

A Statewide Strategy for Improving Student Achievement in Persistently Low-Performing Schools

Investing in Innovation (i3) Fund

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New Jersey After 3, Inc.

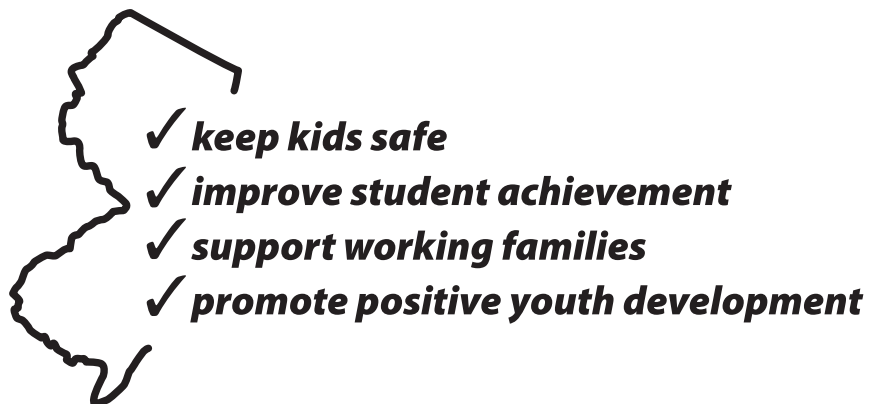


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Absolute Priority Selection

Priority 4: Innovations that Turn Around Persistently Low-Performing Schools

Introduction

Founded in 2004, New Jersey After 3, Inc. (NJ After 3) is a private, nonprofit organization that expands learning time by more than 40% each school day for urban, rural, and suburban public school students statewide. As the only statewide public/private partnership of its kind in the Nation, NJ After 3 formally partners local nonprofit organizations (called “program partners”) with public schools in the delivery of an evidence-based program model that expands learning time three hours each school day, five days per week. NJ After 3 represents a successful, scalable strategy to improve student achievement and break down barriers to student success in persistently low-performing public schools.

NJ After 3 serves as the lead applicant in this project, and seeks a Development Grant totaling \$5 million over a three-year period through the Investing in Innovation (i3) Fund to implement a project with a total cost of \$7,207,592. New Jersey After 3 and its program partners will provide a \$2,207,592 match investment (~31% of the total project cost). NJ After 3 has entered into agreements with Camden Public Schools, Newark Public Schools, and Trenton Public Schools as “official partners” in this project. The i3 grant and matching funds will be used to launch and measure NJ After 3 Expanded Learning Time (ELT) programs that will serve 1,500 high-need students who are enrolled in ten (10) persistently low-performing public schools. The project will serve students in grades kindergarten through eighth grade in schools that have not made Adequate Yearly Progress for three years or more.

Broad Strategy to Achieve Project Goals

NJ After 3 will increase the amount of time students are taught Language Arts and mathematics by teachers who are certified in those content areas (70 minutes each school day), and will provide these lessons within a framework that includes enrichment activities led by trained nonprofit afterschool educators. Combined, these activities will build students’ skills in the critical areas of Language Arts and mathematics, inject relevance, and create opportunities for hands-on applications; making school and learning fun work for students. By strengthening students’ core academic skills, developing stronger student connections to school, cultivating a sense of enjoyment in learning, and forging

connections between students and additional caring adult educators and mentors; NJ After 3 will lay a strong foundation in the elementary and middle grades that ensures student participants build the skills and receive the necessary support to advance through high school graduation and achieve college and career success.

Need for the Project

Access to the “American Dream” for low-income, at-risk students is in jeopardy, and nowhere is that more apparent than in the persistently low performing schools of Camden, Newark, and Trenton, New Jersey. In each city, there exists a vicious cycle of poverty that creates barriers that prevent high-risk youth from achieving the education necessary to build a career and properly support families later in life. The following chart outlines several key socio-economic variables that differentiate these cities from the State averages.

	Camden	Newark	Trenton	New Jersey
Total Population ^a	71,917	251,380	77,406	8,473,863
Average Per Capita Income ^a	\$12,025	\$16,518	\$16,591	\$33,219
% of Children in Single Parent Households ^a	29%	51%	55%	24%
Percent of Population Living Below the Poverty Line ^a	40%	25%	21%	9%
Graduation Rates (2009) ^b	55%	89%	71%	93%
Unemployment Rate (Jan. 2010) ^c	18.7%	15.9%	14.0%	10.3%
Incidents of Violent Crime per 100,000 residents (2008) ^d	2,471	1,058	1,278	335

^a U.S. Census Bureau, “American Community Survey,” (2005-2007), <http://factfinder.census.gov>.

^b NJ DOE School Report Cards (2009), <http://education.state.nj.us>.

^c U.S. Bureau of Labor, “Local Area Unemployment Statistics,” (Jan. 2010), <http://data.bls.gov/>.

^d Calculated using data from: U.S. Department of Justice, “Offenses Known to Law Enforcement, by State by City,” *FBI Uniform Crime Reports* (2008), <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/ucr.htm>.

Across the districts of Camden, Newark, and Trenton, 53 elementary and middle schools, and five high schools, have failed to reach Adequate Yearly Progress for three consecutive years or more as described in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. NJ After 3 will serve 10 of these schools

through the proposed project, and will select these schools through its established competitive RFP process.

Student and school success are more often anomalies than the norm in these targeted school communities, and it is clear from the following chart that, on average, student performance in these targeted districts diminishes as students advance through the elementary grades and into high school. Without meaningful reform and effective structures to improve student achievement and overcome barriers to student success in the elementary and middle school years, far too many students will enter high school ill-equipped to succeed.

According to CQ Press, which tracks violence and crime in 393 cities and towns nationally, Camden, Trenton and Newark were ranked the 1st, 29th and 32nd most violent cities in the United States in 2009, respectively. In 2008, residents of these three cities comprised 5% of New Jersey’s total population; however, these cities were responsible for 19% of violent crime incidents that year in the entire State¹.

