



# PASE

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# etter

PARTNERSHIP FOR AFTER SCHOOL EDUCATION

## Chasing the School Bus: Community–School Collaboration

By Jason Schwartzman

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**M**Y COLLEAGUE AND I RECENTLY CONDUCTED A PARTICIPATORY EVALUATION OF AN AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM. During our first meeting, staff was supposed to articulate and prioritize their goals for working with young people. Staff didn't know us yet, and the conversation moved along slowly, in what felt like a downward spiral, with several awkward silences. We were grinding to a halt, staff appearing anxious to get the meeting over with. Like that old country and western song, they were no doubt thinking, "How Can I Say Goodbye If You Never Leave?"

Rescue appeared in the topic of schools, academic support, and homework time. All of a sudden the room came alive. Some staff felt strongly that afterschool programs should give priority to enrichment and growth—enabling children to express themselves through creative projects, discussions about friends and family, and group computer and science projects. While not disagreeing that these were all valued goals, others felt strongly that attention needs to be focused on school performance.

Staff reminded one another that during homework time, everybody has had the experience of working with a child who just doesn't understand math assignments, or who has difficulty with reading and writing. The executive director summed up the challenge in this way:

*"We are not going to fix the schools, but we have the children for the long-term. A lot of kids are falling through the cracks in the schools. We want to make sure we are moving in a good direction with our program. Should we be doing homework help? Should we have tutors? We want to identify realistic goals with the resources that we have."*

The afterschool program has initiated strategies to do just that. Every September and January, staff contact, via mail, the school teachers and invite them to suggest what the afterschool program can do to support children's academic skills. Every June, staff ask teachers to evaluate whether or not they think the afterschool program played any role in children's academic progress, and invite suggestions for what the



Participant in the PASE Learning Lab at Middle School 142 (see story on page 3).

program might do the following year. With this input, along with input from parents, the afterschool staff set individual goals for each child, covering both academic and social skills.

School outreach efforts have met with mixed results. Since the afterschool program does not take place in the school building, many teachers do not respond to the requests for input. In fact, teachers often say they didn't realize that some of their children were attending an afterschool program. To make matters more complicated, it is not clear with whom afterschool program staff should initiate contact—whether to reach out to the classroom teacher, the reading specialist, or

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# Approaching YES: Afterschool programs, schools, and community partnerships

*By Katty Fernandez*

## BACKGROUND/ HISTORY

**T**HE NEW SETTLEMENT AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM AT CES 64 is a literacy-through-the-arts program that is primarily funded by The After School Corporation (TASC). New Settlement Apartments is a housing and community development organization committed to providing social and educational services and grassroots organizing with the goal of creating more viable, safe, and productive communities. Three hundred children participate in the New Settlement Afterschool Program at CES 64. Like many afterschool and youth development programs, the New Settlement Afterschool program offers project-based literacy, African dance and drumming, visual arts, recreation, and homework help. Additionally, it has a growing parental involvement component. We operate Mondays through Fridays, 3-6pm.

The Board of Education and CES 64 provide us with space, snacks, security and a stipend for supplies. Because all of our children come from CES 64 and because we are housed there, a top priority for me as Director of the afterschool program is cultivating a constructive and thoughtful relationship with the school. We grapple with many issues as we try to have the best possible program for our children and the community at large.

## CHALLENGES IN WORKING IN AND WITH A SCHOOL

For all afterschool programs that operate out of a school, a major issue is negotiating for space and janitorial services. In our particular case, the fact that the school is overcrowded and over-extended heightens the space issue. In addition, the fact that New Settlement advocates for improved education within the school and in School District 9 adds another layer of complexity to our relationship.

At CES 64, 81% of the students are not reading and writing at grade level. This creates added pressure for both the afterschool program and the school. While we have the mutual desired outcome of increased student literacy, at times we have divergent approaches. Clearly, one of the goals of the school is to improve student performance in standardized exams. While the New Settlement Afterschool program believes that it is important for our children to improve their scores, we also want to be more inclusive in our educational approach.

Our philosophy is one that focuses on the whole child. We address children's social, emotional, creative and cognitive needs. To engage students more effectively in the learning process, we strive to develop lessons that allow students to articulate their voices, histories, per-



*Participant in New Settlement Apartments Mural Project*

spectives, and beliefs. If children see themselves reflected in the curricula, and learn that their voices matter, then we believe they will be able to take action to improve the world in which they live and their own community. To help us do this, we go beyond academics to offer arts, recreation, and socially interactive games. This approach differs, at times, from the emphasis of the school. So the challenge is how to work together effectively? How do we have constructive conversations with each other at times of tension or conflict without assigning blame? I fully recognize the need for the school to be a partner. But how do we achieve this? How can we create meaningful dialogue and do it in ways that can lead to winning solutions?

## SOME SOLUTIONS

Although I do not have all the answers, what has worked for me is to acknowledge that I am

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### PASE in a Nutshell.

A New York City association of youth practitioners, funders and technical assistance providers to youth programs. PASE's goals are to strengthen the identity and visibility of the afterschool profession, articulate concepts to guide programming, provide staff development, program exchange and networking opportunities, and advocate for funds and resources.

