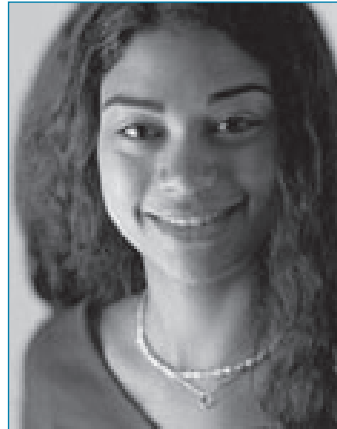


# Blueprint for Action:

Professional Development System  
for the Out-of-School Time Workforce



[A Working Document]

## **Wanted**

Out-of-School Time Group Leader. Hours 2-6 pm daily, full-time during summers and school vacations (8am-6pm). Qualifications: high school graduate, prefer some college in education, early childhood, recreation or related field; two years experience working with children and youth in group setting. Must be energetic, hardworking, well organized, team player, mature, responsible, creative, an excellent communicator, committed to children and the community, willing to make at least a one-year commitment. Responsibilities include: planning and implementing a full-year after-school program for 40 children and youth ages 5-16 years, including homework and academic assistance; sports and recreation; and creative arts instruction; documenting and assessing learning outcomes; building links with community agencies; communicating with school personnel and parents. Salary \$8.00 - 8.50 per hour depending on experience. Benefits: no health insurance available.

## Pre- Achieve Boston Example Resume

### Alex Colon

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14 Desalle Street Dorchester, MA 02124  
(857) 555-1234 dj-alex@yahoo.com

**OBJECTIVE:** Employment in a youth-serving agency doing work with teens at risk.

#### EDUCATION

2001-2002 Bunker Hill Community College, General Studies, Education  
1998-1999 Quincy College, Business Administration, Communications  
1998 Dorchester High, Graduated

#### EXPERIENCE

Summer 2002, 2003 *Summer Counselor*, YMCA of Dorchester  
Led group of 11-and 12-year old boys  
Organized sports and computer activities  
Assisted Camp Director in planning programs for the summer

2001-2003 *Overnight*, Hillside Youth Detention Center  
Planned and ran on-site nighttime activities for older youth  
Prepared weekly discipline reports and administered point system  
Performed counts and room sweeps

1999-2001 *Customer Service Representative*, Avigon Communications  
Answered calls about policies and vehicle-damage coverage  
Completed reports for monthly targets

1996-1998 *Peer Leader*, DTAT (Dorchester Teens Against Tobacco)  
Provided workshops for teens and pre-teens on effects of tobacco  
Organized youth speak-out against tobacco ads in Codman Square  
Spoke at public hearings and to legislators on youth smoking

#### INTERESTS AND HOBBIES

PC and Mac computers, digital mixers, sports, hip-hop, and DJ-ing



## Achieve Boston Managing Partners

**Samantha Wechsler**

Acting Director  
Boston 2:00-to-6:00 After-School Initiative

**Julie Dennehy**

Research Associate  
National Institute on Out-of-School Time

**Laurie Jo Wallace**

Director, Training and Capacity Building  
The Medical Foundation

**David Alexander**

Project Associate  
National Institute on Out-of-School Time

**Moacir Barbosa**

Assistant Director, Training and Capacity Building  
The Medical Foundation

**Marta Gredler**

Former Program Director  
Parents United for Child Care

**Bob Monahan**

Vice President, Strategic Partnerships  
Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston

**Susan Tufts**

Project Director  
Parents United for Child Care

**Jude Goldman**

Executive Director  
Massachusetts School-Age Coalition

**Gil Noam**

Director  
Program in Afterschool Education and Research  
Harvard University School of Education  
and McLean Hospital

**Judith Renehan Rouse**

Deputy Director  
Massachusetts School-Age Coalition

**Sylvia Clark**

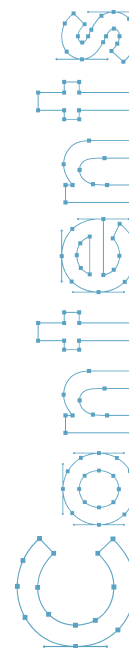
Director of Child Care Resources  
YMCA of Greater Boston

**Ellen Gannett**

Co-Director  
National Institute on Out-of-School Time

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## The Key to Quality: Professional Development and the Workforce

Families, teachers, and policy-makers have turned increasingly to after-school and youth programs to provide critical educational, recreational, and mentoring experiences that foster positive child and youth development. High-quality after-school and youth programs improve academic success, promote children's healthy development, encourage leadership, actively support and strengthen families, and garner and coordinate community resources.<sup>1</sup>

Research proves that a skilled, stable, and motivated workforce is a key determinant of quality programming.<sup>2</sup> However, despite the demonstrated value of high-quality programs, staff development and retention lags in programs across the field. Low wages, poor working conditions, program isolation, and a lack of professional networking and advancement opportunities contribute to a staff turnover rate that was reported in 2001 at 49% annually among Boston's after-school programs.<sup>3</sup>

In order to realize the full potential of out-of-school time (OST), staff must be consistent, well-trained, and well-compensated. After-school and youth workers<sup>4</sup> need access to comprehensive training and educational opportunities that enable them to strengthen their skills, improve their job performance, and develop their knowledge base. Higher levels of training and education should result in greater job responsibility and increased compensation while allowing staff to advance along a chosen career path.

In Boston, there are many innovative training and professional development initiatives. Achieve Boston has designed a system that Boston currently lacks: an infrastructure that builds on and weaves together these often disparate training efforts by creating a coherent system of support for OST practitioners while improving services to young people.

### Achieve Boston's Mission & Vision

Achieve Boston's mission is to improve the overall quality of after-school and youth programs by ensuring that program staff at all levels have access to comprehensive training and educational opportunities. These opportunities enable them to strengthen their skills, develop their knowledge base, and advance along their chosen career path.

Achieve Boston envisions a future in which out-of-school time programs, regardless of mission, size, model, or location, are staffed by dedicated and creative individuals of all ages and backgrounds who have access to and take advantage of a range of education and training opportunities that meet their needs. Programs value staff who are culturally competent; staff who are skilled to work with diverse populations and understand the issues of diverse neighborhoods. Staff are supported in their workplaces to increase their knowledge, develop their skills, and improve their practice. Staff are supported by system-wide structures enabling them to advance along their individual career paths while being well compensated in both full- and part-time jobs with benefits. Staff are recognized and rewarded both at their workplaces and by the larger society for their commitment to bettering our communities through out-of-school time programming. Staff are included in designing and implementing the professional development

Key to Quality

system. Most importantly, these well trained and well compensated staff offer high-quality, challenging, engaging, and rewarding opportunities for children and youth.

## Valuing Our Diverse Field

One truly exciting aspect of Achieve Boston is that it seeks to develop a professional development system that spans the worlds of after-school and youth work – two traditionally separate fields.<sup>5</sup>

Achieve Boston has been and will continue to be committed to engaging and maintaining high levels of involvement among a broad range of stakeholders. These stakeholders will shape the future of and play a critical role in the implementation of the Blueprint detailed in this document. In particular, we are committed to involving practitioners and others who will be directly impacted by the establishment of a professional development system.

During the past two years, Achieve Boston engaged various stakeholders representing a diverse range of youth serving agencies by

involving them in numerous focus groups, Advisory and Working Group Meetings, presentations, phone surveys, and meetings such as the Practitioners Forum, Boston Directors' Roundtable, and the Higher Education Roundtable. (See Appendix II for a list of Advisory Group Members.)

*“Professional development experiences are most successful when they respond to an individual’s background, experiences, and the current context of his/her role. Achieve Boston is committed to creating a professional development system that is broad-based, accessible, and responsive to the diverse nature of the workforce.”*



Achieve Boston recognizes and appreciates that after-school providers and youth workers come to this field by way of many paths. Some may enter into this work without any formal education and training and gain knowledge and skills on the job. Others may come with a background in a variety of disciplines including social work, education, public health, community education, or psychology. Even with education and/or experience in these related fields, practitioners may not be prepared for their specific role in an after-school or youth program.<sup>6</sup> Achieve Boston maintains that all kinds of experience – formal and informal – are valuable in the professional development of practitioners. Furthermore, a variety of approaches to and types of training are often necessary to build the range of skills needed to provide high-quality services for young people. A University-offered certificate program,

for instance, may be appropriate for a practitioner in a particular role but it may be unsuitable for another. Similarly, a community-based training or series of workshops will be appropriate and relevant for some and inappropriate for others. Professional development experiences are most successful when they respond to an individual’s background, experiences, and the current context of his/her role. Achieve Boston is committed to creating a professional development system that is broad-based, accessible, and responsive to the diverse nature of the workforce.

## Prime Time for Collaboration and System Building

The increased national attention on after-school and youth work and the convergence of child care, youth development, and education is creating a dynamic forum for the re-examination of the content of training and professional development. Achieve Boston is integrally linked to state and national work. In particu-

lar, two Achieve Boston Managing Partners (NIOST and MSAC) are charged with maintaining national and statewide perspectives while ensuring Achieve Boston's work is informed and connected.

The National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST) manages a Workforce Clearinghouse, and tracks national trends and state initiatives on out-of-school time workforce-related efforts. The Massachusetts School-Age Coalition (MSAC) works to ensure that city initiatives and state initiatives are aligned and complementary. With the development of a new public-private quality initiative between MSAC and the Office of Child Care Services (OCCS) dedicated to establishing a statewide school-age professional development system that builds on the long-term work of MSAC's PASS project (Professional Advancement for School-Age Staff)<sup>7</sup>, now is the time to formally connect city and state system building wherever possible.

Further, Massachusetts state government is primed for collaboration and infrastructure building efforts. In June 2004, the state legislature announced the creation of a new Department of Early Education and Care to be established by FY06. This new state department proposes to restructure and consolidate existing state early care and education programs within the Office of Child Care Services (OCCS), Department of Education (DOE), and Department of Public Health (DPH). This groundbreaking legislation also specifies the development and implementation of a "workforce development system" designed to support the education, training, and compensation of the early education and care workforce, including all center, family child care, infant, toddler, preschool, and school-age providers.<sup>8</sup> Achieve Boston's work outlined in this Blueprint paves the way for a comprehensive and supportive professional development system that meets the needs of Boston and Massachusetts.



### Personal Stories

Sarah is a graduate of a prestigious university, an honor student, and had her choice of careers. Sarah was raised with the value of helping others and found herself drawn to the education field. As a first year teacher, her outlook was idealistic. The realities of teaching in an inner-city, elementary school classroom did not surprise her but they did exhaust her. She found herself equally interested in the students' academic progress and their emotional well-being, but with pressures to meet curricular deadlines there never seemed to be enough time to directly address the emotional needs of her students. Instead of being a supportive, stable resource for them, she too often felt like a police officer unsuccessfully trying to keep control. She felt insecure in her own teaching ability, and though the supervision she received was helpful she always wished there was more support for her. At the end of the year, she felt depleted. Though she loved working with the children, she felt that classroom teaching was not for her.

Sarah's story is all too common. In every graduating university class, highly talented, caring people are attracted to the field of education. A year after graduation, these highly talented and caring people often decide they cannot continue in the field. Achieve Boston's efforts to professionalize the out-of-school time field will create a viable alternative for educators like Sarah, who find the structure and the academic focus of the classroom is not a perfect fit for them, but still want to contribute to shaping the lives of the next generation.

## A Blueprint for a Professional Development System for the Out-of-School Time Workforce

### Development of the Blueprint

Recognizing the critical link between young people's experiences in after-school and youth programs and the skills and knowledge of program staff, Achieve Boston seeks to improve the overall quality of these programs by creating a professional development system that is detailed throughout this document. A professional development system is typically broad-based, with accessible high-quality training at many levels to meet the needs of current practitioners. A system is composed of separate elements that operate interdependently; all elements are necessary for a comprehensive approach to professional development.

Efforts to address the professional development needs of the out-of-school time workforce at the practitioner, program, and system levels are not new. In the development of this Blueprint, Achieve Boston strove to honor previous work and build on existing efforts at the local, state, and national levels. Achieve Boston explored workforce development models in the after-school, youth work, early care and education, and related child and family service fields to ensure that the recommendations in this document reflect the most up-to-date information and research available.

