



WILLIAM T. GRANT FOUNDATION

CALIFORNIA'S AFTERSCHOOL EXPANSION



**The planning for implementation of Proposition 49 and considerations
for planners in other states**

JUNE 2007
Joseph Ames



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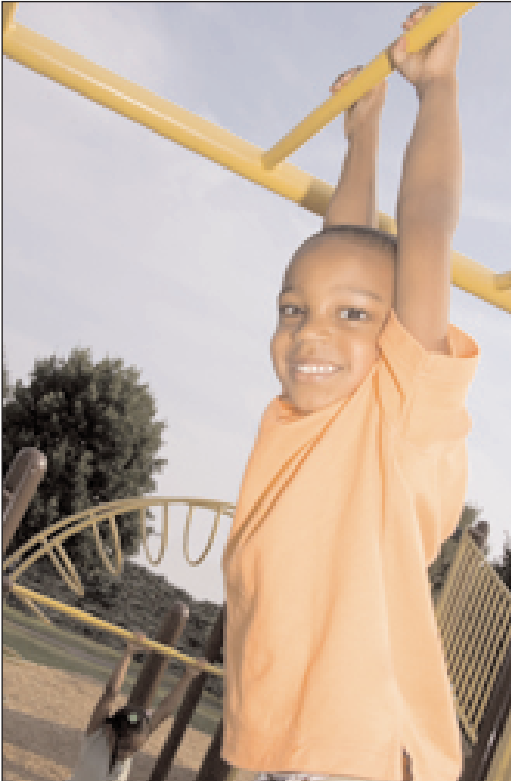


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Joseph Ames

Introduction

The aim of this report is to share insights from the California experience with advocates, program operators, and state agency, school and political officials in other states who are contemplating an expansion of afterschool programs.

This report is the result of a desire by the William T. Grant Foundation to capture a unique process and opportunity – the planning for the largest expansion of state-funded afterschool programs in the nation’s history.

This report covers the time period from summer 2005 to late summer 2006 when legislation sets the stage for the implementation of Proposition 49, which funds afterschool programs for elementary and middle school students.

The information for this report was collected principally in three ways:

- Documents generated during the planning process.
- Observations during meetings of two key groups.
 - The Design Team: This group was comprised of state agency officials, program operators, advocates and employees of a consulting firm. This team produced 19 recommendations on how to implement Proposition 49.
 - The Before & After School Advisory Committee: This committee was created by the California legislature. One of its roles is to review the work of the Design Team and make recommendations to state agencies, the governor and the legislature on how to implement Proposition 49.
- Interviews with 15 people involved in the process. These people were chosen to serve as archetypes because their point of view

The main elements of the report include:

- A summary of key Take Aways from the California experience for advocates and planners in other states.
- A Chronicle of how the process unfolded.
- A more detailed discussion of the four Take Away areas.

represents large numbers of stakeholders.

This report addresses two major issues that drove the planning for the rollout of Proposition 49.

The first is the extraordinary expansion of a state-funded program. The number of sites would increase from 1,700 to 4,000; an additional 16,000 new afterschool staffers would be needed.

The second issue revolves around the decision by a consortium of foundations to pay for a private consulting firm to work with state agencies, advocates and program operators to create a master plan. This yeasty mix – non-profits, business and bureaucracy – created predictable cultural challenges when the main sectors of American working life team up to tackle a big job.

Real answers to what worked in the planning process and what didn’t will begin to reveal themselves once Proposition 49 is fully implemented. At that point, one will be able to see which parts of the plan were implemented and how well those plans succeeded in the delivery of afterschool programs.

What follows is some navigational help for readers: a timeline on key dates in the process and a list of key people and organizations.

Help for Readers

KEY PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS

This is a list of key people and organizations in this telling of the Proposition 49 story. Most of the people listed here contributed to this report.

● **Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor of California.**

- **Office of the Secretary of Education (OSE)**, a part of the governor's administration.
- **Scott Himelstein**, former acting secretary.
- **The Department of Finance**, which serves as the governor's chief fiscal policy advisor.

● **Jack O'Connell, Superintendent of Public Instruction.** This is a statewide elected position.

- **California Department of Education (CDE)**. O'Connell is responsible for this state agency.
- **Sue Stickel**, former Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction at CDE; member of the Steering Committee.
- **John Malloy**, program consultant for CDE; member of the Design Team.

● **The Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO).** This a non-partisan state office.

● **The Boston Consulting Group (BCG).** This consulting firm was hired to help put together the master plan.

- **Linda Segre**, former vice president for BCG based in the San Francisco office.
- **Reggie Gilyard**, a BCG vice president based in the Los Angeles office.

● **The David and Lucile Packard Foundation.**

- **Lois Salisbury**, director of the foundation's Children, Families and Communities Program.
- **Julene Perez-Gonzalez**, former program officer.

● **The Steering Committee.** This group included executives from the state, afterschool programs and the consulting firm; its charge was to set the course for the planning process.

● **The Design Team.** This group was charged with handling the details of the plan. It was comprised mostly of people from the afterschool field, plus a few state officials, and worked closely with the consultants.

● **Before & After School Advisory Committee.**

This group was created by the state legislature and makes recommendations on policy and its implementation to CDE, the governor's office and legislators. Its members are appointed by the governor, legislators and the superintendent of public instruction. This group picked up the work of both the Steering and Design teams.

● **Sandra McBrayer**, Chief Executive Officer of the Children's Initiative in San Diego; chair of both the Steering and Advisory committees.

● **Carla Sanger**, President and CEO of LA's BEST (Better Educated Students for Tomorrow); member of the Steering and Advisory committees.

● **Steve Amick**, Region 9 Lead at the San Diego County Office of Education; member of the Design Team and the Advisory Committee.

● **Tim Erwin**, Project Specialist for Newark School District; member of the Design Team.

- **CynDee Zandes**, former Director of Extended Day Programs, Greenfield School District; member of the Design Team.
- **Sam Piha**, former director of Community and School Partnerships for the Community Network for Youth Development; member of the Design Team.
- **Lindsay Callahan**, former Program Director for Community School Partnerships at University of California, Davis; member of the Design Team.
- **Jennifer Peck**, Executive Director for the Bay Area Partnership for Children and Youth; member of the Design Team.
- **Steve Fowler**, grantee advising the Packard Foundation.
- **Perry Chen**, grantee advising the Packard Foundation.

Timeline

This list of key dates will help readers understand how the planning process unfolded on Proposition 49.

Nov. 5, 2002: Proposition 49 passes.

Oct. 7, 2003: Gov. Gray Davis is recalled; Arnold Schwarzenegger elected governor.

Spring, 2005: Revenue projections indicate Proposition 49 money could be available in the 2006/2007 fiscal year.

Summer, 2005: Experts from afterschool field and representatives from foundations meet in San Francisco to discuss planning.

Early August, 2005: Foundation executives meet with state officials on idea of bringing in a private consulting firm to assist the state in planning for Proposition 49 rollout.

Mid-August, 2005: Request for proposals goes out to consulting firms.

Sept. 28, 2005: Three consulting firms make presentations in Sacramento.

Oct. 13, 2005: As a follow-up, the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) meets with state and foundation officials.

Oct. 20, 2005: The board of the David and Lucile Packard Foundation approves hiring private consulting firm. Pledges from other foundations follow.

Nov. 1, 2005: BCG begins work.

Nov. 8, 2005: Statewide special election. Voters reject four initiatives supported by Gov. Schwarzenegger.

Nov. 10, 2005: BCG and state officials sign a memo of understanding.

Nov. 28, 2005: Steering Committee meets for the first time.

Dec. 1, 2005: Design Team meets for the first time. It would meet several more times over the next several months.

March 14, 2006: Final meeting of the Design Team.

March 15, 2006: After School Summit, Sacramento.

March 16, 2006: Before & After School Advisory Committee begins reviewing work of BCG and the Design Team.

May 17, 2006: Final report of BCG and the Design Team is presented to the Advisory Committee.

June 22, 2006: An Advisory subcommittee begins work on identifying attributes that contribute to quality programs.

Aug. 9, 2006: Senate Bill 638, which includes several reforms, passes a key Assembly committee.

Aug. 30-31, 2006: SB 638 passes the Senate and Assembly.

Sept. 21, 2006: Gov. Schwarzenegger signs SB 638. It goes into effect immediately.

Sept. 25, 2006: The request for proposals goes out to schools.



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Summary of Key Take Aways From California

It is too early to say, with any certainty, what aspects of the planning process discussed in this report can be deemed a success. Only an assessment of the full implementation of Proposition 49, which began

in late 2006 and early 2007, can tell that tale. But there are some hints at issues afterschool planners in other states should consider as they think about planning an expansion. A discussion of these items begins on **page 26**.

● The Basics: Research and Effective Advocacy

Summary: Advocacy efforts that had been going on long before Proposition 49 planning began ensured that important changes were made to the afterschool program law to help make this opportunity attractive to schools and their subcontractors.

