

# Expanding School Time to Expand School Learning

## Lessons Learned and Challenges Remaining

by Christopher Gabrieli & Warren Goldstein

*Simply extending the day is not necessarily going to create success. It is so important to be able to have a plan and to have support for your plan. . . . There needs to be buy-in — and it's not something that you can just pick up and do because you want to.*

— Expanded Learning Time director and teacher, Edwards Middle School, Boston

*My advice to administrators would be that you need to get as many people involved as possible, especially the teachers; parents, the students, what they want. Explain what your reason behind [expanded learning time] is. It's [what] we need to move forward.*

— Teacher and math and science department head, Kuss Middle School, Fall River, MA

Across the nation, more than 1,000 schools have cast away the shackles of a school schedule created for a different age when few jobs required high skills, family structure was different, and opportunities for young people to get into trouble after school were fewer. These pioneering schools have expanded learning time in order to expand learning opportunities designed to raise students' core academic skills and ensure a truly well-

rounded education. Most of these schools have adopted what we term the “new day” — about two more hours of scheduled school every day.

Pioneering new day schools include about one third of all charter schools, isolated standard public schools that have found a way around the conventional schedule, and dozens of “intervention” schools in a few cities trying to

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break patterns of underperformance. In addition, 26 standard district schools have converted to the new day in one state, Massachusetts (where we help lead the effort), that has a state policy and state funding to support schools willing and able to entirely redesign the education they deliver to take advantage of about 25 percent more time for every student.

In this WestEd Policy Perspectives paper, we highlight a dozen design principles we believe should be part of future new day schools. Our conclusions are based on our direct experience in helping create such schools, our visits to schools, our review of the available data, and our best judgment. They are certainly worthy of debate and are not meant to be final, comprehensive, or exhaustive. Our intent is to encourage more people to seek change and to help those who want to make the new school day work.

We end the paper with some thoughts on some of the key issues that call for more experience, data, and perhaps innovation. The new school day is still young as an educational strategy; we should learn a good deal over the next few years. We hope our candor about matters that need more thought and work will help stimulate a creative, productive dialogue as well as more research and experimentation.

## Lessons Learned

It is possible to go about spreading the new day schedule to schools and to put it in place at any given school in any of a number of ways. Experience is too new and the data are still too sparse for anyone to be certain about which approaches work best in what circumstances. However, in our view some emerging patterns allow us to recommend 12 features as key elements of strong designs for new day schools:

- » Voluntary participation for schools
- » Mandatory participation for all students
- » Whole school redesign
- » Significantly expanded time
- » Clear academic focus
- » Well-rounded education
- » Data-driven continuous quality improvement

- » Time for teacher collaboration, planning, and professional development
- » Individualization
- » Time for up-front planning
- » Partnerships with outside resources
- » Starting with individual schools, building for scale

## Voluntary Participation for Schools

Policymakers looking to enable or even drive the growth of the new day among existing schools need to decide between two basic choices: either *requiring* some or all schools to change to the new day schedule or *supporting* the adoption of expanded learning time by conventional schools that want to convert. We favor voluntary participation, though we acknowledge the logic of requiring it in turnarounds.

The people who staff the most impressive new day schools in America believe passionately in the value of more time well spent and have built their schools around it. Charter schools such as Roxbury Prep in Boston, the nationwide network of Knowledge Is Power Program (KIPP) Academies, and experimental district schools such as Achievable Dream Academy in Newport News, VA, and Timilty Middle School, in Boston, consider expanded learning time to be a core pillar of their academic design, and they use the time extensively, imaginatively, and holistically. They recruit teachers and administrators based on this schedule, and students and families who sign up know what they are getting into. These schools often also pursue many other innovations, driven by their strong sense of mission and urgency.

An exciting addition to the new school day movement is the Massachusetts Expanded Learning Time Initiative in which established public schools have opted to convert from their old schedule to the new day schedule. They are full of energy and determination to use the gift (a word they use a lot) of more time to help their students and schools flourish. While the process of converting is inherently more challenging than starting from scratch, they hold out a model for change and improvement that could be followed by literally thousands of other public schools serving millions of children. By contrast, most of the charter and experimental district

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schools that are new day schools are not obviously scale-able enough to change the overall course of American education. While the charter schools and experimental district schools serve well as pioneers and role models, the Massachusetts Expanded Learning Time schools provide a blueprint that can be adopted more or less as it stands.