National research outlines a well designed and articulated professional development system as having each of the following interrelated components:

- > **Core Competencies** that define what staff need to know and do to work effectively with children and youth.
- > A **Training System** that is grounded in the core competencies and is responsive to the diverse nature of the workforce.
- > A **Training and Trainer Approval System** that ensures the quality of both the content and delivery of training.
- > A **Professional Registry** that documents all relevant training and education completed by members of the field.
- > **Career Lattice and Pathways** that link roles, responsibilities, and salary ranges.<sup>9</sup>

Each component of the system as it applies to Boston and Massachusetts is explained in detail on the following pages. Some system components, such as the Training System, are specific to the city of Boston and will remain focused on Boston's after-school and youth workers. Other components, such as the Core Competencies, Registry, and Career Lattice and Pathways, are best implemented at the state level; for these components, Achieve Boston will link to existing statewide initiatives. Achieve Boston will lead the work for the city of Boston. MSAC, in its role as a statewide organization, will lead the statewide system-building initiatives in partnership with OCCS, the other members of Achieve Boston, and the Massachusetts Professional Development Council.<sup>10</sup> Part of Achieve Boston's role in the statewide system will be to expand the statewide efforts to encompass youth work.



## The Professional Development System for the Out-of-School Time Workforce

### CORE COMPETENCIES

#### GOAL:

*A comprehensive set of core competencies and indicators is available for after-school and youth workers that clearly defines what practitioners need to know and do, and what it means to be competent in any given skill area. The competencies can be widely used as an overall tool by the entire field, or separately for after-school and youth work, depending on specific program needs.*

#### SECTION PREVIEW:

- › What Are Core Competencies?
- › Achieve Boston's Eleven Competency Areas
- › Recommendations for Next Steps
  - Develop and Revise Indicators of Competence
  - Develop Multiple Ways of Measuring Competence

#### What are Core Competencies?

Core competencies are an agreed-upon definition of the knowledge and skills people need to do their jobs effectively. Core competencies are the demonstrated capacities that enable after-school and youth workers to provide high-quality services, and they are the practices most likely to result in positive outcomes for children and youth.

Core competencies are different from licensing standards and program standards. State licensing standards are the baseline of program quality and include guidelines for facilities, program activities, professional training, etc.<sup>11</sup> Program standards, such as those established by the National AfterSchool Association (NAA, formerly the National School Age Care Alliance, NSACA), set a higher standard of quality and can lead to program accreditation. Core competencies focus on staff roles and responsibilities within a program and provide a structured guide on how to best utilize staff knowledge, skills, and experience for the benefit of their programs, children, and youth.

Core competencies are the foundation of any professional development system. Identification of a clearly defined core knowledge base sets standards for the profession and creates an avenue toward increased recognition and respect. Core competencies can be used to:

- › Develop education and training opportunities.
- › Establish standards for program quality.
- › Form the basis of job descriptions, hiring practices, and performance evaluations.
- › Establish clear definitions of roles, responsibilities, and expectations.

- > Help determine the relevance of past job experiences.
- > Establish criteria for the approval of training content and delivery.
- > Compare content of courses, transfer credits, and facilitate articulation agreements between institutions.
- > Conduct training needs assessments to identify gaps in content and level of training.
- > Create a framework and curriculum for a credentialing system with specified roles, levels, and specializations.
- > Frame the contents of a professional portfolio.
- > Inform research agendas.
- > Help the public gain a better understanding of the demands of working in out-of-school time.

### Achieve Boston's Core Competencies: A Strong Foundation Built on Existing Work

After extensive planning and research, Achieve Boston established a joint set of core competencies that address the after-school and youth work fields. Achieve Boston recognizes the significant amount of work done by the after-school and youth work fields both in Massachusetts and nationwide that has allowed for the development of the Achieve Boston Core Competencies.

The present iteration of the Achieve Boston framework is a collaborative effort developed with the input of many after-school and youth work professionals with decades of experience. Achieve Boston honors the contributions of these dedicated individuals. We especially appreciate the contributions of two

well recognized efforts, the Boston BEST (Building Exemplary Systems for Training for Youth Workers) and AED (Academy for Educational Development) Youth Worker competencies and the MSAC Core Competencies for Massachusetts School-Age Practitioners, which were primary sources used to draw together the fields of after-school and youth work into one competency framework for the city of Boston.

In 1999, the AED/Center for Youth Development and Policy and the Boston BEST Advisory Board defined a set of core competencies that is used by youth workers in Massachusetts. In 2001, the Massachusetts School-Age Coalition, through an intensive two-year planning and development process that involved multiple organizations and individuals across the state, published Core Competencies for Massachusetts School-Age Practitioners for staff working in before- and after-school programs with children and youth ages 5-14 years. This document includes

*"... I used the guiding questions and assessment from the Achieve Boston Catalog for an in-service staff training last week. It worked great! The documents were so easy to put on the desktop, so the staff got to do them in our computer lab. It came at just the right time. The website was absolutely user-friendly."*

*-After-School Program Director in South Boston*



eight competency areas with indicators and was purchased by OCCS for use in all licensed school-age programs. Achieve Boston integrated these two sets of competencies into a joint framework, and gleaned critical information from several national and statewide after-school intermediaries, national youth serving organizations, and national program quality standards.

The resulting core competencies are listed below and in more detail in Appendix VI. These core competencies are also available in the Achieve Boston catalog and website.

- > **Activities, Curriculum, and Programming:** Attends to the importance of skillfully delivered and well balanced activities that promote life skills and enhances the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development of all children and youth, including those with special needs.
- > **Guidance/Building Caring Relationships:** Includes active listening skills, a variety of communication strategies, and promoting teambuilding. Understanding acceptable and appropriate behaviors in a variety of situations and cultural contexts is a learned skill.
- > **Child and Youth Development:** A comprehensive understanding of child and youth development, including developmental stages, children and youth with special needs, competencies, and positive youth outcomes.
- > **Safety, Health, and Nutrition:** Understanding how to maintain personal health and safety, prevention information, crisis intervention, CPR, and First Aid.
- > **Cultural Competence:** Understanding differences and inclusion principles and techniques.
- > **Environment:** A carefully planned learning environment fosters child and youth involvement and development in all areas. Such an environment includes physical and human qualities that together promote self-esteem, social interaction, and community values, and address physical and mental boundaries while promoting cultural awareness and inclusion.
- > **Families, Communities, and Schools:** Creating and sustaining relationships with families, teachers, and other school personnel is essential to enhancing the quality of after-school and youth services. Coordination and information-sharing among schools, families, and after-school providers/youth workers helps to create a supportive learning environment.
- > **Professionalism:** Understanding one's role in the organization and field, professional boundaries, and professional advancement.
- > **Program Management:** Having an accountable practice of program management enhances quality and promotes efficiency.
- > **Workers as Community Resources:** After-school and youth workers can serve as a resource to children, youth, and families. They also must know how to identify community resources and partner with other organizations.
- > **Building Leadership and Advocacy:** After-school and youth workers can play a natural role as community leaders speaking out on behalf of high quality after-school and youth services and can influence public policy by sharing their expertise. They can also help children, youth, and parents or other family members build their own leadership and advocacy skills.



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS

### Achieve Boston Recommends

1. Developing youth indicators, reviewing and updating the existing school-age competency indicators.
2. Developing multiple ways to measure staff competence.

#### 1. Developing and Revising Indicators of Competence

Simply having a set of core competencies is not enough. The next step for Achieve Boston is to make the competencies an established part of after-school and youth work practice. In order to do this, indicators need to be established for youth workers; existing school-age indicators will be updated after four years of use by the field.

Indicators are observable and measurable characteristics or changes that represent achievement of an outcome. MSAC's Core Competencies for Massachusetts School-Age Practitioners include indicators appropriate to programs serving children ages 5-14 years. However, because MSAC recognizes that the competencies are a dynamic tool that can grow and improve with use by the field, it is planning to review and conduct an outreach process to gather feedback on how the competencies and indicators might be updated and strengthened. This process will be coordinated with Achieve Boston's efforts to create competency indicators appropriate to youth workers. The end result will be a joint set of core competencies and indicators that can be used by after-school and youth work staff in its entirety or as distinct competency sets.

An OST Core Competencies Task Force will be formed to carry out this work. The Task Force will integrate the updated school-age competency indicators and the newly developed youth worker competency indicators into a joint OST framework. The Task Force will include diverse representation from stakeholders, such as practitioners, parents, and experts in professional development, after-school, youth work, and education.



***The OST Core Competencies Task Force will:***

- > Coordinate the efforts of the School-age and Youth Worker Committees to ensure that they are working in tandem and with good communication.
- > Ensure that the two committees and resulting indicators align with the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework and local learning standards for public school professionals.
- > Integrate the work of the two Committees into one joint OST core competency framework.
- > Develop and inform public education and outreach plans for the OST Core Competencies.
- > Provide information and resources to program administrators, educators, and staff on using the new OST Core Competencies.
- > Develop a chart that compares existing quality tools, such as the core competencies, accreditation standards, and the School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale (SACERS), to help practitioners understand how the tools can be used collectively to improve quality.

***School-Age Competency and Indicator Revision Committee will:***

- > Reconvene broadly representative experts.
- > Review other core competencies that have been established since the MSAC competencies.
- > Gather feedback from practitioners and key stakeholders by repeating focus group, feedback, and revisions process.
- > Develop an extensive outreach effort that includes securing input from practitioners, youth, parents, community leaders, higher education, professional development experts, and other key stakeholders.
- > Develop final version of the updated school-age competency indicators.

*“usually when I get back to my site on Fridays, the first thing my staff asks me for is their paycheck. Last week, the first thing they did when I got back was hand me the reference form that needed to be filled out for the training scholarship application. They are really excited.”*

*-Coordinator of Boston  
Community Center site  
in Dorchester*

***Youth Worker Indicator Committee will:***

- > Gather and review youth competencies and indicators.
- > Review youth program standards.
- > Convene broadly representative experts, including practitioners.
- > Develop indicators for core competencies framework.
- > Develop outreach plan and circulate draft of youth work competency indicators.
- > Gather feedback through focus groups, written and verbal communication.
- > Develop an extensive outreach effort that includes securing input from practitioners, youth, parents, community leaders, higher education, professional development experts, and other key stakeholders.
- > Develop final version of the youth worker competency indicators.

**2. Developing Multiple Ways to Measure Staff Competence**

Once indicators are developed, measurement tools need to be constructed to assess the competency levels staff bring to their work. Measurement tools can be used at the individual, program, community, or field levels; for self improvement, program or community needs assessments, and research purposes.

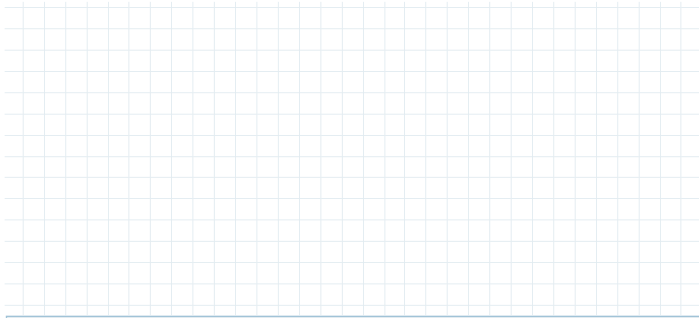
There are multiple ways to evaluate knowledge and skills while respecting different learning styles including: self reporting, observations with feedback and reflection, writing samples, video, written or verbal testing, creation of portfolios, and/or interviewing.

Researchers will be employed to work alongside the OST Core Competencies Task Force and its subcommittees to develop and test the necessary measurement tools.

***The Researchers will:***

- > Review methods of measuring competence and evaluative studies regarding current approaches.
- > Determine the cost effectiveness of implementing various methods.
- > Make recommendations for methods and tools that would meet the needs of the field.
- > Develop user-friendly tools including an observation method, that can be implemented by a variety of users (including program supervisors, trainers, and evaluators) to assess a staff person's knowledge and skills in each core competency area.
- > Develop and implement a training curriculum for evaluators who will measure competencies.
- > Test the validity of the assessment tools, procedures, and evaluative criteria through a pilot project.
- > Based on the outcomes of the pilot project, revise the tools, procedures, and training curriculum for assessors.





## Personal Stories

Genevieve never knew her experience of being a summer camp camper would lead her to become a teacher, after-school program provider, and trainer.