NJ Standardized Test (NJASK) Proficiency Rates in Official Partner Districts Kindergarten through Eighth Grade (2007-2008)					
*Percentage of students who tested at proficient or advanced levels.					
	Camden	Trenton	Newark	New Jersey	State Target Proficiency Rate
Elementary Grades (K-5)					
Language Arts	40.8%	50.8%	60.7%	77.6%	73%
Mathematics	49.3%	54.6%	70.2%	84.3%	69%
Middle Grades (6-8)					
Language Arts	24.5%	29.7%	44.8%	71.3%	72%
Mathematics	21.8%	24.5%	42.4%	69.6%	61%

¹ U.S. Department of Justice, "Offenses Known to Law Enforcement, by State by City," *FBI Uniform Crime Reports* (2008), <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/ucr.htm>

The following statistics illustrate the financial significance of high school drop outs on the State's economy².

- Nearly 19,600 students did not graduate from New Jersey's high schools in 2009; the lost lifetime earnings in New Jersey for that class of dropouts alone totals nearly \$5.1 billion.
- New Jersey would save more than \$258.6 million in health care costs over the course of the lifetimes of each class of dropouts had they earned their diplomas.
- New Jersey households would have over \$1.8 billion more in accumulated wealth if all heads of households had graduated from high school.
- If New Jersey's high schools graduated all students ready for college, the state would save almost \$95.6 million a year in community college remediation costs and lost earnings.

While there is no single reason that students drop out of school, a variety of studies indicate that a deficiency in basic academic skills and a lack of positive school engagement significantly diminish the likelihood of a student earning a high school diploma. In fact, there is strong evidence to indicate that most dropouts are already on the path to leaving school by the time they reach the sixth grade³. Several researchers have identified specific indicators that emerge in the elementary grades and help to identify future dropouts. These indicators include poor grades, poor school attendance, lack of interest in school, and belonging to a peer-group engaged in high-risk behavior⁴.

Both academic and positive social engagement are integral components of empowering youth to successfully navigate the education pipeline. Research shows that a lack of student engagement is predictive of dropping out, even after controlling for academic achievement and student background. Even for those students who graduate, sources increasingly indicate that high school graduates are not adequately prepared for college or careers, prompting fears that the next generation of workers will not

² Alliance for Excellent Education, *Fact Sheet: High School Dropouts in America* (February 2009), http://www.all4ed.org/files/GraduationRates_FactSheet.pdf

³ Robert Balfanz, Liza Herzog, and Douglas J. Mac Iver, "Preventing Student Disengagement and Keeping Students on the Graduation Path in Urban Middle-Grades Schools: Early Identification and Effective Interventions," *Education Psychologist*, 42 (2007): 223-235.

⁴ Louise Kennelly and Maggie Monrad, National High School Center, "Approaches to Dropout Prevention: Heeding Early Warning Signs With Appropriate Interventions," (October 2007), <http://www.betterhighschools.org>.

be equipped with the skills and qualities necessary to thrive in the technology-dependent 21st Century workforce⁵. NJ After 3 programs provide an ideal platform for the broad variety of curricula and personalized instruction that keep students interested in learning and committed to staying in school, and provide exposure to activities, ideas, and mentors that help youth to build their skill-sets. Students who participate in afterschool programs improve in key areas, including social and emotional development, increased engagement in school and avoidance of risky behaviors that lead to success in school and beyond. These improvements have been documented in a number of studies of other comparable programs, most notably the multi-city evaluation conducted by Deborah Vandell and colleagues⁶ in 2007 and Policy Studies Associates' three-year evaluation of NJ After 3, published in 2009.

Project Design

As the only statewide nonprofit organization of its kind in the country, NJ After 3 focuses specifically on the management, quality, growth and sustainability of evidence-based programs that expand learning time in public schools. Over the course of six years, the organization has steadily grown to become a diverse network of 45 nonprofit agency partners and programs that served more than 12,000 students in 114 public schools during the 2009-2010 school year. NJ After 3's ELT programs provide structured, research-based curricula and activities that improve language arts, math, computer, and study skills; improve classroom grades and homework completion rates; promote physical activity and social development; introduce careers and life skills; and teach 21st Century skills - including teamwork, leadership, increased creativity, and oral and written communication skills. The nine core elements that frame the NJ After 3 model are:

Public/Private Partnerships - Programs are operated in public schools by local nonprofit organizations in collaboration with those schools.

⁵ The Forum for Youth Investment. "Ready By 21 Advocates' Series Action Brief # 2 Ready for Work," (September 2006); Beth Buehlmann, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, "Careers for the 21st Century: The Importance of Education and Worker Training for Small Businesses," (June 2004).

⁶ Deborah Vandell, Elizabeth Reisner, and Kim Pierce. University of CA, Irvine, University of Wisconsin – Madison, Policy Studies Associates, Inc., "Outcomes Linked to High-Quality Afterschool Programs: Longitudinal Findings from the Study of Promising Afterschool Programs," Published Report (October 2007), <http://www.policystudies.com/studies>.

Regular Attendance - Programs operate three hours per day, each day school is in session. It is expected that children attend program each day. NJ After 3 programs are not “drop-in” programs.

Significant Size - A typical NJ After 3 program will serve approximately 30% of the total school population, as programs typically serve upwards of 150 students each.

Comprehensive Programming - Programs offer a comprehensive and balanced set of activities that include academic remediation and support, career skills, visual and performing arts, sports, fitness, nutrition, and service learning.

Alignment with School Day Learning - Activities are aligned with the academic standards of the school, in order to complement, but not duplicate, school day instruction. Site Coordinators participate in grade level meetings and curriculum meetings, and design program elements in partnership with the school principal, teachers, parents and students.

Rich and Diverse Staffing Teams - Each program is led by a full-time, year round Site Coordinator who works in the school, and a mix of trained afterschool educators that include Certified Teachers, college students, teaching artists, and youth workers.