Research and analysis done by the consulting firm provided stakeholders across the state with the clearest look yet at the state of the afterschool field. This step served to elevate the work of planners and advocates.

Being armed with accurate, useful information is critical to effective advocacy and planning. Planners in other states should note California's successful effort to understand the lay of the land and ensure the program was attractive to providers before jumping to the nuts and bolts of rollout.

● Investment: Strategic Partnerships and Early Buy-in

Summary: It is critical to secure buy-in from as many key partners as possible, as early as possible. In the case of California, the key partner was the California Department of Education, the main state education agency. But it was also critical that other players like the Department of Finance, the Office of the Secretary of Education and the legislature be on board and engaged.

Deepening relationships with systems and organizations outside of education (e.g., juvenile justice, workforce, public health) is a step many afterschool stakeholders in California have come to consider critical. Planners in other states

should consider whether education is necessarily the most appropriate home for afterschool initiatives or whether a blended approach involving several public funding streams could spark useful new synergies.

● Group Dynamics: Utilizing Expertise and Recognizing Limitations

Summary: Tapping expertise that exists within the state among providers, agencies and advocates and combining that with outside advice proved to be a useful strategy in California. The consulting firm's research and facilitation skills complemented the expertise California stakeholders brought to the table about the afterschool field, its history and the state context.

Clear communication and reporting lines can help ensure the success of bringing in external advisors. Identifying early on the strengths and recognizing the limitations that each party brings to the table is also important.

● Lasting Value: Defining, Creating and Sustaining Quality Programs

Summary: The planning process sparked a long overdue, nuanced conversation within the state about the purpose of afterschool programming and about several key drivers of quality – technical assistance, workforce development and accountability.

Developing consensus about what constitutes quality and being clear about what capacity currently exists when it comes to monitoring and improving quality at scale is critical. This evolving conversation in California will ultimately determine whether Proposition 49 delivers on its full promise.



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The Chronicle

About 500 business and community leaders gathered for a luncheon on Oct. 21, 2002, at the Beverly Hilton Hotel. The topic was standard fare: afterschool programs. The speaker was not.

Citizen Arnold Schwarzenegger delivered this line with what the Los Angeles Times called Terminator-like bravado: “This is the best, safest, soundest initiative ever written, and that’s why it’s going to succeed.”

The initiative, indeed, did succeed. A few weeks later, more than 55 percent of California voters approved the After School Education and Safety Program Act of 2002, or Proposition 49.

For California, in terms of afterschool, the stakes could not be higher. Proposition 49 mandated that \$550 million each year should be set aside from general fund revenues for afterschool programs for kindergarteners through ninth graders.

This infusion of cash meant a four-fold increase in state funds to reach children between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. every school day. The number of participating schools could increase from 1,700 to 4,000.

This puts California squarely in front of the afterschool push. No state has made such a large commitment.

By the summer of 2005, California's economy was rebounding and it seemed like the way was clear for the expansion of afterschool in the 2006/2007 fiscal year.

But there were warning shots. The Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO), the nonpartisan California equivalent of the Congressional Budget Office, in 2004 had advocated delaying or repealing Proposition 49. Its report was unsparing and there was rumbling in the legislature.

The LAO report said that California, given its structural budget deficit, could not afford to pony up an automatic \$550 million each year for afterschool programs, particularly when Proposition 49 funding may "crowd out" K-12

spending that is a higher priority. And, given the track record of the existing program, the "Proposition 49 funds are not likely to be spent in a timely manner," the report said.

There was a need for a plan. One of the largest philanthropies in the country had an idea: bring in a private consulting firm to help create it.

Threads but no plan

Lois Salisbury can't remember whether she was going east or west, only that "it was a long enough trip to write it and my computer battery didn't give out."

In a dimly lit airplane cabin in the summer of 2005, the director of the David and Lucile Packard Foundation's Children, Families and Communities Program was pounding out the formal document for a novel approach – a request for a private consulting company to help create a master plan for California's state agencies.

This unusual step was driven by a few hard realities. Afterschool funding would become available as early as July 2006.

Building Blocks

The Design Team and The Boston Consulting Group (BCG) found several areas that worked well in the California afterschool field.

Students: Students have a safe, educational, and recreational place to go after school where they can receive academic assistance, enjoy exciting activities, explore new ideas, and form meaningful relationships with staff and other students. There is research that has shown that reduced grade retention and drop out rates can be improved for kids who participate in afterschool programs.

Parents: Afterschool programs ease the burden of supervision between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. for working parents and provide the opportunity for students to finish homework and receive tutoring.

Staff: Such programs today create tens of thousands of jobs that build leadership skills and provide opportunities to make a difference in the lives of youth.

Community: Afterschool programs contribute to increased workplace productivity and local economic development. Additionally, there is reduced vandalism and juvenile crime, all of which benefit the local community.

Source: Master Plan for California After-school Programs, April 17, 2006

Even though it had been three years since the passage of Proposition 49, the state and the field – mostly advocates and program providers – were not ready for such a challenge and opportunity. Everyone was surprised by a resurgent California economy.

Proposition 49 required that state revenues grow substantially before the \$550 million could be set aside each year for afterschool expansion. The financial benchmark that would trigger afterschool funds was on the “radar screen of the whole field,” Salisbury said. In

2003 and 2004, when the state was struggling with deficits, there was a “sense that this was several years out.”

John Malloy, a program consultant for the California Department of Education (CDE), which would administer the program, said everyone thought the Proposition 49 money would be available in fiscal year 2007/2008.

“No one really thought the (financial) trigger was going to come so soon,” Malloy said.

In any event, long-range planning is not

Areas for Improvement

The Design Team and The Boston Consulting Group (BCG) identified several areas in the California afterschool environment that do not work particularly well.

Lack of common direction for the community and stakeholders: The absence of a mission or long-term goals for all of afterschool suggests insufficient support and a lack of common understanding between the community and stakeholders.

Unclear program expectations: There is no consensus or clarity on definition of quality or outcome measurements. Beyond the CDE-required outcomes, there is no consistent guidance on essential components of programs across the state.

Gaps in technical assistance: Gaps in provision of training and certain support services as well as overlap in provision of other assistance (e.g. multi-development of databases and websites and various technical assistance materials for the same topics, such as start-up guides) create inefficiencies and an opportunity to optimize technical assistance. The technical assistance system will also be placed under severe pressure with the onset of Proposition 49. Currently there is no central place to find information on technical assistance including timing and location of training and technical

assistance materials.

Management and administration inefficiencies: Systematic oversight of student and school data is not easily accessible today for key decision makers. For example, information such as dates on which grant award letters were sent are not systematically tracked and reported. No coordinated effort exists to identify and provide additional assistance to unfunded “needy” schools (i.e. entire system is a “pull” rather than a “push” system). Furthermore, some data still require manual entry (e.g., attendance, grantee information, etc.).

Continuing change to workforce: High turnover in personnel exists due to relatively lower pay, the part-time nature of most positions and the transient nature of the young adults that fill most positions.

Financial shortcomings: Approximately 30 percent of afterschool programs rate the match requirement as a significant challenge.

Source: Master Plan for California After-school Programs, April 17, 2006

the standard mode of operation for CDE. The department is “so used to having things thrown at them and dealing with what is immediately in front of them,” Salisbury said. “By government standards, a year to plan is a luxury.”

The afterschool field, at best a loose confederation of program directors and advocates, lacked a statewide leadership structure.

At a San Francisco meeting in the summer of 2005 of experts in the field and representatives from a few philanthropies, “it became clear that neither the field nor the state had the infrastructure in place to make a dramatic expansion of afterschool happen,” Salisbury said.

There were threads but only a loose fabric. There were regional leads in place around the state to provide technical assistance to program providers. And there were several successful community, school district, county and city programs.

But there was “no coherent plan, infrastructure or timeframe for an expansion of this scale,” Salisbury said. “Everyone was paying attention to their piece of the world.”

“Short-term issues were being identified, but not in the context of a roadmap of where the state needed to go with this opportunity over 5 to 10 years,” she said.

Salisbury and Julene Perez-Gonzalez, a Packard program officer, believed that using a private company would jump-start the work. A private firm working with state agencies would appeal to other philanthropies as well as to their board members, many of whom came from the private sector.

The Atlantic Philanthropies and the Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund were both high on the list of potential partners to support this proposal. Atlantic was planning to be a big investor in youth development issues and it was on an aggressive track to pay out its principal in 10 years. Salisbury hoped that the

“The freshness of this would get everyone’s attention. This would play well with all of the stakeholders.”

LOIS SALISBURY
PACKARD FOUNDATION

director of youth development, Charles Roussel, formerly an executive with Accenture, would be interested in the private sector approach. And the Haas fund had been long interested in afterschool issues in California.

