



Inspiring, Preparing, Supporting: A Summit on Afterschool, Summer, and Expanded Learning Opportunities for New York's Students
Event Summary

New York State Afterschool Network (NYSAN) convened a group of well over 150 legislators, afterschool and summer leaders, educators, funders, regulators, and community stakeholders for *Inspiring, Preparing, Supporting: A Summit on Afterschool, Summer, and Expanded Learning Opportunities for New York's Students* on Tuesday at the Empire State Concourse in Albany, NY. Opening speakers Assemblymembers Donna Lupardo (Binghamton) and Karim Camara (Brooklyn) kicked off the event by speaking about the importance of afterschool activities in their communities—and in their own lives. Both attended afterschool programs that helped them overcome a fear of public speaking, allowing them to become the public figures they are today.

The first panel was moderated by Senator Patrick Gallivan (Erie) and included perspectives from leaders of high-quality expanded learning programs from across the state. The panelists represented different approaches to structuring expanded learning programs, and included Lucy Friedman, President of The After-School Corporation (TASC); Maggie Martinez Malito, Executive Director of the Nassau County Office of Youth Services; Jim Bostic, Executive Director of the Nepperhan Community Center; and Drema Brown, Vice President of School Age Programs at The Children's Aid Society. They made a strong case for the crucial role of collaboration—between schools and community organizations, between the public and private sectors, and between the state and local communities—in order to better serve students.

The audience was treated to performances from students at two local afterschool programs. The first performance included talented members of the Troy Middle School 21st Century Program's Tae Kwon Do Club, led by Master John Nash, and included synchronized martial arts demonstrations and students skillfully breaking boards in two with their hands and feet. Following that performance, the Hudson Bluehawk Nation's Dances of Life Group from the Hudson City School District demonstrated a game from Ghana, West Africa called Takai. Instructor Pamela Badila explained to the audience how this game teaches children that it is acceptable to make mistakes, and that one must persevere and adjust. Audience members were inspired by both performances, and panelists referred to the life lessons demonstrated during the performances throughout the remainder of the event.

The second panel was moderated by Assemblymember Shelley Mayer (Yonkers), who led a robust discussion on how afterschool and summer programs keep participants safe and healthy, promote social and emotional development, and prepare them for college and career. Panelists included Frank Fowler, Chief of Police for the City of Syracuse; Timothy Davis, Co-Executive Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ontario County; Kyle Stewart, Executive Director of the Alliance of New York State YMCAs; and Bonnie Glazer, President of Child & Adolescent Treatment Services. The importance of social-emotional learning—for both staying out of trouble and being prepared for the workforce—was a recurring theme. As Chief Fowler said, "It's simple—pay now or pay more later."

A networking lunch allowed audience members to meet others from their area of the state as well as others interested in similar aspects of afterschool programming, such as STEM, health and wellness, juvenile justice, and more.



The final panel focused on how expanded learning opportunities reinforce and enrich the school day, and was moderated by Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan (Queens). The Assemblywoman led discussion with panelists Michael Mulgrew, President of the United Federation of Teachers; Tom Phillips, Superintendent of Watkins Glen School District; Eddie Fergus, Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership at New York University; and Patricia Leo, Director of Community Investment at United Way of Greater Rochester. The panelists emphasized that schools cannot do it alone—students need social-emotional supports and services in order to be ready to learn—and that expanded learning opportunities and community schools can be highly effective ways of working together to improve outcomes for students.

Closing remarks were given by Renee Rider, Assistant Commissioner for the Office of Student Support Services for the New York State Education Department, who emphasized the Department's awareness of the importance of expanding learning and enrichment opportunities and increasing supports for students.

Many thanks go to the summit sponsors: National Conference of State Legislatures; Charles Stewart Mott Foundation; Brofenbrenner Foundation; Cornell Cooperative Extension 4-H; TASC; Say Yes to Education; The Children's Aid Society; Alliance of New York State YMCAs; Good Shepherd Services; Partnership for Children, Youth and Families; the Association of New York State Youth Bureaus; and the New York State Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs. Additional thanks go to NYSAN's partners for their hard work in putting together the summit.