Having been very happy as a camper, Genevieve wanted to continue the summer camp experience as a counselor. Recognizing her own interest and skills in swimming and boating helped her to see in what area of camp counseling she most wanted to find a job.

After a summers worth of “counselor in training” experience, Genevieve began work as a canoeing counselor, responsible for 10 boy campers and a cabin assignment. She loved teaching specific skills of canoeing, along with dealing with the spontaneous and often unpredictable issues of the boys in the cabin. Some were personal issues, while others were related to getting along with each other. Teaching how to keep a canoe on a straight path through the water was easy compared to dealing with each camper’s everyday issues of growing up. Genevieve found these issues to be challenging but “fun” to deal with. This variety of challenges kept what could have become routine very interesting.

Having a camp director who recognized Genevieve’s skills at both teaching and counseling and an assistant director who mentored her in developing these skills were encouraging. The directors made a point of telling her she had potential for helping others learn. In thinking about what field to work in (forestry or petroleum engineering), Genevieve hadn’t ever considered her natural talents. Their recognition and validation of her abilities influenced her career direction. As a result Genevieve chose a college major, courses, and apprenticeships related to becoming a teacher and, eventually, an after-school program provider and trainer.

It was Achieve Boston’s organization and articulation of trainings associated with competencies specific to after-school work that helped Genevieve transition from classroom teacher to after-school program provider. Providing trainings on after-school appropriate activities and developing relationships with learners in an after-school program grew from Genevieve’s first hand work in that field.

## TRAINING SYSTEM

### GOAL:

*A system of training that builds the core competencies of participants, ensures that training “counts for something,” and results in improved program quality is available and accessible to a diverse workforce.*

### SECTION PREVIEW:

- › What is a Training System?
- › Building on Boston’s Rich History
- › Expanding Access to Training
- › Recommendations for Next Steps:
  - National Youth Development Associate Piloted in Boston
  - OST Worker Compensation Strategies
  - Ongoing and Enhanced Supports to Improve Access to Training

### What is a Training System?

A fully integrated training system includes accessible high-quality competency-based professional development opportunities at many levels that support practitioners gaining the knowledge and skills vital to delivering high-quality services to children and youth. Effective training systems set quality standards for trainers and training and provide recognition for practitioners.

### Building on Boston’s Rich History

In Boston, there are numerous examples of innovative training and professional development opportunities including:

- › The BEST Initiative offers training for after-school and youth workers that leads to a Youth Worker Certificate. BEST has strong connections to the College of Public and Community Service at UMass Boston and at Springfield College.
- › The 4-Quality Initiative (1999 - 2002) provided ongoing training and on-site technical assistance to direct service staff at YMCA and Boys & Girls Clubs after-school programs.
- › APEX (1996 - 2003) offered an out-of-school time education certificate at Bunker Hill Community College.
- › Boston Public Schools’ Bridging the Gap trains staff to better align their work with what goes on during the school day.
- › Citizen Schools recently announced a new Master’s Degree in Education with a concentration in Out-of-School Time in conjunction with Lesley University.
- › BELL (Building Educated Leaders for Life) also recently launched a Master’s program in conjunction with Cambridge College.

Achieve Boston pulls all of these innovative efforts together to form a coherent, interconnected system of training support.

## Expanding Access to Training

As a first step in the development of a training system, Achieve Boston increased access to training-related information, a primary need identified by staff, through the creation of a “Catalog of Opportunities,” training calendars, and a website. Achieve Boston also addressed a significant barrier – affordability – by providing training vouchers to nearly 200 selected after-school and youth workers.<sup>12</sup> Through efforts over the past two years, Achieve Boston successfully established the foundation of a training system.

However, an ongoing evaluation of Achieve Boston’s work to date shows that more readily available comprehensive information coupled with the incentive of training vouchers has not had an immediate and substantial impact on the field. Despite the high interest and enthusiasm for training, recipients’ busy schedules, lack of specific dates and training times, and miscommunication with training providers remain primary barriers to accessing training. More direct supports and interventions are needed to increase participation in training.

Recommendations based on the lessons learned from these early efforts include:

- > Have Achieve Boston act as an intermediary to link practitioners with specific training providers.
- > Send e-mail reminders and upcoming training notices to voucher recipients and others.
- > Mail a calendar of upcoming trainings.
- > Create clusters of voucher recipients and have program directors bring training on-site. Facilitate this process with directors.
- > Include trainers in the voucher orientation, and allow recipients to register for training (with established days and times) at the orientation.

Achieve Boston implemented several of these recommendations in the early part of 2004. As a result, it saw a substantial increase in the use of vouchers.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS

### Achieve Boston Recommends

1. Developing a national Youth Development Associate credential program to be piloted in Boston.
2. Continuing to partner with Higher Education.
3. Exploring strategies to increase OST workers’ compensation.
4. Providing ongoing and enhanced support to OST workers navigating the current and future professional development system.

The evaluation of Achieve Boston’s Voucher Program as well as extensive research and meetings with stakeholders served as the basis for these recommendations. Achieve Boston recommends four simultaneous and interconnected courses of action.



## 1. Developing a National Youth Development Associate Credential

A credential is a certification that recognizes an individual's performance based on a set of defined skills and knowledge. Credentials define the types of training (based on core competencies) and number of training hours required, and require evidence of skill development. Credentials provide an opportunity for adults working with youth to gain professional recognition for demonstrating competence on the job.

Credentials have been successfully used to stimulate the professional development of staff in various related fields, most notably in early care and education. For example, the Child Development Associate (CDA) is a nationally recognized professional credential for people directly caring for and teaching young children. CDAs are issued by the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition, a national association. In order to earn a CDA, practitioners must actively demonstrate competence in supporting the development of children. Ten thousand providers seek a CDA annually. Forty-six states and Washington, DC have incorporated the CDA into center licensing regulations. Children cared for by CDA recipients showed improved emotional and educational development. CDA recipients demonstrated a remarkably high retention rate.<sup>13</sup>

The U.S. Military also successfully implemented a credentialing program to overhaul its child care and youth development system. In 1989, the Military Child Care Act (MCCA) was enacted to improve the quality of child care services. A critical element of the MCCA established a competency-based training program in which skills must be demonstrated in the care setting and pay raises were linked to increased training. The MCCA and the establishment of the Army School Age Credential instilled a sense of professionalism among providers as the military saw significant changes in its programs. Turnover reduced from over 300% pre-MCCA to below 30% after the implementation; and 95% of program managers reported some or significant improvements in the quality of care and services being provided.<sup>14</sup>

The BEST Apprenticeship is a credential program designed specifically for youth workers. BEST Apprenticeship Programs are registered by the U.S. Department of Labor and at the state or regional level by State Apprenticeship Councils or Bureaus of Apprenticeship Training. BEST Apprenticeship programs promote apprentices' development of core competency skills for the youth work profession. BEST Apprenticeship programs are rigorous and include on-the-job training activities that are integrated into their work schedules. BEST Apprentices must complete approximately 3,600 - 4,000 hours of training on the job, which typically takes two years for full-time employees.

Furthermore, in the absence of a national out-of-school time credential, several states including California, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Michigan, New York, and Wisconsin have implemented local credentials. For example, the Indiana Youth Development Credential (IYD Credential), through a grant from the Indiana Child Care Fund, leads the nation in combining competencies that recognize skills in both youth development and child care professions. The IYD Credential is based on 16 core competency areas encompassing: Youth Development, Families and Communities, Program Environment, Program Content, and Professionalism. The IYD Credential requires three college-level courses, an additional 45 hours of non-credit



or college-credit training, a portfolio documenting skill development, two observations by an advisor, parent feedback through a survey process, and an observation by an independent evaluator. Scholarships for training expenses and/or certification costs are also available.

***Building on these efforts and others, Achieve Boston recommends establishing a National Youth Development Associate credential to be piloted in Boston. In order to do this successfully Achieve Boston will:***

- > Adapt the lessons learned from the Child Development Associate (CDA), Military SAC Credential, the Indiana Youth Development Credential, BEST Apprenticeship, and other efforts to create a National Youth Development Associate (YDA).
- > Engage practitioners in a real and genuine way so that they can shape training content and processes for delivering training.
- > Continue and enhance partnerships with higher education institutions to create the credential.
- > Link the YDA with ongoing initiatives like Bridging the Gap, Citizen Schools, and BELL's Master's degree programs.
- > Identify an appropriate sequence of training.
- > Develop multiple credentials at various levels and job specifications (e.g., entry level, director, specialist).
- > Use the core competency indicators and measurement tools to pilot a credential with a full evaluation.
- > Establish a Training and Trainer Approval System that identifies and ensures the quality of training linked to the certificate (see page 19).
- > Enable practitioners to document their trainings in a portfolio and registry (see page 22).
- > Acknowledge and value current experience in the field and previous training.
- > Allow for an a la carte approach or certificates that allow for "elective" courses/workshops where individuals can specialize or follow a particular area of interest.
- > Partner with states piloting credentials while convening national summits on credentials to share lessons learned.

## **2. Continuing to Partner with Higher Education**

In establishing a successful credential, partnering with the higher education community of local colleges and universities is paramount. These partnerships will be essential in ensuring that the OST Credential "counts for something" in the field and is portable for the individual. The linking of the credential with college credit allows an individual to easily pursue further education if they choose without having to repeat courses while acknowledging their skills and experiences.

***Achieve Boston will:***

- > Continue to host a Higher Education Roundtable.
- > Explore opportunities for articulation agreements among institutions and with the YDA Credential.
- > Involve higher education institutions in the development and enhancement of the credential training content and research.
- > Explore how training (credential-oriented and community-based) translates into college credit.
- > Explore how existing college courses and community-based training can satisfy credential requirements.

**3. Exploring Strategies to Increase OST Workers' Compensation**

Low wages plague the after-school and youth work fields, contributing to a staff turnover rate of 49% among Boston's after-school programs in 2001.<sup>15</sup> Low wages severely deflate practitioners' incentive to seek additional training since there is no financial gain for their efforts. However, there are two models from the early care and education field that have been very successful at increasing practitioners' education and compensation levels: T.E.A.C.H.<sup>®</sup> and WAGE\$.

T.E.A.C.H.<sup>®</sup> Early Childhood Project offers educational opportunities to directors, teachers, and family child care providers. T.E.A.C.H.<sup>®</sup> has grown in the last decade from a small pilot project serving 21 teachers in North Carolina to a national movement. T.E.A.C.H.<sup>®</sup> projects are now administered in 19 states and collectively provide over 15,000 scholarships annually. T.E.A.C.H.<sup>®</sup> is founded on the principles of partnership, diversity, use of existing systems, and collaboration.

T.E.A.C.H.<sup>®</sup> is composed of four components:

- > Educational Scholarships – including support for tuition and books, a travel stipend and often the provision of release time;
- > Formal Education – including a set amount of college coursework leading to a credentialed degree;
- > Compensation – providing an incentive in the form of a raise or bonus; and
- > Commitment – requiring a commitment to remain in the sponsoring child care program or the field for a specified period of time.

Child Care WAGE\$ Project provides salary supplements to underpaid teachers, directors, and family child care providers. The project is designed to provide preschool-age children more stable relationships with better-educated teachers by rewarding teacher education and continuity of care. Salary supplements are tied to the educational attainment and length of time a participant remains in a child care program. In addition, these supplements are paid directly to participants and therefore do not impact the child care program's budget.

Achieve Boston recommends exploring these and other efforts to increase practitioner's compensation.



***Achieve Boston will:***

- > Research opportunities for creative forms of compensation such as supporting full-time positions, supporting further education, loan forgiveness, affordable housing, and other options.
- > Consider how the T.E.A.C.H.<sup>®</sup> and WAGE\$ models will need to be modified to serve the OST field.
- > Explore piloting T.E.A.C.H.<sup>®</sup> and WAGE\$ in Boston.
- > Link T.E.A.C.H.<sup>®</sup> and WAGE\$ with the Training/Trainer Approval System (see page 19) to ensure that quality community-based training is also accessible.

**4. Providing Ongoing and Enhanced Supports**

The Achieve Boston Evaluation showed that practitioners who are currently pursuing education and training need continuous high-level support navigating the training and professional development system now and as the system grows and develops. Achieve Boston recommends providing supports at various levels: community, program, and individual.

