

Oregon's Vision
for
Supporting Student Success
through
**Expanded Learning
Opportunities**



Oregon**ASK**
STATEWIDE AFTERSCHOOL NETWORK



Thank You

A special thank you to the following leaders, researchers and staff. Their time, dedication and effort have gone a long way to support the success of Oregon's children and youth.

Oregon S-3 Policy Group

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This work was supported by a grant from the **National Governors Association Center for Best Practices**, the **Council of Chief State School Officers** and the **National Conference of State Legislators** and financial support was provided by the **Charles Stewart Mott Foundation**.

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Introduction

Educators, policymakers and families increasingly agree: school cannot do it alone. Children need multiple opportunities to learn and grow, at home, in school and in their communities, and research over the last 2 decades confirms the positive impact of afterschool programs on children, families and communities nationwide. At the national, state and local levels there is increased attention to and demand for schools and afterschool programs to genuinely collaborate. That process will require multiple institutions and people to commit to being boundary crossers, to be open to creative solutions as they discover and design a ***new day for learning*** that supports all of America's children and youth.

It is now time to value experimentation and push for innovation that can truly change a fragmented system that has traditionally isolated services in separate silos. There is a unique opportunity to change the landscape of learning opportunities by creating models that will support complementary learning by intentionally aligning resources to maximize efficiency and promote success for all children – from birth through adolescence – and ensure that children and youth who are the most disadvantaged will have access to enriching expanded learning opportunities (ELOs). The following data provides rationale for the S3 priority focused on the most disadvantaged children and youth:

- **47% percent of Oregon's children live in low-income families (below 200% of poverty).**
- **8% of Oregon's children live in families with extreme poverty (below 50% of poverty).**
- **81% of Oregon's K-12 students have working parents and 36% of these children have no adult supervision afterschool. (U.S. Census).**
- **Oregon has one of the highest rates of children living in poverty of any state in the nation.**
- **42% of students are eligible for free and reduced price lunch. One in five children in Oregon is food insecure, meaning they have limited access to safe and nutritious food.**
- **Oregon schools are steadily becoming more culturally and linguistically diverse. Between 1997-98 and 2007-08, overall student enrollment increased by 4.8 percent while the total number of minority students increased by 70.5 percent, with most growth among the Hispanic student population, which increased by 117.7 percent. (ODE, 2009).**
- **12% of Oregon students in 2007-08 were English language learners. (ODE, 2009).**
- **Looking back as far as 1995-1996, minority students have and continue to be disproportionately represented among Oregon's high school dropout rate (ODE, 2008).**

The most disadvantaged include children from low-income families and neighborhoods; children in rural communities; children who live in public housing projects; children with a primary language other than English; children who are in foster care; youth in the juvenile justice system; and middle school youth who are at significant risk for experimenting with drugs, alcohol, sexual activity, or becoming involved with gangs or crime. It also includes children who are in special education and struggling learners who are more at risk of dropping out of school. All of these children have the potential to thrive and grow in nontraditional learning environments where qualified youth development professionals can discover ways for those children to feel competent and confident as well as experience a sense of belonging.

The S3 Study Group, described later in this document, is proud to push for innovation and embrace a new day of learning. The S3 Study Group believes that ELOs belong at the forefront of discussions in the halls of the Oregon Legislature and the Governor's Office, in city council and town hall meetings, in school board meetings and community forums, and at family dinner tables. As a state and a society we have to create and promote opportunities where all of our children and youth will have access to out of classroom learning that will keep them engaged and motivated to learn.



Opportunity and Vision

The S3 Study Group and Oregon Afterschool for Kids (OregonASK) recognize that afterschool programs and expanded learning opportunities matter and Oregon cannot miss this unique opportunity to influence educational and learning outcomes for its children. Oregonians must look beyond the regular school day and ensure that students will have access to expanded learning opportunities in afterschool and summer hours. A brighter future for Oregon depends on how well we fulfill our obligations to support current quality afterschool programs and to create more opportunities for expanded learning in our communities that will close education gaps and prepare students to graduate from high school with the skills necessary to enter higher education and a competitive workforce. This is a shared responsibility to foster the health and well-being of Oregon's children and youth – one that must ensure all children and youth have access to supports, opportunities and experiences that will prepare them to be engaged, productive, caring citizens of the future.



The Supporting Student Success Project

It was in support of this vision that a set of stakeholders joined together to examine how the state's multiple institutions and the people who were charged to care for and educate Oregon's children and youth could authentically collaborate to support student success. In 2009, with support from Oregon's Afterschool Network (OregonASK), Oregon applied for and was one of five states awarded a grant entitled Supporting Student Success (S3): The Promise of Expanded Learning Opportunities. This work was supported by a grant from the **National Governors Association Center for Best Practices**, the **Council of Chief State School Officers** and the **National Conference of State Legislators** and financial support was provided by the **Charles Stewart Mott Foundation**.



The S3 initiative is a policy-focused effort based on the belief that Oregon has an opportunity to influence and institutionalize afterschool policy through the examination and evaluation of student data and by building a policy platform that will support all of Oregon's children—with an initial focus on meeting the needs of Oregon's most disadvantaged children and youth. Recognizing the importance of this initiative, 14 influential stakeholders committed to the process and together began to examine the barriers and challenges students and families face in securing and sustaining quality expanded learning opportunities. This required becoming familiar with the current status of programs, policies and funding streams and then determining priorities, timelines and strategies including collecting and analyzing data and crafting policy recommendations.

Description of the Process

It should be noted that in 2008, prior to receiving the S3 award, OregonASK had begun a data collection process with funding from Spirit Mountain Community Fund and technical support from Education Northwest in an effort to capture the landscape of afterschool programming in Oregon.

In 2009 the S3 Grant supported the formation of an S3 Study Group that included representatives from state agencies, advocacy groups and community organizations. The Group's first meeting focused on building a framework for continued data collection and the creation of a vision for aligning expanded learning opportunities between school and afterschool.

The process involved eight working meetings over a period of 18 months, with an outside facilitator, research and data collection by OregonASK and analysis provided by Cedar Lake Research Group. In the initial meetings the S3 Study Group discussed and defined terminology, developed questions, determined what data they had and didn't have, and discussed how that data might drive the outcome objectives. There was agreement to use the term afterschool to mean academic and enrichment programs that happen before school, afterschool and during the summer. Research on proven practices in afterschool offered criteria for programs to be considered part of the S3 project, including a minimum intensity of service no fewer than 12 hours per week or three days per week.

The Group examined baseline data that been collected in 2008, which was valuable in guiding the discussion as it captured the demographic portrait of Oregon students and families, described the existing landscape of schools and afterschool in Oregon, and made a case for why Oregon needs afterschool.



