

Testimony of
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Before the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee
United States Senate
Hearing on "Meeting the Needs of the Whole Student"
April 22, 2010

Chairman Harkin, Ranking Member Enzi, and Members of the Committee, I thank you for the opportunity to testify before the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions on the important issue of educating the whole child, and for highlighting this issue through the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

About Citizen Schools

Citizen Schools is a national afterschool and expanded learning time model that works directly with schools and school districts across the country. Through our program, thousands of adult volunteers are mobilized and trained by a second shift of educators (including AmeriCorps teaching fellows) to help improve student achievement and close the achievement gap for low-income and minority students. We run programs in seven states, including: North Carolina, New Mexico, California, Texas, New Jersey, New York, and my own state of Massachusetts. Citizen Schools serves nearly 4,500 students annually. At Citizen Schools, we partner closely with high-need schools to expand the learning day and bring more time, more relevant learning, and more caring adults into the lives of our students.

Citizen Schools is not just a solution to help raise student achievement. Through an extended school day our program engaged citizens and communities in the larger effort to meet the needs of the whole child. We hope our success can be replicated across the country to afford all students the benefits of quality afterschool programming and expanded learning time. As such, Citizen Schools is a strong supporter of the Time for Innovation Matters in Education (TIME) Act (S. 1410) and we hope these policies will be reflected in the reauthorization of ESEA.

Citizen Schools programs directly complement classroom learning. Twice a week, students participate in apprenticeships led by professionals from the community who volunteer their time to give hands-on lessons in subjects ranging from business and finance, government and law, science technology, engineering and math, to arts and culture. At the end of each semester students present a portfolio of work developed through their apprenticeships in community sponsored WOW! events. Each year over 4,000 volunteer Citizen Teachers are engaged in our 37 sites.

Citizen Schools' educators also supervise 60 to 90 minutes of daily homework and study time (four days per week). Weekly lessons target the specific educational needs of 6th, 7th, and 8th graders and build the skills to help them navigate middle school and prepare for high school and beyond.

For additional targeted support, Citizen Schools 8th Grade Academies provide intensive programming for 8th grade students. In these academies Students make the connection between current learning and future opportunity. Citizen Schools helps these students analyze high school choices, visit college campuses, and take the necessary actions to make sure a college track is accessible and affordable. A long-term

evaluation reports that Citizen Schools' 8th Grade Academy students are far more likely to graduate from high school in four years than the average for their district, despite starting middle school behind their peers.

Our campuses are typically staffed by three sets of educators. First, the Campus Director works with school administrators and teachers to change school cultures, interface with the community, set the instructional vision for the campus, and lead our teams of educators. Second, our Team Leaders (many of whom are full-time Teaching Fellows, supported by AmeriCorps), work closely with targeted groups of students to raise student achievement in core subject areas. Lastly, our volunteer Citizen Teachers work to engage the students in learning through apprenticeships.

We view our job as the education of the whole child, not simply as an add-on to a student's school day. This time is essential to the development of productive adults. Our success in afterschool settings has led us to see that all children in a school deserve these supports and interventions in a re-imagined learning day. It is our hope that Citizen Schools' success can serve as a model for other states and school districts looking to effectively expand the school day.

The Edwards Middle School - an ELT School Turnaround Success Story

Today, as one example of how Citizen Schools has helped turnaround a struggling school, I want to share with you the incredible story of how expanding learning time helped transform Boston's Edwards Middle School. Three and a half years ago, the Edwards -- a school that serves 90% low-income students in a tough neighborhood -- was failing. Its test scores placed the school at or near the bottom in rankings with other schools in the city. Edwards scored 30-40 percentage points below the state average for proficiency. The school wasn't attracting any new students. Only 77 6th graders enrolled at the Edwards three years ago, and just a handful of them had actually chosen to do so. By most accounts, the school was a year from closing its doors. Today the Edwards is the highest achieving middle school in Boston and 6th grade enrollment has tripled to 247 students.

Through this transformation effort Edwards has doubled and tripled its students' proficiency rates, increased students' engagement in learning, and added more academic enrichment. The most dramatic gains have been achieved by 8th graders, who have participated in the expanded learning time model for three years. Eighth grade math proficiency increased from 12% to 56% and English Language Arts proficiency increased from 40% to 71%. Edwards' 8th graders are out-performing the state average in math proficiency - in a state that leads the nation in academic achievement. Among 6th graders, math proficiency more than doubled - from 15% in 2006 to 37% in 2009 - and English Language Arts proficiency jumped from 27% to 49%. **This school has essentially reversed the achievement gap.**

How has the Edwards done it? The Edwards school has restructured the school day to:

- Add 35% more learning time;
- Deeply engage outside community partners, including a strong leading partnership with Citizen Schools;
- Focus relentlessly on academic instruction; and
- Emphasize relevant, real-world learning activities and exposure to college and careers.

