and one-third of 18- to 19-year-olds reported being engaged.[5]

Given the competing demands on many teens' time and the developmental realities, effective after-school programming for high schoolers is bound to look different than for younger students. We believe that the goal of having every teen engaged in 10 to 15 hours a week of high-quality programming is both reasonable and important. The challenge is that to successfully fulfill that goal and to engage those youth who may need it the most, schools and community partners will have to be flexible about when programs are available (afternoons, nights and weekends), what programs are offered (beyond homework help) and where they take place (on and off of school grounds, near areas where teens work).

Building in the flexibility required to attract older youth is often complicated by funding requirements. Kathy Lewis described developing budget language for high school 21st Century CLC applicants. "We ran into a lot of difficulty with the 'time in seat' concept. People want to pay for X amount of hours of Y activity. The good news is we've succeeded in building in more flexibility with our continued focus on outcomes."

WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS TO ENGAGEMENT?
SUPPLY, ACCESS, OPPORTUNITY COSTS, PROGRAM COSTS, AGE-APPROPRIATENESS

"I think youth look around and don't see anything they want to participate in. Teens really don't want to attend programs that are remedially focused. And then there is the competition with jobs. These obstacles are coupled with the fact that most communities don't have a sense of accountability or responsibility for young people."
— MILBREY MCLAUGHLIN

Out-of-school activities for teens have been around for decades, as have activities for younger children. But they have been seen as nice, not necessary. The shift to viewing these programs as part of a basic menu of opportunities that all teens deserve is significant. It involves both increasing the capacity and quality of existing programs

and building new ones to meet growing demand. There are several reasons why this will not be easy.

- **Supply.** Out-of-school opportunities decline rather than increase with age. In Kansas City, less than one-quarter of organizations reported providing out-of-school activities and supervision for youth age 16 or older. Nationally, more than half of teens wish there were more programs available after school, and two-thirds of those surveyed said they would participate in such programs if they were available.[6]
- **Access.** Even when programs do exist, access to information about what is available and transportation, especially in rural areas, are substantial obstacles. Older youth require broader horizons and greater mobility to access opportunities found throughout their communities and in neighboring areas.
- **Opportunity costs.** Many teens, particularly those from low-income families, have no choice but to work or have family responsibilities after school, such as caring for siblings and household chores. While some work is considered healthy, studies suggest that working 20 hours per week or more is linked to sleep loss, reduced school performance and greater health risks.[7] Research on welfare reform points to negative effects on teens due to the increased likelihood that they have to assume adult-like roles.[8]
- **Program costs.** Surveys of teens in Chicago and Sacramento identified money as an obstacle to participating in fun, positive opportunities during the out-of-school hours. Sports leagues, recreation centers and many other available programs charge entry fees and there are often additional costs associated with specific programs offered by centers or agencies.[9]
- **Age-appropriateness.** Research suggests that the same basic inputs that support young children also positively impact older youth.[10] While these key features of positive settings remain the same, their effective implementation varies along the developmental trajectory *(see* Table 1: Features of Developmental Settings*).*

WHAT ARE THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT?
REMEDIATION MAY MOTIVATE US, BUT IT WILL NOT MOTIVATE TEENS

"High school after-school has to include academic achievement as a driver. With high school exit exams in place, people are seeing that what happens during the school day is not enough. Our challenge is to provide programs that look and feel different and that engage young people in meaningful ways."
— KATHY LEWIS