“The freshness of this would get everyone’s attention,” Salisbury said. “This would play well with all of the stakeholders.”

The biggest stakeholder of them all was Schwarzenegger, now the Republican governor.

The afterglow of the 2003 recall of Gov. Gray Davis and Schwarzenegger’s promotion from action hero to governor had worn off. The new governor was pushing hard for four reform proposals on the November 2005 ballot. Proposition 49 was still his baby, and any deal on planning would have to have his blessing.

In August 2005, the Packard folks sat down with a few of the players, including Bonnie Reiss, the governor’s long-time confidant on a wide variety of issues.

Salisbury said the governor’s people were “interested in collaborating with philanthropy.”

Reiss and others were intrigued with the idea of working with a management consulting company, Salisbury said. They considered this “out of the box...It was a provocative suggestion.”

Sue Stickel, then the CDE’s deputy superintendent, was at the meeting. She was representing her boss, Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O’Connell.

“We all recognized the enormity of the task ahead of us,” she said. Stickel said she was “not opposed to” bringing in a private company to help create the master plan.

There was great concern about the interplay between the two executive branch entities involved – the Office of the Secretary of Education (OSE), under the control of the GOP governor, and the CDE, headed by O’Connell, a Democrat.

In a few weeks, there was an agreement to move forward, but there was a strong precondition: no partisan politics between the governor’s office and CDE. They must agree to not play politics with the Proposition 49 master planning process.

The agreement held but it did not include the legislature. That gap would prove to be a lurking problem in the creation of a master plan.

The Planners: Sept. 28, 2005

Representatives of three large U.S. consulting firms each gave a 90-minute presentation at the Office of the Secretary of Education in Sacramento.

After the first round, the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) was invited back for a follow-up interview on Oct. 13.

“One of the reasons they were picked was that everyone was impressed with their work in Chicago on education policy,” said Salisbury.

The foundations would pay the bill of more than \$1 million but the client was the state government, specifically, the California Department of Education (CDE) and the Office of the Secretary of Education (OSE).

This arrangement was not unprecedented for philanthropy, Salisbury said. “Philanthropies are frequently the brokers in these relationships.”

What was extraordinary was the speed and intensity: an autumn 2005 start and a spring 2006 delivery of a plan for a rollout as soon as mid-2006.



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On Oct. 20, 2005, the Packard board’s executive committee approved the project. Later, Atlantic Philanthropies signed on, too. Then the Stuart, Koret, Haas and Mott foundations all pledged to help pay for BCG’s work. The William T. Grant Foundation (which commissioned this report) agreed to be a “backup” source. It was tapped later when Mott dropped out.

This broad coalition of foundations would prove useful as work went forward. When the governor’s office later called for the process to stop, the coalition was able to keep most of the work on track.

BCG started in on the project on Nov. 1. A memo of understanding, on BCG letterhead, was signed 10 days later by Stickel from CDE, Scott Himmelstein from the OSE, and Linda Segre, then a BCG vice president based in the San Francisco office.

Segre saw an immediate difference in this assignment with state agencies compared to BCG’s work in cities on education and with its corporate clients, too.

“I don’t have a single client,” she said in an interview two months into the project. In New Orleans and Chicago, there was one clear leader so it was easier to “touch base. There are a lot of stakeholders in this assignment.”

This lack of a single point of contact – a champion, really – would prove to be a problem later on, from BCG’s perspective.

Segre said she and her team had a good,

even typical, corporate relationship with CDE and Sue Stickel. But the communication was difficult between the multiple state government layers in play – Department of Finance, Department of Education, Office of the Secretary of Education, the governor’s office and the legislature – due to busy schedules.

Five days after BCG began work, a special election would ultimately add a level of difficulty no one could foresee. The popular governor turned out not to be so popular on Nov. 5, 2005. His four initiatives, including one to limit teacher tenure, would all fail badly.

BCG put its platoon of 20- and 30-something analysts to work building a plan. They sorted through existing information at CDE and other sources; they did 140 interviews with program providers, state and school district officials and regional leads, who provide technical assistance to program operators and schools from all over the state.

While BCG’s sponsor and paymaster was the consortium of foundations and the client the state’s education agencies, it shared the workbench with two groups of experts from the afterschool field and public policy.

- **The Steering Committee** was a group of 15 state and program executives and policy makers charged with setting the strategy and overall tone and direction for the work.

- **The Design Team** was made up mostly of program operators with a sprinkling of state officials in the afterschool offices. The 18-member Design Team would do the heavy lifting, addressing workforce, technical assistance, program quality and financial issues.

The Steering Committee, at its first meeting on Nov. 28, 2005, laid out these objectives for “aspirational, yet practical” steps toward achieving a workable master plan:

- Utilize and synthesize the vast knowledge available today.



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- Outline short- and long-term steps for equitable access and consistent quality and outcomes across the state, despite differences among populations served.
- Ensure proper level of financial and infrastructural support in place, including programs, workforce, oversight and administration.
- Define public vs. private roles and interaction in a Proposition 49 implementation environment.
- Define and measure success.

Almost immediately, the Steering Committee ran into trouble. An early meeting was described as a dysfunctional family Christmas, complete with insults and multiple agendas. In the end, the Steering Committee would meet only twice, leaving the work to the Design Team.

The Design Team’s subcommittees pushed

ahead, tackling workforce development, financing, management, administration and the execution of the plan.

All along, BCG was creating thick “decks” of PowerPoint slides heavy with statistics, analyses, charts, diagrams and scenarios. In addition to the BCG interviews with 140 stakeholders, the raw data most often came from the records of the CDE.

For many Design Team members, it was new information or, at the very least, information put into a broader, more useful context.

While BCG’s analysis would come under some fire later on, during this period the Design Team members and others were pleased.

“The depth of analysis from BCG is a pleasant surprise, as is the energy and eagerness they are bringing to the project,” said Steve Fowler, a consultant advising Packard.

Design Team members often echoed Fowler’s sentiments: “When I ask a question,” commented Design Team member Dick Roberts of Los Angeles Unified School District, “I get four pages of research.”

Featured in these “decks” were useful insights:

- About 1,400 needy schools – defined as having at least half of their students eligible for free or reduced lunches – did not receive any state or federal funding for afterschool.
- One in three elementary and middle schools received state or federal afterschool funding.
- Participation among middle and junior high students was lower than average.
- Seven rural counties had no programs. Yet several rural counties, including some neighbors to the no-program counties, reported good participation among schools in either a state or federal program; in three rural counties all of the

**“When I ask
a question,
I get four pages
of research.”**

DICK ROBERTS,
A DESIGN TEAM MEMBER

schools were offering afterschool programs.

- Among urban counties, more than 69 percent of schools in a cluster of four Bay-area counties – Contra Costa, Marin, Santa Cruz and San Francisco – provided afterschool programs.
- In San Diego, all schools offered afterschool – the result of the 6 to 6 campaign. The extended school-day program is available in every public elementary and middle school.
- The greatest need for afterschool programs tended to be in Los Angeles, the areas east of the city and in the Central Valley.

BCG’s interviews also revealed several key barriers to implementation of Proposition 49, including:

- The match requirement. The current law required that for every dollar received from the state, the schools had to raise 50 cents in cash or in-kind services.
- The size of the grants. They were capped at \$5 per student/per day, \$50,000 for an elementary school and \$75,000 for a middle school.

- Grant writing and distribution of funds. The current model was a reimbursement system. So, schools had to provide their own start-up funds and then bill the state. Steve Amick, a member of the Design Team who works as a regional lead in the San Diego County Office of Education, likened this system to “qualifying for your unemployment check as soon as you demonstrate that you have a job.”
- Rural districts had special concerns about finding qualified afterschool workers and transportation. Rural schools needed funding for a late bus to take the students home at 6 p.m.
- CDE’s capacity and systems to handle such a large increase in a program. The CDE traditionally did not have a good track record of delivering promised revenue in a timely manner, said Carla Sanger, CEO of LA’s BEST and a member of the Steering and Advisory committees.

Agency buy-in

One area of concern from the start was the buy-in from CDE people, who would have to implement the plan. After all, it was their pool everyone was playing in. Ultimately, Proposition 49 would be their program.

CynDee Zandes, a Design Team member who ran afterschool programs for a Bakersfield-area school district, recalled that at the first meeting the CDE representatives were late – and the meeting was at CDE offices in Sacramento.

While there were “segments of goodwill” there was still plenty of “pride, self and ego” in the room. CDE was keeping information tightly held and not soliciting advice from people in the field, she said.

These signals, to Zandes, underscored CDE’s reluctance to the whole process and particularly BCG’s role. “It wasn’t a CDE party.”

The old funding system was like “qualifying for your unemployment check as soon as you demonstrate that you have a job.”