As the nation struggles to turn around low-performing schools – particularly middle schools where early indicators show the first signs of the dropout crisis – Edwards demonstrates the importance of effectively using additional time. To meet the needs of the whole child and keep each student on the achievement track more time is a key variable.

Three years ago the Edwards undertook an intensive redesign process to implement an expanded learning time (ELT) model. It made some key decisions that distinguished it from most other Expanded Learning Time schools. The Edwards' faculty and staff:

- Added a full three hours of extra learning time Monday through Thursday and made Friday a shorter day to allow for joint professional development of teachers and outside partners; The Edwards added approximately 380 hours of learning, significantly above the state's requirement of 300 additional hours for ELT schools;
- Forged a partnership with Citizen Schools and empowered our staff and volunteer Citizen Teachers to run all extra learning time for all 6th graders. Citizen Schools and other community partners worked to expand the menu of academic and enrichment activities for 7th and 8th graders;
- Organized joint professional development and shared curriculum planning for teachers and outside partners, and used Citizen Schools' staff as a pipeline to fill administrative and faculty positions and to serve as substitute teachers;
- Focused on math reinforcement through hands-on lessons for one extra hour each day across all grades. These lessons were led by Citizen Schools' young educators (generally recent college graduates) and by school-day teachers;
- Focused on relevant, fun learning activities and exposure to careers and colleges through apprenticeships taught by professionals from the community (trained and coached by Citizen Schools' staff). Older students also had access to cheerleading, dance, music, and athletic programs, including the city's only middle school football team.
- Enrolled a portion of the 8th grade class in an 8th Grade Academy, led by Citizen Schools. These students visited 10 college campuses while also learning about high school options and coaching their classmates on the best pathways to high school success and college and career readiness.

Expanded Learning Time Done Well

Expanded learning time holds great promise for American education. The transformation of the Edwards School demonstrates that ELT – if well designed and well implemented – can advance achievement and expand opportunity for low-income students. Citizen Schools is eager to work with school and district partners who have an appetite for change and who are ready to meet the substantial challenges of implementing ELT well. As Congress considers expanded learning time in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, high-quality ELT should include:

- 1) A substantial increase (at least 30 percent more) in total learning time, and enroll all, or a large portion (such as a whole grade level), of a school in the ELT schedule.
- 2) Engaging talented outside educators and strong community/nonprofit partners to complement traditional instruction and allow these providers to take lead responsibility for instruction for large chunks of the longer learning day. School principals should have the flexibility to form instructional teams comprising current teachers and nonprofit partners to meet the needs of students and improve engagement and results.
- 3) Including small-group academic coaching that is aligned with and supports the core academic subjects. Ideally, ELT programs will add a minimum of 60 minutes of small-group academic instruction per day at least four days per week.
- 4) Offering relevant enrichment activities with embedded academic exercises to engage the interest of students, capitalizing on the special opportunities that an expanded schedule allows. Ideally, ELT programs will add a minimum of 90 minutes of enrichment per day at least four days per week to allow for deep learning and enrichment experiences such as hands-on apprenticeships connected to career opportunities, theater, arts and music activities, and participation on sports teams.
- 5) Taking special note of students who are transitioning from elementary to middle school or from middle school to high school, and support these transitions through ELT activities.

Our Afterschool and ELT Models Replicate Success Across the Nation

While today I focused on our work at Edwards middle school in Massachusetts, we have seen similar student achievement results in our other sites across the country. Throughout all of our program sites, our students' grades have improved, our

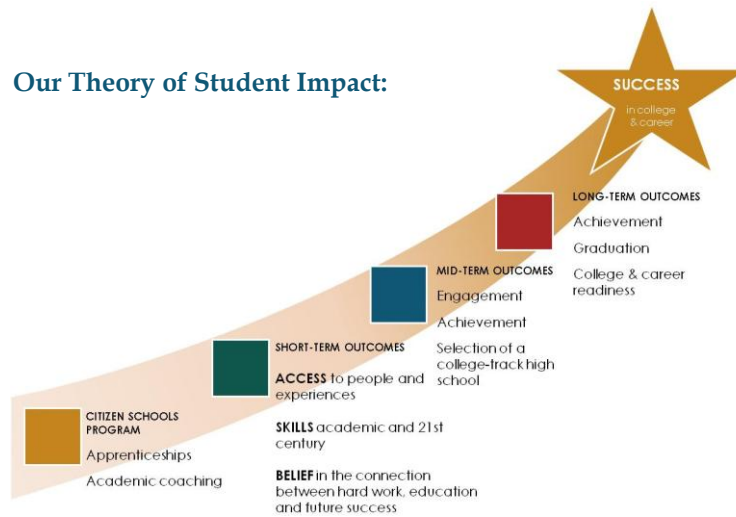
partnerships with schools and districts have grown, we have engaged thousands of families on a regular basis to integrate them more fully into the school community, and we have mobilized thousands of professionals to bring the science, the law, engineering, the arts, finance, and many other disciplines into the classroom. Our goal is always to bring learning alive for our students. Our alumni are succeeding in and graduating from high school, attending college, and entering the world with knowledge, skills, and self confidence.