Intended Outcomes and Related Progress

The S3 Study Group developed three intended outcomes for the 18-month period. The outcomes and progress are described below.

Outcome #1

Establish a process and collect data on expanded learning opportunities in Oregon.

Program Data

Building on the data from the 2008 research, a methodology was developed which aligned diverse data from the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and the Oregon Employment Department-Child Care Division (CCD). ODE provided all school locations, total numbers of students served, the highest levels of poverty schools (defined by those that qualified for 50% Free and Reduced Federal School Lunch Program) and minority percentages by school district, and locations serving USDA afterschool snacks and meals. CCD provided identification data on all licensed programs that serve school-age children.

Afterschool programs that met the established criteria, based on best-practices research of offering programming for 12 or more hours/week and operating at least three days of the week, were contacted. All partner organizations assisted in the outreach, including Boys and Girls Clubs, the Y, Parks and Recreation, Camp Fire USA, SUN Community Schools and 21st Century Community Learning Center programs. Providers were asked for program data, reported in the following age categories: Under 5 years of age, 6-12 years old, 14-18 years old, and greater than 18 years old.

Once the data sets were established and baseline information from partners was collected, OregonASK staff contacted every Oregon school and afterschool program (on and off school sites) to find out more about the individual programs. Staff interviewed program directors and collected data related to program capacity, hours of operation, average daily attendance by age group, days of operation and use of federal afterschool snack or supper program.

Identifying Barriers to Quality Programming

During the same time period OregonASK, at the request of the Oregon Commission for Child Care, established a task force and gathered afterschool program providers together to analyze the regulations and barriers faced by programs working to provide quality out-of-school time experiences for Oregon's school-age youth.

The October 2010 School-Age Task Force Report to the Commission for Child Care identified specific barriers to quality within school-age programs. Barriers relate to program access, including equitable access for low-income families; quality of personnel, breadth of resources and sustainable funding; and uncoordinated and/or divergent systems.

Specific examples of barriers follow:

- **There is inequitable opportunity** to access programs and often inequitable programming, particularly for low-income families
- **Oregon families** are much more diverse and as such have different needs for programming while many families are also unaware of the benefits of quality afterschool programs
- **Community resources** are scarce, particularly in rural areas
- **Funding** is inadequate and uncertain—both to secure and retain the best staff, as well as inadequate to sustain programs and services
- **Staffing & staff development** present as barriers including ensuring programs have skilled and competent staff, that professional development is ongoing and that supports and incentives are in place to retain good staff
- **Facility & licensing** issues include challenges of operating programs in a space providers don't own, as well as variations in licensing requirements even while operating in the same building
- **Too few educators recognize the value of afterschool** programs and many fail to encourage families to access these opportunities for expanded learning
- **Cooperation & collaboration** is hindered by divergence in the field **that doesn't operate** "as one" (e.g.: Agencies tend to focus on different outcomes, operate by different processes, and have different resources)

Data Related to Poverty and Minority Populations

The S3 Policy Study Group identified a geographically balanced representation of the top 21 school districts by poverty and minority population, as well as 21 outlying individual schools with the highest percentages of poverty and minority population that are not in the aforementioned school districts. The Group developed a series of questions which they asked each of the 21 district superintendents and the 21 school principals, as well as staff from the corresponding county's Commission on Children and Families. From these interviews the OregonASK staff compiled subjective data on perceptions about the barriers and potential solutions for the Group to better understand the local issues and the perspectives of this specific subset of stakeholders.

Outcome #2

Identify all current Oregon statutes regarding afterschool, expanded learning opportunities and school-age childcare programs. Identify federal funding streams that are used for expanded learning opportunities.

OregonASK staff conducted a complete review of existing Oregon statutes and identified all current statutes that have relevance to afterschool, expanded learning opportunities and school-age childcare in order to have a clear picture of Oregon's statutory emphasis.

Education Northwest did a review of the federal register and identified current available funding that can or does support expanded learning opportunities and found multiple agencies with multiple funding streams, which will be useful in future policy discussions.

Outcome #3

Establish a framework to determine priorities about which children to serve and to explore development of a nutrition initiative.

Demographic data already provided rationale for the S3 priority focused on the most disadvantaged children and youth. Data collection allowed the S3 Study Group to identify the geographic locations where programs are and are not available, as well as the degree to which those programs are serving eligible students. Further data collection will refine this focus by identifying the scope of the services needed to meet the needs of Oregon's most vulnerable populations.

Upon review and analysis of the data that was collected from the Oregon Department of Education, specifically the information about the number of schools that qualify for the USDA Afterschool Snack and Meal Program, and the relatively few schools that are currently accessing this program, two priorities emerged. First, the S3 Study Group acknowledged that a nutrition initiative would need to include funding to help afterschool programs get established with the USDA Afterschool Snack and Meal Program, and second, such an initiative would require greater capacity for training and technical assistance to help programs implement effective practices to utilize this resource. Both of these priorities were included in a Legislative Concept submitted for the 2011 Oregon Legislative Session (LC2865). Input from program providers confirms that these two components would support expansion of services to Oregon's low-income children, youth and families.