The alternative to choice — that is, to allowing new schools to start up based on the new school day and helping existing schools that want to convert to the new schedule — is to make some or all schools adopt it. This strategy could come about in one of two ways. First, at least theoretically, a state or district could simply mandate a major change in the legal minimum number of instructional hours or days. While some states have modestly expanded the legal minimum school year, generally to catch up with the standard of 180 days, and while some districts have tinkered with time, no state or district has dramatically expanded learning time requirements across the board. We don't anticipate any doing so soon because of the cost implications and the resistance to such one-size-fits-all change. We also don't think it would be wise to mandate the new day on such a uniform and broad basis. One day, policymakers may decide to consider such sweeping change — but that day is not here yet, and we are not at all sure such mandatory, top-down thinking will ever work very well.

The other category of mandated expansion of learning time is very real and rapidly growing — in turnaround schools. Under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act as well as under many state standards-based reform laws, a growing number of schools are being identified as chronically underperforming the rest. By 2010, experts estimate that this number will reach 5,000 schools — up from today's 2,000. Most of these are schools that have been posting low results year after year. Under NCLB,

they are labeled “Restructuring,” meaning that they need deep change. States and districts are increasingly facing the question — what do we do about them? How do we act boldly enough to break through? How do we act constructively enough while pressing for real change?

Expertise on how to intervene and how to press a turnaround agenda is growing rapidly. A report issued in November 2007 by the Mass Insight Education & Research Institute and commissioned by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, *The Turnaround Challenge: Why America's Opportunity to Dramatically Improve Student Achievement Lies in Our Worst-Performing Schools*, lays out recommendations based on a number of efforts by cities and states to date. In identifying what should be part of interventions (based on what they report “high-performing high-poverty schools” are doing), they cite an “extended school day and longer year.” And in fact, intervention programs in New York City, Miami-Dade, Pittsburgh, Boston, and Chicago have all included, among a series of changes, adding about one hour per day to school in all intervention schools.

Schools that superintendents or chancellors have redesigned by mandate can show meaningful academic gains. We appreciate the sense of urgency in district offices when schools have been lagging far behind for years. And because we believe that more time helps, we appreciate why using an expanded school schedule as part of a turnaround plan for chronically underperforming schools can make sense. But we also have seen the qualitative difference in charter schools, experimental district schools, and Massachusetts Expanded Learning Time schools when the principals and teachers and parents have worked together to bring about a new day school instead of having it forced upon them from above by order of the central office. The voluntary new day schools have a shared and strong sense of purpose, where the added time is seen as

a blessing and an opportunity rather than a requirement imposed from outside. In the best of the turnaround schools, new leadership and teachers who want to be there do help create some of the same sense of shared excitement in the service of real student progress, but the difference remains perceptible.

Over the longer haul, policymakers will have to decide what to do about chronically underperforming schools; given all the evidence, we expect expanded learning time to be part of that ongoing effort.

Regardless of what happens in the turnaround effort, we favor focusing the bulk of energy and resources for creation of the new day on schools that want to change over and even compete for the opportunity to do so. The likeliest prospects for success are the schools where proponents of the new day are willing to have their plans scrutinized and reviewed by independent bodies, such as state departments of education, to ensure sound planning and sufficient capacity to effect the change.

It seems to us both fairer and more effective to target scarce resources to those schools where the desire for change is greatest. These have consistently proven to be schools where kids have the greatest need, so this approach meets the fairness test as well as the practical concern that to work at its best, redesigning and expanding the school day needs all constituencies on board. Moreover, since a truly voluntary approach leaves the door open to all schools, it answers the occasional criticism that the new resources are only there for the low-performing schools and allows some schools with more proficient students to demonstrate how more time can translate into reaching even higher standards.

### **Mandatory Participation for All Students**

Many schools find ways to provide more time to some students who need it most academically, in some cases through tutoring, in others through mandatory summer school. In New York City, nearly one third of all students, chosen because of their lower academic performance, stay for two-and-a-half more hours each week and receive small-group instruction and tutoring. These efforts, certainly better than doing nothing, face two key limits. First, they address only academic needs and usually do so in a remedial fashion that can fall short of truly engaging students. Second, many students simply do not

comply. Summer school attendance is always well short of complete. At Miami Edison Senior High, a school in the Miami-Dade School Improvement Zone — a turnaround schools effort wherein the standard schedule has been expanded by one hour per day — students who have the greatest academic difficulties are also referred to “mandatory tutoring.” While compliance with the new schedule is essentially universal, we were amazed to hear that only about 10 percent of those told to come for so-called mandatory tutoring actually do so.