We appreciate the Committee's leadership on these important issues and look forward to working with you to expand quality afterschool and expanded learning time opportunities for students as ESEA reauthorization moves forward. I am happy to answer any questions Members of the Committee may have, and, again, I thank you for the opportunity to share the Citizen Schools story with you.



Beyond Standardized Tests, Citizen Schools focuses on the key levers of Access, Skills, and Belief to drive mid- and long-term outcomes

Our Theory of Student Impact:



October 27, 2009 www.citizenschools.org



Traditional Citizen Schools Schedule

In addition to apprenticeships, our traditional program provides academic support, leadership and study skills, field trips, and other learning activities.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	
School Day					8:30
Opening Circle (30 min.)	Opening Circle (30 min.)	Opening Circle (30 min.)	Opening Circle (30 min.)	Professional Development for Staff	3:00
Homework/Academic Support (120 min.)	Homework/Academic Support (60 min.)	Homework/Academic Support (60 min.)	Homework/Academic Support (60 min.)		
Team Building (30 min.)	Apprenticeship (90 min.)	Exploration (90 min.)	Apprenticeship (90 min.)		
					6:00

May 1, 2009 www.citizenschools.org

1



Sample Math-Focused ELT Schedule

In an ELT model, school day teachers and staff from outside partners like Citizen Schools come together to provide academic instruction and enrichment throughout an expanded day.

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	
FIRST SHIFT: School Day Teachers	Homeroom (15 min.)	Homeroom (15 min.)	Homeroom (15 min.)	Homeroom (15 min.)	Homeroom (15 min.)	8:30
	Literacy & ELA (60 min.)	Literacy & ELA (60 min.)	Literacy & ELA (60 min.)	Literacy & ELA (60 min.)	Literacy & ELA (60 min.)	
	Science (60 min.)	Science (60 min.)	Science (60 min.)	Science (60 min.)	Science (60 min.)	
	Elective (60 min.)	Elective (60 min.)	Elective (60 min.)	Elective (60 min.)	Math (60 min.)	
	Social Studies (60 min.)	Social Studies (60 min.)	Social Studies (60 min.)	Social Studies (60 min.)	Social Studies (60 min.)	
	Lunch (35 min.)	Lunch (35 min.)	Lunch (35 min.)	Lunch (35 min.)		11:30
SECOND SHIFT: Citizen Schools	Math (60 min.)	Math (60 min.)	Math (60 min.)	Math (60 min.)		
	Transition & Snack (15 min.)	Transition & Snack (15 min.)	Transition & Snack (15 min.)	Transition & Snack (15 min.)		
	Opening Circle (30 min.)	Homework/Academic Support (60 min.)	Homework/Academic Support (60 min.)	Homework/Academic Support (60 min.)	Joint Professional Development for Staff	
	Homework/Academic Support (90 min.)	Apprenticeship (90 min.)	Choice/Exploration (90 min.)	Apprenticeship (90 min.)		
	Team Time (30 min.)					
					6:00	

May 1, 2009 www.citizenschools.org

2

8GA Program Schedule

Our 8th Grade Academy program incorporates curriculum and activities designed to help students prepare for success in high school and beyond.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	SATURDAY	
School Day					8:30
Opening Circle (30 min.)	Team Circle (30 min.)	Team Circle (30 min.)	Opening Circle (30 min.)		3:00
Homework/Academic Support (60 min.)	Homework/Academic Support (60 min.)	Homework/Academic Support (60 min.)	Homework/Academic Support (60 min.)	8GA Exploration (monthly)	
8GA Programming (60 min.)	8GA Programming (90 min.)	Choice Time / Exploration (90 min.)	Apprenticeship (90 min.)		
Choice Time (30 min.)					
					6:00

