

### **Recommendation:**

Promote partnerships with experienced expanded learning opportunity (ELO) providers to Priority Schools considering how to most effectively implement the Expanded Learning Time (ELT) programs, including at least 200 additional hours of student contact time, required for whole school reform under New York’s ESEA waiver.

### **Research:**

The work of effectively educating children to succeed in college, career and beyond is a task that schools cannot do on their own. Community organizations play a crucial role in bringing essential resources and expertise to schools, complementing and supplementing what schools deliver. Recent studies have found that participation in high-quality programs with community partners can increase graduation rates, raise grades and test scores in core subjects, and improve school attendance.

ELOs bring to schools that serve low-income students the types of enrichment that more affluent students have access to regularly – art, music and drama; hands-on science; organized sports; and opportunities for service and career exploration. These enrichments are by no means “extras”; not only do these activities extend learning and help keep more at-risk students engaged in school, they offer these students much needed

social and emotional experiences that lead to positive noncognitive skills development. Effective and high quality partners use the additional time to incorporate innovations and enrichments that form a foundation on which students can develop meaningful personal connections to the wider world outside of school and begin to articulate aspirations for themselves, identify passions, and connect their dreams to realistic pathways to a successful future.

For more information, see NYSAN’s report: [The Role of Expanded Learning Opportunities in New York State School Reform.](#)

ELOs bring resources from the community into students’ lives, whether in the form of local scientists or artists who come in to share their skills through project-based learning or local mentors who know just the right words to reach struggling students and assure them that they, too, have bright futures with a little hard work. ELOs are often run by, or have relationships with, multi-service community agencies, so that the ELO becomes an entry point for health services, counseling, food assistance, and many other social services. ELOs also bring these community resources into the schools with which they partner, resources which can be tremendous assets to high-needs schools.

### **Examples:**

1. *The Thurgood Marshall Academy in Harlem, in partnership with Abyssinian Development Corporation, uses Khan Academy’s online video library to offer students additional interactive practice exercises in math during the afterschool hours. The online exercises provide students with immediate assessment and feedback while they work at their own pace. Students review math concepts from the school day and preview upcoming topics. Working alongside an AmeriCorps member – part of the program’s shared staffing with its community partner – the math teacher is able to give students the one-on-one math support they need while the AmeriCorps member assists them with everything from tech support to emotional concerns.*

2. *During the school year, Encompass Resources for Learning in Rochester runs an afterschool program at multiple school sites focused on academic intervention services for children struggling to meet grade-level standards. Encompass brings individualized attention, years of tutoring expertise, and private and county funds to the partnership, which the district is able to blend with its own dollars to fund transportation to the program, waive facility fees and provide clerical support during program hours.*