TABLE 1:
FEATURES OF DEVELOPMENTAL SETTINGS

9-YEAR-OLDS	FEATURES	16-YEAR-OLDS
Children are paired with "buddies" — other participants in the after-school program that are also in their class. They spend the ten minutes of free time in between school and the program with their buddy, either in the cafeteria or on the playground — two designated areas where parent volunteers relax with children until buses have left and the space used for the program is ready.	Physical and Psychological Safety	In an effort to reduce conflicts occurring after school, a core of volunteer parents and staff from a local community center are ready to greet students, providing "coverage" and creating an opportunity to build rapport between youth and neighborhood adults between the last school bell and students' travel home or to after-school programs.
The Culture Club after-school program offers a consistent schedule. The activity board for Tuesday lists: Snacks: 2:50; Games Around the World: 3:15; Homework Heroes: 4:15; Discovery Workshops: 5:00. Whatever day it is, participants know they will spend the afternoon with adults they trust, will get to move around the center and do something interesting.	Appropriate Structure	From 2:30–4:00 the teen center offers a variety of options, including computers, open gym, a quiet area for reading/studying or an informal volunteer-led activity like sketching. At 4:00, teens meet in small groups to work on their community service projects. At 5:30, some stay to talk with specific staff, a small group prepares to leave for their street outreach shift, and others prepare the lounge for open mike night.
Staff development and retention is a strong focus. The director maintains open communication and consistently follows through on compensation and recognition, training, scheduling and adequate program resources. Staff support allows the center to provide children with consistent adults ready to focus on their needs in the program.	Supportive Relationships	Club members get a lot of support from each other in Express Yourself — a ritual the group initiated when the program began. At every meeting, participants set aside time to share issues on their mind. Adult staff provide a consistent presence, modeling listening, supporting an environment of psychological safety, and following up with individual youth as needed.
Staff members help children make "a plan" for how they want to use their time, helping children who want to join an activity with other children to do so, and structuring activity spaces and materials ahead of time to minimize conflicts and encourage inclusion.	Opportunities to Belong	Teens set and monitor the program rules based on their principles of inclusiveness and mutual support. New young people are greeted by peer staff members who talk to them about what goes on at the center, and set the tone for making "The Spot" a place where everyone can belong.
"Everybody cares for the center" is a motto practiced every day at South End Neighborhood Club. During snack time, participants rotate being "on" for snack duty, helping with serving the snack and doing light clean-up afterwards.	Positive Social Norms	"Family meetings" provide a space for teens and staff to set goals and norms, plan activities, make decisions, solve problems and reflect. Staff facilitate discussions, some scheduled and some ad-hoc, always modeling active listening skills, a structured problem-solving process, and a focus on positive program culture.
On Thursdays, several participants in the local after-school club travel to a nearby retirement community to listen to the stories of seniors and spend time with them. The youth will collect these stories into a book that will be distributed at the community fair.	Support for Efficacy and Mattering	Fifty cents of every purchase of coffee from a youth-run coffee delivery service in downtown Nashville goes to support youth programs — young people earn income, learn the skills of running a small business, and contribute to their community to provide expanded opportunities for their peers.
Students involved in the Readers for Life literacy program can spend a half-hour reading to a guide dog in training, building reading skills while avoiding the social pressure of reading aloud to other people. This reading time also helps the guide dog get used to human contact.	Opportunities for Skill Building	Poetry slams are popular events at the Zone. Youth form groups that review and practice poetry together. To gain skills, interested youth join weekend workshops taught every other month by their peers or college students. Slams are held every few months, and there are opportunities to join a competitive slam team.
Program staff comprised of graduate student teachers and neighborhood parents make regular links with teachers and parents through face-to-face meetings and "passports" that each student carries between school, after school and home.	Integration of Family, School and Community Efforts	Staff at this employment program function as part educator, part guidance counselor and part life planner. They move freely between where youth live, hang out, and go to school, and are respected in all worlds. They help teens develop individualized plans, connect with the services they need, and make the most of their internship experiences.
A school-coordinated neighborhood after-school initiative allows participating students to join after-school activities in one of four sites. Vans, purchased through foundation grants and jointly operated between sites, pick up participants and take them safely home.	Basic Care and Services	An after-school drama troupe creates original theater to address physical and mental health issues impacting young teens in their neighborhood. At each performance, they make sure that related health information is available and help connect their peers to community resources.

Examples developed by Forum staff.

List of features adapted from National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. (2002). *Community Programs to Promote Youth Development*. Jacquelynne Eccles and Jennifer A. Gootman, eds. Board on Children, Youth, and Families, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: National Academy Press. Available online at www.nap.edu/catalog/10022.html.

Interviews with teens suggest that the main theme driving their desire to be involved in something during the out-of-school hours is meaningful engagement. "Adults . . . just want to get us off the streets and out of sight . . . just let them 'do something,' throw them a ball, you understand what I am saying? Nobody seems to give a shit about what would help us find a good path . . ."[11] Whether activities are related to academic achievement, arts or cultural enrichment, service or employment, teens want to learn skills that matter and they want their time to count for something.

These are certainly goals that resonate with policy makers, parents and the general public. They are, of course, related to metrics commonly used to measure progress toward adulthood. But these are not the goals that have driven the after-school movement, which by and large, has been built on three broad themes: safety, supervision and academic support.