May 1, 2009 www.citizenschools.org

3

OUR RESULTS - EXPANDED LEARNING TIME



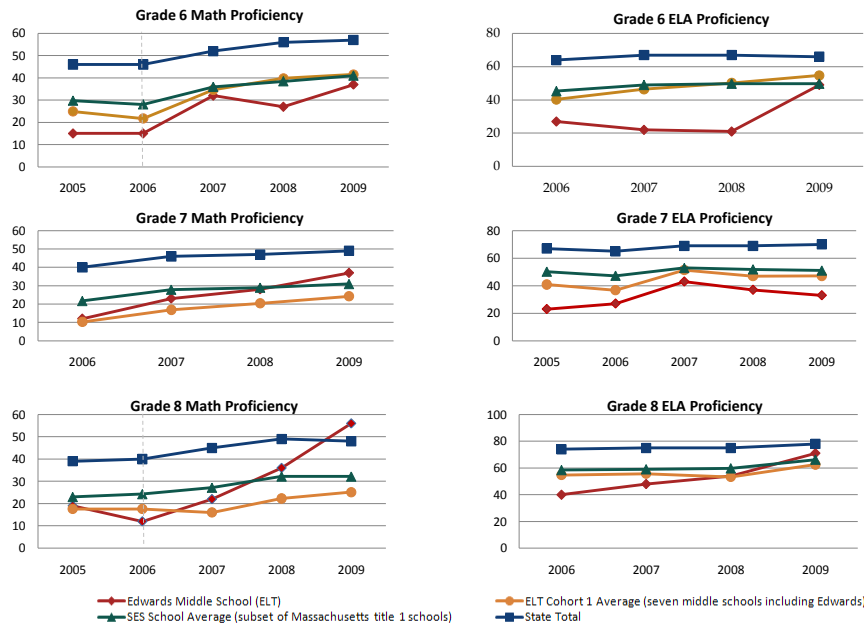
Expanded Learning Time as a successful school turnaround strategy

- The Edwards Middle School in Boston has partnered with Citizen Schools and the state’s Expanded Learning Time initiative to dramatically turn-around school performance and begin to erase and even reverse the achievement gap.
- The Edwards turnaround strategy was to :
 - Add 35% more learning time;
 - deeply engage outside partners, led by Citizen Schools;
 - focus relentlessly on math instruction; and
 - emphasize relevant, real-world learning activities and exposure to college and careers.
- The following slide shows the percentage of students achieving scores of proficient or advanced on the rigorous MCAS test. Scores from 2005 and 2006 are prior to implementation of ELT and scores from 2007-2009 represent the first, second, and third year of ELT implementation.
- The graph shows four lines representing scores for four schools or groups of schools: the Edwards; the first cohort of seven middle schools, including the Edwards, that began implementing ELT in 2006-07; all title one schools in the state whose students are eligible for Supplemental Educational Services (early stages of restructuring under NCLB); and all middle schools in Massachusetts.

2



MCAS Results at Edwards Expanded Learning Time School and for comparison groups



3

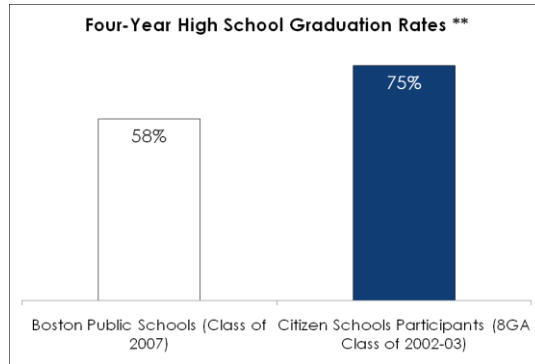


OUR RESULTS - 8th GRADE ACADEMY



Our students graduate from high school at higher rates (75% vs. 58%)

Compared to other students in their district, Citizen Schools alumni are far more likely to graduate from high school on time.



Results from PSA Evaluation of Citizen Schools Boston (Phase VI).

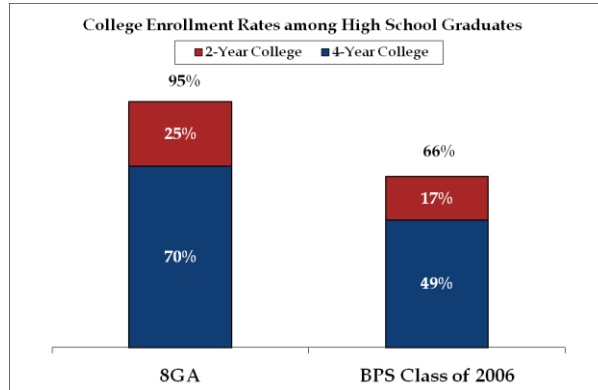
- * Participants outperformed comparison group, $p < .05$
- ** Participants outperformed comparison group, $p < .01$
- *** Participants outperformed comparison group, $p < .001$

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... and enroll in college at higher rates (95% vs. 66%)

Among 8GA alumni, nearly all of those who graduated from high school enrolled in college, compared to about 2/3 of high school graduates in the district.



October 27, 2009 www.citizenschools.org