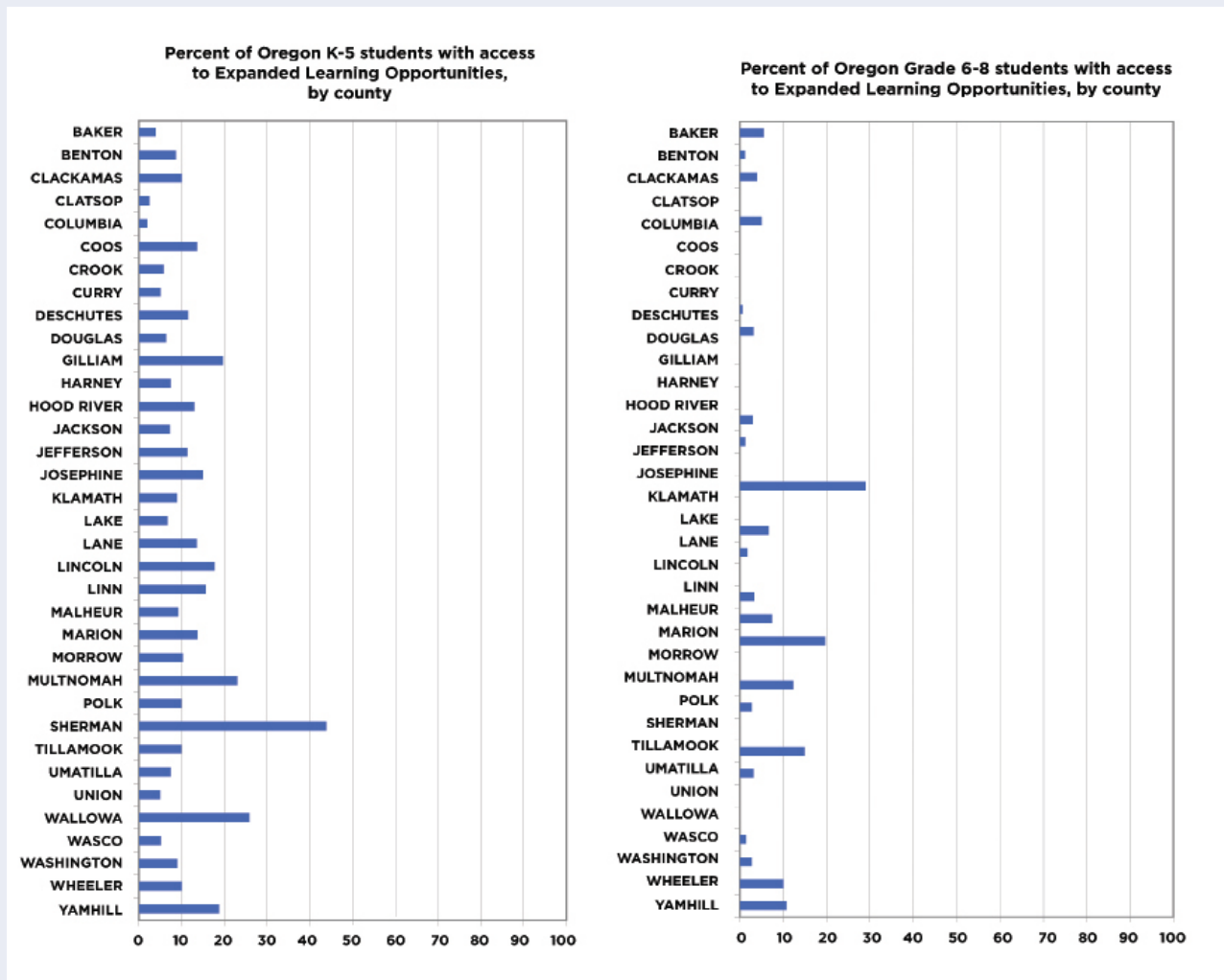
What the Data Reveals: The Status of Expanded Learning Opportunity Programs in Oregon

The initial analysis of the compiled data focused on students' access to expanded learning opportunities and related nutritional programs by geographic location and socioeconomic status.

Data systems and analysis are in ongoing development, however the following highlights present a snapshot based on data from the 2008-2009 school year.

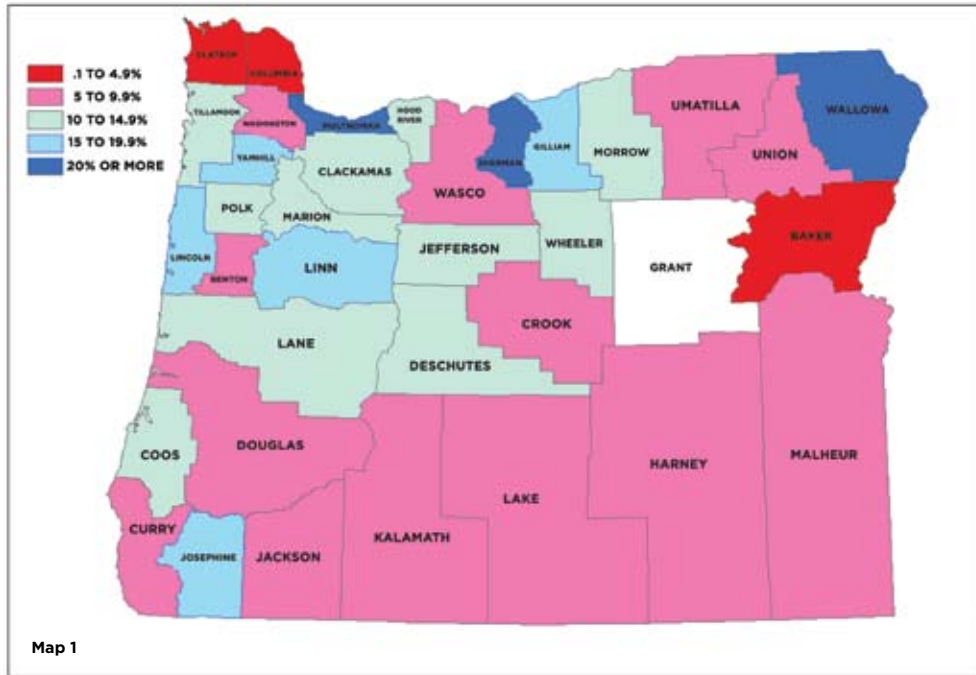
- Geographically the percentage of K-5 grade students with access to expanded learning opportunities (ELOs) varies from 2.0 to 43.9 percent in various Oregon counties (Figure 1 and Map 1), with the majority (21 of 36 counties) having access for less than 10% of students and another 11 counties having ELO access for 10%-20% of students. One county has access for 25% of students, and another for 44% of K-5 grade students.
- Geographically the percentage of 6-8 grade students with access to expanded learning opportunities varies from 0 to 29.1 percent (Figure 2 and Map 2), with 14 counties reporting no access for middle school students, 16 counties have less than 10% access, and 4 counties have 10%-20% access to ELOs for students in grades 6-8, and one county has 29% access.

Figure 1 & 2. Overall student access to expanded learning opportunities, by county



Maps 1 & 2. Overall student access to expanded learning opportunities, by county

Percent of Oregon K-5 students with access to Expanded Learning Opportunities, by county



Note: Data missing for Grant county

Percent of Oregon Grade 6-8 students with access to Expanded Learning Opportunities, by county