STEVE AMICK,
A DESIGN TEAM MEMBER

The second meeting was at a BCG office – neutral ground. No one was “accusatory,” and people were committed to the “real task” of designing a plan, Zandes said. By the third meeting, the group began to hit its stride. CDE was more on board, she said. The focus was on the work, not the parochial issues that drive all the stakeholders. By the fourth meeting, two months into the project, the transformation, in her view, was complete. CDE was on board. There was an “ebb and flow” that felt right.

Others in the process, including Sandy McBrayer, the chair of the Steering and Advisory committees, agreed that CDE was at first cool to the idea of bringing in BCG and experts from the field. But they warmed to the idea by the winter of 2006.

Sue Stickel, the former deputy superintendent at CDE who sat on the Steering Committee, personally felt challenged by the time the planning demanded. She was unwilling to break previous commitments in order to go to Proposition 49 meetings. She said people would pressure her to come to these meetings by saying things like “you need to make it a priority.” What they didn’t understand, she said, is that she had many other commitments in addition to Proposition 49 planning.

Afterschool planning was hardly the only item on the CDE agenda. While \$550 million is an enormous amount of money for afterschool programs, it represents about one percent of what the state spends on education.

Stickel was generally accessible when a question came up and attended key meetings, said BCG's Segre. People from the governor's Office of Education, the other signatory to the memo of understanding, were not as engaged, Segre said.

Scott Himmelstein, the former acting secretary, said that is a fair assessment since "all of the dollars flow through" CDE.

Fowler, the consultant, noted at the time that "there is activity on a lot of levels – the political process is moving forward, the master planning is moving forward, each of the constituencies is acting predictably," he said.

"It is not unlike building a plane while in flight."

Zandes, and others on the Design Team, gave BCG's people credit for driving the process and avoiding the "meet, reflect, meet, reflect and not go anywhere" syndrome that infects many education initiatives.

But to others, some key issues were becoming victims to time pressures. Fowler noted that questions like, "Where do we want to be in 2020?" were not being asked.

Malloy, a consultant for CDE, said that BCG was at a disadvantage. "They are being asked to do long-term planning, but it is really crisis planning," he said.

Outcomes and quality

One area where there was rising tension was program outcomes and quality – in effect, what does the state want the program to deliver?

Prior to summer 2006, standardized test scores were, by default, the measurement. Even though, it is worth noting, the state had never denied funding for an afterschool

program whose children's test scores were inadequate.

There was an ongoing conflict between some in the youth development community and the CDE over test scores being a component of the measures.

To make afterschool programs accountable for test scores is wrongheaded, argued the youth development advocates on the Design Team. That is the job of the schools, not the afterschool program.

Plus, an afterschool program is a good opportunity to attract "disengaged" kids, said Sam Piha, formerly of the Community Network for Youth Development in San Francisco and a member of the Design Team. How do you attract kids if you are offering algebra tutoring?

Piha and others argued that there were other measures that could be used. For instance, there is evidence that an afterschool program can increase school-day attendance. Homework completion and a decrease in anti-social behavior are other measures that should be considered. There needs to be a reasonable expectation of what can be achieved by afterschool programs, Piha said. "Put the bar where it needs to be."

From the CDE perspective, test scores are how people "judge our work," said CDE consultant Malloy. He noted the irony that many in the education community, including CDE, opposed the movement toward standardized test scores. Even though "we lost that one" CDE was now in the position to enforce it, Malloy said.

Others, most notably McBrayer, the chair of the Steering Committee, sympathized with the CDE point of view. Test scores have to be part of the metrics because it's "CDE's money," and the department's charge is improving academic achievement, she said. Test scores are "tied to academics. We need to

have academic support in real time,” McBrayer said.

Political football

To the afterschool community, there was not a bigger issue than Proposition 49 and its implementation. And, it turned out, Proposition 49 was just big enough to become a player in a larger political drama.

To many working on the plan, this was a source of frustration. To others, it was a signal that afterschool was no longer a backburner issue. \$550 million has a way of elevating an issue’s profile.

It was enough money to make not only a difference to kids and schools but to politicians looking to rein in the budget.

The master planning for afterschool would find itself on a stage with a back story – a deal and dispute over K-12 education.

The deal was cut in 2003, in the first few weeks of the new Schwarzenegger administration. The governor negotiated a deal with the California Teacher’s Association (CTA) to set aside \$2 billion in K-12 education funding, guaranteed under the formulas in Proposition 98. This extraordinary deal, said the Los Angeles Times, “would give him a one-year cushion as he tried to reduce a \$16 billion deficit.”

Schwarzenegger had played ball before with the CTA, one of the state’s most potent political forces. In 2002, he had worked with CTA staff to write Proposition 49 “so that its funding stream would not interfere with Proposition 98,” the Times said.

The dispute began in the fall of 2004, when the governor was feeling trapped by his deal with the CTA and the Proposition 98 formulas. The state’s economy was growing and, under the formulas, the Proposition 98 guarantee was going to be \$1.8 billion higher than when he made his deal a year earlier.

If he restored the \$2 billion he had promised, he would have to cut health and

welfare funding, according to the Times. The governor chose to not pay back the \$2 billion immediately.

Adding to the tension between the teacher’s union and the governor’s office was a series of initiatives for voters to consider in November 2005. The initiatives included proposals to lengthen the probation period for new teachers and restrict the ability of unions to use their members’ dues for political purposes.

Just as the Proposition 49 master planning process was getting underway, voters soundly rejected the governor’s plan.

The weakness of the governor gave the Democrats in the legislature a chance to push their agenda, particularly the full funding of K-12 education. The first challenge came from an unlikely source.

Sen. Tom Torlakson, a former science teacher and supporter of Proposition 49, was carrying a bill that many counted on to make Proposition 49 workable – and solve some of the problems identified by the Legislative Analyst’s Office (LAO) and advocates. The Torlakson bill would shelve the reimbursement system and raise per student/per day rates – issues well known to the afterschool providers and confirmed in BCG’s 140 interviews around the state.

But Torlakson was also considering a constitutional amendment to repeal or delay Proposition 49 funding.



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The argument for delay was not new. The LAO had made the same point in 2004. The state could not, right now, afford the \$550 million a year for afterschool, particularly when Proposition 98 – the money for K-12 – was not fully funded.

While there had been great pains taken to include the CDE and the governor’s office in the planning process, representatives from the legislature were largely absent.

The lack of legislative groundwork set the stage for some missteps at a time when Proposition 49 was hanging in the political balance.

Long before the planning process began, advocates had pushed hard for some key reforms to the law, most notably a change in the way the state’s afterschool contracts were administered and an increase in the per student/per day rate.

The planning process was separate from lobbying, which is off-limits for the foundations. Still, the legislative and planning tracks informed one another. And in one case the two tracks collided, leaving some with hard feelings.

The significance of the missteps that followed is a matter of some debate. To some, it was a blip; to others it endangered passage of key afterschool reforms.

To some program operators and advocates, including McBrayer of the Children’s Initiative



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in San Diego, Sanger of LA’s Best, and Jennifer Peck of the Bay Area Partnership, BCG overreached by what they saw as pushing a funding scenario that they say endangered carefully negotiated deals with legislators.

To others, including Segre of BCG and Salisbury and Perez-Gonzalez of Packard, the consulting company was simply laying out scenarios for stakeholders to consider and not advocating a position. In Segre’s view, BCG was doing what it did best – providing an “unbiased, objective point of view.” Politics is not BCG’s expertise and lobbying is beyond the scope of the foundations.

The critical issue was the per day rate for each student. A consensus among advocates and program operators had been building for more than a year that \$7.50 per student/per day was the minimum needed to operate a good program. The higher rate would push the per-school caps to \$112,500 for elementary schools and \$150,000 for middle schools. (The existing program caps were \$5 per student/per day, and \$50,000 for elementary schools and \$75,000 for middle schools.)

The higher rates, given the fixed total of \$550 million, also meant the program would fall far short of being universal.

Proposition 49 was sold to voters as a universal program, but many in Sacramento and in the field embraced a phase-in plan that grandfathered in existing programs and gave needy schools first shot at the money.

Proposition 49 would also enable the state to use federal 21st Century funds, when existing programs expired, for high school programs.

“All the stakeholders were OK with prioritization,” said Peck, a Design Team member whose organization was a co-sponsor of the Torlakson bill.

BCG consultants kept putting scenarios on the table, including one with a lower per student/per day figure. With that scenario, the

program would reach more schools – making it closer to a universal program.

McBrayer said this independent analysis caused problems early on in negotiations with legislators. There was an accusation from one legislative office of “hoodwinking” legislators with these differing numbers, she said.

BCG “pushed back on issues where they had no expertise,” Peck said. “They kept mentioning all this research. There was a presumption of expertise.”

In McBrayer’s view, BCG essentially overreached. “They are not the experts,” she said. BCG’s consultants made assumptions on situations they didn’t understand. Their overall lack of knowledge of afterschool, the stakeholders, the legislative process and the policy situation made the process more difficult, she said. Himmelstein agreed that BCG “didn’t seem skilled in dealing with public entities.”

