



**Minnesota Commission on Out-of-School Time Meeting Minutes**  
**March 30, 2004 9:00 – 2:00**  
*McNamara Alumni Center on the University of Minnesota campus*

**Commissioners Present:** Maya Babu, Joanne Benson, McKinley Boston, Jr., Delroy Calhoun, Emmett Carson, Andrea Platt Dwyer, Anne Ganey, Jennifer Godinez, Les Heitke, Joe LaGarde, Scott Lyons, Sandy’Ci Moua, Mary Ann Nelson, Greg Owen, Valerie Halverson Pace, Michael Rodriguez, Don Shelby, Carol Truesdell, Kathleen Vellenga, David Walsh, Christopher Wilson

**Commissioners Absent:** Peter Benson, Blair Gagne, Bridget Gothberg, Julie Green, Susan Hoff, Daniel Knutson, Harold Mezile, Jr., Neal Thao

**Staff Present:** Dale Blyth, Ann Lochner, David Moen, Joyce Walker, Kitty Schneider

**1. Welcome and Introductions:**

Co-Chairs Don Shelby and Carol Truesdell welcomed everyone. Carol introduced Commissioners who were not at the first meeting. Following brief remarks from all Commissioners about reasons for serving on the Commission, Don Shelby reviewed highlights from the January meeting. He stated the charge of the Commission: “To craft the vision and strategies to ensure Minnesota’s young people have engaging opportunities to learn and develop in their non-school hours.” He briefly recapped major accomplishments of the first Commission meeting—identification of five priority areas to focus the work of the Commission; needs for additional information to inform the work of the Commission and strategies to address five priority areas.

**2. Review of Goals for Today’s Meeting:**

Don explained the goal for today’s meeting was to frame the vision and strategic principles for Out-of-School Time supports and opportunities that will guide the work of the Commission. The goal involved three tasks for Commissioners:

- 1) To understand the current situation in Minnesota.
- 2) To construct a vision of how Minnesota should ensure quality and access in Out-of-School Time supports and opportunities for youth from 8 to 18.
- 3) To identify principles that can guide strategies for funding, building public will and marketing Out-of-School Time supports and opportunities to youth and their families.

**3. Understanding Minnesota’s Current Situation:**

Carol underscored the importance of increasing understanding about current Minnesota youth policy to explore how these policies impact Out-of-School Time opportunities for youth. She introduced Ann Lochner, Commission Coordinator, who reviewed highlights of five research briefs addressing policy questions raised in the January Commission meeting. Four briefs prepared by Commission staff were reviewed: *Demographic Snapshot-Children and Youth in Minnesota; In Search of Youth Policy; Sustainability of Out-of-School Time Programs; Support for Adults in Out-of-School Time Programs*. *All Kids Learn*, a Factsheet created by the Minneapolis Foundation was also featured. Carol facilitated a discussion eliciting reactions to information presented. Commissioners noted that communities are key in addressing youth needs for Out-of-School Time opportunities because they are the closest to the circumstances impacting

youth and their families in respective areas. State aggregated data can miss unique circumstances in specific communities.

#### **4. Creative Tensions and Critical Components in Building a Vision**

Dale Blyth, Commission Chief of Staff, engaged Commissioners in thinking about the elements of building a vision for Out-of-School Time in preparation for this activity.

He outlined four creative tensions involved in creating a vision for Out-of-School Time:

- Focused vs. comprehensive approach
- Key age groups vs. 8 to 18 year olds
- Specific outcomes vs. the whole child
- Targeted youth vs. all youth

He suggested possible approaches to be considered in addressing these tensions, including: choosing one alternative over the other; attempting to balance elements; sequencing areas of emphasis over time and utilizing resources to prioritize criteria for reaching youth. Dale discussed the importance of using powerful, yet simple frames for visions for Out-of-School Time, and illustrated how ensuring quality, supporting choices for parents and youth, and engaging communities in building systems of opportunities could all be components of a larger vision.

#### **5. Framing a Vision**

Joyce Walker invited Commissioners to break into small groups to discuss what would be included in a vision for Out-of-School Time for 8-11 year olds; 12-15 year olds and 16-18 year olds. She encouraged discussion groups to generate and prioritize a series of vision statements related to quality and access for respective age groups, using key issues identified in the first Commission meeting as a reference point. Framed as commitments to ensuring that youth have access to high quality, opportunities for learning and development during out-of-school time, Commissioners created a list of vision statements:

- That every MN youth is engaged in age appropriate activities outside of school that provide positive connection and guidance.
- That young people gain a positive sense of self and the world.
- That all communities in Minnesota have a plan and activities so that youth engage in OST activities that reward them, challenge them and help them grow.
- That there are adequate opportunities for young people to discover and develop skills and healthy behaviors to grow into adults with a positive sense of self and a positive view of the future.
- That we achieve success for 8-15 year olds.
- That adults have an adequate amount of training to understand the developmental stages of youth.
- That there are creative ways to engage adults in the lives of youth.
- That there is relevance in our programs so that young people feel ownership and are engaged.
- That there is continuity of opportunity/infrastructure across age groups to ensure an “operating system”.
- That the distinct values of OST are identified and supported.

#### **6. Youth and Parent Voices about Decisions to Participate**

Dr. Mary Marczak, Associate Professor, U of M, shared research findings from her study of Minnesota youth and parents in which she explores youth decisions to participate in Out-of-School time activities. Dr. Marczak found three key factors related to youth decisions to participate in Out-of-School Time opportunities: Duration, intensity, and breadth of experience. A complete summary of Dr. Marczak’s presentation will be available at the May meeting.

