

About Expanded Learning Time/New York City

All across the nation, schools, community partners, school districts and states such as Massachusetts are piloting ways to expand learning and enrichment beyond the traditional school day and year, so all kids get a well-rounded education.

Expanded Learning Time/New York City (ELT/NYC) is New York City's innovative three-year demonstration project, launched at the start of the 2008-09 school year in 11 New York City public schools. The After-School Corporation (TASC) is managing the project in partnership with the New York City Department of Education (DOE) and the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD). TASC is a nonprofit organization that supports and innovates after-school programs that operate in New York City public schools.

Twenty-six schools applied in partnership with community organizations to expand learning time in their schools through this initiative. Based on the demonstrated need of each school and the vision and leadership represented in the detailed plans each team submitted, TASC, DOE and DYCD selected 13 schools to progress to the next stage, a guided and collaborative planning process that took place in June and July, 2008. Three school partnerships did not complete the planning stage, and the initiative moved forward with 10 participating schools.

What is ELT/NYC?

ELT/NYC is designed to expand kids' learning time by at least 30 percent by expanding the traditional school day and/or year. A primary objective is to develop strategies that connect more time for learning, discovery and enrichment to kids' higher achievement and healthy development.

Each participating school partners with a lead community organization to plan for and staff expanded learning activities. These include academic support and enrichments that go beyond the basics, such as arts, service-learning and fitness. In each school, the principal directs the project in partnership with a fulltime site coordinator who works for the lead community organization.

What are the core elements of ELT/NYC programs in schools?

Programs serve at least half the students in each school or 300 students, depending on school size. Students in grades kindergarten through eight are eligible to participate.

Students experience a gain in both academic support and enrichment activities beyond what is now available to them. The staff is a mix of teachers and community-organization staff. Students learn in small groups, with a ratio of one adult for each 10 students in elementary school and one adult for each 15 students in middle school. Teachers and parents are partners in planning and providing input into schedules and activities.

What was accomplished in the planning phase of the project?

Each selected school formed planning teams that include the principal, a representative of the community partner, at least one parent and one teacher (and, in the case of middle schools, one student). Through a series of summer workshops led by TASC, each planning team worked to articulate a vision for their ELT/NYC program; designed a program plan that defines the goals for students, and specifies the scale, content, scheduling, staffing and costs; surveyed parents and identified community partners; defined and developed their roles and responsibilities, reporting protocols, and communications; revised and revisited their program models, activity schedules and budgets; and identified additional resources within the school community to support the effort.

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Describe and list the 10 participating schools and their community partners.

Three currently serve middle school-aged students and the others serve elementary students. Seven propose to expand the traditional school day and four propose to expand both the day and the year. Three are in the Bronx, three are in Brooklyn, two are in Manhattan and two in Queens. Two are charter schools.

The participating schools (listed with their lead community partners) are: Mott Haven Academy Charter School with The New York Foundling; PS 59 with The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families; Anne Hutchinson School (PS 78) with Building Educated Leaders for Life (BELL); Brooklyn School for Global Studies with Citizen Schools; Young Scholars' Academy for Discovery and Exploration with University Settlement; The UFT Elementary Charter School with Groundwork; The Island School (PS/MS 188) with The Educational Alliance; Thurgood Marshall Academy Lower School with Abyssinian Development Corporation; Edward Bleeker Junior High School (JHS185) with The Child Center of New York; and The Samantha Smith School (PS 182) with Learning through an Expanded Arts Program (LEAP).

How is this supported by public and private fundraising?

Schools are contributing at least 10 percent of the program cost in the first year, with school contributions increasing in the second year. TASC will both fund programs and raise private funds in partnership with community organizations, or through collaborative fundraising.

What will the project demonstrate?

At the end of three years, the partners expect to learn through an independent evaluation about the feasibility of expanding learning time; whether and how students benefit in their academic, civic, social and emotional development; the cost of such programs and how to finance them; and how to develop and support programs that help children learn not only more, but also learn differently.