Consider how these policy goals can backfire when applied to teens:

- **Keeping children safe from harm can turn into keeping communities safe from teens.** For most decision makers, the nexus between safety and teens is, unfortunately, crime prevention, as opposed to teen protection. It is difficult to carry the safety theme through into the older years without having it used against teens.

- **Supervision can become spying.** After-school programs play an important supervision role for working parents. But because teens need room to live their lives without constant adult scrutiny, supervision can take on a negative connotation when applied to high school years. Teens are clear about their desire to have strong, positive relationships with adults and about the benefits of structured activities, but they quickly vote with their feet if they feel they are being too closely supervised.

- **Academic support can become mandatory remediation.** Programs across the country are working hard to define appropriate ways to support student achievement. By high school teens have often been sorted into one of four groups: those on their way to college and well-prepared, those contemplating college but inadequately prepared, those not going to college and not well prepared, and those who are not in school at all. Young people in each group are looking for academic support — but what they want and need, and how and from whom they are willing to receive it varies significantly. While tempting from a policy perspective, homework help is not the answer.

WHAT OPPORTUNITIES DOES THE HIGH SCHOOL AFTER-SCHOOL IDEA PRESENT?
SCALE, MOMENTUM, RESOURCES

School-linked after-school programming is not the only game in town in terms of supports for teenagers. Federal and state-level employment and prevention initiatives fund an array of community-based programs *(see* Table 2: Federal Funding Streams that Support Programs for Children and Youth*)*. Why is it important that policy makers and policy advocates figure out what "high school after-school" should be? In addition to mounting evidence that extracurricular activities and community-based programs can have a positive impact on teen's development,[12, 13] there are important reasons why high school after-school should be considered a timely investment.

- **The scale of the current after-school movement provides mechanisms for recognition and resources.** Even when existing funding streams for youth are combined, they meet only a fraction of the need and trail significantly behind funding for younger children.[14] Having been named as part of the target population in the 21st Century CLC program, teens deserve equitable investments. The scale of the after-school movement offers an important new leverage point and presents a rare opportunity to garner broad-based resources for all young people.

- **The assumptions behind the current after-school movement create normative visions for all youth opportunities that are not fueled by problems.** The after-school movement may be fueled by concerns about supervision, safety and academic skills, but it is built around powerful normative visions of what all young people, in particular low-income children and youth, need in order to be fully prepared. At the core of these visions is structured, voluntary time use. There is a bottom-line belief that, other things being equal, young people who spend more time engaged in high-quality structured, voluntary activities are better off than those who do not. This belief is new and should be leveraged to generate broad support for high school-age programs and encourage data collection on teen participation in out-of-school activities that is as systematic as data collection about schooling.

- **The mandate and funding for high school after-school programs could help bridge the gaps between multiple targeted funding streams.** Many adolescent programs are created in response to problems and targeted to young people who are "in trouble" or "at risk." Most existing funding streams for youth programs are framed around a specific *outcome*

TABLE 2:
FEDERAL FUNDING THAT SUPPORTS YOUTH PROGRAMS

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
- Job Corps
- Workforce Investment Act (WIA)
- Youth Opportunity Grants

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
- Healthy Schools, Healthy Communities
- National Youth Sports Program Fund
- Promoting Responsible Fatherhood
- Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
- Juvenile Accountability Incentive Block Grants
- Gang-Free Schools and Communities
- Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP)
- Weed and Seed Program
- Tribal Youth Program

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
- 21st Century Community Learning Centers
- Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities
- Safe Schools/Healthy Students
- Gear Up

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
- Cooperative Extension Service/4-H
- Child and Adult Care Food Program
- School Breakfast and Lunch Programs

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
- Community Development Block Grants
- YouthBuild
- America's Promise

CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE
- Americorps
- Learn and Serve America

This is not intended to be a comprehensive list. See the Finance Project's *Finding Funding: A Guide to Federal Sources for Out-of-School Time and Community School Initiatives*, currently being updated, online at www.financeproject.org/ostfinancing.htm.

(e.g., employment training, gang diversion, pregnancy prevention) and/or population (e.g., dropouts, teen parents). After-school funding, on the other hand, is framed around a specific *period of time*. By approaching youths' lives by time of day rather than by depth of problem, mandates for high school after-school programming can be used to tap both after-school dollars and other school- and community-focused funding sources such as the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).