# Forging New Partnerships: The PASE Learning Lab

by Lissette Resto Brooks

AS KIDS, MANY OF US PROBABLY WENT STRAIGHT HOME AFTER SCHOOL, played stickball in the street, watched TV, played with friends or had homemade cookies waiting for us made by moms, grandmothers or neighbors. Today, however, many children can't go directly home because of changing families, communities, and an increase of women in the work force.

There is now a higher demand for quality afterschool programs, and new programs are rapidly expanding in community centers, faith-based organizations, school buildings, and arts/cultural institutions. In addition, there is increased public pressure on schools to raise the academic performance of all students, and schools look to afterschool programs as a way to help. In addition, in response to school reform efforts, schools have begun to open their doors to community institutions and create new partnerships to achieve their goals.

As one example of this new form of partnership, The PASE Learning Lab was created in January 2000 at MS 142, a public school in District 15 in Brooklyn, which houses four different schools, The Community School, Harbor School of International Studies, Manuel de Dios Uname School of Journalism, and the Brooklyn New School. The PASE Learning Lab was founded with the goal of demonstrating how schools and community-based organizations can work together and build a collaborative relationship in order to

provide after-school services. In addition, the Learning Lab was envisioned as a professional development venue – a place where practitioners (educators, teaching artists, youth workers, program administrators) could see an array of different program approaches, and have the opportunity to discuss critical issues with their peers. The Learning Lab is also an opportunity for practitioners in the field to showcase what they do best with youth.

Activities with youth at the Learning Lab are designed and delivered by staff of youth agencies, cultural and arts organizations, and technical assistance providers who have been selected by an application process. Practitioners are selected because they demonstrate a high level of expertise, have clear goals and objectives for their programs, have high expectations for youth, and are successful in engaging young people. Also of importance is the criterion that practitioners have experience designing and delivering staff development, because as part of the Learning Lab responsibilities, they train other practitioners and have to be able to articulate what they do.

## SEEING EYE TO EYE A Principal's Viewpoint

Larry Woodbridge, the principal of The Community School, is concerned primarily that the



Participants in the PASE Learning Lab at Middle School 142.

afterschool program offers high quality educational activities that complement the school day. This is obviously a priority for him because it supports his goal of having young people meet academic standards. In addition, Mr. Woodbridge wants to expose young people to activities and disciplines that are not available during the school day, such as the arts and leadership development. He is concerned that competent, caring professionals who are able to engage children, particularly those having difficulty in school, deliver afterschool activities. Because of this, he's closely involved in the selection of practitioners in the Learning Lab and in program planning.

Another concern of Mr. Woodbridge is for his school-teachers. He sees the Learning Lab as an opportunity to provide additional innovative staff development, and expose teachers to new approaches that will support and enhance academic subjects. He encourages his teachers to have conversations with Learning Lab practitioners, and grow in their understanding of educational practice and of youth development. One way he has aimed to accomplish this is by having teachers co-teach in the Learning Lab. This semester, a teacher is co-teaching a literacy

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## CURRENT FUNDERS

THE AFTER-SCHOOL CORPORATION  
ALTMAN FOUNDATION  
THE ANNENBERG FOUNDATION  
THE AXA FOUNDATION  
THE BARKER WELFARE FOUNDATION  
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# PASE *updates*

## PASE Forum

The first PASE Forum of the year, "America Goes Back to School," held on October 18, featured a panel discussion addressing the relationship of schools, communities, and afterschool programs. Speakers included John Mahoney, the Education Secretary's Representative for the U.S.

Department of Education; Menahem Herman, Director of the Department of Education's Partnership for Family Involvement in Education; Adriana de Kanter, Special Advisor on Afterschool Education for the Department of Education; Larry Woodbridge, Co-Director of The Community School, S.D. 15; Jean Thomases, consultant for youth services and facilitator for Community School Connections; and Richard Negron, Director of the Children's Aid Society's National Technical Assistance Center. After the panel, several workshops were offered on the topic of community, schools, and afterschool programs. Presenters included Laura Paris from the Coalition for Hispanic Family Services, on "Parent Involvement in Schools," Dr. Menahem Herman on "Strategies

for Building Partnerships between Communities And Schools," Richard Negron on "New Afterschool Partners," and Gerry Vazquez and Jenn David-Lang, NY Charter School Resource Center on "Planning a Charter School: The Nuts and Bolts."

## KidzLit After-School Literature (ASL) Project

The After-School Literature Project has begun its third phase of implementation and is sporting a new name: KidzLit. After receiving over 40 applications, PASE would like to welcome twelve new sites to the KidzLit program. They are: Association To Benefit Children, Casita Maria, Inc., Goddard Riverside Community Center, Grosvenor Neighborhood House, Mosholu Montefiore Community Center, National Sorority Phi Delta Kappa Early Childhood Education Center, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Day Care Center, Operation Exodus Inner City, Phipps Community Development Corp, Polish and Slavic Center, ROZA Promotions, Inc., and The Community School—PASE Learning Lab. All new sites have attended training and have begun implementation with their young people. We're looking forward to another successful year with our new sites and continued success with the other Kidzlit agencies.