***Community Supports may include:***

- > Developing a Training and Trainer Approval System to ensure high-quality training and trainers are available (see page 19 for more information).
- > Expanding training opportunities within each competency area.
- > Identifying and eliminating gaps in training opportunities within each competency area.
- > Working with current training providers and practitioners to develop new trainings.
- > Expanding the pool of trainers to be more diversified.
- > Encouraging and supporting neighborhood networks that foster information and resource sharing among individual practitioners.
- > Enhancing public education efforts that validate the importance of investing in professional development by helping those entering the field see the expanded opportunities while building awareness about the field.

***Program Supports may include:***

- > Continuing the successful Strong Director, Skilled Staff Training,<sup>16</sup> which helps build directors' ability to coach and support staff in creating individual professional development plans, strengthening their practice, and improving services for children and youth.
- > Promoting quality work environments that support individuals who put into practice what is learned through mentoring, coaching, or technical assistance.
- > Investigating and supporting compensation strategies, wages and benefits, and recognition and incentives to participate in training while ensuring that training counts for something.



- > Encouraging organizations to recognize and integrate the certificates and training into their infrastructure through human resources policies.
- > Developing competency assessment tools for programs to evaluate their staff training needs.
- > Supporting program administrators in prioritizing and/or sequencing training and competencies according to their program goals and mission.

**Individual Supports may include:**

- > Continuing and enhancing supports by maintaining the successful training catalog, website, and training opportunities calendars.
- > Offering vouchers for training.
- > Providing orientation to the professional development tools (credential, registry, pathway, self-assessment, etc.).
- > Establishing mentoring and/or coaching programs.
- > Offering support navigating the higher education system.
- > Establishing a two-part Career Advising option: (1) a career goal assessment identifying individual strengths and interests; (2) identification of options including higher education programs, financial aid, internships, jobs, and community-based trainings.
- > Diversifying the pool of trainers by encouraging and supporting local practitioners to share their expertise by becoming trainers through a train-the-trainers approach.



*"This is really fantastic. I never knew that there were so many other organizations providing training for after-school providers and youth workers in Boston! I would love to talk more with some of the training providers who are here to see if there are ways we can work together to develop sequenced training or training modules that will better meet the needs of staff."*

-Training Provider who attended the Achieve Boston Training Provider Orientation

## TRAINING/TRAINER APPROVAL

### GOAL

*Quality OST training and trainers are identified and approved by an independent entity, to ensure that quality training based on the core competencies is available to OST practitioners.*

### SECTION PREVIEW:

- › What is a Training/Trainer Approval System?
- › Strong Foundation: Building on Existing Work
- › Recommendations for the Next Steps
  - A CEU-like Approval Process
  - Support for New Leaders & Trainers

### What is a Training/Trainer Approval System?

A field ensures quality standards for its training and trainers through a training approval system. Training approval is an essential tool that ensures the content of a training is grounded in core competency areas, up-to-date, and accurate. An approval system verifies that trainers are knowledgeable and experienced not only in the OST field, but also in adult learning methods. Approval systems provide written and published guidelines for the content and/or design of training and offer a “seal of approval” to identify quality training opportunities.

### Strong Foundation: Building on Existing Work

Many states and many fields have developed training and/or trainer approval systems to identify and provide high-quality training. Various professions including medicine, law, education, social work, and early care and education require practitioners to participate in ongoing education. Many individuals stay informed about developments in their field through a process called Continuing Education Units (CEU). A college or professional association can approve the CEU or simply approve the training as meeting the requirements.

The Massachusetts Association for the Education of Young Children (MassAEYC) is an example of a training approval system. MassAEYC is the nation’s first professional association to approve early childhood related courses and to grant CEU certificates to individuals who complete approved courses or conferences. MassAEYC is approved by the Office of Child Care Services to issue CEUs and has been doing so for over 10 years. One CEU represents 10 hours of education provided either in a training series format, a conference, or a distance-learning experience. MassAEYC approval indicates that the training: (1) has been reviewed by a group of early childhood professionals; (2) actively involves the adult learner in the learning process; (3) is developmentally appropriate for the age group of children served by the participants; (4) is taught by an instructor who meets MassAEYC minimum standards; and (5) consists of a minimum of five hours of training. MassAEYC approval means that the content of the training is more extensive and in-depth than an ordinary workshop, but requires less time commitment

than a college course. The Massachusetts child care regulations allow individuals to apply CEUs toward the fulfillment of their staff qualification requirements. Connecticut, Maine, and Pennsylvania have also established training and/or trainer approval systems for early care and education and school-age care providers.

The Family Development Credential (FDC) is an example of a trainer approval system. The FDC is based on a national curriculum developed by Cornell University and is awarded to students who complete a training series provided by an approved trainer. In order to be an approved trainer, trainers must attend a one-week training and be certified by Cornell University. FDC Certificates are awarded to trainees by Tufts University and are equivalent to nine credit hours that can be transferred to other college degree requirements if desired.

### Achieve Boston's Accomplishments

Achieve Boston researched various models of training and trainer approval systems and convened a Working Group to focus on the issue. The Working Group discussed the implications of establishing an approval system in Massachusetts, the additional stakeholders who need to be involved in this process, various options for housing the system, and the mechanics of how an approval system would function. The recommendations below are a culmination of this work.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS:

### Achieve Boston Recommends

1. Establishing a CEU-like process for identifying and approving high-quality training and trainers based on the OST core competencies.
2. Supporting the development of trainers from within the OST field.

#### 1. Establishing a CEU-like process

Achieve Boston recommends the creation of an Approving Entity composed of a broad and balanced committee of stakeholders: practitioners, trainers, Office of Child Care Services, Department of Education, Boston Public Schools, and higher education. Achieve Boston proposes an inclusive approach that recognizes workshops, modules, certificates, credentials, apprenticeships, and degree programs to ensure practitioners have choices in training options and that all experiences “count for something.” The training and trainer approval work of the Approving Entity is outlined below.

Achieve Boston recommends that the Approving Entity take on the following responsibilities:

- > Incorporate and balance the perspectives of both higher education and community-based trainers and trainings.
- > Explore lessons learned from MassAEYC and other organizations' approval systems, other fields that utilize CEUs, and other systems for developing trainers.



- > Establish criteria for approving “high-quality” training opportunities and trainers.
- > Approve training providers and/or training sessions.
- > Review course descriptions.
- > Ensure that training is linked to core competencies.
- > Ensure that trainers are knowledgeable and experienced in adult learning and interactive teaching methods.
- > Maintain quality control (course evaluations and/or participant skill evaluations).
- > Award certificates and CEUs.
- > Link with the Youth Development Associate and other certificate processes while incorporating existing entities and credentials.
- > Recommend sequences of trainings for different OST jobs, and different levels of training.
- > Facilitate articulation agreements between community-based training and local colleges and universities.
- > Establish periodic evaluation and re-approval process.
- > Market high-quality approved training and trainers to the OST field.

## **2. Supporting the development of trainers from within the OST field**

High-quality professional development opportunities offered by current practitioners coupled with support for practitioners to become qualified trainers are an essential part of an overall professional development system-building strategy. Achieve Boston values the role that current practitioners can and do play as trainers. Practitioners have current direct experience in the field that deepens the content of the training and the trainer’s connection with participants. Furthermore, becoming a trainer can enhance the experiences that the practitioner brings back to his/her program, which can be an integral step in a practitioner’s career path.

In order to support the development of future trainers, Achieve Boston also recommends:

- > Developing support systems to encourage and assist practitioners currently in the field to become trainers and mentors.
- > Providing training to potential trainers on facilitation skills, adult learning methods, etc.
- > Supporting and encouraging co-facilitation of training workshops by pairing experienced trainers with experienced practitioners.
- > Working with practitioners to develop new and innovative training sessions/workshops.
- > Developing a support process to improve trainer skills and knowledge in competency areas.



## A PROFESSIONAL REGISTRY

### GOAL

*A statewide professional registry that allows practitioners to track their education, training, and professional experience is available for the OST field.*

### SECTION PREVIEW

- › What is a Professional Registry?
- › Strong Foundation: Building on Existing Work
  - Workforce Data
  - Current Registry Developments
- › Recommendations for the Next Steps
  - Statewide OST Professional Registry
  - An OST Workforce Study

### What is a Professional Registry?

A professional registry is a database that lists practitioners' qualifications and experience including workshops, conferences, continuing education units (CEUs), and college courses. The registry creates a personal career development file for the individual and stores it in a confidential database. A registry provides essential documentation and recognition for members in the field.

### Strong Foundation: Built on Existing Work

Several states (Connecticut, Maine, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin) have incorporated professional registries into their comprehensive professional development systems. Registries in other states and communities are often operated by state licensing agencies, a community- or four-year college, a child care resource and referral agency, or a statewide professional organization.

Professional registries have been a successful entry point for practitioners just beginning their professional development and have become an integral part of the overall system.

In many ways, a professional registry helps to pull the pieces of a professional development system together. By collecting detailed information about an after-school provider's or youth worker's education and training experiences, a registry is able to:

- › Promote professionalism by demonstrating staff's accomplishments to constituencies.
- › Provide a personal record of one's education and training accomplishments.
- › Help organize one's training and professional development plan.
- › Identify career advancement opportunities.
- › Assist in hiring prospective employees by providing documentation of training.

- > Recognize and reward individuals' training accomplishments by issuing certificates.
- > Track the professional development needs of the field.
- > Create a profile of the workforce.

## Workforce Data

Currently, there is no comprehensive profile of the OST workforce providing data on how many people work in OST programs, the demographics of practitioners (age, gender, race/ethnicity), practitioners' training experience and educational background. Two research projects, the Massachusetts Department of Education Community Profiles and the more recent BASE Project, have tried to address this issue.

The Massachusetts Department of Education Community Profiles Project, developed in 1998, is modeled after the nationally recognized Boston EQUIP surveys. These comprehensive surveys have been distributed and utilized in one-third of all of the cities and towns in the Commonwealth, and over 7,000 provider surveys, 45,000 parent surveys, and 2,300 teacher surveys have been collected. However, whereas the Boston EQUIP model includes a School-Age Program Survey, the primary focus of the Community Profile Surveys is early care and education. Community Profile surveys are distributed to center-based child care and Head Start programs, family child care, and public preschool programs (parent and public school teacher surveys are optional).

BASE (Building Boston's After School Enterprise) Citywide After-School Data System is an initiative of Boston's After-School for All Partnership. BASE's goal is to create a data collection and analysis system to better inform the after-school sector. BASE developed and piloted the Boston Out-of-School Time Annual Survey in February 2004. This comprehensive program survey, a great first step, asked basic information about workforce issues.

A Professional Registry, in conjunction with the BASE survey, will provide a more detailed assessment of the workforce and offer a comprehensive view of the OST field. A registry provides a unique service to practitioners and is an invaluable resource to researchers and training providers that will help influence and continuously improve the professional development system and OST field.

## Current Registry Developments

As part of the MSAC-OCCS quality initiative (see page 3), MSAC and OCCS will be working together to establish a school-age provider registry for Massachusetts. At present, the OCCS Professional Child Care Qualifications Registry serves only the early care and education field (those providing education and care for children from birth to age five years), and issues about 5,000 certificates each year to qualified professionals. This free service provides professionals and their programs with an easy way to document qualifications while supporting child care professionals by reviewing their qualifications to certify them as teachers, lead teachers, or directors. The Qualifications Registry also stays up to date with course offerings in early childhood education and provides technical assistance to applicants looking for the right course or experience to advance to a higher level of certification.

## Achieve Boston's Accomplishments

Achieve Boston researched various professional registry models and convened a Working Group to focus on the issue. The Working Group discussed the implications of establishing a professional registry in Massachusetts and explored various options for housing a registry.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS:

### Achieve Boston Recommends

1. Working with MSAC and other existing systems to develop a statewide Professional Registry that serves the out-of-school-time field.
2. Conducting an OST Workforce Study.

In light of the existing efforts to establish a statewide school-age registry, Achieve Boston will work with MSAC to determine how best to establish a registry for both after-school and youth workers. The ultimate goal is to establish one registry to meet the diverse but related needs of the after-school and youth worker fields.