In Segre’s view, BCG did not advocate a particular position but simply pushed for a “rigorous look at the data.”

At the same time, BCG was not aware that a deal was already in the works with the administration on the \$7.50 per student/per day figure, Segre said.

This was another example, from BCG’s perspective, of not having the access it needed to key information and legislative staff. So when the firm acted on limited information, it said it was unfairly accused of being naïve.

These tensions came to a head in early March. During what Stickel called one of the “ugliest days,” Department of Finance officials were “completely unwilling to give up control” for design of the program to the Design Team and BCG.

So, the planning for afterschool gave way to the real world of politics. “What we needed from the legislature (on other issues) was more important than the master planning process,” Stickel said.

At the request of the governor’s office and

**About 1,200
afterschool advocates
attended the summit;
it was probably
the largest gathering
ever for the field.**

CDE, the scope of the planning was narrowed to recommendations in three areas: program quality and outcomes, workforce development and matching funds. The foundation consortium was able to help keep these key items in play.

The financial plan, including the rates and how the money would be disbursed, and the test score question would be handled by legislators and the governor’s office.

To Salisbury, from Packard, the political machinations were a “dust up” that did not derail the momentum created by the Design Team/BCG work. The bulk of the work would go forward.

These troubles underscored the “extra-governmental” nature of the planning process, said Fowler, a former Nebraska legislator. While the process was not “negotiations on napkins,” it still was viewed as a threat to the legislature and some in the administration.

The planners’ work, in Fowler’s view, was “demoted from a master plan to a planning conversation.”

Ides of March

Three days in the middle of March served as the transition period from planning to preparing for implementation.

- On Tuesday, March 14, at their last meeting, Design Team members were officially told of the narrower scope of the

planning work. An ambitious series of road shows around the state would be cancelled, so the planning work would not get the public vetting many thought it needed.

While some members were unhappy about their roles being short circuited, McBrayer noted later that some “legislators were offended. You think you just get to decide” without the legislature weighing in?

- The next day, about 1,200 afterschool advocates and school officials gathered at the Sacramento Convention Center for the After School Summit. This is likely the largest gathering on afterschool in the nation’s history. “Usually, it is 200 to 300 people in a hotel ballroom, not more than a 1,000 in a convention center,” Fowler said.

The Democratic state Superintendent of Schools, Jack O’Connell, was on the stage along with the father of Proposition 49, GOP Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger. The summit was an indicator on “how far California has come,” Fowler said.

- On March 16, the Before & After School Advisory Committee met to pick up the work of the Steering Committee – and turn the focus toward implementation. McBrayer would be the chair of this advisory group, which was created by the legislature. In the coming weeks, BCG and the Design Team would put the finishing touches on recommendations on outcomes and quality, workforce development and matching funds.

The threat of a constitutional amendment to delay or repeal Proposition 49 had dissipated. Yet there was still no consensus on new legislation to fix the implementation problems and define the qualities of afterschool programs, including the role of test scores. The

political forces that had made afterschool a political football still were in play in an election year – a tight budget and the ongoing dispute between teachers and the governor.

There was a consensus, at least on the Advisory Committee, that the worst-case scenario was the existing law.

The Advisory Committee voted to support a GOP bill – a rival to Torlakson’s bill – that cited test scores as the only outcome. But this bill lacked support in committee and ended up on the suspension calendar, one step from dead.

But most of the Advisory Committee’s attention was on the work of BCG and the Design Team. McBrayer made it clear that the Advisory Committee might not agree to all of the recommendations and would need several meetings to review, prioritize and make decisions on the BCG/Design Team work.

Windfall

There was an emerging opportunity for the Advisory committee to put the work of BCG and the Design Team to use. While the Republican bill was on the shelf, the Democratic bill carried by Torlakson was moving ahead.

In the Torlakson bill there was a menu of outcome measures, including test scores, that schools could choose to use to measure success.

The governor’s office, in a compromise with advocates, agreed to drop the requirement that test scores be the primary measure in determining renewal of a three-year grant. The governor very much wants Proposition 49 “checks out the door, serving kids by November” when he is up for re-election, Peck said. (Schwarzenegger did not highlight afterschool programs in his successful re-election campaign.)

After this compromise was brokered, the legislature and the governor were looking for

guidance. A subcommittee of the Advisory committee began work on developing recommendations on how to gather the measurement data.

In early May, 2006, a new report said surging tax receipts – driven by a rising stock market and business expansion – would create a \$5 billion windfall. The extra money would allow the governor to restore education funding, quieting his critics among teachers and other education advocates. Proposition 49's tenure as a political pawn was over, for now.

The bill working its way through the legislature would include many of the changes advocates had been backing for years. Among the provisions:

- Grant program, not a reimbursement-based program, with streamlined application procedures.
- Increase in daily afterschool rate from \$5 to \$7.50 per student/per day. The maximum per-school cap would rise to \$112,500 for elementary and \$150,000 for middle schools.
- Funding match decreases from half to one-third.
- More funding for technical assistance to providers in the field.
- The key outcomes and quality measures would be attendance – both school-day and program attendance. There would be a supplementary menu of goals with the legislature looking to the Advisory Committee for guidance.
- Priority funding would be existing programs, qualifying federal 21st Century programs and schools with more than half of their students receiving free and reduced lunch. All other elementary and middle schools would be judged based on demonstrated need.

State funding for afterschool programs in California was on track to increase from \$120 million to \$550 million. Fowler noted that you would never get that kind of bump from the

“What can we take credit for and be held accountable for?”

STEVE AMICK
DESIGN TEAM MEMBER

Appropriations Committee.

And the political fight, now nearly over, had pushed the afterschool agenda to a higher plane.

“The flip side of having all of these politicians argue about you is to be ignored,” Fowler said. “It is messy, but we’re still poised to be much further ahead on our agenda.”

Standards and Scale: June 22, 2006

On this steamy day in Sacramento, a subcommittee of the Advisory committee began to tackle this shortcoming identified in the Design Team/BCG final report: “There is no consistent guidance on essential components of programs across the state.”

Nearly four years after voters approved a massive expansion of afterschool and a few months before the money would flow, it would be up to this group to begin to identify the “essential components” of a quality program.

There would be a need to review existing research on what it takes to operate a quality program. “I don’t want to be in a bubble here,” said subcommittee member Michael Funk, of Sunset Neighborhood Beacon Center in San Francisco, “drinking from my own punch.”

Rigorous standards and accountability measures were needed so the state could “scale up” the program statewide while maintaining quality. The standards need to be “robust for use across the state,” said Malloy of CDE and the Design Team.

Malloy pointed out that the standards and measures also need to be scientifically reliable. This is why the standardized tests are so appealing.

As the discussion progressed, homework completion became the example of an intuitive measure. But the question remains: How do you create a valid measure? For instance, what does “completion” mean?

Homework completed? Homework handed in to teachers? Homework completed – at what level of completeness, accuracy and quality?

The overall question to the group was this: “What can we take credit for and be held accountable for?” asked Amick.

Malloy made another critical point on measures. “The audience needs to care about them.”

- For the legislature, they need to be “impressive to decision-makers,” Malloy said.
- For school principals, they need to “give that principal something to keep that program going,” Malloy said. The measures need to make the school’s business office comfortable and to make sure that the Proposition 49 demands are not making an incursion into the school district’s general fund.
- The community – teachers and parents – need to care, too.
- And the kids, particularly at the middle school age, need to care. “They vote with their feet,” Amick said.

Finale: Aug. 9, 2006

On a sunny, breezy day in Sacramento it’s the job of the Assembly Appropriations Committee to do the final vetting of Senate bills. Room 4202 is set up like a small-town theater – a modest number of seats on the first floor and about the same number in a balcony.

Large black-and-white photos of California’s beauties – mountains, valleys and waterways – hang on the walls. Up front, in two rows, are places for the committee members.

It is a place for business. This morning, the pace will be quick. The hearing starts at 9 a.m. There is plenty to do – 200 bills are on the calendar – and the chairwoman is working hard to move things along.

For most of the bills, this is the stop to make sure all of the parties have worked out the kinks. This is the final filter. So, most of the business is pro forma.

“Do I have a second?” asks the chair. “Do we have testimony in favor of the bill?”

“We support this bill,” says an advocate. An opponent says the opposite.

And the bill passes, ready for final passage on to the Assembly floor.

There are a few moments of tension. For some advocates, this is the last chance – they’re already on the dreaded “suspension” calendar, the holding tank for near-dead legislation.

One afterschool bill, the Republican bill, landed there.

For advocates who have worked for years, there is often a hint of desperation just below the surface of polite discourse. The tip-offs are the words – “unconscionable,” “outrage,” “we need to do something about this.”

But there’s no need for such rhetorical excess today for the Democratic bill on afterschool.

