



Build Public Will Workgroup

Recommendations that would establish effective mechanisms that build public will in order to hold citizens and leaders accountable for creating and sustaining an appropriate range of high quality, widely accessible opportunities for young people during the non-school hours.

Public Will is the force of broad public opinion that stimulates or motivates behavior change.

Building public will involves changing the attitudes of citizens, public officials, the business community, community leaders, and youth themselves.

It will require broad and targeted awareness campaigns.

In addition, it will require creative and effective ways to support the changes.

Critical Directions for Recommendations:

1. Develop a simple case statement that identifies the need, the gap and the action needed to fill the gap.

- Develop key points to increase awareness in easy to understand nuggets that the public will get.
- These points also need to be easy to remember and emotionally compelling.

2. Develop a multifaceted "Social Marketing Plan" to build public will around the issue of Out-of-School Time.

- Create a task force to explore other social marketing campaigns to gain insight and build on their tested messages, best practices and strategies.
- Develop both broad and targeted awareness campaigns.
- Develop a host of strategies from grass roots to media to public relations, to lobbying, etc.
- Develop key message points for the social marketing campaign.
- Construct a list of key stakeholder groups with strategies for getting their attention.
- Identify and prioritize the communication channels to reach the stakeholder groups.
- Identify and recruit allies and champions to help build public will.

3. Develop a variety of action plans/ mechanisms to engage the public and stakeholders to affect policy change.

- Identify and recruit allies and champions to help build public will.
- Develop creative and effective ways to support the changes.
- Develop a variety of actions that people can do to become engaged at all levels, i.e. putting up a lawn sign on their yard, or volunteering for a local OST effort, to lobbying with legislators.
- Identify access points for public to influence decision makers, policy makers, program providers, etc.

What will I look different if we succeed?

- The bulk of people in Minnesota will know what Out-of-School Time is and why it is important.
- A majority of Minnesotans will understand the importance of providing public and private resources for kids in OST and support development and maintenance of those resources.
- Minnesota will have a wide variety of quality OST opportunities (not just programs) that any youth, wherever they are in the state should be able to find.
- The resources for opportunities and programs will exist because public will has demanded it.

What Type of Strategies, Including Funding and Accountability, Would Best Fit the Recommendations?

- Identify and initiate opportunities for youth involvement in all aspects of the campaign.

FUNDING:

Develop mechanisms that don't depend on money or direct funding, i.e.:

- Explore existing delivery systems to get information out, i.e. public utilities inserts in billing statements, school/community education newsletters to all residents, etc.
- Identify community/civic minded groups and get them involved in grassroots, statewide campaign effort.
- Explore natural pathways, pro-bono, university departments that may have graduate students looking for projects, etc.
- Identify foundations that would fit well with this charge. Expand list of people, especially those involved in agencies that would have a vested interest in the OST goals and could incorporate into their existing media campaign.

ACCOUNTABILITY:

- ????

Youth Recommendations:

- Develop statewide OST public awareness campaigns targeted at youth and at the general public. Allocate funds to support marketing and public awareness efforts by OST programs in Minnesota.
- Create a Website dedicated to supporting OST efforts throughout the state, and include access to marketing information for youth related to programs in their communities.
- Within every county in the state establish a resource center that collects and stores information on OST funding opportunities and provides free education about how to apply for funding.
- Enlist schools to play an integral role in OST access issues, both in offering programs and marketing other opportunities, including surveying students on their interests and providing information about programs that correlate with their interests.