Low Student/Adult Ratio - Programs maintain a maximum 1:10 educator to student ratio for grades K - six; 1:12 for grades seven and eight.

Family Involvement - Programs engage parents and family in all aspects of their operations. This is often achieved through community evenings, parent workshops on a variety of topics, and culminating student events and presentations.

Affordability - Annual operating costs are approximately \$1,600 per student per year, and nonprofit program partners contribute between 15% and 20% in matching funds to total program costs.

Upon receiving notification of an i3 grant award, NJ After 3 will publish and perform an objective and transparent Request for Proposals (RFP) process in official partner district communities to identify the ten nonprofit/public school partnerships that will operate NJ After 3 programs. A sample RFP is included in the attachments section of this proposal (See *Appendix H*). Eligible nonprofit organizations and their official school partner(s) will be required to demonstrate that the nonprofit applicant and partner school have collaborated in the design of the program within the NJ After 3 core elements; have built formal mechanisms to ensure ongoing communication, collaboration, and data sharing; have clear goals and measures for student success that are consistent with the goals of this specific

project; and will utilize the following program framework and staffing pattern in order to achieve program goals.

The following outlines the project design, the staffing structures, and the roles of each partner in achieving successful implementation of NJ After 3’s ELT programs.

Time/ Duration	New Jersey After 3 Expanded Learning Time (ELT) Program: Activity and Staffing Pattern (Monday through Friday)
~3:00 PM	Traditional School Day Ends - Students transition to the NJ After 3 program and receive a nutritional snack
70 min	Academic Remediation and Tutoring Period - <u>Staffing Pattern</u> : Certified Teachers work alongside trained nonprofit Afterschool Educators to achieve a total adult to student ratio 1 to 10. <u>Description of Activity</u> : Students in need of remedial support receive focused tutoring from Certified Teachers in core curriculum subjects. Nonprofit Afterschool Educators serve as teachers’ aides and support students in the completion of homework and other academic activities. Certified Teachers (preferably district teachers) and Afterschool Educators are employees of the partner nonprofit agency, unless Districts can provide in-kind support through Title I or other funding.
~4:20 PM	10-Minute Transition - Certified Teachers fade, nonprofit Afterschool Educators begin Academic Enrichment/Youth Development activities with students
90 min	Academic Enrichment/Youth Development Period - <u>Staffing Pattern</u> : Nonprofit Afterschool Educators (Certified Teachers, college students, community members) lead students in structured activities that are aligned with school day learning. The total student to adult ratio does not exceed 1 to 12. <u>Description of Activity</u> : Afterschool Educators lead students in a variety of activities within the framework of NJ After 3's <i>Five Key Content Areas</i> . These are: Academic Support; Career & 21st Century Skills; Sports, Health & Fitness; Civic Engagement & Leadership; and Arts & Culture. NJ After 3 will provide partners with turn-key, evidence based curriculum in a number of areas. Full- and part-time AmeriCorps members will supplement program staff teams, lead service learning activities with an emphasis on literacy skills.
~6:00 PM	Dismissal - After a brief reflection period, students are dismissed for the day

Roles of Partners

New Jersey After 3 - Lead Applicant/Project Manager

Provides:

Project Management, Administrative Support, Evidence-Based Program Model, Year-Round Training & Technical Assistance, Curriculum & Content, AmeriCorps Members, Evaluation Administration, Fiscal Management, Fundraising

Camden, Newark, and Trenton School Districts – Official Partners

Provide:

Program and Office Space in Schools; Access to Student Performance Data; Inclusion of Nonprofit Program Staff in Curriculum and Instruction Meetings, School Faculty Meetings, and School Grade Level Meetings; School Security; School Custodial Services; Nutritious Daily Snacks for Students

Sub-Grantee Nonprofit Organization Partners (“Program Partners”) - Selected through RFP

Provide:

Program Staffing; Implementation of NJ After 3 Program Model, Fundraising

Project Goals and Strategies

Goals

The project will expand learning time by three (3) hours each school day (~180/year) for approximately 1,500 students in grades kindergarten through eighth grade across a total of ten persistently low-performing schools in the districts of Camden, Newark and Trenton. The goals for each program are as follows:

1. To increase the average score of student participants in **Language Arts** in each school served by the project by four (4) percentile points each school year according to standardized state test scores (NJASK).
2. To increase the average score of student participants in **mathematics** in each school served by the project by six (6) percentile points each school year according to standardized state test scores (NJASK).
3. To improve the average (school day) **attendance rates** of participating students by two percent (2%) each year of the project.

4. To improve the average **on-time promotion rates** of participating students by six percent (6%) each year of the project.

NJ After 3 will achieve these goals by applying the following four strategies.

Strategy #1 - Expand Learning Time in Core Content Areas of Language Arts and Mathematics

NJ After 3's ELT programs will provide 70 minutes of additional instructional time each school day during the Academic Remediation and Tutoring Period. During this time, instruction will be provided in the core curriculum content areas of Language Arts and mathematics. Instruction will be led by teachers who are certified in the subjects and supported by trained nonprofit afterschool educators. The staff to student ratio will be 1 to 10 during this period for grades K to six, and 1 to 12 for grades seven and eight. Instruction will be coordinated with school day classroom teachers to ensure that individual students are receiving instruction in the areas of greatest need. Staffing will be structured and lessons will be planned so that Language Arts content will be the focus of instruction three days per week, and mathematics will be the concentration the remaining two days per week (unless student needs require a different configuration). In addition, afterschool educators will ensure that homework assignments are completed, providing assistance as necessary during this period.

Strategy #2 - Strengthen the Connection Between the Traditional School Day and the ELT Program

Each program will embed a full-time Site Coordinator in each partner school. Each Site Coordinator will manage the daily operations of the NJ After 3 program in the assigned school, and will work closely with the principal and classroom teachers to deliver a program that will best meet the academic needs of student participants. Site Coordinators will meet with school day classroom teachers biweekly, regularly provide the classroom teachers with updates on activities and observations, and revise instructional approaches as necessary. Classroom teachers, in turn, will provide Site Coordinators with a monthly assessment on the academic progress of participating students. Lastly, Site Coordinators will regularly inform parents of student progress and seek their assistance in solving any problems that arise.