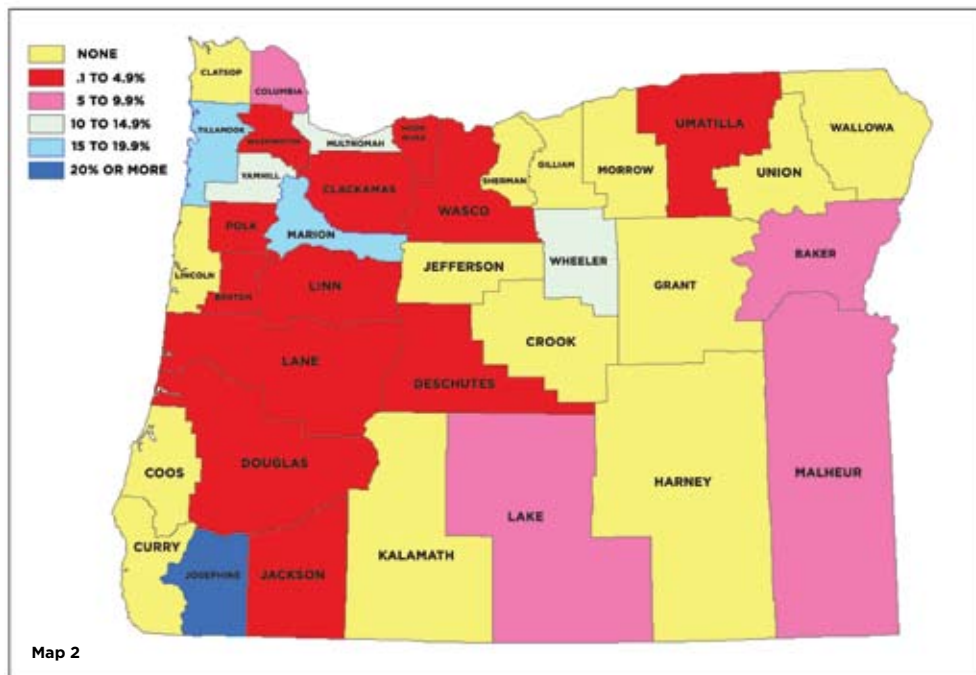
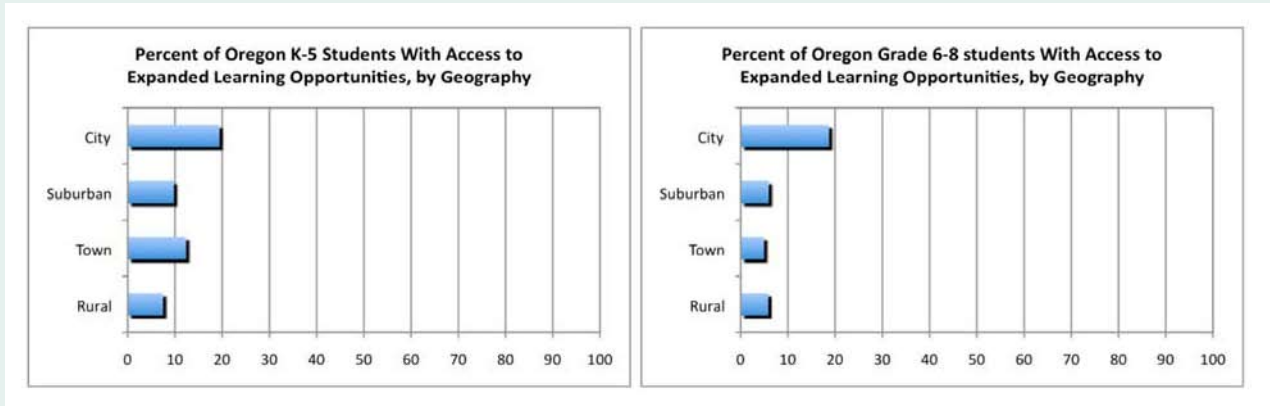
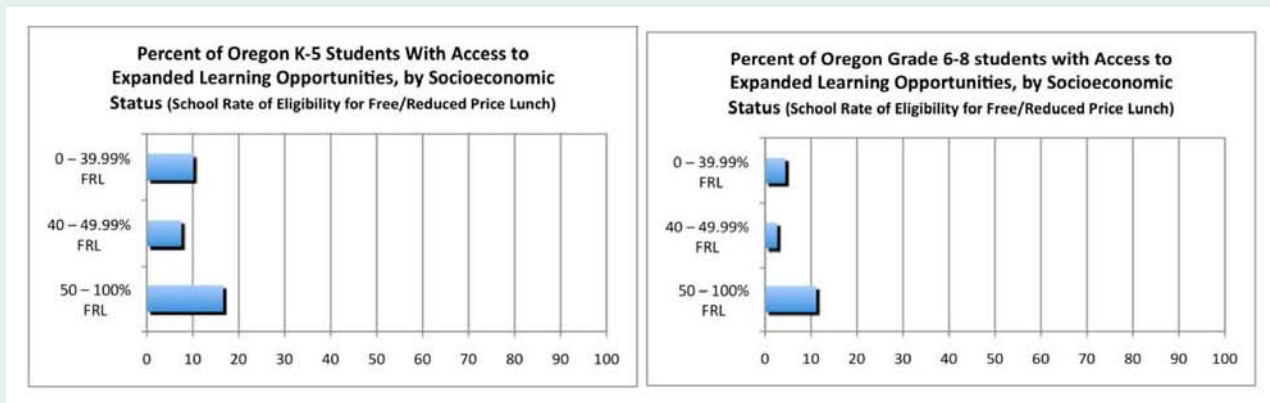


Figure 3. Overall student access to expanded learning opportunities, by geographic locale



- At both the elementary and middle school levels, the students in cities and students in schools with lower socioeconomic status are more likely to have access to expanded learning opportunities (Figure 3).
- Less than 20 percent of Oregon K-8 students living in cities have access to ELO program opportunities (Figure 3). This rate is even lower for students living in suburban, town and rural areas, ranging from 5% to 12%.