### 1. Developing a Professional Registry

***Achieve Boston recommends convening a Registry Advisory Group.***

***The work of this Group will be to:***

- > Determine if an existing Registry can be expanded to include the entire OST field or, if not, where the proper home would be for this registry.
- > Work with all key stakeholders around the state to inform the development of a registry.
- > Coordinate efforts with OCCS-MSAC initiative, BASE, and other related projects.
- > Determine all appropriate users and functions of the registry including tracking training, education, and data collection.
- > Determine which individuals and organizations will have access to the data.
- > Design templates for applications and records for the Registry.
- > Record training and education as it relates to core competencies, indicators, and certification requirements.
- > Link the Registry to the professional Career Lattice and Pathways (see page 27).
- > Recognize and reward an individual's training accomplishments at various levels.
- > Design a plan for outreach and marketing to fields that will benefit from a new Professional Registry.
- > Utilize the data collected through the registry to inform the continued improvement of the professional development system.



## 2. An OST Workforce Study

Achieve Boston proposes the development and implementation of an OST Workforce Study which will serve many purposes including: providing the first comprehensive profile of the OST workforce in Massachusetts and influencing the shape and form of the complete professional development system.

### *The OST Workforce Study will:*

- > Utilize the workforce data from various sources including BASE, the Massachusetts Afterschool Research Study (MARS), Parents United for Child Care's annual data collection, Community Profile Surveys, OCCS databases, Achieve Boston pilot evaluation of voucher recipients, and the previously recommended Professional Registry.
- > Compile and analyze available data.
- > Identify gaps in information.
- > Design and implement a study of after-school and youth workers focused specifically on workforce issues (salary, access to benefits, training and education levels, needs, interests, and barriers).
- > Convene agency directors to discuss pay structures.
- > Research living wages initiatives and market surveys.
- > Research opportunities for creative forms of compensation (such as supporting full-time positions, supporting further education, loan forgiveness, affordable housing, and child care assistance).



## Personal Stories

Joao moved with his family from Cape Verde to Roxbury when he was nine years old. His parents worked long hours and he attended a community after-school program with his cousins until his aunt picked them all up at six o'clock. Over time the program became a second home for Joao. He received help with his homework, practiced speaking English, and got to spend time drawing and playing basketball, two activities he loved. When he was in high school, Joao volunteered at the program on the afternoons he didn't have to work at his retail job. After graduation Joao wasn't sure what his next step should be. Though he thought about college, he was not a great student and didn't think he had enough money. He got a summer job with the after-school program and really liked working with the kids. He knew what it was like for them because he shared similar experiences, being a first-generation immigrant and living in a poor neighborhood. When a part-time position at the program opened up in the fall, Joao decided to take it, while he continued working part-time at a retail store.

Joao's life experiences and interest in working with children make him an ideal role model for youth in his neighborhood. What he lacks is knowledge about child development and best practices in teaching and tutoring. Achieve Boston's website with its catalog of training opportunities can educate Joao not only on the trainings available, but also the skills he requires to grow as a youth worker.



## CAREER LATTICE AND PATHWAYS

### GOAL

*A system is established that defines the amount and kind of training, education, and experience required to work in specific roles, the salary ranges for these roles, and career pathways so that after-school and youth workers are able to chart a course for their careers.*

### SECTION PREVIEW

- › What are Career Lattices and Pathways?
- › Career Ladders – Lessons from Other Fields
- › Strong Foundation: Building on Existing Work
- › Recommendations for the Next Steps
  - An OST Career Lattice and Multiple Pathways

### What are Career Lattices and Pathways?

A Career Lattice outlines a shared definition by people in the field of the amount and kind of training and experience that practitioners will need to work in specific roles. A lattice is like a map, detailing the boundaries and many features and options – roads, hills, valleys, lakes, and footpaths - for traveling through a community. A pathway is a plan for negotiating the map; it describes the actual or planned journey. A career lattice and/or pathway, as opposed to a ladder, recognizes that there are multiple ways or paths one may choose to develop and advance his/her career. A comprehensive lattice will, in a readily accessible format, relate: (1) position level by responsibility and connection to direct service; (2) qualifications required including experience, education, and certification; (3) knowledge expected; (4) advancement options or how one moves among various pathways; and (5) guidelines for fair compensation expected by position.

### Career Ladders - Lessons from Other Fields

Many fields have clearly delineated career paths. Nurses, for example, have a common and traditional linear path that could start with a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) and lead to a Licensed Practicing Nurse (LPN), to a Registered Nurse (RN) with an Associates degree, to a Registered Nurse (RN) with a Bachelors degree, Nurse Manager, and/or a Nurse Practitioner, Nurse Administrator, Midwife, consultant, researcher, etc. Similarly, all of the trade professions have clear career pathways that start with apprentice, journeyman, and master. Each of these positions has a defined job description, training and experience requirements, and salary expectations. A person with the proper training and education can enter this ladder at any rung and know exactly what he/she needs to do to change positions. Career ladders and lattices establish clear roles, responsibilities, expectations, and rewards, and have been essential in the understanding and professionalization of the field. A career lattice, as opposed to a ladder, recognizes that there are multiple ways or paths to career advancement.

## Strong Foundation: Building on Existing Work

In establishing OST professional development systems, other states including California, Connecticut, Maine, and New Jersey have focused significant attention on establishing clearly defined career lattices and pathways. The Massachusetts School-Age Coalition (MSAC), through the PASS Initiative, has developed a career pathway tool for school-age professionals linked to its core competencies. This tool outlines position, qualifications, and opportunities for career advancement and development, but it does not include compensation levels by position. Currently, the MSAC-OCCS quality initiative is designed to enhance the use of the pathways as a statewide tool for after-school practitioners. Achieve Boston, in its efforts to address the professional development of after-school and youth workers together, will continue to explore building on and/or replicating existing models of career lattices.

## Achieve Boston's Accomplishments

Achieve Boston has researched various lattice and pathway models in the OST and other related fields and has convened a Working Group to focus on the issue. The Working Group discussed the implications of creating a career lattice and multiple pathways, and considered all of the various stakeholders who would need to be involved in the development process. Finally the working group concluded that the field is lacking vital information regarding the workforce that is necessary to articulate a full lattice including salary recommendations for various job classifications.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT STEPS

### Achieve Boston Recommends

1. Articulating a statewide system that defines the amount and kind of training, education, and experience required to work in specific roles, the salary ranges for these roles, and career pathways so that after-school and youth workers are able to chart a course for their careers.

### 1. OST Career Lattice and Pathways

Articulating a coordinated statewide career lattice that identifies knowledge, experience, skills, and recommended levels of compensation to promote competence, career advancement, and retention.

#### *The Lattice and Pathways Advisory Group will:*

- > Determine how best to expand the MSAC Pathways to meet the needs of the entire OST field, including youth workers.
- > Guide the joint nomenclature between after-school and youth work.
- > Map youth worker positions and update after-school positions as appropriate.
- > Provide detailed examples of key roles and job titles.
- > Link the self-assessment tool for core competencies with the pathways.



- > Address the fluidity of the out-of-school time field and its relationship to fields such as education, early care, and other human services.
- > Identify equivalencies for experience, education, and other preparations.
- > Ensure multiple entry points and pathways.
- > Address the needs of both career staff and temporary or flow-thru staff (college students, interns, etc.), and recognize the role and needs of specialists (art, music, computer, etc.).
- > Develop an agency staff assessment similar to the personal assessment in the Achieve Boston catalog, which will help an OST agency identify its personnel and recruitment needs.



## MAKING IT A REALITY: THE NEXT STEPS

### SECTION PREVIEW

- › How the Pieces Fit Together
- › Summary of Achieve Boston's Recommendations for a Professional Development System
- › Now imagine a world...

### How the Pieces Fit Together

Through the recommendations described in this document, Achieve Boston has established a detailed description and work plan for developing a comprehensive professional development system that supports after-school and youth workers in Boston and throughout the state. This is an enormous but absolutely necessary undertaking that requires the commitment of the whole field to be effective.

Achieve Boston remains committed to its consensus-building approach that has brought the field together to design this Blueprint and it believes that only this approach will lead to the successful implementation of this plan. In its two-year history, Achieve Boston has supported and acted on these principles consistently and this has contributed to a stronger foundation for future work. Achieve Boston will continue this by:

- › Continuing to engage its diverse Advisory Group and ensuring practitioner participation in the design and implementation of the professional development system.
- › Seeking out stakeholders and interested parties.
- › Linking this work with similar efforts by the state and/or other organizations.
- › Encouraging the organizations with the most expertise to take the lead in implementing the various aspects of the professional development system.
- › Establishing a strong base to coordinate this effort.

Since Spring 2002, Achieve Boston has worked as a collaborative of intermediary organizations, research institutions, and service providers. The Managing Partners met regularly as a whole group and in subgroups to create this ambitious work plan. Work was divided among the Managing Partners based on capacity and expertise, resources, interest, and willingness. By building on the strengths of each of its Managing Partners, Achieve Boston is supporting its philosophy through its management structure. In moving toward full implementation of the Blueprint recommendations, Achieve Boston will continue this effective management structure by establishing a healthy "hub" with strong "spokes" to institute a successful professional development system serving after-school and youth workers.

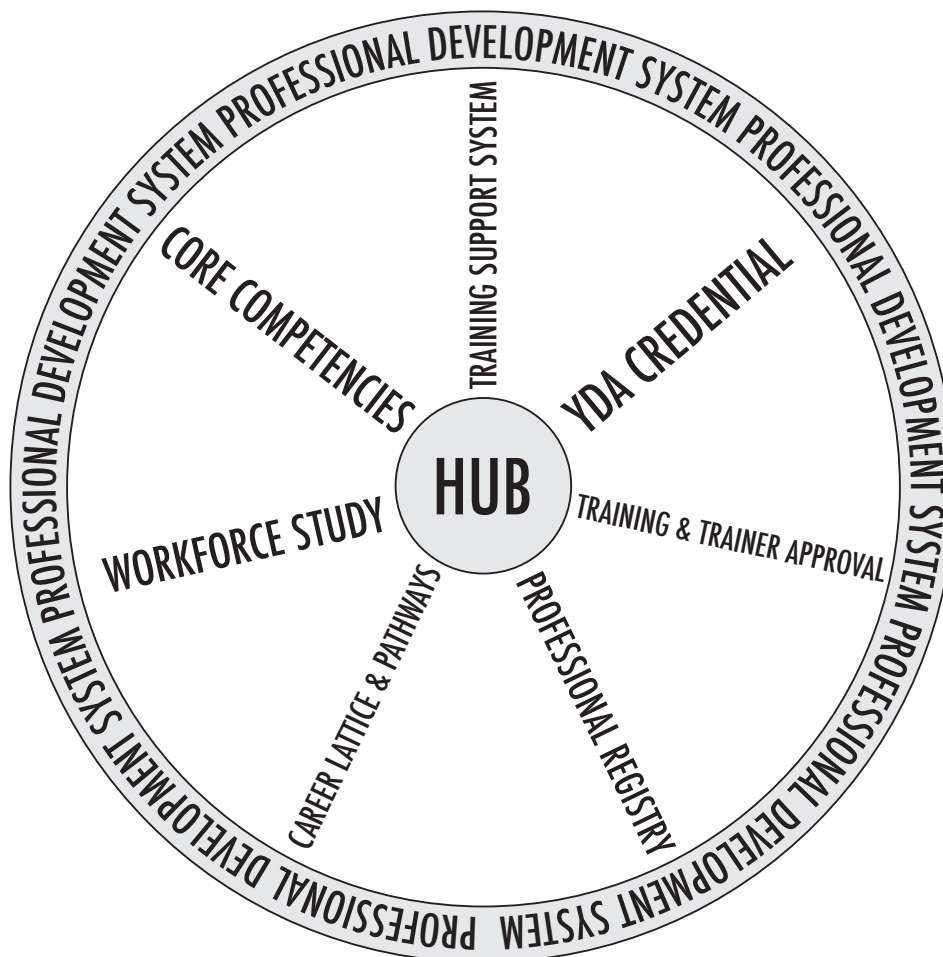


## The Hub and Spokes

Throughout its development, Achieve Boston has often discussed the need to identify a “home” for its work. After much debate, Achieve Boston decided that a healthy hub with strong spokes (as opposed to one centralized agency or a weak center with strong decentralized spokes) would be the most effective management system to implement this necessary work.

The Hub will primarily coordinate the work of Achieve Boston. The Hub will be responsible for: resource development, work plan management, public policy and advocacy, linking to city, state, and national efforts, building public will through public/private partnership, and public education. It will also oversee administrative functions and serve as the fiscal agent.