## Peer Mentoring Program

PASE continues to expand its Peer Mentoring Program with the addition of new mentors and mentees. This year's mentor/mentee matches include: East Harlem Tutorial Program matched with Phipps Crotona Park West & Lower East Side Girls Club; Forest Hills Community House matched with South Asian Youth Action (SAYA); Pius XII North Bronx Family Services matched with Mary Mitchell Community Center; Project Reach Youth matched with Warren Street Center at Lutheran Medical Center and New Settlement Apartments matched with Casita Maria. We also welcome aboard Jacob



*Participant in the PASE Learning Lab at Middle School 142.*

Riis Neighborhood Settlement and Coalition for Hispanic Family Services as new mentors. PASE continues to recruit community-based agencies to participate as mentors or mentees, and plans to begin a new round of mentoring in January. For more information on becoming a mentor, or mentee, call Yvonne Brathwaite at 212 571-2664.

## Peer Technical Assistance Teams

Peer Technical Assistance provides on-site program assistance to afterschool agencies that are selected through an application process. Technical Assistance is provided by experienced practitioners from the afterschool field who are matched with programs based on their strengths and areas of expertise. This year, we are very excited to announce that in addition to the Youth Leadership, Literacy, and Arts teams, we have added a fourth team in the area of Management. We are happy to welcome aboard new team members in all four areas. PASE is also still accepting applications from agencies interested in receiving technical assistance. We have begun the selection process, and plan to continue adding recipient agencies over the course of the year. We look forward to a great year of networking, training and information-sharing! For more information or to receive an application to receive or provide technical assistance, call Yvonne Brathwaite at 212 571-2664.

## TASC (The After-School Corporation)

PASE continues its work with TASC in supporting the professional develop-

*RIGHT: Left to Right- Suzy Sonenberg, Peter Visconti, Rev. Reginald Tuggle Nassau PASE Mini-conference 10/20/00*



*BELOW: Left to Right- Suzy Sonenberg, Amy Hagedorn, Ann Irvin, Angela Zimmerman Nassau PASE Mini-conference 10/20/00*



ment of the site coordinators and staff of TASC-funded afterschool sites. In August, PASE provided three institutes for experienced coordinators. These institutes mixed content with strategic planning, inviting participants to analyze program goals in relation to respective topics. PASE has continued to provide its New Coordinator Institute for newly funded sites, a 5-day training which acquaints participants to the many constituencies in their programs and focuses on staff supervision, communication, and management systems.

PASE also has offered three sessions of its Core Knowledge Training for new site staff. This training is oriented around child-centered practices and those in attendance choose from workshops in conflict resolution, classroom management, and developmentally-appropriate practice. Additionally, PASE hosted a young adult employee training specifically designed to address the job readiness skills of the first-time teenage group leader. As always, PASE extends its thanks to all the fabulous trainers it has worked with in this venture and the dedicated staff of these sites.

### **MONY (Mutual of New York Foundation)**

PASE recently held focus groups with afterschool programs regarding the training needs for community service activities with youth. At these focus groups, programs articulated the need for training on the history, philosophy and potential of community service opportunities, training in program design and management, and specific how-to advice on running community service components at afterschool programs. Based on the response, PASE will be working with the MONY foundation to design training in these areas.

### **Public Policy and Youth**

PASE has been funded by the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund to run a project entitled "The Voice of Experience – Engaging the after-

school community in developing public policy." In this project PASE will first collect and analyze data on conditions affecting afterschool programs and identify key policy issues. Next, PASE will train CBOs in policy issue areas and advocacy skills, and then engage members of the afterschool community to develop and advocate for an afterschool agenda that builds on the experience of practitioners and the needs of communities.

### **Regional News — Nassau PASE**

Nassau PASE, an affiliate of the New York City Partnership for After School Education, is now operating in Nassau County, and held its kick-off Mini-Conference on October 20, 2000 at the Hagedorn Family Resource Center in Hempstead, NY. The keynote speaker for the day was Reverend Reginald Tuggle – Pastor of the Memorial Presbyterian Church of Roosevelt, and Executive Assistant to the President of Nassau Community College. Rev. Tuggle delivered an inspirational address on the importance of supporting young people, and instilling in them a desire to persevere in reaching their goals. Workshops followed, including Literacy: How to Achieve Success With Non-Traditional Techniques; Middle School Programming; The Uniqueness of This Population; Ten Program Ideas You Can Use; Practical Applications Put To Use.

The day was a huge success with sixty people representing a variety of programs/agencies across Nassau County. Nassau PASE will continue to work towards building a network of afterschool programs, with the goal of strengthening services to youth. Nassau PASE will next hold a Workshop Series, Fall 2000/Winter 2001. Scheduled dates are November 17th; December 15th; January 19th. For more information on Nassau PASE please call Barbara King (516) 935-3298.

## **FREE/LOW-COST COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS**

**COOPER-HEWITT, NATIONAL DESIGN MUSEUM.** Fifth Avenue at 91st St. Design Directions Program prepares high school students for careers in fashion, industrial, graphic, media, film, interior design, architecture, urban planning and other design professions. Design Directions consists of a series of programs, including "Career Days," "Design Studio," "Portfolio Workshops," and internships. For information call Nell Daniel, Coordinator, at 212 849-8390. Fees vary.