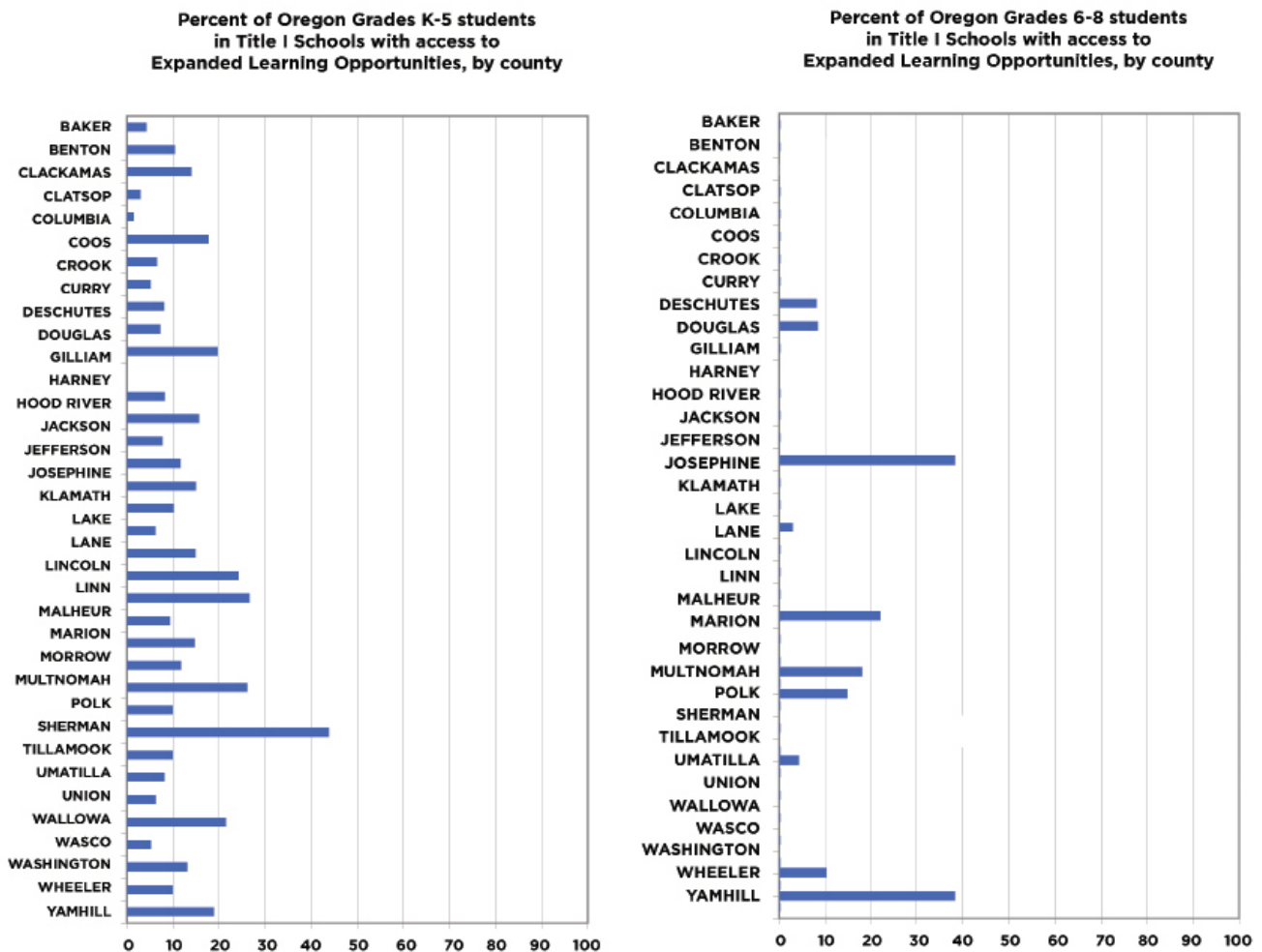
Figure 4. Overall student access to expanded learning opportunities, by socioeconomic status



- Among students in schools where more than 50 percent of the enrollment is eligible for free or reduced price lunch, 16.6 percent of students in grades K-5 and 11.1 percent of students in grades 6-8 have access to expanded learning opportunities (Figure 3). These rates are lower in schools with lower rates of eligibility for free or reduced price lunch.

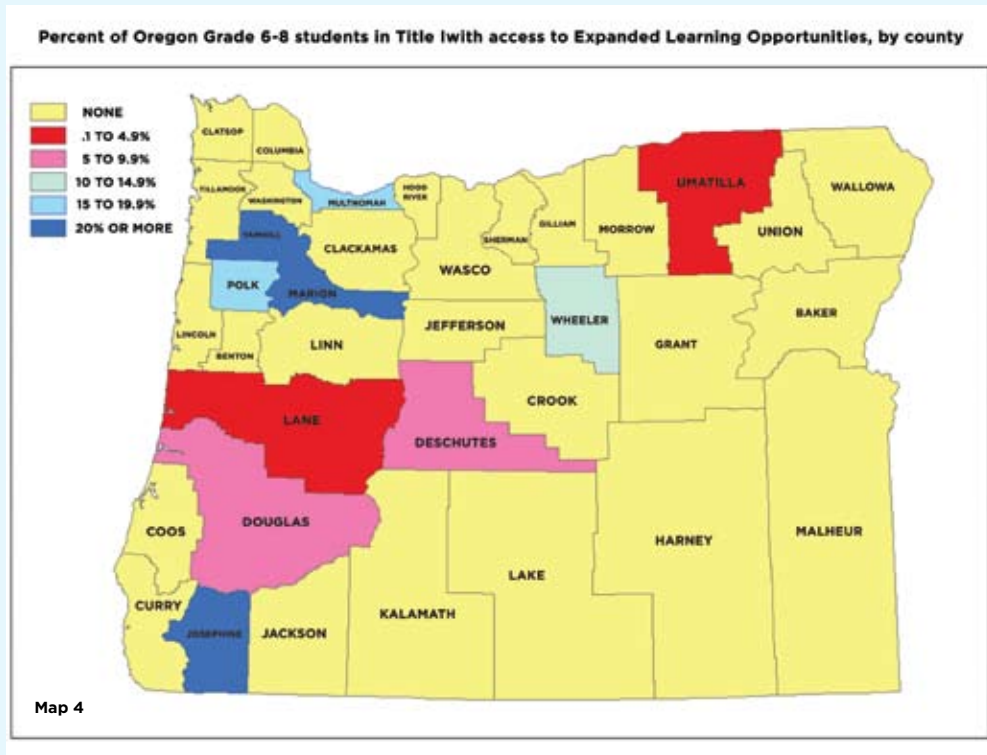
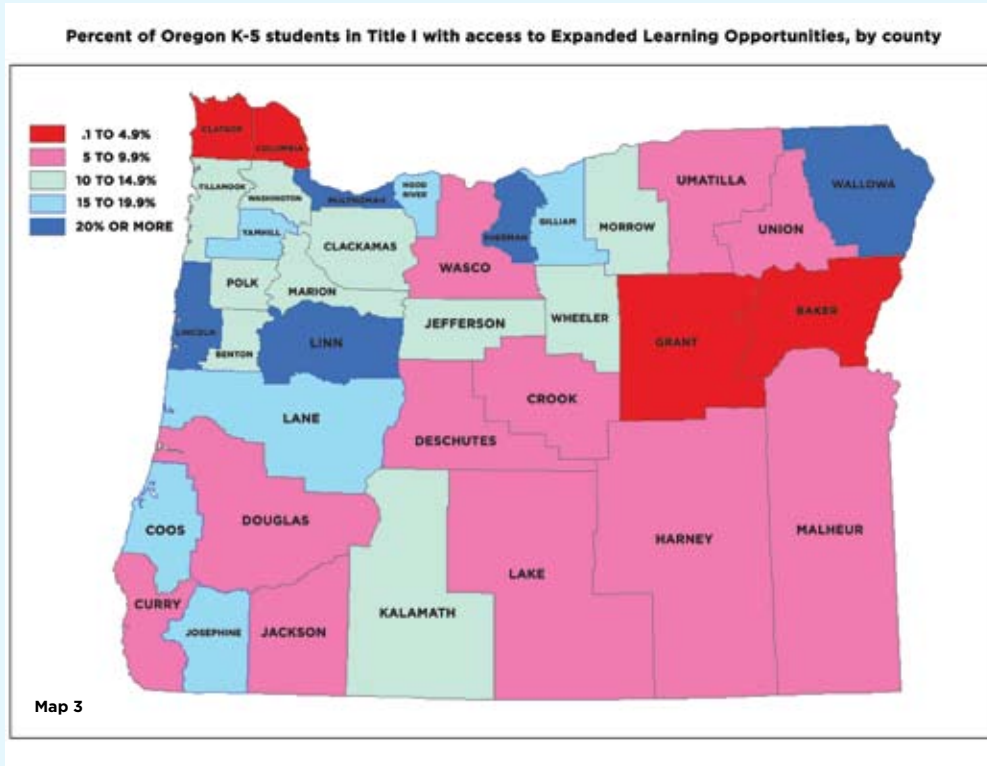
Figure 5 & 6. Title I school student access to expanded learning opportunities, by county