Strategy #3 - Provide Students with a Rich Mix of Activities that are Relevant, Engaging, and Fun

Policy Studies Associates' evaluation of NJ After 3 showed that students who participated in NJ After 3 programs did so at a higher frequency than participants in comparable programs found nationally. The evaluation revealed an average daily student attendance rate of 81%, which was

achieved, in large part, due to the satisfaction and enjoyment that students felt towards their program. NJ After 3 will ensure that all programs continue to implement a consistent core program that offers a rich mix of content and structured enrichment activities designed to provide a well-rounded, enjoyable experience for student participants. Activities will be confined to NJ After 3's *Five Key Content Areas* of: Academic Support; Career & 21st Century Skills; Sports, Health & Fitness; Civic Engagement & Leadership; and Arts & Culture. NJ After 3 will provide partners with turn-key, evidence-based curriculum in these content areas. NJ After 3 AmeriCorps members will supplement program staff teams, leading service learning activities with an emphasis on literacy skills. Partner organizations may adopt and create their own specific curriculum within these categories to supplement core activities based on individual school and community needs, but must ensure compliance with the NJ After 3 program framework.

Strategy #4 - Provide Each Program Staff Member with a Required Year-Round Training Program

NJ After 3 will provide each afterschool educator with year-round training. Training will begin with an annual summer orientation, and will be sustained through monthly Site Coordinator meetings and quarterly regional trainings. These trainings will be supplemented by ongoing, site-based training and modeling that support the successful implementation of emerging content and special initiatives. In addition, NJ After 3 will conduct city-specific trainings to address local needs and foster city-wide collaboration and communication across school clusters within an official partner district. The annual training cycle will conclude with the Promising Practices Institute, which will showcase and disseminate the best teaching strategies, activities and practices found throughout NJ After 3's network, encouraging continual improvement and peer sharing across program sites. Site Coordinators will receive, in total, a minimum of 40 hours of professional development each year of the project.

Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect

In April 2009, Policy Studies Associates (PSA) of Washington, DC published the findings of a three-year study of NJ After 3. The longitudinal evaluation provides promising evidence of NJ After 3's impact as a statewide, public/private partnership that expands learning time in public schools, and demonstrates the critical academic improvements, behavioral changes, and other benefits among those students who participated in NJ After 3 programs.

Documented findings of the study included:

- Significant Gains in Language Arts Skills - Reading and Language Arts skills rose significantly for students who participated in NJ After 3 programs for two years or more, according to their school day classroom teachers. PSA evaluators identified NJ After 3 participants who had been rated by a teacher in any two consecutive years of the three-year evaluation period. Ratings of these students' reading and language arts skills rose from a scale score of 2.79 (on a five-point scale) in the first year to a scale score of 3.14 in the second year, which represents a significant learning gain (effect size=.24).
- Improved Study Skills - Students who were highly active in the program demonstrated significantly higher scores in study skills than those who were less active. The vast majority of participants also reported feeling more confident in their academic abilities and more positive about school.
- Improved Student Performance and Attitudes Toward School - The study found that student participants reported finishing their homework more often, solving math problems better, feeling better about schoolwork, and achieving better grades and attributed these benefits to the NJ After 3 program.
- Exceptionally High Daily Attendance Rates - NJ After 3's average daily student attendance rates are exceptionally high for the field of afterschool learning (81%). NJ After 3 participants participated in their NJ After 3 program an average of 115 days per school year in 2007-2008. Conversely, a study of the Federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program conducted by Public/Private Ventures revealed that in 2007-2008, 21st CCLC student participants attended their program an average of 58 days – almost half the frequency of NJ After 3 students.

The PSA study of NJ After 3 analyzed data and opinions from a broad base of sources and stakeholders. Survey participants included school day teachers, student participants and parents.

What Teachers Reported: Policy Studies Associates found that students' regular classroom teachers identified important academic outcomes among students who participated in NJ After 3 programs. Teachers reported in 2007-08 that over three-quarters of program participants were at grade level or above in their ability to draw conclusions from written materials, spell, identify the main idea in a passage of reading, and communicate orally. Teachers described most participants as “almost always”

or “often” demonstrating the key study skills, and reported gains in academic engagement and interpersonal skills, study habits, reading and language arts, and technology-related skills during each year of the evaluation. Similarly, surveyed teachers reported that most participants’ technology skills were good or excellent in comparison to other students at their school, particularly in using word processing programs, spreadsheet programs, and the Internet. According to PSA, this cluster of skills is commonly believed to constitute essential cognitive abilities needed to navigate the career and citizenship demands of the 21st Century.

What Students Reported: PSA found that most student participants believe that participation in NJ After 3 has helped them academically. In 2007-08, surveyed students indicated that they “agreed” or “agreed a lot” that the program helped them to finish their homework more often, get better grades in school, read and understand better, solve math problems better, write better, and use computers to do schoolwork better. A large majority of participants reported that they generally enjoyed their experiences in the afterschool program. In addition, they conveyed that staff members believe students can do things well, treat them with respect, try to be fair, think they can learn new things, and care about them.

What Parents Reported: Parents interviewed by PSA were satisfied with their children’s NJ After 3 experiences and outcomes. Many indicated that their children were introduced to new activities and classes that they would not otherwise have experienced due to the family’s financial constraints. Several said that their children began to demonstrate new or improved skills in reading and math as well as improvements in social skills and attitudes toward school after they enrolled in NJ After 3.