Sen. Torlakson steps to the podium and says the magic words. “There has been a lot of coming together” among advocates on the bill, he says. His bill will make it easier to “get money out the door” and there are accountability measures, he tells his Assembly colleagues.

A long line quickly forms behind

Torlakson and the advocates step up and introduce themselves and who they represent. “Bay Area Partnership...Children Now... School Age Consortium...Fight Crime: Invest in Kids...LA’s BEST... Children’s Initiative in San Diego...”

The vote is quick, like most of the business today. The bill passes easily, and it goes to the Assembly floor.

At the end of the month, on the last day of the session, the bill passes the Assembly along with hundreds of other bills.

Three weeks later, the governor signs the bill.

Proposition 49 is ready for implementation.



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Take Aways from the California Experience

While readers might draw many conclusions after reading the chronicle of how the Proposition 49 planning process unfolded, the commentary that follows frames four key areas for planners in other states to consider.

The Basics: Research and Effective Advocacy

For years, advocates in California knew that the system for distributing afterschool funds needed to change. The Legislative Analyst's Office's (LAO) unsparing report confirmed it. New legislation was a critical step.

These advocacy efforts, coupled with research gathered by the consulting firm, provide clear guideposts for afterschool advocates and policy makers in other states.

Afterschool programs needed to be more attractive to school administrators as well as to the community-based organizations whose subcontracts would allow them to operate many programs. The first step was the size of the grants and how they were handled. The legislation signed by the governor:

- Replaced the reimbursement system with a direct grant.
- Increased the caps and per student/per day rates.
- Lowered the “match” of non-state contributions of cash and in-kind services.
- Streamlined the application process and provided the California Department of Education (CDE) with more funds and support to administer a soon to be rapidly expanding program.

These changes would address the LAO critique that when the afterschool program had expanded in the past, more than half of the funds were unspent.

“The unused funding results from two main factors – the reimbursement system and budget and contracting delays,” said the LAO.

No one wants to “replicate that kind of failure,” said Tim Erwin, a Design Team member.

The budget and contracting delays were a long-time source of friction between the CDE

and program operators. The Boston Consulting Group (BCG) stepped in to advise the CDE on how to be more efficient, said Sue Stickel, formerly of the CDE. The entire planning process triggered an “enormous change in culture to get things going and revved up.” To Stickel, this was a telling example of that change: two business days after the governor signed the legislation, the request for proposals went out to schools.

The CDE would also end up receiving the authority to add 18 full-time employees, CDE's John Malloy said, raising the total number of CDE people working on state and federally funded afterschool programs to 40.

A more efficient CDE and the reforms in the law would make it easier for school administrators and school board members to sign on.

Larger grants would lessen the chance that a school board would have to divert money from other programs to help fund afterschool programs, said Erwin, who runs afterschool programs for the Newark School District, on the east side of San Francisco Bay. At the old rates of \$5 per student/per day, “You'd have a hard time selling it to your district,” he said.

To raise the rates to \$7.50 per student/per day, priorities had to be set. There wouldn't be enough money to offer a program to every elementary and middle school. Existing programs and programs in needy schools and their contractors would get first crack at the money.

The betting is that schools in affluent neighborhoods will not want to deal with the restrictions, thus opting out of the program, said Perry Chen, a consultant who monitored the process.

Ultimately, it is a “depth vs. breadth” argument, Chen said. This approach will allow

the program to go “deeper into the schools that have the need” and was “a wise tradeoff.”

This tradeoff was a critical, strategic decision. By targeting schools in poor neighborhoods, the program would be far from universal. But it would give the 1,400 schools in poor neighborhoods identified in the research by BCG the first shot at the money.

Identifying this large number of needy schools without state-funded afterschool programs was one of several key research tasks tackled by BCG. CDE’s willingness to open its files to the consulting firm’s analysts provided

many in the field with their deepest look into the status of afterschool in the state.

BCG’s research-heavy presentations would provide the grist for the work of the Design Team. “BCG lifted a lot of information so that people could see the reality in a very fragmented world,” said Julene Perez-Gonzalez, formerly of Packard.

Their readable analyses “allowed the team members to make decisions based on clear, hard facts,” said Cyndee Zandes of the Design Team. “You can ask more and better questions.”

Summary: Advocacy efforts that had been going on long before Proposition 49 planning began ensured that important changes were made to the afterschool program law to help make this opportunity attractive to schools and their subcontractors.

Research and analysis done by the consulting firm provided stakeholders across the state with the clearest look yet at the state of the afterschool field. This step served to elevate the work of planners and advocates.

Being armed with accurate, useful information is critical to effective advocacy and planning. Planners in other states should note California’s successful effort to understand the lay of the land and ensure the program was attractive to providers before jumping to the nuts and bolts of rollout.

Investment: Strategic Partnerships and Early Buy-in

While the level of financial investment in afterschool in California is certainly unique, taking a close look at the roster and commitment of key partners is critical to any afterschool expansion effort.

To some in California, linking a group of advocates, state officials and program operators with a business consulting firm to do the detailed planning work had a fresh appeal. Others needed to be talked into going along. So it is not surprising that as the planning progressed, buy-in was uneven.

The key partner was the CDE, the main education agency. It had the data and the resources; the implementation of Proposition 49 was its responsibility. While many noted its lukewarm attitude in the early days of planning, CDE received in the end fairly good marks from most for its engagement in the process. The engagement of other principal agencies – the Office of the Secretary of Education and the Department of Finance – was less intense.

One practical lesson that Scott Himmelstein drew from the experience was to gather “as many partners as early as possible,” said the former acting Secretary of Education. “There are obvious benefits to engaging them early and often.” But it is also important to look beyond the “usual suspects” when considering partnerships in afterschool.

When Himmelstein’s boss, the governor, launched the drive for Proposition 49 votes in 2002, he said the measure would “pay for itself in reduced crime, welfare and child-care costs,” the Los Angeles Times reported. While the state’s justice and social services communities provided important political support for the passage of Proposition 49, they

were not part of the planning process. The opinions of police chiefs, child care advocates or key afterschool players like the Boys & Girls Clubs were not solicited.

While the alliance between the governor’s office and the CDE was a significant step, the afterschool community needs to capitalize on opportunities to attract long-term, sustainable partners to aid its cause.

As the planning process unfolded, some advocates even wondered if the state’s main education agency was the right place for Proposition 49.

“This whole program is probably not a good fit for education,” said Sam Piha, a member of the Design Team. He said it might be better in the juvenile justice sector or even workforce development, particularly given the job-training needs for this kind of expansion.

Perhaps the justice community could become for the afterschool community the partner that farmers became for child nutrition advocates two generations ago.

In that case, two forces – those interested in nutritious foods for kids and those interested in stable prices for commodities – have worked together to make sure lunch is a given in every student’s school day.

No one quibbles that vegetables are an indispensable part of good nutrition, said Steve Amick, a member of the Design Team and the Advisory Committee. But, in afterschool, which provides safe havens and productive activities, “we are still trying to prove that vegetables are good for you.”

Sandy McBrayer, chair of the Steering and Advisory groups, would like to see the creation of an afterschool office with representatives from the Justice, Education and Health and

Human Services departments, as well as the governor's office. "Blended funding" from each agency would spark new combinations and ideas.

Requiring new police recruits to work in afterschool programs as part of their community service training, for instance, would be "fascinating," she said. It would also be a way to break down stereotypes for two groups often at odds – teens and cops.

Such alliances, armed with the hard data BCG collected and crunched, could help press the case that afterschool programs are indispensable to students, parents and their communities and schools.

In afterschool, "we don't yet have the kind of synergies we need with other powerful political" interests, said Amick.

This deficit hobbled efforts to get a key stakeholder – the legislature – to support the planning process.

The "pre-sell" of the planning idea, including bringing in an outside consulting firm, didn't get the resources and attention it needed to bring key legislative partners on board.

Some legislative staffers attended early Steering Committee meetings but their participation was limited. Legislative slots on the Advisory Committee remained unfilled for months.

A skilled government relations manager could have smoothed the legislative road a bit. But some of the key players at the table – foundations and BCG, for instance – didn't have the expertise or the responsibility to make this happen. Indeed, private foundations like the ones engaged in this planning process are barred from engaging or supporting lobbying activity.

Many involved in the process assumed that the unified, non-partisan pact between the governor and the superintendent's offices would translate into an effective voice in the legislature; the politics of the special election in November 2005 and K-12 education funding negated that assumption.

Planners in other states who are contemplating a similar expansion should think carefully about how to ensure that the legislature is informed and on board.

Summary: It is critical to secure buy-in from as many key partners as possible, as early as possible. In the case of California, the key partner was the California Department of Education, the main state education agency. But it was also critical that other players like the Department of Finance, the Office of the Secretary of Education and the legislature be on board and engaged.