The Hub will leverage the expertise of partner organizations or “spokes.” Spokes include all the organizations involved in Achieve Boston including the Managing Partners, Advisory Group Members, trainers, practitioners, etc. By staying true to its commitment to build on existing work without duplicating efforts, Achieve Boston recognizes the wealth of knowledge and experience currently in the field. Achieve Boston expects the Hub to seek out the best organizations to implement the various aspects of the professional development system. The Hub will contract with Managing Partners and/or other organizations to carry out the actual implementation of the infrastructure building components.



## Summary of Recommendations

In order to offer the highest quality services possible, after-school and youth workers need access to comprehensive training and educational opportunities that enable them to strengthen their skills, improve their job performance, and develop their knowledge base. In Boston, there are numerous examples of innovative training and professional development initiatives. This Blueprint outlines an infrastructure that builds on and weaves together these often disparate efforts into a coherent system of support for practitioners.

In order to develop a fully integrated Professional Development System for the Out-of-School Time workforce, Achieve Boston will need to implement the following recommendations.

**RECOMMENDATION ONE:** *Establish a comprehensive set of core competencies and indicators for after-school and youth workers that clearly define what practitioners need to know and do, and what it means to be competent in any given skill area. The competencies can be widely used as an overall tool by the entire field, or separately for after-school and youth work, depending on specific program needs.*

**To accomplish this Achieve Boston will:**

- > Convene committees to update the current school-age competencies and indicators, and to develop indicators of competence and youth work.
- > Establish comprehensive Out-of-School Time Core Competencies with school-age and youth worker indicators that can be used to measure staff competence.
- > Work with researchers to develop evaluative criteria, methods, and measurement tools to assess staff competence. Methods and tools for evaluating knowledge and skills will respect different learning styles, and may include such things as writing samples, video, observations with feedback and reflection, written or verbal testing, creation of portfolios, and/or interviews.

**RECOMMENDATION TWO:** *Establish a system of training that is available and accessible to a diverse workforce, builds the core competencies of participants, ensures that training “counts for something,” and results in improved program quality.*

**To accomplish this Achieve Boston will:**

- > Develop a national Youth Development Associate (YDA) credential that is piloted in Boston.
- > Explore strategies to increase practitioner compensation, such as T.E.A.C.H.<sup>®</sup> or WAGE\$, which tie training and education to increased salaries.
- > Provide ongoing and enhanced support at the community, program, and individual levels so that practitioners can effectively navigate and benefit from the professional development system.

**RECOMMENDATION THREE:** *Identify quality OST training and trainers approved by an independent entity to ensure that quality training based on the core competencies is available to OST practitioners.*



**To accomplish this Achieve Boston will:**

- > Establish a process, similar to the one used to award Continuing Education Units (CEUs), to identify and approve high-quality training and trainers based on the OST Core Competencies.
- > Support the development of trainers who are out-of-school time practitioners by developing a process to improve trainer skills and knowledge in competency areas; encouraging the development of practitioner-trainers; and providing training to current and potential trainers.

**RECOMMENDATION FOUR:** *Establish a statewide professional registry that allows practitioners to track their education, training, and professional experience.*

**To accomplish this Achieve Boston will:**

- > Convene a Registry Advisory Group and work with Achieve Boston's Managing Partners and the Massachusetts School-Age Coalition, to develop a statewide registry that serves all out-of-school time professionals.
- > Conduct a comprehensive, statewide workforce study that provides an accurate profile of the out-of-school workforce, including educational qualifications, wages and benefits, tenure, and workplace settings.

**RECOMMENDATION FIVE:** *Establish a system that defines the amount and kind of training, education, and experience required to work in specific roles, the salary ranges for these roles, and career pathways so that after-school and youth workers are able to chart a course for their careers.*

**To accomplish this Achieve Boston will:**

- > Build on current efforts to articulate a coordinated statewide career lattice that identifies knowledge, experience, and skills needed, as well as recommended levels of compensation, for each position or role within an after-school or youth program.

**Now imagine a world in which...**

The professionals who work in after-school and youth work receive the same level of respect and recognition as those who work in elementary and secondary education. The courses and degrees specializing in after-school and youth work are widespread throughout the higher education system. The degree earned translates into a salary and benefit structure equal to classroom teachers. A career lattice offers a wide variety of pathways, roles, and opportunities in any of the converging fields of youth work, after-school, and education. An out-of-school time worker has opportunities to develop the skills needed to work with elementary-school-age children, adolescents, and young adults in community-based organizations, public schools, residential treatment settings, and municipal agencies such as parks and recreation departments.

Out-of-school time is considered an attractive career choice, not just a pass-through option onto other more lucrative positions. The future of the profession holds the promise of a skilled and stable workforce highly qualified to lead and inspire our young people to become contributing members of their communities.

With proper support the above scenario can become a reality in the near future. With a comprehensive Professional Development System in place the OST workforce would be able to provide high-quality services to youth and families, greatly impacting the developmental and academic lives of our state's youth. Clarity of vision, belief in its possibility, and a willingness to work toward it collaboratively are at the heart of Achieve Boston's efforts to make this Blueprint for an Out-of-School Time Professional Development System a reality.

# Post- Achieve Boston Example Resume

## Vanessa Sanders

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25 May Street . Hyde Park, MA 02136 . 617-555-4321

### EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

#### **“PROJECT-BASED LEARNING IN OST PROGRAMS”**

**September 2006 – Present**

##### ***Trainer***

Train out-of-school time staff on methods of incorporating community needs and assets into everyday learning activities in which children and youth can and want to participate.

#### **KLASSIC KIDS**

**October 2005 – Present**

##### ***Assistant Director***

- Supervise 10 staff and 75 children in a before- and after- school day care program
- Develop and implement creative curriculum for children and youth
- Train and mentor staff
- Maintain administrative records according to licensing procedures
- Communicate with parents and school personnel
- Outreach to the community, for example linked program Knitting Club with local pediatric unit to provide handmade caps for newborns

#### **WATSON ELEMENTARY AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM**

**2001 – August 2005**

##### ***Senior Group Leader***

- Organized after school activities for half-day kindergartners, including homework help, sports and recreation, and creative arts activities
- Assisted with curriculum development for older groups, first through sixth grade
- Designed and implemented a “Food Science Club” and intramural kickball league

#### **ITALIAN HOME FOR CHILDREN**

**January 1998 – May 2001**

##### ***Youth Worker***

- Counseled and cared for children age 4 –14 years old in a residential treatment center
- Implemented behavior management programs and techniques
- Provided parent education

#### **CAMPUS CHILD CARE CENTER**

**April 1996 – January 1998**

##### ***Preschool Teacher***

- Cared for preschoolers ages 2.9 – 5 years
- Supervised and supported educational play experiences
- Responsible for all basic needs of the children

### EDUCATION AND CREDENTIALS

University of Massachusetts Boston, College of Public and Community Service  
Bachelor of Arts in Youth Work, expected graduation date 2006

Massasoit Community College  
Child Development Associate, 1994

Achieve Boston Endorsed Trainings, 2004-2006

Service Learning: Why? – Leadership & Literacy Foundation, Spring 2006

Experiencing Your Urban Environment – New England Aquarium, Spring 2006

Psychology of Preadolescence and Adolescence – Lesley University, Fall 2006

Links to Learning – National Institute on Out-of-School Time, Spring 2005

Activity Planning – themes, webbing, structuring activities – Leadership & Literacy Foundation, Spring 2005

Supervisor Training – BEST Initiative, Fall 2004

## Appendices

- I. Funders and Acknowledgements
- II. Achieve Boston Advisory Group Members
- III. Glossary of Terms
- IV. Achieve Boston's History and Accomplishments
- V. Development and Implementation Timeline
- VI. Achieve Boston's Competency Framework
- VII. Descriptions of Achieve Boston's Managing Partners

## Appendix I: Funders and Acknowledgements

The development of this Blueprint would not have been possible without the generous financial support of the following organizations, to whom Achieve Boston is enormously grateful:

**Barr Foundation**

**Boston 2:00-to-6:00 After-School Initiative, Boston Centers for Youth & Families**

**The Boston Foundation**

**Charles Stewart Mott Foundation**

**Harvard University**

**Massachusetts 2020**

**Massachusetts Department of Education**

**Robert Wood Johnson Foundation**

**U.S. Department of Education**

**Verizon**



## Appendix II: Achieve Boston Advisory Group Members

Members of the Achieve Boston Advisory Group are invited to meetings to lend their expertise and experiences to help direct the professional development system-building effort. The participation of individual members varies widely. Some members listed have given feedback on this document, but membership is not tantamount to an endorsement of this Blueprint. The Achieve Boston Managing Partners take full responsibility for the Blueprint's content.

**Suzanne Allmendinger**

University of Massachusetts

**Susan Lange**

Youth Opportunity Boston

**Tulaine Shabazz Marshall**

Youth Build

**Phil Baimas**

Office of Child Care Services

**Judy Lindamood**

Bunker Hill Community College

**Harold Sparrow**

Black Ministerial Alliance

**Joni Block**

Department of Education

**Matt LiPuma**

The Home for Little Wanderers

**Peg Sprague**

United Way  
of Massachusetts Bay

**Corbett Coutts**

Boston Public Schools

**Sandy Martin**

Youth Workers' Alliance

**Kevin Stanton**

Boston Centers for Youth & Families

**Christopher Coxon**

Boston Public Schools

**Debra McLaughlin**

Boston's After-School for All  
Partnership

**Tony Streit**

Education Development Center, Inc.

**Bernadette Davidson**

Child Care Resource Center

**Dishon Mills**

Boston Public Schools

**Cecilia Ugarte**

Massachusetts School-Age Coalition

**Jennifer Davis**

Massachusetts 2020

**Vern Nelson**

BELL

**Melissa Walker**

Massasoit Community College

**Maria Dominguez**

Phillips Brooks House  
Association

**Joel Nitzberg**

Cambridge College

**Joan Wallace-Benjamin**

The Home for Little Wanderers

**Jody Figuerido**

Office of Child Care Services

**Lisa Pickard**

United Way  
of Massachusetts Bay

**Nancy Witherill**

Child Care Choices of Boston

**Carol Grady**

The Home for Little Wanderers

**Karyl Resnick**

Department of Education

**Ginny Zanger**

The Children's Museum

**Jean Horstman**

Citizen Schools

**Peter Roby**

Northeastern University

**Lisa Jackson**

Boston's After-School for All  
Partnership

**Eric Schwarz**

Citizen Schools

## Appendix III: Glossary of Terms

### The Challenge of Language: Clarifying Our Terms

The lack of a “common language” continues to plague the out-of-school time, after-school, and youth work fields. It is well beyond the scope of Achieve Boston’s work to solve this problem; however, for the sake of clarity and for the purposes of this Blueprint, we have developed working definitions for words that are often used interchangeably, but rarely interpreted in the same way. The authors of this Blueprint have attempted to be consistent in their use of language to describe the field and its programs and practitioners. Our working definitions are:

**Out-of-school time (OST):** Generally, we use “out-of-school time” to describe the “field,” meaning the diverse range of programs that serve children and youth ages 5-22 years outside of the school setting. Sometimes we use “after-school and youth programs” to also refer to OST programs.

**After-school and youth workers:** “After-school and youth workers” refer to those individuals who work in out-of-school time programs. Sometimes we use “out-of-school time workforce” or “practitioners.” These terms include individuals who work in every role including direct service with youth, program development and coordination, and administration. They include part-time and full-time employees, long-term staff members, and specialists and/or temporary staff who may only work three months per year.

**School-age Providers:** Where appropriate, we use “school-age providers” instead of after-school providers. “School-age providers,” refers to those who work in programs that serve children ages 5-14 years.

### Other terms used in the Blueprint:

**AED:** Academy for Educational Development

**BASE:** Building Boston’s After School Enterprise; A citywide After-School Data System is an initiative of the After-School for All Partnership

**Boston BEST:** Building Exemplary Systems for Training; Training certificate for Youth Workers offered by the Medical Foundation

**Career Lattice and Pathways:** A professional recognition system that helps practitioners plan their training, education, and career development goals. The system relates: (1) position level by responsibility and connection to direct service; (2) qualifications required including experience, education, and certification; (3) knowledge expected; (4) advancement options or how one moves among various pathways; and (5) guidelines for fair compensation expected by position.