Diversity and Program Content: Evaluators examined the content and quality of program services from many vantage points and produced descriptive findings across the initiative as a whole and at the level of individual programs. Looking most broadly, analyses revealed that NJ After 3 programs provided a wide range of activities to address the academic, social, cultural, and recreational interests and needs of participants. During 2007-08, according to data recorded in the initiative’s central data collection and reporting system, the average NJ After 3 participant experienced the following hours of programming:

- 33 hours of literacy learning and practice

- 25 hours of mathematics activities, including mathematics applications
- 19 hours of technology and science-related activities
- 32 hours of study skills and college exploration
- 41 hours of visual arts and performing arts activities
- 38 hours of community service/character education activities

Past Evaluation Findings Informing Program Design and Implementation

Service Learning: In 2000, a report by the RMC Research Corporation summarized key findings related to service learning: Service learning is correlated with greater school engagement, higher state test scores, improved attendance, increases in responsibility and self-esteem, increased positive interaction with peers and reduced levels of alienation and behavioral problems. Civic Engagement Programs and Youth Development: A Synthesis, published in *Child Trends* in May 2002, corroborated these findings, reporting that participants in service learning programs had higher rates of school attendance and educational aspirations, and were less likely to get suspended, fail or drop out of school. The PSA study of NJ After 3 programs revealed that student academic improvement was positively correlated with the availability of community service projects in the NJ After 3 program. This i3 project will double the number of hours that students engage in service learning, making it a requirement that students engage in structured service learning activities for at least 90 minutes each week. One full-time NJ After 3 AmeriCorps member will be assigned to work at each program site, and will actively engage students in weekly service learning activities as part of the Academic Enrichment component of the program (see earlier program schedule chart).

The PSA evaluation demonstrates specific areas of student growth and improvement, and provides promising evidence that NJ After 3 serves as an effective lever to provide the necessary skills and experiences students need to succeed in high school and graduate on time. Building upon its experience and the findings of the independent PSA evaluation, NJ After 3 will increase the emphasis on academic remediation in its daily program structure and will provide a more rigorous ongoing evaluation to measure student progress and, as necessary, make adjustments to individual student programs.

Experience of the Eligible Applicant

NJ After 3 has demonstrated its ability to implement high-quality programs with a quick start-up time in school communities throughout the State. This is especially true in low-performing, urban school districts where the majority of its programs are offered. More than 70% of NJ After 3 programs have been offered in Title I schools, in partnerships with districts considered “low-performing” (Abbott) by the New Jersey Department of Education. NJ After 3 has strong, collaborative relationships with each of the three official partner school districts, a robust network of experienced nonprofit program partners that are able to scale up NJ After 3 programs easily, and strong ties with the philanthropic sector to ensure sustainability and growth.

NJ After 3’s growth trajectory demonstrates its ability to grow to scale while maintaining quality and fidelity to its program model. Within 4 months of inception, NJ After 3 launched 21 programs that served 4,000 students in the 2004-2005 school year. The next year, its network had expanded to 50 programs that served 11,000 students. By its third year, 2006 – 2007, NJ After 3 programs were operating in over 100 schools, serving 15,000 students statewide.

NJ After 3 has applied its six years of organizational experience and recommendations from its independent evaluator to modify its program offerings for greater impact on student achievement and overall program success through this specific project. Included in these modifications are using Certified Teachers to provide 70 minutes of content-focused remedial instruction in each school day, explicit inclusion of service learning opportunities, and increasing its already robust annual training program to include focused local trainings in each of the official partner districts.

Project Evaluation Plan

Through an independent evaluation, NJ After 3 will test the hypothesis that its Expanded Learning Time programs, featuring structured academic remediation and enrichment activities, will increase student achievement and engagement in low-performing schools. The purpose of this quasi-experimental, three-year evaluation will be twofold – (1) to assess the impact NJ After 3 programs have on the expressed project goals related to student achievement and performance, and (2) assess the quality of program implementation. NJ After 3 will continue to work with Policy Studies Associates to conduct the evaluation.

In the proposed comparative, interrupted time-series design, NJ After 3 students will be compared to a matched comparison group of similar, nonparticipating students in another school within the same district. Comparison schools will be similar to treatment schools on basic profile criteria such as student race/ethnicity, special education enrollment, and income levels. Official district partners will share basic demographic data, grades, and standardized test scores for all participating and nonparticipating students. Since program participants will not be randomly assigned to groups but will self-select, initial analyses will examine demographic and performance data of students in each group as the means to identify any potential baseline differences between groups. NJ After 3 will develop a Quality Rubric that will be used to track progress towards project and program goals and will assess each program's fidelity to the NJ After 3 program model. The Rubric will contain specific benchmarks that will be assessed three times each program year (September, January and June), and will quantify progress towards desired student outcomes and overall program implementation.

Student Outcomes: The independent evaluation will measure the impact of programs on student outcomes, comparing student participants' scores on key variables to those of nonparticipants. The comparison group will be comprised of students from the same official partner district, similar in demographics and baseline achievement to the experimental group. Three years of retrospective data on all students in the treatment and comparison groups will be collected from district records plus three years of current-year (project duration) data from both district records and student survey data. Each student will be assigned an ID number in the data collection process to ensure anonymity in analysis and reporting. Key outcome variables will include: course (classroom) grades in Language Arts and mathematics; standardized test scores in Language Arts and mathematics according to the NJASK (state assessment); 21st Century skills (Teamwork, Leadership, Oral Communication Skills, Written Communication Skills, and Problem Solving); and student behavior (school-day attendance, study habits, delinquency, social behavior, attitudes towards school, aspirations). Outcomes related to 21st Century skills and Student Behavior (except attendance and delinquency), will be assessed through pre- and post-treatment scores for program participants only, using rubrics completed by Site Coordinators and afterschool educators at the beginning and conclusion of each school year. Rubric "scores" will measure change in annual growth and cumulative growth over the three-year project period. Students will complete surveys at the beginning and end of each year in order to measure

perceived changes in skills, attitudes, and behavior as they relate to the key variables. In addition to assessing the statistical significance of effects, effect sizes will be calculated and considered in order to determine the magnitude of the effect. Significant results with low effect sizes (below .30) will be interpreted with caution.