Promoting the idea of high school after-school could create a broader base of political and financial support for out-of-school time programs for teens. But it is not without risks. Without a clear vision of what high school after-school is or could become:

- **Efforts could fail to bring in students or yield lackluster results.** This reinforces the perception that high school students do not want to be engaged, and legitimizing existing sentiments that funding should be targeted at the elementary and middle years.

- **Funding levels could be set too low.** This could force providers to create what McLaughlin refers to as "herd programming" that temporarily gets teens "safe and off the street" but does not address their developmental needs or nurture their talents.

- **Efforts to blend funding streams could be deemed too difficult.** Tapping WIA funds, for example, makes sense in theory, but, as Kathy Lewis shared, is not necessarily easy. "The eligibility criteria are income-based on an individual level, and we've stayed away from that in our programs. At this point many state WIA representatives are urging the federal government to reduce the rigid application of eligibility rules to allow for more flexibility and blending of funding."

The question before many state decision makers is whether to hook the high school issue to the already moving after-school train, or wait for another or create a new one. The advantage of linking to the current moving train is that it allows youth advocates to build on the strong "entitlement" message — an after-school program for every student — that has already netted amazing results across the country. In addition, acting now will allow for cross-fertilization with high school reform efforts, many of which are looking to meet halfway in terms of school-community partnerships designed to expand youth opportunities for learning and engagement.

WHAT MIGHT HIGH SCHOOL AFTER-SCHOOL LOOK LIKE?
STRONG PROGRAMS, CITYWIDE INITIATIVES, COORDINATED SYSTEMS

Table 3 offers brief snapshots of the kinds of individual programs that teens want and use. Other reports[15, 16, 17, 18, 19] are filled with additional examples. Just as effective programs often combine elements, supportive communities need to offer a variety of options to meaningfully engage a substantial number of teens.

Citywide out-of-school time initiatives offer another important lens. The New York City Beacons, for example, provide a wide array of supports and opportunities that attract young people to one center on a regular basis. Beacons are venues for hanging out with friends, learning new skills, meeting with mentors, working on job applications, getting health care, doing a theater project, using computers and many other activities youth would otherwise have to travel across the city to participate in — a one-stop shop model for meeting both interests and needs.

On the other hand, the Afterschool Matters (ASM) initiative in Chicago takes a more decentralized approach.

ASM is a public/private collaboration that is working to create a citywide system of graduated out-of-school opportunities for adolescents in Chicago; creating pathways that link together participation in programs, apprenticeships, internships and employment. In this model, a teen may move from participation at a school-based program to an apprenticeship in a film studio to part-time employment in the media department of a city museum.

TABLE 3:
WHAT TYPES OF PROGRAMMING EXIST FOR TEENS?

Existing programming for teens during the out-of-school hours tends to fall into one of the following categories. The best programs, however, often combine elements. Examples of high-quality programs are provided in each category.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT/MENTORING
The Dearborn Academy's after-school program, part of Boston's Community Learning Centers initiative, pairs youth with undergraduate mentor/tutors from Harvard University for homework and learning assistance. There is a strong focus on social and school readiness skills such as communication, time management and study skills.

SERVICE LEARNING
In the EcoHouse Service Learning program in California, teens work alongside adults after school to design, plan and implement ecological projects such as building solar powered electric equipment, water heating systems, and re-circulating ponds for a community garden and a school.

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT/ORGANIZING
Project Hip-Hop empowers youth to address social justice issues by building skills in critical thinking, communication, research, facilitating and organizing. Youth select issues to focus on; staff provide support and ensure integration with the school curriculum. Youth produce a bimonthly newspaper and a radio program, present at schools and conduct peer discussion groups.

EMPLOYMENT/CAREER DEVELOPMENT
Work Force is an unemployment prevention program sponsored by the Cambridge, Massachusetts Housing Authority. Well-structured, mentor-supported internships expose youth to a variety of careers. The development of life skills, conflict resolution skills and workplace culture awareness take place throughout the five-year program. Work Force staff function as part educator, part guidance counselor and part life planner.

CULTURE, ARTS AND MEDIA
Through workshops and institutes, Educational Video Center trains New York City high school students in a range of media arts skills. Students have produced over 75 documentaries, on topics ranging from race relations to the environment. A handful of their videos have been featured on national television. Many have been used to change policies and bring attention to critical community issues.