**AFRICAN AMERICAN BURIAL GROUND SITE.** Duane Street, New York, N.Y. Colonial burial ground sheds light on African Americans who played a major role in building the city. A site tour includes slide presentation and lecture. Participants are allowed to touch artifacts and observe laboratory technicians. Educational materials including articles and maps are available. Call 212 432-5707 to make reservations. Free.

**SOCRATES SCULPTURE PARK.** VERNON BOULEVARD, Long Island City. One of New York's only large-scale sculpture gardens, Socrates Park offers Community Connections, interdisciplinary workshops which may include activities such as lectures by guest artists, tours of the park and projects such as making sculpture and studying the environment through hands-on gardening and photography workshops. Call 718 956-1819. Fees vary.

**URBAN PARK RANGERS.** All boroughs of New York City. Using the parks as outdoor classrooms, Urban Park Rangers offer educational walking tours year-round throughout the five boroughs. Pre-visit curriculum materials are available for certain ecological topics. Tours offered in several languages. Call Bronx: 718 548-0912, Brooklyn: 718 438-0100, Manhattan: 212 628-2345, Queens: 718 846-2731, and Staten Island: 718 667-6042. Free.

**SOUTH STREET SEAPORT MUSEUM.** Fulton Street, New York, N.Y. Provides a multidisciplinary program taught by visual artists, poets, marine biologists, mariners and archaeologists. Using the museum as the primary resource, each specialist brings his or her own perspective to bear on the rich and varied history of one of the world's largest ports. Call 212 748-8762. Fees vary.

# Chasing the School Bus

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resource room teacher who works with a specific child.

In sum, this community based afterschool program has a committed staff, and is secure in its ability to offer a range of creative and enrichment activities to its participants as well as to support academic progress. In addition, the staff has identified the school as an important ally, and reach out to it. Yet, despite these intentions and efforts, it has not been easy to accomplish this task. While the afterschool program and the neighborhood schools are engaged in a common enterprise, they aren't working in tandem. While they are based in the same neighborhood and work with many of the same kids, they are not sharing much work or information. While co-located, they are not co-ordinated. This experience, while unique to one program, is also representative of many afterschool programs, whether located in a school or not, and the challenges faced in developing meaningful and productive relationships.

## MOTT FOUNDATION NATIONAL SURVEY OF TRAINING NEEDS

In a year-long national project funded by the Mott Foundation, PASE has been meeting with community based organizations, schools, funders, policy advocates, and higher education institutions to discuss the professional development needs of people who are connected to afterschool education. This includes everyone from youth workers and program directors to school principals and school superintendents. We have found that a cross-section of professionals consistently state that one of the top priority training needs is how to create and sustain community-school collaborations. This makes a great deal of sense given the rapid growth in the number of community based organizations establishing afterschool programs in school buildings—let alone those organizations that have long

established reputations in their communities and who are reaching out to schools.

Here in New York, we contacted a number of organizations collaborating with schools and asked them if they are utilizing any training to prepare staff to launch school-based programs. Most reported that they are not aware of any such opportunities. Many agencies say that they handle relationships with schools on a case-by-case basis, and learn a great deal by trial and error. It is interesting to note that even after successfully coordinating efforts with local schools, these experienced community agencies have not been approached by other agencies who may be implementing their first school-based program to facilitate trainings or to share their experiences. One reason may be that organizations are used to “going it alone” and are not looking for outside assistance.

We have also found that the need for training in this area of community-school relationships is not well appreciated. In our telephone conversations we found that many practitioners had difficulty imagining what might be the content of a training or series of trainings that focus on community-school collaboration. Even though these organizations had encountered difficulties in their collaborations, they seemed to think that their problems are specific to their site and hence, not something that preparation or ongoing training might address.

## POTENTIAL TRAINING AREAS IN COMMUNITY-SCHOOL COLLABORATION

There are many possible topic areas that a community-school training might address. For example, trainings might focus on practical aspects of collaboration, such as how to work with custodial staff, how to approach and communicate with a school principal, and how to anticipate and mediate the concerns of teachers. Possible trainings might also focus on curriculum issues, how to create linkages between the school day and afterschool, and how to integrate youth development with academic approaches to programming. Meetings might also be designed to enable afterschool practitioners who are working in school settings to share

expertise, strategies, and tips on how to negotiate situations and relationships. When events such as these are well structured and facilitated, they allow practitioners who share common challenges to reflect, discuss, and brainstorm solutions.

## BARRIERS TO TRAINING IN COMMUNITY-SCHOOL-COLLABORATION

Organizations with experience in implementing community-school collaborations indicated that while they are quite open to sharing their experiences and practices with others, it would be difficult to free up time so that individuals or teams of staff could advise or mentor other organizations. Since the best resources for training are often the practitioners themselves, strategies are needed that enable agencies to overcome internal organizational barriers that prevent them from working with other organizations. Doing this would rapidly increase the number of trainers and technical assistance providers available to the field, in addition to expanding the possible career paths of afterschool professionals.