NJ After 3 expects that 100% of programs that are faithful to its model will demonstrate significant improvements on key variables each year of the project period. Specific program elements will be tracked and correlated with program outcomes, in order to best determine the effectiveness of specific components of the program model and inform future program improvements and replication. Upon successfully meeting the expressed project outcomes, culminating in Year 3, NJ After 3 will increase enrollment at each of the 10 schools to include at least 60% of the enrolled student population (with the assumption that 100% enrollment is implausible for non-mandatory programs). With the majority of students in each school enrolled in the program, NJ After 3 expects to significantly improve overall school performance, due to its impact on individual student performance, and will compare overall school improvement with similar schools in the district. During the three-year i3 grant program, NJ After 3 will aggressively pursue and secure private and public investments to fuel this enrollment expansion. Concurrently, NJ After 3 intends to expand access to these programs to new schools and districts, in alignment with its mission.

Program Implementation: The Quality Rubric, in line with the U.S. Department of Education's priorities, will assess the fidelity of programs to the NJ After 3 model; cost per child; and student academic and behavioral outcomes, measured three times per year throughout the term of the project. The Rubric will be completed in September, January and June each year of the project. Formative assessments will be made throughout the school year by Program Support Officers and discussed with stakeholders, and annual summative assessments will summarize the outcomes of the school year for public consumption. The goal of this project will be for all programs to adhere to the model within the expected cost range, indicating high quality, cost-efficient program delivery. Extrapolating from NJ After 3's previous independent evaluation results and other literature in the field, adherence to this model will result in significant gains in students' academic scores, 21st Century skills, social behavior, and both school and program attendance.

In order to be considered faithful to the program model, programs must meet 80% of requirements; the percentage of programs (90%) that achieve fidelity will be a key outcome of this project. Progress towards these goals will be assessed frequently throughout the year in order to troubleshoot any challenges and replicate effective program strategies and techniques. NJ After 3 Program Support Officers will monitor enrollment, attendance, and finance monthly by analyzing data entered into NJ After 3's online database each month and will discuss positive and negative trends with Site Coordinators. On a bimonthly basis, Program Support Officers will formally meet with Site Coordinators to discuss progress on other measures, including school day alignment, activities, parent involvement, and staffing, and submit reports on status to the Project Director and Evaluator. The Executive Director of each program partner and the principal of each partner school will submit bimonthly assessments of program quality, in order to determine the strength of the public/private partnership. NJ After 3 will use concerns and challenges emanating from these reports to inform program progress and initiate any necessary modification. Each district's Program Support Officer will serve as a critical resource in assisting Site Coordinators to make any adjustments necessary based on performance feedback, from brainstorming solutions to modeling new techniques. Together, they will identify problems, devise solutions, implement changes, and measure the outcome of those changes.

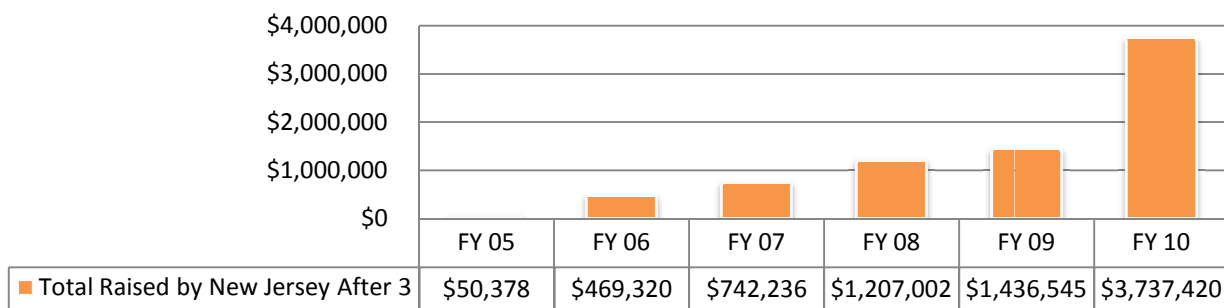
Dissemination Strategies: NJ After 3 will apply a variety of methods to disseminate information on the project and its results. These include participation in various conferences and meetings devoted to school improvement, especially as it relates to extending school time; preparing articles for juried and other publications; using school partners to provide information to other school districts; using parent groups as conveyors of information; and enlisting the aid of the state superintendent in getting information to other states. NJ After 3 will plan to use the i3 regional technical assistance as a dissemination vehicle.

Strategy and Capacity to Further Develop and Bring to Scale

NJ After 3 has leveraged significant public and private investments from partners that include: The State of New Jersey, AmeriCorps, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Bank of America, Novartis, Capital One Bank, The U.S. Tennis Association, Victoria Foundation, and many others. Annual investments in NJ After 3 from The State of New Jersey, totaling \$72 million, have leveraged just over

\$41 million in matching cash contributions and in-kind support since 2004. This year alone, the NJ After 3 and its nonprofit partners (through matching funds) have raised over \$9 million against the \$10.4 million it was appropriated in the FY2010 State Budget. The chart below outlines NJ After 3’s momentum in generating direct revenues outside of its annual State budget allocation to support its programs and administration.

New Jersey After 3 Direct Revenues by Year (Non-State Sources)