- Within Title I schools, student access to expanded learning opportunities in Oregon varies by geographic location and by socioeconomic status. Within Title I schools, the percentage of students in grades K-5 with access to these programs varies from 0 to 43.9 percent in various Oregon counties. For grades 6-8, access rates vary from 0 to 39.0 percent. Highlights are presented in figures 5 and 6 and maps 3 and 4.



- Within Title 1 schools (Figure 5 and Map 3), the percentage of students in grade K-5 with access to ELOs varies from 0 to 43.9 percent in various Oregon counties with 30 of 36 counties having ELO access for less than 20% of students. Of these 30 counties, 11 have 10%-20% access; 18 counties have less than 10% access and 1 county has no access.
- For grade 6-8 students in Title 1 schools (Figure 6 and Map 4), access varies from 0 to 39% with only 10 counties reporting any access to ELOs, and 5 of those counties reporting less than 10% access, clearly indicating a significant lack of resources for middle school students in Oregon.

Maps 3 & 4. Title I school student access to expanded learning opportunities, by county



The last step of data collection revealed that 84.8 percent of the Title I schools serving students in grades K-8 in Oregon cities were eligible under current rules to provide nutritional support (snack or supper). In Oregon towns, suburbs and rural areas, this rate ranged from 64.4 to 82.3 percent. However, the percentage of Title I schools that actually provide snack and/or supper ranged from 35.9 percent in rural areas to 77.1 percent in cities.

64% to 85% of Title 1 schools serving students in grades K-8 are eligible under current rules to provide USDA afterschool snack and/or meals.

Only 36% to 77% of Title 1 schools serving students in grades K-8 are actually providing USDA afterschool snack and/or meals.

Not all Title I schools qualify to provide nutritional support as part of afterschool programs, and programs that are able to provide nutritional support to students do not always do so. Schools in which more than 40 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced price lunch are designated as Title I schools and are provided with a number of special programs. A subset of these schools in which more than 50 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced price lunch may provide afterschool snack or supper to students as part of their ELO programs (if they have ELO programs). Therefore, some Title I schools are eligible to provide nutritional support, but they may not be doing so because they may not have an afterschool ELO, or the afterschool ELO does not provide nutritional support even though it could. This situation is depicted graphically in Table 1.

Table 1. Illustration of eligibility and practice for providing nutritional support

School percentage of student eligibility for free or reduced price lunch	Schools may have ELO programs	Schools may be designated as Title I schools	ELO programs are eligible under current rules to provide snack or supper	ELO programs actually provide snack or supper
50 – 100%	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maybe
40 – 49.99%	Yes	Yes	No	No
0 – 39.99%	Yes	No	No	No



Summary of Barriers and Challenges

The S3 Study Group acknowledges Oregon's long history of public-private support in providing a variety of afterschool and out-of-school time programs, including those sponsored by municipal parks and recreation departments, faith-based or community groups, libraries, arts organizations, and schools and school foundations. However, the Group also became fully aware that even with these partnerships there are clearly not enough programs or resources to support the needs of over 560,000 school-age children in Oregon (ages 5-17 years old).

Through the data collection process, the S3 Study Group was able to identify specific barriers and challenges that impact 1) access to afterschool programs; 2) program capacity; 3) program quality; and 4) best use of program resources.

Barriers/Challenges	Impact Areas			
	Access to Afterschool Programs	Afterschool Program Capacity	Afterschool Program Quality	Best Use of Program Resources
Common Vision	✓	✓	✓	✓
Agency and System Cooperation and Collaboration		✓	✓	✓
Program Capacity	✓	✓		✓
Transportation	✓	✓		✓
Underutilization of USDA Snack & Meal Program			✓	✓
Investment Strategies			✓	✓

Common Vision

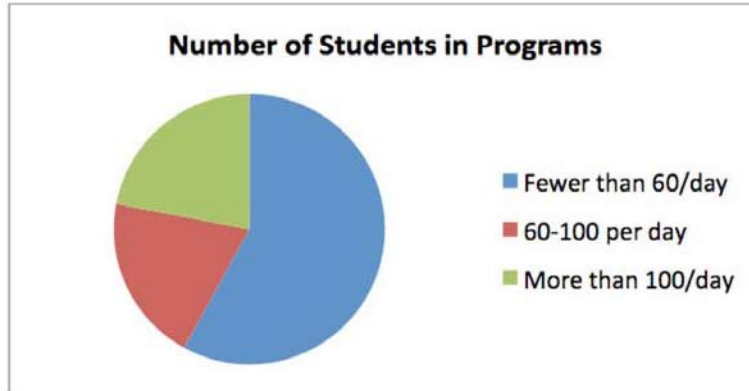
Oregon would benefit from a common vision shared by schools, municipalities, businesses, non-profits, families and public officials with regard to the value of afterschool to learning. Research notes that 86% of voters think afterschool programs are valuable. This general value needs to be articulated and embraced in a commonly held vision about the specific benefits, and thus, public expectations regarding the contributions of afterschool to children, youth, families and communities.

Cooperation and Collaboration

School-age programs cross systems and address multiple outcomes. Greater cooperation and collaboration between agencies and systems that administer the multiple federal funding streams related to school-age children and youth would result in efficiencies and improved outcomes for children, youth, families and communities. These outcome areas include academic progress, health and wellness, public safety, and economic development.