Another challenge in designing training in community-school-collaboration is determining successful avenues for working with a school. Conversely, what are some ways that schools have worked best with community based organizations? What do you say to a school principal or teacher so that they'll recognize you as an ally, not a threat or a burden? How do you learn how to work your way through the bureaucracy? How do you establish and groom a relationship that is based on trust so that information can be shared, and mutual efforts reinforced?

While practitioners are convinced that collaboration is critical, achieving collaboration is quite another story. It reminds me of what an advocate from a community agency in Chicago once said, “For an agency to partner with a school is a bit like a dog chasing a school bus—we're not sure what we'll do with the bus if we ever get a hold of it, but we're sure trying.”

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*Jason Schwartzman is Deputy Director, Evaluation & Research at the Partnership for After School Education.*

# Forging New Partnerships

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group with an experienced youth practitioner. As a result of this process, the teacher has gained new insights, and learned to better develop community in her classroom and new instructional approaches.

## THE LEARNING LAB DIRECTOR'S VIEWPOINT

As Director of The Learning Lab, I see the Learning Lab as a unique professional development opportunity because it is peer-driven. Peer-driven professional development means that colleagues come together to articulate their own needs, and identify challenges and successes. It is an opportunity to discuss where the field needs to go, in effect creating a community of learners and a network of support for practitioners. In addition, the Learning Lab allows practitioners to demonstrate an area of expertise and share their talents with other afterschool professionals. It is an opportunity to build and support capacity within the field of afterschool education by identifying and connecting professionals to other training opportunities.

Working with four different schools within one building has been a challenge because of the differing educational emphases of the schools in relation to the PASE Learning Lab. For example, some of the schools, because they are magnet schools, operate using a theme. A challenge for me has been to make sure that afterschool activities build upon these areas and fill in gaps. On the other hand, each school has different students, who have varying needs and interests. The Learning Lab has to address

these as well. Finally, scheduling has been a challenge because each school operates on a staggered schedule. Bringing the schools together to participate in afterschool activities and develop a sense of community despite the differences has been a priority.

## A SHARED VISION

What has worked at the Learning Lab is that PASE, the schools, and the community based organizations whose staff provide services at the Learning Lab share a common vision. That is, all intend to provide quality and enriching learning experiences for students in the afterschool hours. This partnership has been maintained by keeping all stakeholders informed and involved through consistent conversations about program goals and objectives, and by assessing, planning, and working together to utilize all the resources.

Having a full time Afterschool Director at the school has made it easier to infuse the afterschool activities into the fabric of the school day. I serve as a liaison between the schools and the community based organizations. Because my office is located at the school, I am aware of what events are happening, and can respond as needed in the afterschool program. I also have access to teachers, school administrators and students. I am able to communicate with the afterschool practitioners about what students are experiencing during the school day that might influence the afternoon. I also co-facilitate one of the advisory periods at school, attend staff meetings and parent-teacher conferences. My participation in the school day and the principals' involvement in the program are evidence of the investment that they have made to make this partnership successful.

## SUMMARY: NEXT STEPS AND NEW DIRECTIONS

After almost a year of operation, we have identified some crucial next steps to enhance the quality of our program. First, we need to better integrate the school day with the afterschool program so that there is a seamless provision of services. Second, we need to support and continue developing collaborative relationships among the teachers and the afterschool practitioners by hosting joint planning meetings, employing teachers to co-facilitate afterschool activities, and developing a teacher advisory board. Third, we need to refine our Open House days, and offer topic-specific workshops before visitors observe program activities. This will establish a context for what they are observing. In addition, experienced practitioners at the Learning Lab have requested additional training in staff development methods and opportunities to reflect on practice. The Learning Lab intends to address this in the future.

As another professional development venue, we need to establish an internship program where practitioners can be paired off with Learning Lab facilitators in order to learn about the different methodologies and approaches for working with young people. This will broaden professional development opportunities and provide interns with a chance to practice and refine their skills while receiving continuous feedback from a mentor. Finally, we intend to launch an elementary site in order to showcase the most effective approaches to working with younger students.

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*Lisette Resto Brooks is the Director of The PASE Learning Lab.*

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# Interview with:

## Millie Henrique McArdle, Division Director, Red Hook Programs, and Frank Walston, Assistant Director, Good Shepherd Beacon at P.S. 15 in Red Hook, Brooklyn

*Sara: Your afterschool program operates out of a public school. What's your relationship with the school like?*

Frank: I think our relationship with the school is like any good relationship, it's very complex. There's a lot of give and take. We work with the school collaborating on projects and on using the space. Historically we were lucky enough to have a principal who had a lot of insight into the benefits of programs that work with schools that enhance what they do in the daytime...

Millie: Who believed that the school should be part of the community.

*Sara: So there was a vision on the part of the school that was aligned with your vision?*

Millie: Yes. The principal shared some of the values that we had. He knew the families and children. He took great pride in making sure that the school environment was clean and beautiful. The principal who replaced him taught in the school all of her professional life and she grew up in this community. There's a real investment in a strong school and a good learning environment and relationship with the community.

Frank: I think what helped us is that they saw our programs, came and witnessed some of what we do. We also spoke to teachers and tried to find out

what they were doing and have a dialogue with them about what's going on. So, they're on board with us.