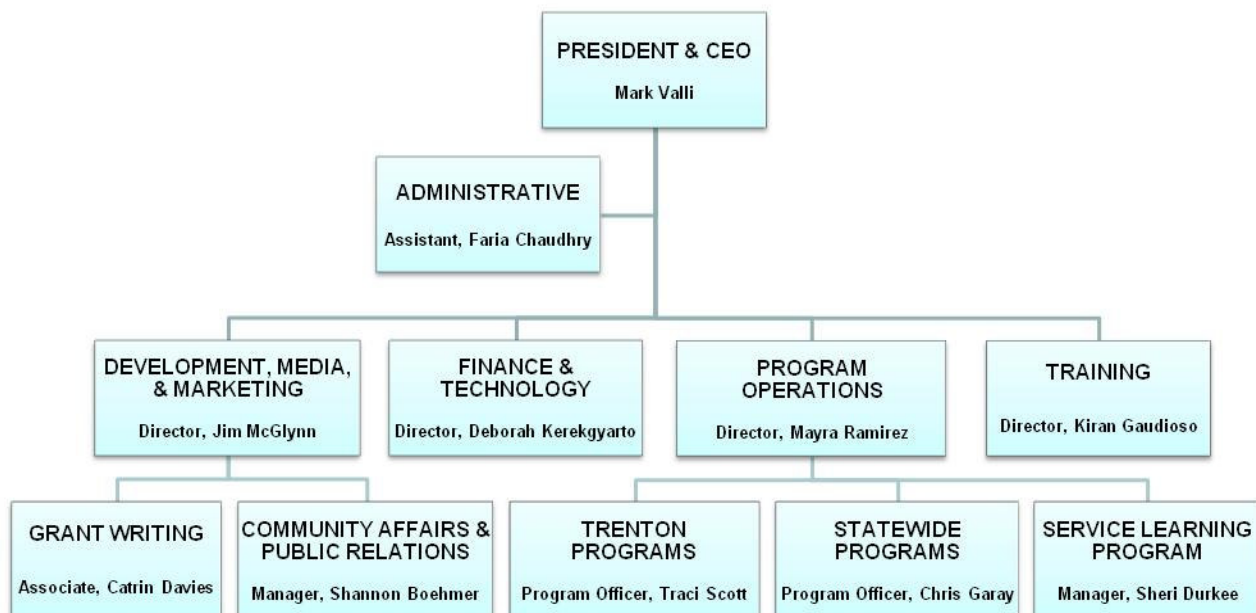


NJ After 3 has demonstrated that it can grow rapidly while maintaining fidelity to its evidence-based model, and has the resources, expertise, and track record to ensure success in sustaining successful programs in targeted schools. It is estimated that the costs of scaling the proposed project to 100,000 students would be \$160,100,000; 250,000 students: \$400,250,000; and 500,000 students: \$800,500,000. In each case, the cost per student per year is \$1,601. Furthermore, having the capacity to thoroughly evaluate the impact that NJ After 3 ELT programs have on student achievement will provide the evidence necessary to attract and secure even more public and private sector investment, empowering the agency to demonstrate its innovation and grow its effective statewide model to scale. As evidenced by the attached letters of support from New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, New Jersey Commissioner of Education Bret Schundler, Mayor Cory Booker, and private sector investors, NJ After 3 is well supported, and is working with key decision makers to ensure that this project is aligned with other Federal and private sector investments meant to drive meaningful education reform throughout New Jersey.

Management Plan and Personnel

NJ After 3 has been expanding learning time for students in urban, rural, and suburban communities throughout New Jersey for the past six years, beginning with 4,000 students in 21 schools to serving more than 12,000 students in 114 schools during the current school year. NJ After 3’s unique private/public partnership model allows it to expand service at low incremental costs by leveraging its significant scale and the resources of its nonprofit and school partners. Therefore, NJ After 3 is able to maintain low administrative costs (5.15% in FY09) and maximize the flow of resources directly to the youth it serves. NJ After 3’s core structure is comprised of four different categories of support and program management, each overseen by the President and CEO, Mark Valli: Program Operations, Training, Finance, and Development.

Organizational Chart



NJ After 3’s Director of Program Operations, Mayra Ramirez, will serve as Project Director for the initiative. In this role, she will coordinate all facets of the project across the three districts; serve as the point of contact for district, nonprofit, school, and U.S. Department of Education partners; and assist the External Evaluator with access to data and disseminating results. Ms. Ramirez will provide support and supervision to NJ After 3 Program Support Officers and manage the relationships between NJ

After 3, and selected program partners and schools participating in the i3 project. Mayra has more than 15 years of non-profit management experience working with diverse populations, has strong ties with the nonprofit and public school communities of Camden, Newark, and Trenton, and has managed NJ After 3's program operations since 2004. In this role, Mayra managed 74 contracts with 45 nonprofit program partners in this year alone. Kiran Gaudio, the Director of Training, will lend significant support to the implementation of this project, particularly in connecting evaluation findings with the appropriate training and professional development experiences for program staff teams. Mayra's demonstrated leadership, relationships with community and school leaders statewide, and ability to execute complicated and large-scale projects make her an ideal candidate to lead this project.

As head of NJ After 3's Training department, Kiran Gaudio has developed a comprehensive statewide training regimen that has provided more than 30,000 hours of professional development to afterschool educators since 2004. Each year, Kiran implements NJ After 3's training for more than 1,300 educators and 50 senior level nonprofit program partner staff across its statewide program network.

In conjunction with regular Training sessions, NJ After 3 Program Support Officers will provide on-site technical assistance. Each district in this project will be assigned one Program Support Officer to focus on successful program implementation. Each Program Support Officer will exclusively serve programs in the assigned district, and will work out of a local office within the partner district's board of education to ensure afterschool program integration with school day curriculum and instruction. Program Support Officers will provide active technical assistance to programs, with frequent site visits and on-site training. They will teach effective strategies for ongoing program improvement, provide support in the assessment and improvement of program impact, and intervene if program quality or fidelity ever appear to be compromised. In conjunction with this customized program support, NJ After 3's Service Learning Program Manager, Sheri Durkee, will be specifically responsible for coordinating service learning activities and staffing related to this grant; Sheri currently manages NJ After 3's two statewide AmeriCorps programs.

In addition to Program Operations and Training, NJ After 3 provides fiscal accountability and support through its Finance department. Director of Finance, Deborah Kerekgyarto, manages all financial matters of the organization, including budget development and accountability for program

partners. NJ After 3's Director of Development & Policy Initiatives, Jim McGlynn, oversees donor cultivation and fundraising for the network, and is responsible for marketing, community relations, media outreach, and education policy work for the organization.

Finally, NJ After 3 has contracted with Policy Studies Associates (PSA) to conduct its external evaluation after selecting the agency through a competitive RFP process. PSA has extensive experience in program evaluation, with clients that include federal, state, and local government agencies, foundations, and other organizations that use high-quality data to inform policy decisions.