Program Capacity

More than half of the 180 programs that responded to the survey reported serving fewer than 60 students per day, 20% of programs had 60-100 students attending each day, and less than 22% served over 100 students per day. Our research clearly shows there are more children at those schools who would take advantage of afterschool program if programs had the capacity to serve them.



Transportation

Superintendents, principals, families and providers identified transportation as a major barrier in supporting students in afterschool programs - and it was described as almost nonexistent for children in suburban and rural areas and children in special education.

Underutilization of the Federal Nutrition Program

While Oregon is one of only 14 states that qualify for a special federal subsidy of afterschool supper, the subsidy is grossly underutilized. The specific barriers identified were related to infrastructure issues with food preparation and serving and lack of financial resources to sustain the enrichment component of the afterschool program. Discussions with afterschool advocates and the state agency administering the USDA Afterschool Snack and Meal Program described difficulties in marketing the program and challenges with the agency's capacity to provide technical assistance.

Investment Strategies

Even with multiple federal funding streams, many of which Oregon currently utilizes to support afterschool programming, there are not enough resources to meet the needs of Oregon's children who would benefit from expanded learning opportunities. Greater cooperation and collaboration, noted above, would help to address this issue, as would greater investments, particularly in support of low-income families and communities. One of the most significant federal funding streams is 21st Century Community Learning Center (CCLC) funding which provides over \$10 million annually to 135 programs in Oregon; however, that is only 22% of the 607 schools that qualify for these federal funds, based on poverty. In addition, these funds are offered as seed money, with the expectation that programs will become sustainable and able to operate, serving low-income populations, without 21st CCLC funding.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Oregon, a small state with a population of less than 3.8 million people has a history of strong partnerships between schools and community based organizations (CBOs) that are committed to supporting children, youth and families. The state has been particularly impacted by the recent economic crisis, which has and continues to impact unemployment, housing, hunger, school district budgets, childcare subsidies, and discretionary spending. Oregon cannot afford to miss the opportunity to expand learning opportunities for our children and youth, particularly when 673 of the existing 806 afterschool programs are located on school campuses.

As we near the end of this 18 month Supporting Student Success Initiative, OregonASK and its community partners are committed to continue the work of S3, which includes connecting schools and out-of-school time programs that support academic enrichment and also provide opportunities for positive behavioral and emotional growth, while engaging and empowering Oregon's children and youth to pursue post-secondary education and careers that will serve them in the 21st century workforce. When communities take collective responsibility for children's well-being, there is a greater likelihood of achieving the desired results for kids, schools and communities. Similarly, if policymakers support a comprehensive learning system that promotes seamless expanded learning opportunities—particularly for the most vulnerable children in Oregon—results will include improvements in educational achievement while nurturing social and emotional development in our youth and creating competent citizens and future leaders.

Recommendation #1 - Create a formal statewide Expanded Learning Opportunities Taskforce

The foremost recommendation of the S3 Study Group is to establish an expanded learning opportunities task force. We believe that by examining federal, state and local funding across multiple agencies that support a range of increasingly integrated education and care approaches, while encouraging the multiple agencies that collectively receive federal funds for children and youth K-12 served in afterschool programs to become a unified system that integrates education with workforce development and economic development. The task force will:

- √ **Review federal funding allocations to this state that are received by multiple agencies, and recommend protocols for pooling separate sources of funding into a unified funding source designed to implement common goals;**
- √ **Review existing state and local investments in before-school, afterschool and summer programs and make recommendations for building new partnerships that increase the capacity for delivering high quality programs across the state;**
- √ **Examine the ability to provide greater access to before-school, afterschool and summer programs for all children in kindergarten through grade 12;**
- √ **Examine and make recommendations about greater coordination between primary and secondary school education and before-school, afterschool and summer programs;**
- √ **Examine and make recommendations for innovative and cost- effective funding models for using high school student leadership programs in concert with before-school, afterschool and summer programs;**

- √ **Review current connections between before-school, afterschool and summer programs and teacher education programs, and make recommendations for establishing better connections;**
- √ **Review different academic subject areas for the purpose of identify practices that lead to high student performance in each subject area, and identify the barriers and costs for implementing these practices in before-school, afterschool and summer programs; and**
- √ **Examine processes that would evaluate and ensure the quality of before-school, afterschool and summer programs, using a common evaluation method.**

Representing key stakeholders, members will integrate and interpret existing data from different sources and make policy recommendations to increase access and enhance program quality.

Recommendation #2 - Continue data collection and analysis

Long term, the goal of OregonASK and the S3 Study Group is to better integrate existing data collection efforts and to propose an enhancement of the current system to provide the information the policy makers need about ELOs in Oregon. Refine the focus to the three prioritized areas for future data collection: 1) parents; 2) under-represented populations; and 3) the afterschool workforce.

Recommendation #3 - Intentionally and strategically address the needs of underserved groups of children/youth

The S3 Study Group is particularly committed to identifying and reaching out to the most vulnerable populations which will involve focus on children who live in rural communities as well as in disadvantaged urban communities, children who are in special education or who are English language learners, children who are highly mobile, children in foster care, children and youth who are homeless, at risk for becoming homeless or are “unaccompanied minors under the age of 18,” children who are in the juvenile justice system, children who live in public housing, children of migrant or seasonal workers, children who are Native American, Hispanic, African-American or from other newly immigrant communities, children with mental health issues or other chronic health issues, and children of military or National Guard families.

Recommendation #4 - Support workforce development

The vision of expanded opportunities and enhanced quality within afterschool programs requires a strong commitment to recruit, train, retain and compensate workers who support children and youth in afterschool programs. Out-of-school time (OST) programs are recognized as a potentially robust space for academic, social, and emotional development and skilled staff is central to helping children reach developmental and/or learning outcomes. The new paradigm that recognizes the benefits of expanded learning requires a workforce with the skills to cross boundaries of education, youth, and community work, child and youth development, adult education, management, public relations, budgeting, and workforce development. Keeping this in mind during the next phase of data collection, and work to support skilled staff with strong and diverse professional development opportunities and better compensation and benefits, will also result in greater retention.