Deepening relationships with systems and organizations outside of education (e.g., juvenile justice, workforce, public health) is a step many afterschool stakeholders in California have come to consider critical. Planners in other states should consider whether education is necessarily the most appropriate home for afterschool initiatives or whether a blended approach involving several public funding streams could spark useful new synergies.

Group Dynamics: Utilizing Expertise and Recognizing Limitations

The afterschool field in California, like in other states, is fragmented. One of the inherent values in pulling together program and policy experts is increased communication and the cross-pollination of ideas.

During the California experience, the Design Team became just such a forum for a fragmented field. “It was an opportunity for my voice to be heard,” said Laurie Isham, a Design Team member who operates programs in Visalia, in California’s central valley, at a forum in the fall of 2006. “I can’t emphasize how important that is.”

To Julene Perez-Gonzalez, a former program officer at the Packard Foundation, this interaction was one of the “big gifts” in the process.

For BCG executive Reggie Gilyard the creation of the Design Team, where people with different points of view could debate the issues, was a key step worth repeating. “I would highly recommend that for anyone who is looking to replicate this process,” he said.

With many voices at the table, the Babel quotient could have been high. But BCG was able to focus the team and move forward quickly in a short timeframe. “It was important to have a neutral party with a lot of management expertise,” to facilitate the process, said Lindsay Callahan, a Design Team member.

While the consulting firm brought the neutrality that Callahan speaks of to the day-to-day facilitation, the foundation consortium became a neutral hand in designing the planning process. Substantial resources are needed to do this kind of planning, and it is easier to do this with private money than to take the money from the program budgets.

“They did a very good job for this purpose,” said Scott Himmelstein, the former acting Secretary of Education. “I think it was great to have the foundations involved.”

Just as the California experience revealed issues to replicate, there are other steps that planners elsewhere would be wise to approach differently.

When the planning started, there were two groups – the Steering Committee of executives focused on strategy, the Design Team focused on operational details. The two groups did not meet, creating a disconnect that helped foster “unrealistic expectations of what we could accomplish,” said Sandy McBrayer, chair of the Steering Committee.

Communication was another area that needed more attention. It was never clear who was responsible for communication, both to the field (internal) and to the public (external). There was a need for a concrete conversation on communication guidelines, McBrayer said.

For BCG, a single point of contact, or champion, could have helped get quick and coordinated responses as issues arose. That didn’t happen, said Linda Segre, the former BCG executive, leaving BCG out of the loop on some critical issues like the political negotiations on per student/per day rates. Salisbury of Packard said, in retrospect, it might have been wise to push harder for a single state government point of contact for BCG. A single voice on the state’s side of the equation might have helped the process smooth over a problem that popped up for BCG – the first two project managers left the company just as the project was getting underway. A single point of contact might have been useful, said Himmelstein. “But it is hard to implement

that in a practical sense” given the multiple agencies involved.

There are two other related lessons that planners elsewhere might want to contemplate; both are connected to interactions outside the immediate planning group.

The first point is understanding the limitations of the planning group’s expertise and when to reach outside the group for help; the other is the importance of being cautious about reaching into areas outside the immediate planning group without the necessary expertise and background.

The first limitation was revealed when a BCG/Design Team’s recommendation got some scrubbing.

Frank Pisi, a CDE consultant who was not on the Design Team, was asked to review a Funding Guide that included 29 recommended sources for matching funds. In his review, Pisi found that 13 of the programs either no longer existed or would not be appropriate.

“While a well-intentioned effort, the Funding Guide suffers from a lack of complete information regarding funding and match sources,” the Pisi presentation to the Advisory committee said. “Unfortunately, given the lack of information about the sources, and the

inclusion of sources that either no longer exist or are not able to be used by ... programs, as match or otherwise, pursuing or using funding from these sources can place programs in precarious fiscal situations.”

This misstep could have been avoided if the BCG/Design Team had asked for someone from the CDE for help; the expertise obviously was near at hand.

The second limitation was revealed by BCG’s involvement in policies and politics. Many, including Sandy McBrayer, chair of the Advisory Committee, and Scott Himmelstein, the former acting Secretary of Education, say the firm overreached by mistaking the research it had done for expertise in content areas like afterschool program evaluation.

BCG executives, including Linda Segre, counter that policy and politics are not their areas of expertise and that they were not responsible for political and policy questions.

Given the ease with which planning can quickly morph into policy, and then politics, planners in other states might want to consider carefully the expertise of the planning group and any outside advisors – and then be as clear as possible about roles and responsibilities and the scope of the work.

Summary: Tapping expertise that exists within the state among providers, agencies and advocates and combining that with outside advice proved to be a useful strategy in California. The consulting firm’s research and facilitation skills complemented the expertise California stakeholders brought to the table about the afterschool field, its history and the state context.

Clear communication and reporting lines can help ensure the success of bringing in external advisors. Identifying early on the strengths and recognizing the limitations that each party brings to the table is also important.

Lasting Value: Defining, Creating and Sustaining Quality Programs

What does California want to get out of its substantial investment in afterschool? This question might seem like a starting point for planning discussions.

But it was one of the last questions to get airtime – and the answer is still evolving. This is partially the result of the political process.

When voters approve a major afterschool expansion they aren't asked whether children should learn piano or algebra or blow off steam on the playground.

By letting a couple of years pass with no long-range planning, the state missed an opportunity to have a detailed conversation about technical assistance, workforce development and accountability – key drivers of quality – well before there was a rush to “get money out the door.”

Still, during the Proposition 49 planning process, key stakeholders in California began a long overdue, yet nuanced, conversation about a question facing afterschool planners elsewhere: What constitutes a quality program and how do you create, sustain, monitor and improve quality at scale?

The Design Team/BCG final report clearly lays out the technical assistance and workforce challenges for California (or any state) as it gears up afterschool programs.

“The expansion of programs expected with Proposition 49 funding makes addressing existing weaknesses a critical priority,” the report said. “Shortcomings in workforce supply and gaps in technical assistance will be particularly important in an environment of vastly expanded programs.”

“Currently there is no central place to find information on technical assistance including timing and location of training and technical

assistance materials,” the report said.

Early on, BCG was advocating a “push” mechanism to find programs that need additional technical assistance. This would replace the current system, where additional help was provided only when a program operator asked for it.

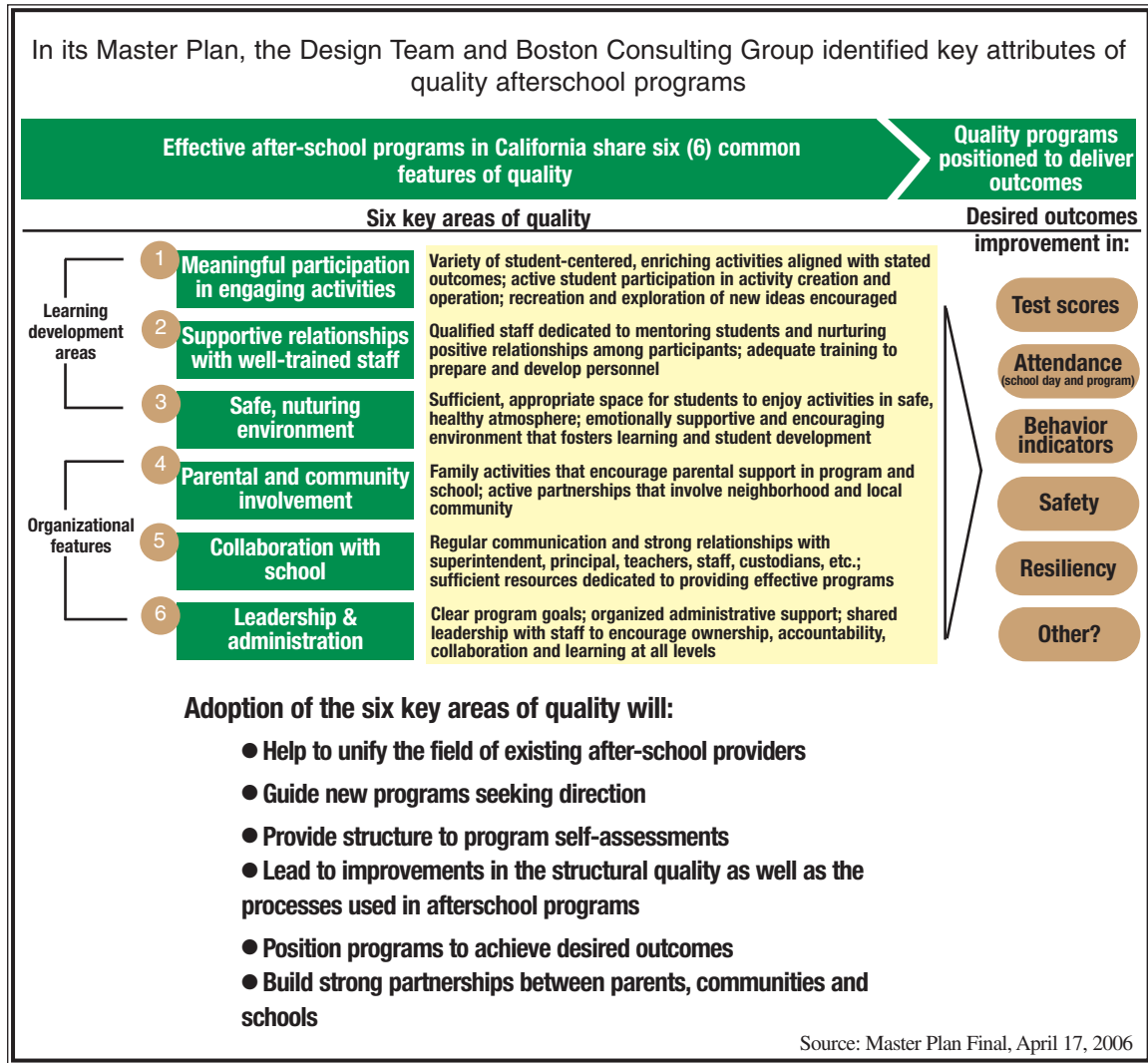
BCG recommended this “push system” as part of a plan to provide better access to information so CDE could more quickly alleviate some management and administrative problems.

