Shaking the Money Tree: Sources for After-School Funding

By Kathryn Baron on January 26, 2015 1:52 PM | No comments

The growth in after-school programs, especially those focused on academics and enrichment activities in the arts, computer coding, and hands-on science, all have at least one challenge in common—funding.

The price of running high-quality, out-of-school-time programs ranges from an average of $3,450 to $3,780 per student, according to a 2009 study by The Wallace Foundation. But those are somewhat blunt figures. Costs can vary considerably based on such factors as location, grade level, whether the program is run by a school or community group, the length of the program, and how often each student attends.

The tab for that is typically picked up by a combination of competitive federal, state and local grants, foundations, private donations, community organizations, and families, with parents paying “the lion’s share of after-school costs...even among programs serving high-poverty children,” according to another 2009 study, The Roadmap to Afterschool for All, by the Harvard School of Public Health and the Washington-based Afterschool Alliance.

In America After 3PM, a recent study on access and availability of after-school programs also conducted by the Afterschool Alliance, parents reported spending an average of $113.50 a week on after school programs. Nearly 60 percent of low-income parents cited affordability as a reason they couldn’t enroll their child in a program even if they wanted to. That same report, which this blog covered in detail when it was released in October, found that “for every child in an after-school program, approximately two more children would be enrolled if a program were available to them.”

The largest source of federal money dedicated to after-school funding is the 21st Century Community Learning Centers grants, which have increased from $40 million in 1998 to about $1.15 billion today. But all federal grants combined account for just 11 percent of the funding for...
Last Friday, in its Note of the Week—a free subscription from the otherwise for-profit ExtendED Notes—the company provides a list of potential after-school funding sources. Smaller grant opportunities, some with deadlines approaching, include the following:

- **Amgen Foundation**—Awards of $10,000 to multimillions of dollars for programs promoting science education in communities where Amgen has a presence; currently, that includes the San Francisco Bay area; Ventura and Los Angeles counties in California; the Greater Boston area; Juncos, Puerto Rico; Rhode Island; King and South Snohomish counties in Washington; and most of Colorado's largest cities.

- **The Awesome Foundation**—$1,000 grants to projects that "challenge and expand our understanding of our individual and communal potentials," and "bring communities together."

- **McCarthey Dressman Education Foundation**—Up to $10,000 per year for a maximum of three years for "in-class and extracurricular programs that improve student learning" and programs "that foster understanding, deepen students' knowledge, and provide opportunities to expand awareness of the world around them."

- **The PeyBack Foundation**—Created by Denver Broncos' quarterback Peyton Manning, the foundation awards up to $10,000 grants for youth development programs in Colorado, Indiana, Louisiana, and Tennessee.

In addition, the Note of the Week links to a handful of organizations that provide a significant amount of resources that fund after-school programs, including:

- The Wallace Foundation - After-School Program Funding Sources
- Afterschool Alliance - Funding and Sustainability
- The After-School Institute - Getting Funding
- The Finance Project - Financing and Sustaining After-school Programs
- Find Youth Info - Funding for Afterschool
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