Elizabeth Reisner will serve as Principal Investigator on the evaluation project. Ms. Reisner has conducted a wide variety of studies in the youth development and afterschool fields, including evaluations of the Out of School Time Programs for Youth initiative in New York City, Citizen Schools, and NJ After 3's previous three-year evaluation. As Principal Investigator, Ms. Reisner will meet with the Project Director, District Program Support Officers, and Site Coordinators to review data and revise recruitment, retention, and instructional strategies, as needed.

Project Timeline and Milestones

Timeline		Milestones
Timeframe	Activity	
August 2010	RFP Released	
September 2010	Proposals Due	
	Peer Review Process; “Winners” Notified	Nonprofit/school partnerships selected through competitive RFP.
October 2010	All Educators and Program Staff Hired	
	Training: Orientation	
November 2010 – June 2011	Year 1 of Project	1,500 students enrolled.
November 2010*	Programs Open	
	Evaluation: “Pre” surveys Distributed	
Nov., Dec., Jan., Feb., & Mar.	Training: Site Coordinator Sessions	Each project Site Coordinator receives 15 hours of professional development.
Nov., Dec., & Jan.	Training: Part-Time Instructor Sessions	Each project instructor receives 9 hours of professional development.
May 2011	Evaluation: “Post” surveys distributed	75% of respondents to “pre” surveys fill out “post” surveys.
June 2011	Promising Practices Institute	
June -July 2011	Evaluation: Year 1 Report Published	Improvements in students’ on-time promotion (6%), attendance (2%), math proficiency (6%ile pts), and language arts proficiency (4%ile pts).
July 2011	Contract Renewal Process	All contracts renewed.
	Training: Summer Retreat	
September 2011 – June 2012	Year 2 (Trainings, Evaluations, & Contract Renewals as Scheduled in Year 1)	1,500 students enrolled.
September 2012 – June 2013	Year 3 (Trainings, Evaluations, & Contract Renewals as Scheduled in Year 1)	1,500 students enrolled.
August 2013	Evaluation: Final Report Published	TOTAL improvements in students’ on-time promotion, attendance, math proficiency, and language arts proficiency.

Investing in Innovation Fund – Project Narrative - Criteria and Scoring Outline

A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design (25 points)

1. The extent to which the proposed project represents an exceptional approach to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet (*i.e.*, addresses a largely unmet need, particularly for high-need students, and is a practice, strategy, or program that has not already been widely adopted).
2. The extent to which the proposed project has a clear set of goals and an explicit strategy, with the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project clearly specified and measurable and linked to the priorities the eligible applicant is seeking to meet.

B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect (10 points)

1. The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that there are research-based findings or reasonable hypotheses that support the proposed project, including related research in education and other sectors.
2. The extent to which the proposed project has been attempted previously, albeit on a limited scale or in a limited setting, with promising results that suggest that more formal and systematic study is warranted.
3. The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that, if funded, the proposed project likely will have a positive impact, as measured by the importance or magnitude of the effect, on improving student achievement or student growth, closing achievement gaps, decreasing dropout rates, increasing high school graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.

C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant (25 points)

1. The past performance of the eligible applicant in implementing projects of the size and scope proposed by the eligible applicant.
2. The extent to which an eligible applicant provides information and data demonstrating that--
 - (a) In the case of an eligible applicant that is an LEA, the LEA has--
 - (i) Significantly closed the achievement gaps between groups of students described in section 1111(b)(2) of the ESEA, or significantly increased student achievement for all groups of students described in such section; and
 - (ii) Made significant improvements in other areas, such as graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and principals, as demonstrated with meaningful data; or
 - (b) In the case of an eligible applicant that includes a nonprofit organization, the nonprofit organization has significantly improved student achievement, attainment, or retention through its record of work with an LEA or schools.

D. Quality of the Project Evaluation (15 points)

1. The extent to which the methods of evaluation are appropriate to the size and scope of the proposed project.

2. The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide high-quality implementation data and performance feedback, and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.
3. The extent to which the evaluation will provide sufficient information about the key elements and approach of the project to facilitate further development, replication, or testing in other settings.
4. The extent to which the proposed project plan includes sufficient resources to carry out the project evaluation effectively.

E. Strategy and Capacity to Further Develop and Bring to Scale (5 points).

1. The number of students proposed to be reached by the proposed project and the capacity of the eligible applicant and any other partners to reach the proposed number of students during the course of the grant period.
2. The eligible applicant's capacity (e.g., in terms of qualified personnel, financial resources, or management capacity) to further develop and bring to scale the proposed practice, strategy, or program, or to work with others (including other partners) to ensure that the proposed practice, strategy, or program can be further developed and brought to scale, based on the findings of the proposed project.
3. The feasibility of the proposed project to be replicated successfully, if positive results are obtained, in a variety of settings and with a variety of student populations. Evidence of this ability includes the availability of resources and expertise required for implementing the project with fidelity, and the proposed project's evidence of relative ease of use or user satisfaction.
4. The eligible applicant's estimate of the cost of the proposed project, which includes the start-up and operating costs per student per year (including indirect costs) for reaching the total number of students proposed to be served by the project. The eligible applicant must include an estimate of the costs for the eligible applicant or others (including other partners) to reach 100,000, 250,000, and 500,000 students.
5. The mechanisms the eligible applicant will use to broadly disseminate information on its project so as to support further development or replication.

F. Sustainability (10 points).

1. The extent to which the eligible applicant demonstrates that it has the resources, as well as the support from stakeholders (e.g., State educational agencies, teachers' unions) to operate the project beyond the length of the Development grant.
2. The potential and planning for the incorporation of project purposes, activities, or benefits into the ongoing work of the eligible applicant and any other partners at the end of the Development grant.

G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (10 points).

1. The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.
2. The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director and key project personnel, especially in managing projects of the size and scope of the proposed project.