Recommendation #5 - Encourage or facilitate genuine collaboration between agencies

The S3 Study Group encourages state agencies to become boundary crossers and visionaries who strive to create braided funding streams and pooling of resources to support expanded learning opportunities for all of Oregon’s children and youth. The current system often creates strong disincentives and/or barriers to coordinate or combine resources, such as eligibility requirements, program regulations, funding flows and administrations that are sometimes in direct conflict with one another. The goal is to develop a clear vision and results orientation for multiple funds from different agencies. This can be achieved by establishing collaborative planning processes and structures, understanding resource options and allocating funds strategically while developing “outcome alignment” for funding streams that attempt to reach the same children and youth. Needless to say creating this coordinated and unified funding stream will require state agency approval and cooperation—but it will also support regional education and school improvement, as those projects are required by federal law to have expanded learning options.

OregonASK and its partners will strive to utilize all existing resources thoughtfully and intentionally and will encourage private sector support of afterschool programming. This cross agency collaboration would include agencies such as the Department of Education, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Employment Department-Child Care Division and the Department of Justice. The first collaborative project will ensure that Oregon’s children will experience less hunger.



Oregon's Nutrition Initiative

With 43% percent of Oregon's students qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch, 20% of children in Oregon experiencing food insecurity (having limited access to safe and nutritious food), and 10% of Oregon families living below the poverty line, reducing hunger in this state is a critical priority. Currently many afterschool programs offer snacks, however providers consistently report it is not enough food to stave off hunger, particularly for older kids from 4th grade through high school. In addition providers often use program dollars to provide additional snacks. Unfortunately, given program's limited financial resources, these are seldom healthy foods, as those foods are often cost prohibitive.

Following a series of discussions and review of data from the Department of Education and statutes from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, it was apparent that the problem was not without a solution. The S3 leadership team determined that the first S3 initiative should focus on the statutes that support and connect afterschool and USDA nutrition programs.

The primary goal is to increase nutrition support by expanding the numbers of programs serving USDA Afterschool Snacks and Meals. An evaluation by the Oregon Hunger Relief Task Force, "**The Afterschool Supper Program: An Oregon Case Study**" suggests that the USDA Program is an important component for the success and sustainability of afterschool programs, and that the success of the USDA Program is "integrally tied to the availability, vitality, and quality of afterschool programming."

Only one of many examples cited in the report states:

"Participation numbers nearly doubled when we started to offer supper. With snack we served around 40 kids at program sites and now with the meals we are serving up to 60-80 kids at each site. As a result more kids are coming to drop-in-tutoring sessions that aren't even mandatory – it has been amazing!"

- Michael Vetter, Food Service Director, Central School District

The policy group believes:

The first component is to help local schools and community groups apply for grants, purchase the necessary equipment, and/or publicize the availability of the federal Afterschool Snack and Meals Program. To that end a legislative concept has been drafted, wherein the Department of Education is allocated \$175,000 to support this effort and the Child Nutrition Division initiates a process of awarding start-up grants, not to exceed \$10,000 per application.

The second component is to encourage outreach to providers from the Oregon Department of Education, which would expand utilization of the federal Afterschool Snack and Meals Program. This specifically includes providing multiple training options, including webinars and/or regional trainings to allow more eligible programs to access the training, be able to apply for funding, and utilize the federal resources. The legislative concept includes this second component, enabling the Department of Education to provide such services. The effort focuses on low-income areas and encourages all 21st Century Community Learning Centers to apply for and participate in all Child Nutrition Programs.

This proposed Nutrition Initiative is simply one example of genuine collaboration to increase the efficiencies, reach, and impact of afterschool programs. There are numerous other opportunities for boundary crossing between state agencies in terms of transportation, higher education, child care licensing, etc.

Closing

When the bell rings at the end of the school day, more than 15.1 million children in this country are left unsupervised, while they wait for families to return home from work. In Oregon tens of thousands of the 560,030 school-age children similarly are left alone or spend their time in environments that might compromise their health and safety or increase their risk of becoming victims or perpetrators of crime. Oregon has 806 afterschool programs, and 673 of them are on school campuses. These programs operate at least 3 days a week, or 12 hours or more. Average ratios of adults to students showed nearly 2/3 of sites have approximately 12:1 student to adult ratio (5-12 years of age), which is considered threshold for optimum child to adult ratios.

Due to the identified limitations only about 43,340 students in Oregon, which is less than 8% of the student population, are participating in afterschool programs. For the rest, these out-of-school time hours present challenges to families and communities as well as compromise youth who are already vulnerable. Cities and municipalities acknowledge that these same unsupervised hours could be spent in quality afterschool or summer programs that would dramatically expand learning opportunities. Through efforts like this Supporting Student Success Initiative, we are also beginning to recognize that organized and intentionally designed non-school hour programs cannot only help keep communities safe, but that they keep kids engaged in learning which supports collaboration, problem solving, creative thinking, and helps develop life skills and enrichment opportunities that they would otherwise not be able to access.

With the initial launch of the Supporting Student Success Initiative, led by OregonASK and a cadre of state agencies, private and not-for profit organizations, advocates for families and children and with support of the Department of Education and the Child Care Division, the S3 Study Group has launched a movement to continue to support expanded learning opportunities for all of Oregon's children. Throughout this 18-month process the S3 Study Group has collected and analyzed data, identified access barriers, developed strategies to begin the process of genuine interagency collaboration, and are recommending changing the very systems that operate in silos to an approach that is by definition "boundary crossing", an approach that is value driven and based on the belief that leaders in Oregon can develop policies and practices that will support expanded learning opportunities beyond the bell and outside the classroom. Right now in Oregon, there are 673 missed opportunities if action is not taken to immediately encourage teachers and principals to look down the halls and recognize that many more of their students can and should have access to high quality expanded learning opportunities. Partners simply have to commit collectively and intentionally to ensure that the journey begins immediately and work together to educate and influence policymakers to embrace this new day for learning.

The S3 Study Group concludes this Executive Summary with a word of advice from Marshall "Mike" Smith, senior counselor to the Secretary of Education and director of international affairs at the U. S. Department of Education, conveyed in a recent interview with Harvard Family Research Project as he describes how policy makers have been frustrated that promising interventions in schools are so often not replicated. He stated "Education reforms in this country are like fireflies in a field – the fireflies blink on and off, but they are isolated and uncoordinated, so they do not give off a concentrated or meaningful glow."

The S3 Study Group is confident that, as this unique challenge to expand learning opportunities is embraced in Oregon, leaders will not work in isolation to create reform that is not sustainable or coordinated. OregonASK and its partners commit to continue to work with any and all Oregon stakeholders, using a youth development approach to ensure positive outcomes for each and every child in this state. Every effort will be made to discover and disseminate promising models that use expanded learning opportunities to support schools, communities, students and families. Partners pledge that they will not "blink like fireflies in a field" – but will create a concentrated light as they cross boundaries, change systems that need change, and are ready and willing to impart and replicate lessons learned in the shared journey to support student success through extended learning opportunities.



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