Millie: Besides the afterschool and its relation with the school, we also have a preventive services program, and we've done a good job integrating those services into the school. Our social work staff spends time during the day seeing children who've been referred to us by teachers or guidance counselors. We collaborate with Lutheran Medical Center who provides an on-site nurse who sees the children during the day. Also, at the beginning of the year we hosted a breakfast. We came early and had bagels and cream cheese and coffee, and it was very informal, we took a few moments to introduce ourselves and teachers introduced themselves. We used the time let them know that we were there, briefly described what we do at the school and how much we support what the teachers do. Also, Ms. Manti, the principal of the school, invited us to attend her staff meeting. I went in and made a presentation and distributed calendars of our events ...

Frank: What also helps the relationship is that Ms. Manti has access to us and we have access to her. We meet once a month, and we go over any concerns and questions. We let her know about upcoming events so that nothing's a sur-

prise. We talk with teachers regularly and ask if their rooms have been left o.k.

Millie: Space is still a challenge for us, sharing space. And if there's an issue, like a stapler is broken in the classroom or a book is missing, we might replace it, we understand that these things are valuable and that they're hard to replace. And we'd rather replace them than get locked into, "You're always blaming us." And I think the school appreciates that. At the beginning of the school year, when Frank goes to the teachers to ask them if we can use their classrooms, he'll bring them a basket filled with chalk, scissors, markers, Post-It notes, multi-colored paper clips.

Frank: And it's only a couple of dollars, but it makes them appreciate that we know what they have to go through to get their stuff. Another thing we do is if there's a problem during the school day we make ourselves available.

*Sara: You mean if there's a conflict?*

Frank: Yes. We do conflict resolution, conflict mediation. If I walk by a classroom and see children having a fight, I'll intervene. And not to step on the teacher's toes, if they've handled it, fine. We have a different type of relationship with the children because of the afterschool program, and we know the parents, and can talk with them.

Millie: But children in the afterschool don't know us as separate programs, they know us as all part of the school.

*Sara: If you could envision training on the relationship between schools and community-based organizations, what would it look like?*

Millie: This is a topic that's close to my heart. It's a hard question to answer because there are so many different layers. Ideally I'd like to see training where people begin to explore what their vision of school is. And then we should talk about what it really is, and how we can live up to that vision. I've been in forums with principals and Beacon directors and I felt very frustrated because people were coming out of their own perspectives and their own interpretations. Some principals see Beacons only as extended school days, and they're more than that.

*Sara: So, how to articulate your own identity as a program?*

Millie: Right, and for schools to be able to appreciate all of the resources that we bring. We've been lucky, because I hear about some Beacons operating out of hallways. So training could be on examining the needs in the community and how we can mutually accomplish our goals. For example, if a school feels that they want more parent involvement, parents aren't coming to Open School Night,



## CAPITALIZING ON THE COMMUNITY: THE NEW YORK AFTER SCHOOL AT PS. 84

not coming to PTA meetings, how could we work on that together? How do you create real opportunities for people to be a part of something? I think the training needs to be with a core group of people who are in the management and leadership positions to make sure that whatever the goals are they get accomplished.

*Sara: If you could envision training that would include district superintendents, what would they look like?*

Millie: Superintendents have a different level of responsibility, they perform a particular function, and they have real pressures. You know, I don't care about whether or not superintendents understand the day-to-day details of what we do. It's more important that they understand the larger picture. That they understand what it is that we can accomplish. How can superintendents support schools to create partnerships? Superintendents are the leadership for principals, and they need to support them. But how do we get there, and what are our resources? I think it's ultimately about a genuine commitment to what your schools could be, and what role you play in the lives of communities, families, children.

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*Sara Hill is the editor of the PASEsetter, and a Program Director at the Partnership for After School Education.*

**T**HE NEW YORK AFTER SCHOOL (NYAS), a program of the New York Historical Society and funded by The After School Corporation, is devoted to providing a safe and fun environment in which children develop critical thinking skills through project-based learning. NYAS has recently worked with Harvard University's Project Zero, an organization with a long history of research and practice in the area of project-based learning. This collaboration has provided staff with a renewed focus and the opportunity to participate in specialized training in implementing long-term projects in an afterschool setting.

NYAS is a unique program because of its strong link to cultural institutions and resources. Children in NYAS not only work with the New York Historical Society, but also the Martinez Gallery, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and Bard Graduate Center. Based on individual projects, students have been linked with different cultural institutions such as the "Phun Phactory," a graffiti museum, New York Hall of Science, and the Children's Museum of Manhattan.

Student projects have included creating a public service announcement about landmark preservation, writing and performing a show about conflict resolution, and learning the history of hip hop. Activities utilize city museum exhibits, artifacts and primary historical documents. The afterschool semester culminates in an event which involves both the installation of student products – artwork, writing, and performance of student-generated music and dance at the New York Historical Society.

The benefit of working with a cultural institution is that it provides opportunities for children to be exposed to resources to which they normally wouldn't have access. Using the resources and staff of museums allows children to conduct research using primary sources, and allows them to see connections between the past and the present. Young people become junior historians and document the history of their own communities and of the City of New York. In addition, children gain information about careers and vocations, as they talk with museum educators and curators about working in a museum setting.