RECREATION
In Alameda, California, a group of young people involved in the HOME project responded to community concerns about youth skateboarding through the business district by designing, fundraising for and managing the development of a youth-run, city-sanctioned skate park. While many recreation programs provide "gym and swim" opportunities, this effort went one step further, combining recreation with leadership and service opportunities.

PREVENTION
The focus of the Friday Night Live program in California is to provide programs rich in opportunities and support, so young people will be less likely to engage in problem behaviors, more likely to achieve in school, and more likely to attend higher education or secure a full-time job. Programs include mentoring, peer education, leadership development and social and recreational opportunities.

Individual programs can certainly be strengthened and expanded, and community offerings can be better coordinated. The question is, in five years, how could the out-of-school time look *substantially different* for teenagers? Our hope is that the current after-school climate offers momentum for advancing an "expanded learning opportunities" agenda for older youth. Along these lines, the high school after-school experiment could yield:

- **An increased commitment to school-sponsored extracurricular activities.** Many high schools have had to make serious cuts in extracurricular activities. If standards for all leads to after-school for all, then the expectation that every student be involved in at least X extracurricular activities for at least Y hours per week could result in schools expanding choices, extending outreach and addressing access issues.

- **A coordinated menu of school- and community-based opportunities.** Having made the commitment to monitor after-school participation, schools could take the next step and become information hubs for available opportunities. Having basic knowledge about young people's interests and about their own offerings, schools could help students access supports provided on school grounds or in the community.

- **A blended approach to school- and community-based learning.** Five years down the road, the artificial time/space boundaries that divide the 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. experience from the rest of students' lives could be reduced. Many school reform efforts reflect an interest in pushing beyond the school day and walls to expand the scope and relevance of learning. A serious effort to support after-school programming for older youth could speed up this process by encouraging community organizations to identify roles they can play in supporting expanded notions of learning and engagement.

- **Flexible credit for out-of-school learning.** If the lines currently denoting time/space boundaries are indeed blurred, definitions of what constitutes credit and how students demonstrate competence in specific subject matter areas could also shift. Many schools currently provide credits for community service-learning and career preparation/internship experiences. A clearer understanding of the roles community organizations can play to support learning could broaden accountability and assessment for high school students.

- **A coordinated information system that tracks student engagement and progress on multiple fronts.** Schools have the lion's share of the funding, but they also have the lion's share of the data collection and

data reporting capacity — schools are one of the few institutions that reach and monitor essentially all children and youth. Schools can become not only physical but virtual hubs for coordinating and tracking after-school programming.

WHAT IS THE LONG-TERM VISION?
BLENDED GOALS, BLURRED LINES AND SHARED SUCCESSES

"Hopefully after-school can influence the outdated notion of high school itself. Maybe time shouldn't be partitioned this way for teens. We need to break open the nature of high school and think of it more like community college. It takes up your whole day, happens in various places in the community, some is academic and some is vocational, it involves relationship and social skill-building — instead of being an 8:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. schedule filled with 50-minute periods and a drop-dead graduation date."

— MILBREY MCLAUGHLIN

McLaughlin's idea that after-school could be the Trojan horse of school reform may seem radical. But parallel reform efforts are underway to change the nature of learning that occurs in the school building during the school day *(see* Figure 1, *Box A)*, strengthen the role of non-school partners during the school day *(see* Figure 1, Box B*)*, expand and improve the opportunities for learning provided by CBOs *(see* Figure 1, *Box C)*, and expand schools' formal involvement in programming in the out-of-school hours *(see* Figure 1, *Box D)*.

There is a need to ensure that the high school after-school "box" gets defined in a way that, at a minimum, does not derail other reform efforts and, ideally, informs them. Personalization, purpose and participation — mantras of high school reform advocates like Paul Hill of the University of Washington — fit well within the contours of the current after-school conversation. A vision of

blended goals, blurred lines and shared successes is not as farfetched as it might seem.

ENDNOTES

[1] Tolman, J., Pittman, K., Yohalem, N., Thomases, J., & Trammel, M. (2002). *Moving an Out-of-School Agenda: Lessons and Challenges Across Cities.* A publication of the Greater Resources for After-School Programming (GRASP) Project. Takoma Park, MD: The Forum for Youth Investment.

[2] Zill, N., Nord, C.W., & Loomis, L.S. (1995). *Adolescent Time Use, Risky Behavior and Outcomes: An Analysis of National Data.* For the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

[3] National Center for Education Statistics. (1995). *Extracurricular Participation and Student Engagement.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

[4] Independent Sector and Youth Service America. (2002). *Engaging Youth in Lifelong Service.* Washington, DC: Independent Sector.