Development of a statewide technical assistance website would help improve staff quality, along with a leadership mentoring program and a statewide e-learning system, the report said.

The Design Team/BCG saw the online recruiting and marketing resource center as a “quick win” to begin to address the “high turnover ... due to relatively lower pay, the part-time nature of most positions and the transient nature of the young adults” that plagues the field.

In the first couple of years of Proposition 49, the state would need to “maximize potential workforce sources, increase the attractiveness and value of an afterschool career and organize select activities that will increase retention of well-trained staff,” the report said.

In addition to recruiting, supporting and retaining a qualified workforce, planners grappled with the question of what outcomes to hold programs accountable for and how to measure them. In this context, the tension between youth development aims, including attracting disengaged students, and improving academic test scores would color much of the debate.



Tracking academic improvement was mandated by the existing law, so this was CDE’s focus. The rationale for making test scores one of the measures was linear. This was education money, so it ought to be aligned with one of the department’s major goals – improving test scores. CDE’s John Malloy said it most clearly: “This is how people judge our work.”

Others on the Design Team argued that to make afterschool programs accountable for test scores was wrong-headed, at best – that was the job of the schools. A better approach, said Sam Piha, a member of the Design Team, was

this: How do you get “disengaged” kids interested?

In a Design Team meeting, Piha led an exercise that involved a different set of 3Rs to talk about what was important in an afterschool program.

- **Relationships.** What relationships are built between adults and kids? Later, Design Team member Steve Amick would comment that “staffing is everything in afterschool.”
- **Relevance.** How can you make this different from school? Afterschool is a youth-driven opportunity, Piha said; you

can learn math cooking quesadillas.

● **Rigor.** Are the standards and the expectations linked? CDE, to date, had never turned down a program renewal if a program didn't meet standards. If there are solid measures will "CDE be willing to pull the plug?" Piha asked. Michael Koerner, another Design Team member, echoed that point during a Design Team meeting: "Do we have the courage to not support these activities in schools that don't meet the standards?"

The Design Team embraced a balanced approach. "The resulting sentiment among the team was that academic performance should be one of the outcomes to be measured and tracked, but other key outcomes should also be included," the Design Team/BCG report said. "Pupil attendance (both for the school day and the afterschool program), behavior indicators, safety and resiliency are among the set of outcomes the team strongly believes should be measured and tracked."

This approach would set a reasonable

expectation of what can be achieved by afterschool programs, Piha said.

In the political compromise that emerged, a program's success will be measured by program attendance and school-day attendance. A list of student test scores will be included in periodic reports, but only as a matter of information.

The idea is to attract the kids who are most likely going to attend the program, in order to keep program attendance high. And in terms of school-day attendance, the goal is to attract students who are missing a fair amount of school, so their school-day attendance numbers move up.

This combination may work to limit the "creaming" issue that concerns many – programs specifically recruiting kids who are already highly motivated and successful.

The new legislation directed the Advisory Committee to recommend a menu of other measures that could be used, statewide, to determine program effectiveness. This work is ongoing.

Summary: The planning process sparked a long overdue, nuanced conversation within the state about the purpose of afterschool programming and about several key drivers of quality – technical assistance, workforce development and accountability.

Developing consensus about what constitutes quality and being clear about what capacity currently exists when it comes to monitoring and improving quality at scale is critical. This evolving conversation in California will ultimately determine whether Proposition 49 delivers on its full promise.

Summary of Key Recommendations

The Design Team and the Boston Consulting Group submitted its final report – Master Plan for California After School – to the Before & After School Advisory Committee in May 2006. What follows is a summary of their key recommendations. Their report said:

“The process began with a mission and vision statement that guided recommendations across the remaining Master Plan elements. Eight recommendations, which are considered high priority and actionable, were selected out of a total of 19 recommendations. These high priority recommendations will have significant impact on improving the afterschool system and delivering the aspirations of the mission and vision statements. Some recommendations are actionable within the next four-to-six months, whereas others require a longer time horizon to implement. The priority

recommendations are underlined in the list of recommendations below.”

Mission and Vision: Mission and vision statements will unite the afterschool community and provide a beacon to guide programs.

1. Adopt the mission statement for afterschool in California and vision statement for 2015

Management and Administration: Effective management and administration of an enlarged afterschool system can be significantly improved by four key recommendations:

2. Improve database management and

“California Kids Deserve the After-School Advantage”

Supporting California children and youth to be safer, healthier and more successful through:

- Emotionally and physically nurturing environments
- Enhanced connections with families, schools and communities
- Enhanced academic excellence and improved literacy
- Engaging enrichment opportunities
- Expanded efforts to ensure student success in school and life

With equitable access to high quality, student-centered after-school programs that:

- Inspire kids to make positive choices
- Build character, leadership and teamwork capabilities, and self esteem
- Contribute to the development of positive peer relationships and connections between young people and caring adults in well supervised and secure settings to engender a sense of belonging
- Develop and strength collaboration between community partners and schools to deliver high quality services
- Build upon existing schools, communities and public resources to enable measurable success

Mission Statement

All California children and youth shall have access to engaging, high-quality, student centered after-school programs by 2015

Vision Statement

Source: Master Plan Final, April 17, 2006

access to information at CDE

3. Build an executive management dashboard to evaluate progress

4. Review the Statewide System of Field Support, with specific effort to optimize the Regional Lead system

5. Increase communication and collaboration between public and private groups

Operating Plan: In order to maintain a functional system of quality afterschool programs, a few key operational actions should be undertaken.

6. Adopt a statewide definition of a quality afterschool program and propose systematic semi-annual self assessments (the 'Quality' initiative)

7. Promote strong collaboration between schools and programs to secure critical site-level operational fundamentals, such as physical space and safety

Workforce: The team's workforce recommendations have been divided into those focused on staff quality and those focused on staff development and retention strategies.

Staff quality: Three recommendations address training issues facing California's afterschool programs:

8. Develop a leadership mentoring program

9. Develop statewide e-learning system

10. Develop a statewide technical assistance website

Staff development and retention: Although there is one quick win, most recommendations will require some time to achieve. Over the next four to six months, it is most important to:

11. Develop online recruiting and marketing resource center

And, over the next one to two years, three recommendations will institute changes that will have more long-lasting impact:

12. Maximize potential workforce sources

13. Increase the attractiveness and value of an afterschool career

14. Organize select activities that will increase retention of well-trained staff

Financial Plan: In order to provide the tools and support infrastructure for securing match funding, the team proposes three recommendations. It is critical to distribute the fundraising guide as soon as possible for the guide to be valuable in the upcoming school year. The consortium operating model, which requires efforts from Regional Leads to promote and develop the model, could have near-term impact for small and rural programs most in need of assistance. These two nearer term recommendations will ensure that programs have the tools that are essential for creating sustainable afterschool opportunities.

15. Distribute the fundraising guide that was developed during the Master Planning Process

16. Create a centralized funding pool organization

17. Promote and develop proven consortium operating models

Execution Plan: Timely implementation of the recommendations requires a strategy for coordinating efforts and ensuring success. The following recommendations comprise an effective execution plan:

18. Implement recommendations in an organized, timely fashion, according to provided work plans

19. Ensure sufficient resources for each recommendation

Source: Master Plan Final, April 17, 2006

Notes:

The after school bill that eventually passed was Senate Bill 638. California legislative action can be viewed at: <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/> To review, go to Bill Information and then search under 2005/2006 session.

The full Master Plan can be found at the Packard Foundation website <http://www.packard.org>. To access the plan, go to the Children, Families, and Communities page in the section What We Fund, and click through to After-School Programs for Children and Youth.