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# Approaching YES

*continued from page 2*

in a partnership that, like all relationships, must be constantly nurtured and cultivated. Relationship-building with the school is therefore a priority. Because of the inherent tensions of any relationship, the principal and I frame our conversations by acknowledging our mutual goals and the ways that together we can achieve these goals. These constant affirmations remind us that we are on the same team, and that we are not opponents, setting the tone and the climate for mutuality, professionalism, and collaboration.

Another success in relationship-building has been to underscore how The New Settlement Afterschool Program and CES 64 complement each other, and how the afterschool program can support the work of teachers during the school day. Because the afterschool program has more latitude in terms of curricula, children can engage in more art-making, project-based activities and other experiential exercises. And, because we also have a strong literacy focus, children gain by having more opportunities to explore reading and writing.

### A CASE STUDY OF COMMUNITY SUCCESS

Last spring and summer, children in the New Settlement Afterschool Program at CES 64, teenagers from New Settlement's youth programs, City Arts, Inc., two professional muralists, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) worked together to design what is now the biggest child-created mural in New York City. A rocket



*Participants in New Settlement Apartments Mural Project*

scientist and artist from NASA facilitated workshops with children to learn about Mars and space travel. A New Settlement literacy specialist led reading, writing, and drawing activities that focused on astronomy and geology. Another New Settlement staff member coordinated the project. CES 64 and District 9 provided the physical environment for the mural, a wall outside of the school, and provided other in-kind support such as water hoses and electricity. Over 100 children from the community helped paint the mural.

In October, 2000, NASA and City Arts returned to the New Settlement After School Program at CES 64. This time, children created a sculpture shaped like a rocket ship. On it they wrote and drew their wishes and hopes for the future. The goal of this arts and literacy project was to encourage children to write about themselves and what they'd like to share about themselves with an alien culture. A CBS crew filmed the children while they worked on the statue.

The mural and sculpture projects were successful community efforts. They engaged a broad scope of partners including the

school, community-based organizations, government, artists, arts agencies, children and parents. The school's support was crucial, as they helped secure permission for filming on Board of Education property. I believe that we were able to proceed so quickly because we've worked so hard on building trust and mutuality.

### SUMMARY

The relationship with the host school is a crucial factor in the success of an afterschool program. Making the relationship a priority, acknowledging differences, and focusing on mutual goals are instrumental in building a good relationship and a good program. One thing to take note of is that afterschool programs gain value in the eyes of the school if we can demonstrate how we bring in outside resources, are able to effectively partner with outside agencies, and involve the community as a whole.

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*Katty Fernandez is Director, New Settlement Afterschool Program at CS 64*



# Off the Shelves

BOOKS ON SCHOOLS, COMMUNITIES, AND AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

**Beyond the bell. A toolkit for creating effective after-school programs. (2000). North Central Regional Educational Laboratory. U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement.**

A compendium of management tools for creating an afterschool program, covering topics such as programming, evaluation, and resources. Of importance to the topic of community and school relationships are chapters on "Integrating After-School Programs with the Traditional School Day," and "Collaboration and Community Building." The manual includes very practical reproducible handouts, checklists, and surveys that may be used by programs. You can order online at [www.ncrel.org](http://www.ncrel.org).

**Decker, L. E. and Boo, M. R. (1996). Community Schools: Linking Home, School, and Community. Online publication at ERIC's (Education Resource Information Center) Urban Education web site at [www.eric-web.tc.columbia.edu](http://www.eric-web.tc.columbia.edu).**

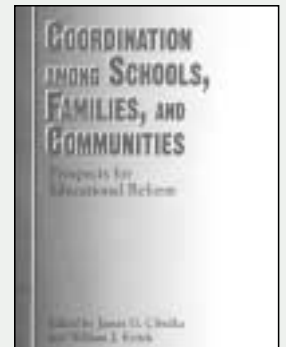
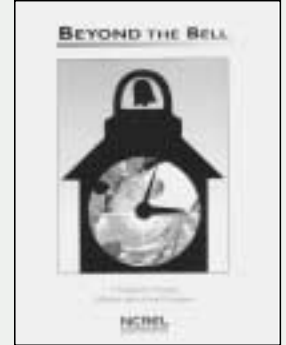
Schools need new ways to think about and foster parental and community involvement in education. This publication provides a clear and concise overview of the "community school" as a model. It describes the use of schools as community learning centers, in which the concept of education and schooling is extended beyond the traditional K-12 program and schools are not limited by traditional school schedules and roles.

**Cibulka, J. G., Kritek, W. (Eds.) (1996). Coordination among schools, families, and communities. Prospects for educational reform. New York: State University of New York Press.**

This book is a collection of essays that address the coordinated services movement and the problems of reconciling competing goals. The articles present different models of coordination, as well as attendant organizational and management issues. One of the interesting aspects of this collection is that it explores the institutional politics of schools.