**CDA:** Child Development Associate

**CEU:** Continuing Education Unit or credit

**Core Competencies:** An agreed-upon definition of the knowledge and skills people need to do their jobs effectively.

**Credential:** Testimonials, a certificate, or diploma showing that a person is entitled to credit or has a right to exercise official power. Certificates, Associates, Bachelors, and Masters degrees are all types of credentials.

**IYD:** Indiana Youth Development Credential

**YDA:** Youth Development Associate

**MSAC:** Massachusetts School-Age Coalition

**NIOST:** National Institute on Out-of-School Time

**NAA:** National Association of Afterschool (formerly the National School-Age Care Alliance)

**OCCS:** Massachusetts Office of Child Care Services, the licensing agency

**PAER:** Program in Afterschool Education and Research

**Professional Registry:** A database that lists practitioners' qualifications and experience including workshops, conferences, continuing education units (CEUs), and college courses. The registry creates a personal career development file for the individual and stores it in a confidential database. A registry provides essential documentation and recognition for members in the field.

**PUCC:** Parents United for Child Care

**Training and Trainer Approval System:** A system that verifies that trainers are knowledgeable and experienced not only in the field, but also in adult-learning methods. Approval systems provide written and published guidelines for the content and/or design of training and offer a "seal of approval" to identify quality training opportunities.

**Training System:** A fully integrated training system includes accessible high quality competency-based professional development opportunities at many levels, quality standards for trainers and training, and provides recognition for practitioners.



## Appendix IV: Achieve Boston's History and Accomplishments

### Beginnings

In the spring of 2002, seven organizations, with seed funding from the City of Boston, came together to build a professional development infrastructure for after-school providers and youth workers throughout Boston. The Barr Foundation generously supported Achieve Boston beginning in December 2002.

The founding members, who comprise Achieve Boston's Managing Partners, include public and non-profit intermediary organizations and service providers: the Boston 2:00-to-6:00 After-School Initiative, the BEST Initiative/ The Medical Foundation, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston, the Massachusetts School-Age Coalition, the National Institute on Out-of-School Time, Parents United for Child Care, and the YMCA of Greater Boston. In the summer of 2003, the Program in Afterschool Education and Research at Harvard's Graduate School of Education joined Achieve Boston's Managing Partners.

Achieve Boston also has an extensive and active Advisory Group of over 30 members including after-school providers and youth workers, program managers and administrators, training providers, the Massachusetts Office of Child Care Services and the Department of Education, Boston Public Schools, representatives from higher education, policymakers, and researchers. (See Appendix II for a full list of Advisory Group Members.)

### Breaking New Ground

One of the truly exciting aspects of Achieve Boston is that it seeks to develop a professional development system that spans the worlds of after-school and youth work – two traditionally separate fields. In order to accomplish this goal, Achieve Boston began its work by linking established core competencies for after-school and youth work into a set of 11 shared competency areas. Achieve Boston then published a catalog of professional development opportunities – just as a university publishes a course catalog – organized by the competency areas. Achieve Boston also launched a website, [www.achieveboston.org](http://www.achieveboston.org), which includes an up-to-date training catalog and other professional development resources. For the first time, after-school providers and youth workers in Boston are now able to go to one place to identify training and professional development opportunities linked to specific competency areas that will help them build their skills and knowledge.

Achieve Boston's first priorities were to increase access and expand opportunities to training, and to learn from the experiences of after-school and youth workers in ways that would inform recommendations for an overall professional development system. In an effort to reach these goals, Achieve Boston awarded nearly 200 scholarship vouchers to after-school and youth workers to attend trainings listed on Achieve Boston's website. Achieve Boston, through ongoing evaluation and close contact with scholarship recipients, gained a deeper understanding of how to address barriers to professional development.



### **Building on the Foundation**

Next, Achieve Boston initiated an extensive research and consensus-building effort to develop the specific recommendations for establishing a professional development system that are the basis of this Blueprint. Achieve Boston formed an Advisory Group and Working Groups, hosted a two-day national summit on citywide professional development systems, and convened a Higher Education Roundtable.

As a testament to the importance of the work and its initial successes, Achieve Boston has received extensive attention and interest from stakeholders across Boston and around the state. Representatives from advocacy organizations, intermediaries, research institutions, professional associations, provider organizations, and others all expressed strong interest in contributing to the effort. Achieve Boston continues to welcome this interest. It recognizes the need to expand the network of thinkers and developers to move the work forward.

Achieve Boston has also received increased attention from experts across the country. It was made clear at the Achieve Boston Summit held in the summer of 2003 that other cities are looking to Boston to lead the way. While several cities and states have established pieces of a professional development infrastructure, none have put a comprehensive coordinated delivery system in place for both after-school and youth work. Boston is poised to serve as a national model for doing just that.

This Blueprint for a Professional Development System for the Out-of-School Time Workforce represents the culmination of Achieve Boston's efforts over the past two years. It also builds on the OST field's efforts over the past decade, and paves the way for a comprehensive and supportive professional development system that meets the needs of Boston and Massachusetts.



## Appendix V: Development and Implementation Timeline

Achieve Boston projects an ambitious yet realistic multi-year timeframe to fully implement the recommendations detailed in this Blueprint.



### Fall 2004

- Develop and submit proposals for implementation funds
- Continue Higher Education Roundtables
- Provide enhanced support to practitioners and programs
- Begin development of Trainer and Training Approval System, Professional Registry, and Career Pathways
- Continue research on workforce and other professional development initiatives

### 2005 - 2006

- Develop process for evaluating and measuring competency indicators
- Develop and pilot the Youth Development Associate credential and begin to develop multiple credentials at various levels
- Continue providing enhanced support to practitioners and programs
- Further develop and pilot processes for Trainer and Training Approval System, Professional Registry, and Career Pathways
- Evaluation of pilots (credential, CEU approval process, etc.)

### 2006 - 2007

- Have in place systems and processes for evaluating and measuring competency indicators, providing access to training, approving trainers and trainings, managing a professional registry, and managing the career pathways
- Continue research and evaluation



## Appendix VI: Achieve Boston's Competency Framework

Achieve Boston's Competency Framework represents an integration of the competencies for both after-school and youth work. Eleven competency areas are further distinguished into particular topics, and issues of inclusion and special needs are addressed throughout the framework.

### Activities, Curriculum, and Programming

Activities and curriculum builds upon the importance of a well-balanced structure where activities promote life skills and enhance the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development of all children and youth, including those with special needs.

- > Developmentally-appropriate programming
- > Balanced programming
- > Science, literacy, games, art, math, and multicultural activities
- > Team building and group dynamics
- > Community service/service learning
- > Physical fitness
- > Encouraging youth participation
- > Activity planning – webbing, themes, structuring activities, project-based learning
- > Community resources
- > Critical thinking
- > Work-based learning

### Guidance/Building Caring Relationships

Building caring relationships with children and youth includes promoting teambuilding, active listening, and a variety of communication strategies. Understanding acceptable and appropriate behaviors in a variety of situations and cultural contexts is a learned skill. Children and youth develop this understanding and feel more secure when consistent limits, appropriate consequences, and realistic expectations of their behavior are clearly and positively defined.

- > Establishing strong relationships
- > Establishing trust
- > Communication skills
- > Effective listening
- > Youth-centered programming
- > Developmental assets
- > Resiliency – protective and risk factors
- > Team building
- > Positive guidance techniques
- > How the program environment and developmental needs affect children's behavior
- > Engaging families in behavior guidance
- > Cultural relevancy
- > Topics specific for middle school age-youth
- > Utilizing community resources

- > Peace making activities
- > Conflict resolution and mediation

### **Child and Youth Development**

To provide a program that meets the multiple needs of children and youth, practitioners must understand comprehensive child and youth development, including developmental stages, children and youth with special needs, competencies, and positive youth outcomes.

- > Physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development – ages and stages
- > Adolescent development
- > Youth outcomes
- > Children with special needs
- > Efficacy (e.g., aligning resources, policies, and practices to achieve targeted outcomes; and creating an environment that sets high expectations for achievement)

### **Safety/Health and Nutrition**

Understanding how to maintain personal health and safety, prevention information, crisis intervention, CPR and First Aid.

- > Wellness and exercise
- > Nutrition
- > Licensing
- > Conflict resolution
- > CPR, First Aid, and universal precautions
- > Crisis management
- > Worker safety
- > Risk prevention – HIV/AIDS, teen pregnancy, abuse, drugs, alcohol, etc.

### **Cultural Competence**

Understanding differences and inclusion principles and techniques.

- > Anti-bias and culturally relevant programming
- > Multicultural activities
- > Cultural competencies
- > Program outreach to diverse communities
- > Inclusion
- > Creating an environment that reflects and honors diversity
- > Identifying bias and oppression
- > GLBT issues
- > “Isms” – racism, sexism, classism, adultism, etc.
- > Celebration of diversity
- > Sharing power
- > Inclusive decision-making



## **Environment**

A carefully planned learning environment fosters children and youth's involvement and development in all areas. Such an environment includes physical and human qualities that together promote self-esteem, social interaction, and community values, and address physical and mental boundaries while promoting cultural awareness and inclusion.

- > Space design – facilities, décor
- > Human/emotional climate – relationships, ownership, youth friendly
- > Age-appropriate materials/supplies, furniture, equipment
- > Print-rich environment – using the environment to promote literacy
- > Working in shared space – unique challenges and strategies
- > Activity planning – themes, webbing, structuring activities
- > Creating an inclusive environment
- > Boundaries, territory, “turf”

## **Families, Communities, and Schools**

Creating and sustaining relationships with families, teachers, and other school personnel is essential to enhancing the quality of after-school and youth services. Coordination and information sharing among schools, families, and after-school providers/youth workers helps to create a supportive learning environment.

### **Partnering with Families**

- > Engaging families – recognizing the multiple roles family members can play (e.g., volunteers, decision makers, board members, etc.)
- > Family support services – providing referrals and linking to community resources
- > Communicating with families

### **Partnering with Schools**

- > Building relationships with school personnel
- > Bridging the in-school and out-of-school time gaps
- > Understanding school expectations
- > Aligning out-of-school time activities with frameworks and learning standards
- > Understanding MCAS
- > Creating a communication plan
- > Full-service schools – understanding what mechanisms are in place
- > Understanding education reform opportunities

## **Professionalism**

Understanding one's role in the organization, professional boundaries, and professional advancement.

- > Core competencies
- > Self-awareness
- > Career development
- > Advocacy
- > Leadership development
- > Program management

- > Supervision
- > Ethics
- > Boundaries
- > Reporting and referral
- > Documentation
- > Professional development portfolios

### **Program Management**

Having an accountable practice of program management enhances quality and promotes efficiency.

- > Policies and procedures
- > Supervision – relationships with staff, team building
- > Fiscal management – budget and fundraising
- > Leadership style
- > Workforce issues – staffing, recruitment and retention, professional development of staff, coaching/mentoring, hiring and firing, employee motivation
- > Organizational climate – team decision-making, power-sharing, teambuilding
- > Conflict resolution
- > Program planning, development, implementation, and evaluation
- > Assessment and outcomes
- > Organizational skills
- > Program start-up
- > Time and stress management
- > Meeting facilitation
- > Building management
- > Organizational change/transition
- > Marketing
- > Computer literacy
- > Board development

### **Workers as Community Resources**

After-school and youth workers can serve as a resource to children, youth, and families. They also must know how to identify community resources and partner with other organizations to most effectively serve those in their programs.

- > Referrals
- > Community assets
- > Youth worker networks
- > Community mapping – identifying community resources
- > Collaboration – building partnerships
- > Advocacy – among the general public and among providers
- > Youth employment
- > Community service



- > Collaborating with cultural and civic institutions
- > Linking with funding opportunities

### **Building Leadership and Advocacy**

After-school and youth workers serve as a connection between families, schools, communities, children, and youth. They can play a natural role as community leaders speaking out on behalf of the importance of quality after-school and youth services and can influence public policy by sharing their expertise. They can also help children, youth, and parents or other family members build their own leadership and advocacy skills.