## 7. Commission Updates

Commissioners were invited to participate in two upcoming events in response to interest indicated on surveys completed at the January Commission meeting.

**Site Visit following the May 25, 2004 Commission meeting:** A mini-van will take Commissioners from McNamara Alumni Center to two or three Out-of-School Time program sites. Christine Ganzlin, Program Officer at the McKnight Foundation, will accompany participants and explain program elements, approach, structure and funding. Commissioners will be transported back to the McNamara Alumni Center by 5:00 or 5:30 PM. Reservations can be made by contacting Ann Lochner at [lochn006@umn.edu](mailto:lochn006@umn.edu) or (612) 624-8190.

**Youth Caucus Saturday July 10, 2004:** *(This is a change from July 27, 2004. Additional information will be forthcoming.)* Commissioners will interact with approximately 20 Youth attending a weekend Youth Caucus on Out-of-School Time event at Camp Iduhapi (approximately one hour west of the metro area on Lake Independence). Through a variety of group interactive process methods and dialogue with select Commission members, youth participants will generate resolutions and recommendations on Out-of-School Time topics being considered by the Commission. Contact person: Dave Moen, at [moenx010@umn.edu](mailto:moenx010@umn.edu) or (612) 624-7988.

## 8. Framing Strategic Principles to Guide Work toward Visions

Joyce Walker invited Commissioners to form small groups to outline how funding, public will building, and marketing strategies identified in the January meeting could be used to operationalize visions identified in small group discussions.

**A. Funding:** Funding was seen as a particularly challenging aspect of Out-of-School Time planning, given recent state budget cuts in After School Enrichment grants and constraints on spending directed to positive investments in youth. Research findings by Newman, Smith, and Murphy (2000) providing estimates of the cost for providing youth development (Out-of-School Time) opportunities for one young person for 1,200 hours per year @2.55 per hour at \$3,060 per year per youth were shared with Commissioners.

- There was recognition that it would take about \$2 Billion to serve Minnesota youth with Out-of-School Time programming.
- In light of the price tag noted above, Commissioners agreed that reaching this monetary goal would require collaboration of resources on behalf of youth.
- A combination of public and private funding would be essential to adequately serve young people with Out-of-School supports and opportunities.
- Resource leveraging would be an important element in generating adequate funds to create needed resources. This would include a combination of foundation support with donations, in-kind contributions and volunteer contributions, etc.
- Resource generation would also depend on creative combinations of strategies, including local taxes and legislative actions requiring collective responsibility for Out-of-School Time opportunities for Minnesota youth in the communities where they live.
- Taxes on products may be a viable way to generate support for youth programming, such as sports event ticket surcharges.
- A stadium incentive including a ticket tax for youth programs may be a resource for positive investments in youth.

**B. Public Will Building** was seen as a critical issue because there is neither an identified audience, nor is there a unified voice for Out-of-School Time, e.g., a legislative committee, or a Youth Policy monitoring entity.

- The need to reach local policy leaders and decision makers was recognized.
- Making a bold case for a realistic vision was seen as the most effective way to promote awareness of and support for Out-of-School Time—e.g., ask all public schools to stay open until 5PM allowing community collaborations to provide after school opportunities for learning and growth.
- Involving local communities in defining their local opportunities and approach is critical—including local policy makers and mayors.
- Devising the most persuasive way to “Make the Case” for Out-of-School Time supports and opportunities is essential. Need someone to customize messages for local communities.
- Ideas for engaging public support include: public safety, retaining youth in small rural communities, enhancing school achievement, etc.
- The vision for Out-of-School time needs to be realistic and within reach, appealing to the broadest audience.

**C. Marketing** strategies were related to those addressing public will building. They emphasized the importance of crafting a public awareness and messaging strategy tailored to elicit positive response from Minnesota audiences. The Minnesota Out-of-School Time Partnership is contracting with Frameworks Institute, in Washington D.C., to study current perceptions about Out-of-School Time in Minnesota and to recommend a message development strategy that generates support among Minnesota audiences.

Recommendations for marketing strategies saw the need to reach both general and more targeted audiences with information about the positive benefits of Out-of-School Time opportunities for youth learning and development, e.g., those listed below.

- 1) **Parents of youth utilizing OST programs**
- 2) **Youth utilizing OST programs**
- 3) **Funders**
- 4) **Everyone Else**

Ideas for engaging people in caring about Out-of-School Time included enlightened self-interest, guilt and fear. These were seen as the approaches that have historically—for better or worse—attracted the attention of audiences. The marketing discussion group pointed out the need for a marketing approach that engages people in understanding how Out-of-School Time opportunities are as essential to optimal youth development as academic learning.

## **9. Next Steps and Adjournment**

The meeting concluded with final comments from Don and Carol acknowledging the day’s strides toward development of a vision and strategies to accomplish them. It was noted that the level of discussion had moved the group from a consideration of discrete elements to strategic thinking about a system of Out-of-School Time supports and opportunities. They indicated Commission staff would synthesize information gathered in today’s meeting to provide further direction in the May meeting. In particular, there was interest in learning more about the work of other states, communities, and governments that may enlighten Commission efforts in creating recommendations for effective funding policies and marketing strategies. **Next Meeting Dates: May 25, July 27, September 29.**