[5] Sipe, C.A., Ma, P., & Gambone, M.A. (1998). *Support for Youth: A Profile of Three Communities.* Community Change for Youth Development. Philadelphia, PA: Public/Private Ventures.

[6] YMCA of the USA. (2001). *After School for America's Teens: A National Survey of Teen Attitudes and Behaviors in the Hours After School.* Chicago: YMCA of the USA.

[7] Lerman, R.I. (2000). *Are Teens in Low-Income and Welfare Families Working Too Much? Number B-25 in New Federalism: National Survey of America's Families.* Available online at http://newfederalism.urban.org/html/series_b/anf_b25.html.

[8] Brooks, J., Hair, E., & Zaslow, M. (2001). *Welfare Reform's Impact on Adolescents: Early Warning Signs.* Washington, DC: Child Trends.

[9] Tolman, J., et al. (2002). *Moving an Out-of-School Agenda: Lessons and Challenges Across Cities.* A publication of the Greater Resources for After-School Programming (GRASP) Project. Takoma Park, MD: The Forum for Youth Investment.

[10] Melaville, Shah, & Blank. (2002). National Research Council. (2002). Learning First Alliance. (2001).

[11] McLaughlin, M. (Undated). *Community Counts: How Youth Organizations Matter for Youth Development.* Washington, DC: Public Education Network.

[12] Sipe, C.A., et al. (1998). *Support for Youth: A Profile of Three Communities.* Community Change for Youth Development. Philadelphia, PA: Public/Private Ventures.

[13] Gambone, M.A., Klem, A. & Connell, J. (Forthcoming). *Finding Out What Matters for Youth: Testing Key Links in a Community Action Framework for Youth Development.* Philadelphia: Youth Development Strategies, Inc., and Institute for Research and Reform in Education.

[14] The Forum for Youth Investment. (2001, December). "How Much Do We Spend on Youth?" *FYI Newsletter 1*(2). Topic: Youth Policy: The State of the States. Takoma Park, MD: The Forum for Youth Investment, International Youth Foundation. Available online at www.forumforyouthinvestment.org/fyi/dec2001cover.htm.

[15] National Research Council and Institute of Medicine. (2002). *Community Programs to Promote Youth Development.* Committee on Community-Level Programs for Youth. Jacquelynne Eccles and Jennifer A. Gootman, eds. Board on Children, Youth and Families, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

[16] McLaughlin, M., Irby, M, & Langman, J. (1994) *Urban Sanctuaries: Neighborhood Organizations in the Lives and Futures of Inner-City Youth.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

[17] McLaughlin, M. (Undated). *Community Counts: How Youth Organizations Matter for Youth Development.* Washington, DC: Public Education Network.

[18] American Youth Policy Forum. (1997). *Some Things DO Make a Difference for Youth: A Compendium of Evaluations of Youth Programs and Practices.* Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum.

[19] American Youth Policy Forum. (1999). *MORE Things That DO Make a Difference for Youth: A Compendium of Evaluations of Youth Programs and Practices*, Volume II. Washington, DC: American Youth Policy Forum.

FIGURE 1: LEARNING: BREAKING IT DOWN

	WHERE	
	In the School Building	In the Community
During the School Day	A	B
Out of School	D	C

(WHEN)

the forum
FOR YOUTH INVESTMENT

**OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME
POLICY COMMENTARY #**

2

HIGH SCHOOL AFTER-SCHOOL:
WHAT IS IT? WHAT MIGHT IT BE?
WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Issue 2 • January 2003

High school is becoming the next frontier for after-school advocates. The conceptual and practical leaps from programming for elementary and middle school students to high school students are significant, and the marketing challenges are huge. Arguing persuasively for investments in this population requires revisiting almost every strategic decision made, from public education to policy framing to partnership development. To support policy makers, program leaders and advocates in making decisions related to high school after-school, this commentary summarizes what we know and answers some basic but important questions.

What do teenagers do after school?
What are barriers to engagement?
Why promote high school after-school?
What do effective programs for high school youth look like?
What is the long-term vision?

Conversations with Kathy Lewis, deputy superintendent for Child, Youth and Family Services in the California Department of Education, and Milbrey McLaughlin of Stanford University help us illustrate and bridge the policy and research perspectives on high school programming.