**Joy Dryfoos, (1998). Learning Together: The Developing Field of School-Community Initiatives. Flint, Michigan: The Mott Foundation.**

Defined in this report are efforts to create and sustain relationships between a K-12 school or school district and a variety of both formal and informal organizations and institutions in the community. Copies of this report can be obtained free of charge by writing the Mott Foundation at 1200 Mott Foundation Building, Flint, MI 48502-1851; sending an e-mail message to [infocenter@mott.org](mailto:infocenter@mott.org); calling the Foundation's Publications Hot Line at 1-800-645-1766; or visiting its Web site at [www.mott.org](http://www.mott.org).



## DYCD's Proposed Changes to YDDP!

NYC's Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) is planning to release a new Request for Proposals (RFP) for Youth Development Delinquency Prevention (YDDP) programs in early 2001. Recently, DYCD sent the "Youth Development and Delinquency Prevention Programs Concept Paper" to all contracted YDDP providers, outlining how it proposes to restructure YDDP. Proposed changes to YDDP include:

### 1. Restructuring the sub-categories.

PROPOSED: DYCD proposes that the new RFP will have 3 sub-categories for YDDP funding: (1) Community Share Initiative; (2) Youth Special Needs Initiative; (3) Public/Private Partnership Initiative. \*DYCD's proposal contains no information on how dollars will be allocated among the categories.

### 2. Change of allocation indicators:

PROPOSED: DYCD proposes that the Community Share Initiative (number 1 above) will be allocated by community district (CD) based upon the youth population in each CD, using a 1999 update (from the NYC Dept. of City Planning) of the 1990 census population data. Also, DYCD will implement a minimum allocation of \$40,000, meaning that each CD will receive at least that much. For the Youth Special Needs Initiative (number 2 above), DYCD will use 3 delinquency indicators - incidents of high school dropouts, teen births, and NYC Dept. of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) admissions - to allocate funding at the borough level for borough-wide programs. No change is proposed for the Public/Private category.

**3. Shift to targeting populations for program participation:** PROPOSED: DYCD proposes that programs funded under the Youth Special Needs Initiative

(2 above) will "serve youth special needs populations" and no specifics are provided as to how a "special needs youth" is defined - whether a high school dropout, pregnant teen, DJJ-admitted youth, or a youth at-risk of having one of these outcomes.

**4. Shift of emphasis in geographic service levels:** PROPOSED: DYCD proposes that funds allocated to the Youth Special Needs Initiative (number 2 above) will fund only borough-wide programs.

*\*Provided by Michele Yanchee of The Neighborhood Family Services Coalition.*

**Write to DYCD (send copies to the Mayor, your City Council Member and Borough President) to inform them about the impact of these changes on youth programming in your community! Please Write TODAY! (Don't know who represents you? Go to this website: [www.nypirg.org](http://www.nypirg.org) and click on "Who Represents Me" to find out.)**

# FUNDING alert.

# Bulletin Board

**The Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing**, a collective of national, regional and local grantmakers who pool resources in order to advance youth organizing as a strategy for youth development and social justice is now accepting proposals from community-based organizations. The Collaborative is projected to award a total of about 25 grants in the range of \$15,000-\$30,000. Contact The Funders' Collaborative on Youth Organizing c/o Jewish Fund for Justice 260 Fifth Avenue, Suite 701, New York, NY 10001. [www.jfjustice.org](http://www.jfjustice.org).

**The Do Something Organization** has just launched an online destination created by and for teens whose topic is community involvement. Do Something's online action

guide offers young people the chance to get informed, get connected, and take action on issues such as gun violence, racism, child abuse, domestic violence, the environment, and more. The website address is [www.dosomething.org](http://www.dosomething.org).

**Educational Equity Concepts (EEC)** has created After-School Science PLUS, an equity-based science program for after-school centers. The program is designed to facilitate fun, hands-on science activities, provide positive information about who does science, dispel stereotypes about girls and women in science and create opportunities for students to see science as part of their everyday lives. After-School Science PLUS is appropriate for students ages 5-14 and is easy to implement. Please call 212

725-1803 or visit EEC's website: [www.edequity.org](http://www.edequity.org) for more information.

**The Lisa Libraries**, created by a group of friends in memory of Lisa Novak, a children's book editor, donates small libraries of new children's and young adult books to organizations in low-income and underserved areas. For more information, write to The Lisa Libraries, P.O. Box 430, Boiceville, N.Y. 12412.

**Take 5**, a program of High 5 Tickets to the Arts, provides an opportunity for small groups of teenagers (ages 13-18) to attend arts events throughout New York City. Groups can choose from hundreds of performances at venues such as BAM, P.S. 122, Lincoln Center, The New Victory Theater, Carnegie Hall and the Apollo

Theatre. For more information about High 5 Tickets to the Arts, call 212 Hi5-TKTS or visit their website, [www.high5tix.org](http://www.high5tix.org).

**I Can Do That** is a 30-minute video introducing preteen and teen girls to a variety of careers they might not have considered. In the half-hour program viewers meet women in construction, website design, architecture, AIDS research, publishing, law, and many more fields. Videos include a resource guide to help incorporate the video into curriculum. To get a free copy, you have to be one of the first 2000 to email [info@icandothatvideo.com](mailto:info@icandothatvideo.com). If you're not one of the first, you may order this low-cost video by visiting the website [www.Icandothatvideo.com](http://www.Icandothatvideo.com).

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