- > Social justice issues
- > Community mapping and surveys
- > Group dynamics
- > Youth empowerment
- > Youth on boards
- > Peer leadership/education
- > Involving youth in social justice
- > Media advocacy
- > Facilitation skills for youth
- > Goal-setting
- > Legislative and/or budget advocacy
- > Parent/provider empowerment
- > Community organizing



## Appendix VII: Descriptions of Achieve Boston's Managing Partners

### **Boston 2:00-to-6:00 After-School Initiative**

Mayor Thomas M. Menino created the Boston 2:00-to-6:00 After-School Initiative in 1998 to support the expansion and improve the quality of after-school programs across the city providing learning and social development opportunities for children and youth. On July 1, 2004, the Boston 2:00-to-6:00 After-School Initiative became part of a new 501(c)(3) organization that was created by combining 2:00-to-6:00 with Boston's After-School for All Partnership, a \$26 million funding collaborative. The new organization, which grew out of a year-long planning process funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, is a public/private partnership focused on expanding, strengthening, and sustaining Boston's system of out-of-school time programs.

*The new organization will work to advance out-of-school time in several important ways:*

**Communications:** Raise awareness about the importance of out-of-school time and play a key role in making information easily accessible to programs, media, funders, researchers, and other stakeholders.

**Data, Research, & Analysis:** Provide a central database of citywide out-of-school time information and enhance the capacity to collect, store, and analyze data; provide technology and data use capacity-building for programs and intermediaries.

**Strategic Initiatives:** Identify systemic issues that face multiple programs and stakeholders, and convene groups to develop initiatives to address those needs.

**Resource Development:** Advocate for and leverage additional public financing of out-of-school time programs and promote increased private sector funding, bringing additional financial and non-financial resources to the field.

### **The BEST Initiative/The Medical Foundation**

For more than 40 years, The Medical Foundation (TMF) has been a leader in public health, consistently at the forefront of efforts to improve the health of individuals and communities. TMF's mission is to help people live healthier lives and create healthy communities through prevention, health promotion, and research.

Working with communities in Boston, New England, and around the country, TMF offers a wide range of training, development, management, and communication services. TMF's BEST (Building Exemplary Systems for Training for Youth Workers) Initiative offers training for after-school and youth workers that leads to a Youth Worker Certificate. TMF also provides training for peer leadership programs and organizational development for youth serving agencies. TMF is leading the integration of public health prevention outcomes and youth development outcomes with practitioners, parents, community stakeholders and policy makers.

TMF provides local organizations, coalitions, schools, youth workers, and youth peer leaders with assessment, leadership development, program development, and program implementation services concerning youth development, obesity, tobacco use, substance abuse, violence prevention, HIV/AIDS and many other topics. TMF provides non-clinical information to a variety of public consumers. With the help of focus groups and health experts, TMF writes, designs, publishes, and distributes culturally-competent, age-appropriate health-related publications in up to eight languages. Annual distribution exceeds 1.5 million pieces.

### **Boys and Girls Club of Greater Boston**

The mission of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston (BGCB) is to help boys and girls, generally from disadvantaged circumstances, develop the qualities needed to become responsible citizens and leaders. To achieve this, we offer a variety of program activities and support services designed to assist in the educational, emotional, physical, and social development of 6-to-18 year-olds, without regard to social, racial, ethnic, or religious background.

The BGCB has over 100 years of service, with the BGCB's first clubhouse founded in Charlestown in 1893. Today, BGCB serves more than 8,000 young people in greater Boston in its five Clubhouses located in Charlestown, Chelsea, Dorchester, Roxbury, and South Boston and through joint education and intervention programs with the Boston Police Department and Boston Public Schools. Our programs address crucial youth development needs in the areas of education, the arts, life skills, leadership and character development, technology, and sports, fitness and recreation.

### **Massachusetts School-Age Coalition (MSAC)**

The Massachusetts School-Age Coalition (MSAC) is a statewide intermediary organization dedicated to systematically improving the accessibility and quality of out-of-school time (OST) opportunities for children, youth, and working families across the Commonwealth. MSAC's goal is to build a statewide infrastructure that supports OST programs and practitioners around the state in their efforts to provide safe places for children and youth to learn and grow during non-school hours. MSAC's comprehensive supports promote professionalism and clear standards for the OST workforce through quality improvement tools, training, technical assistance, networking, organizing, and management and communications support for OST organizations.

MSAC has produced numerous quality improvement tools including Massachusetts Core Competencies for School-Age Practitioners, and Developmental Tool, a refresher guide on the ages and stages of children's growth and development that provides user-friendly guidance for planning age-appropriate learning activities in OST programs. MSAC also provides quality improvement training and technical assistance to practitioners at all levels, hosts an annual conference, and provides peer-to-peer learning opportunities at networking meetings and Director's Roundtables. MSAC has played a crucial role in promoting coordinated state-level OST advocacy, an activity now coordinated by the Massachusetts Afterschool Partnership.

### **National Institute on Out-of-School Time**

For over 25 years, the National Institute on Out-of-School Time has successfully brought national attention to the importance of children's out-of-school time, influenced policy, increased standards and professional recognition, and spearheaded community action aimed at improving the availability, quality, and viability of programs serving children and youth. NIOST's varied initiatives have moved the field forward using four paths:

- > Research, Evaluation, and Consultation
- > Policy Development and Public Awareness
- > Training and Curriculum Development
- > Interactive Clearinghouse Website

Our mission for the 21st century is to ensure that all children, youth, and families have access to high quality programs, activities, and opportunities during non-school hours. We believe that these experiences are essential to the healthy development of children and youth, who then can become effective and capable members of society.

NIOST has worked with and will continue to work with all levels of government, national and local non-profits, foundations, and corporations, including the rising corps of intermediaries supporting quality programming for children and youth. We have successfully managed grants and contracts from the U.S. Department of Education; over a dozen state child care offices; the Carnegie Foundation and Wallace Readers Digest Fund, as well as smaller foundations; and several private corporations.

NIOST is part of the Wellesley Centers for Women at Wellesley College. The Center for Research on Women and the Stone Center for Developmental Services and Studies, which comprise the Centers, are united in a joint mission to educate, inform and expand our knowledge of women's lives. It is home to an interdisciplinary community of scholars and theorists engaged in action, research, theory building, publication, and training.

### **Program in Afterschool Education and Research (PAER)**

The Program in Afterschool Education and Research (PAER) is dedicated to making meaningful theoretical and practical contributions to the field of youth development, with a particular focus on afterschool time. Dr. Gil Noam founded the program, a collaboration between McLean Hospital, Harvard Medical School, and the Harvard Graduate School of Education in 1999 as a response to the growing recognition that high-quality afterschool programs hold the promise of building resiliency and preventing high-risk behavior in youth, as well as contributing to school reform.

PAER takes a developmental approach to the study of new models of effective afterschool programming, and incorporates educational, health, public policy, and psychological perspectives. PAER has developed program models that actively serve youth, such as RALLY (Responsive Advocacy for Life and Learning in Youth), a prevention program that serves youth in the Boston public school system. The RALLY model has been replicated in several cities across the country. PAER concurrently runs and conducts research on its programs to ensure that models are based on effective practices with reliable outcomes.

PAER has established dynamic collaborations with other Harvard University departments, projects, and programs, and acts as a managing partner for local, city, and state afterschool and mental health initiatives.

### **Parents United for Child Care (PUCC)**

Parents United for Child Care (PUCC) builds the network of out-of-school time (OST) opportunities for children, youth, and families in Boston by linking programs with resources that support staff and organizational development and help families get access to OST services. Our annual [Guide to Boston's Before and After School Programs](#) lists over 400 neighborhood and citywide programs in Boston, serving as a resource for families as well as for programs that need to market their services. Through our Boston Director's Roundtable, the only ongoing professional forum for OST program directors, providers have opportunities to share best practices and quality-improvement strategies. Our strategic initiatives provide grants, technical assistance, and training that enable selected OST programs to improve their services in a range of areas, including enrollment expansion, facilities improvement, parent engagement, and inclusion of youth with disabilities. By linking individual OST programs with community partners, we are building an OST system that is responsive to the needs of school-age children, their families, and the communities in which they live.

### **The YMCA of Greater Boston**

The YMCA of Greater Boston, founded in 1851, was the first YMCA in the United States. For over 150 years, the YMCA has shaped and strengthened Boston neighborhoods by contributing to the health and well-being of community residents. One of the city's largest human service providers, with 72 branches and program centers located throughout Boston and its surrounding communities, the YMCA is truly a network of neighborhood-based programs designed to meet the needs of respective populations. Branches are located in the Allston/Brighton, Chinatown, Dorchester, East Boston, Egleston Square, Fenway, Hyde Park, Roxbury, and West Roxbury sections of Boston and in the outlying communities of Needham, Reading, Wakefield, Walpole, Waltham, and Woburn.

For decades, Boston's families have turned to the YMCA of Greater Boston for programs and information that meet their children's educational and developmental needs. The YMCA enrolls 3,000 children a day in childcare and 10,000 each summer in camping programs, making it the largest childcare provider in Massachusetts. In the city of Boston, the YMCA operates 30 childcare and afterschool sites, 16 in Boston Public Schools.



## Endnotes

1. Gambone, M., Klem, A., & Connell, J. (2002). *Finding Out What Matters for Youth: Testing Key Links in a Community Action Framework for Youth Development*. Philadelphia, PA: Youth Development Strategies, Inc., and Institute for Research and Reform in Education.

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2. Arnett, J. L. (1989). Caregivers in Day Care Centers: Does Training Matter? *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 10, 541-552.

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Vandell, D. L., & Wolfe, B. (2000). *Child Care Quality: Does It Matter and Does It Need To Be Improved?* (No. SR #78). Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin, Institute for Research on Poverty.

3. Associated Day Care Services. (2000). *Early Education Clearinghouse Facts in Action*. Boston, MA.

4. Achieve Boston defines after-school and youth workers as those working with young people ages 5-22 years outside of the school setting. Also see Appendix III: Glossary.

5. For the purposes of this document, Achieve Boston has developed working definitions for the following words: after-school and youth programs, out-of-school time, school-age provider and youth worker. These terms are often used interchangeably, but are rarely interpreted in the same way. Also, the term practitioner is used throughout this document to be inclusive of after-school, school-age providers and youth workers. Also see Appendix III: Glossary.

6. Costley, J. (1998). *Building a Professional Development System That Works for the Field of Out-of-School Time*. Wellesley, MA: National Institute on Out-of-School Time.

7. The overall goal of the multi-year PASS project was to establish the foundation of a statewide professional development system for school-age practitioners in Massachusetts. MSAC and OCCS have recently formed an innovative public/private partnership to continue statewide system building in Massachusetts; work that expands on that of the collaborative PASS project. The MSAC-OCCS initiative is focused on implementing components of a system that were developed by the PASS project, including core competencies, and a career lattice/pathways. The timing of this statewide work coordinates well with the work of Achieve Boston.



8. Rasmussen, Charles and Richard Musiol, Jr. "Legislature Promises Universal Access to High Quality Early Childhood Education New Department of Early Education and Care by FY06." General Court of Massachusetts, State House, Boston, MA Press Release June 16, 2004.

9. Armory, J., Morgan, G., & Statum-Francisco, K. (2002). Report on 2001 Early Childhood/School-Age Career Development Survey. Boston, MA: Wheelock College Institute for Leadership and Career Initiatives.

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10. The Massachusetts Professional Development Council (MPDC), convened by MSAC, is comprised of providers, intermediaries, trainers, members of the higher education community, state agencies and others. The MPDC is a forum for review of current initiatives, a place to share information from across the state, and an advisory group for MSAC's professional development work.

11. The licensing agency in Massachusetts is the Office of Child Care Services (OCCS), which licenses programs that serve children ages 5-14 years.

12. Each recipient of an Achieve Boston Voucher received \$300 to attend trainings listed on Achieve Boston's website. Recipients were selected through a competitive application process.

13. "The Child Development Associate: Lessons and Implications for the Field of Youth Development" The Council for Professional Recognition.

14. Duff Campbell, Nancy, Judith C. Appelbaum, Karin Martinson, and Emily Martin. (April 2000) "Be All that We Can Be: Lessons Learned from the Military for Improving Our Nation's Child Care System." National Women's Law Center.

15. Associated Day Care Services. (2000). Early Education Clearinghouse Facts in Action. Boston, MA.

16. The Strong Directors, Skilled Staff Initiative was implemented in 2003. Funded through the Boston Capacity Tank and led by Parents United for Child Care, the initiative offers a series of trainings to selected program directors on how to better support and promote the professional development of their staff.