By expanding the schedule for all students, a school helps students get extra help without feeling the stigma of being selected for what amounts to academic detention. Students at new day schools often describe the reaction of their friends at traditional schools, especially at first, as making fun of them for having to stay longer, but they describe themselves as readily falling into the habit of the new schedule. Since everyone at their school has the same hours, it becomes the norm.

Redesigning the whole day — as opposed to adding an extra period at the end of the day — requires all students to be on the new schedule. Adding time to core courses such as English and math so that students can work in small groups and on their own at their own levels, so that students can pursue exploratory, project-based learning, so that science labs can be done in one day, and so that enrichment classes can be woven into the fabric of the day requires considerable change. Changing the culture and pace of the school for all teachers and students involves establishing a truly new school day for everyone.

### **Whole School Redesign**

The easiest way to add learning time is to tack it on to the end of the schedule — follow last year’s plan and figure out what to do with a couple more hours. But in this case easiest is far from best. Schools planning to convert to the new day schedule do better when they start from scratch and consider everything anew. In part that means adding time to existing features of the day. Few teachers or principals would dispute the value of more time each day for math and for English. But should they be added as block scheduling, as at Achievable Dream Academy, or as a second math and English class each day, as at Roxbury Prep? We see evidence of both approaches working and think each school should

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carefully consider its preferences and capabilities, and then choose its own path.

Ideally, schools will consider how to make their students' education more well-rounded, not just stronger in the core academic subjects. But what constitutes adding breadth? At Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School in Cambridge, MA, added time has allowed every student in every grade, from pre-kindergarten for four-year-olds on, to gain first exposure and then knowledge of Mandarin Chinese. At the KIPP Academy in the Bronx, New York, every student learns an instrument and plays in the school orchestra. And how do you add both more time for students to learn and more time for teachers to work together? Should all sports take place at the end of the day or does KIPP Houston get it right with elementary students playing soccer in the gym in the middle of the day, before returning to classes? All of these good questions can only be answered by taking a whole school redesign approach — and the answers will show tremendous variety at least until the education community has had years of experience to study and reflect on the results, and perhaps even then.

### Significantly Expanded Time

To make a real difference in the depth and breadth of education, schools need to add hundreds of hours per year — not just a few minutes a day. While adding 10 minutes a day or an hour a week could help a little bit, it will not allow for whole school redesign; it will not resolve the unnecessary tension in today's schedule between math and music, between sports and reading. We see some real impact in schools that add one hour per day but see even more results when the new schedule adds closer to two hours per day or even more. Adding this much new time not only allows the school to make vital additions to core subjects and leaven academic time

with enrichment time, it also makes for a more sensible pace to the day for all involved. It allows adding time to such so-called frills as lunch and recess — both of which humanize a school day currently in danger of becoming a treadmill for far too many kids and teachers.

### Clear Academic Focus

A significant risk in expanding the school day is the temptation to think of the day as a palette from which to take a little bit of time for this and a little bit for that, and a few new things — and not enough clear focus. For schools that want to really change their kids' academic performance, whether to help far more students reach basic proficiency in core subjects or to add the sort of science, technology, and engineering content that will open doors for their students in the 21st century economy, teachers and principals must set priorities and make choices. At the Jacob Hiatt Magnet School in Worcester, MA, the top priority was improving literacy skills, so the redesign team rebuilt the whole day around a core two-hour, sacrosanct literacy block the first two hours every day. At Edwards Middle School in Boston, math was a top priority, so the leadership team both expanded class time and added competitive Math Leagues to the day.

### Well-Rounded Education

Many schools considering the new school day do so to counteract disappointing academic results. That's a compelling motivation; there is overwhelming evidence that more time, well spent, can make an enormous difference in how well students learn the core academic subjects: reading, writing, and math. But we also believe that students would benefit from a more expansive definition of a well-rounded education. Setting academic standards and testing whether students are reaching them has forced

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public schools to narrow their focus on core academic time. We think the evidence on new day schools shows that the pursuit of academic proficiency, and even excellence, need not come at the expense of exposure to a broad array of subjects and fields; nor need it be pursued to the exclusion of children's social, emotional, or physical development. Restoring the balance to children's education can be one of the more compelling reasons to bring an expanded schedule to any school. Redesign teams do best by their students when they make sure the added time is used both to strengthen academics and to add breadth and variety to their students' education.

The beauty of a well-done new day school is that it can pursue the yin of academic excellence and the yang of a well-rounded education for the whole child. Good new day schools allow math *and* music, literacy *and* sports, academics *and* youth development because they have the time to do so.

### Data-Driven Continuous Quality Improvement

The process of converting to a new school schedule affords schools the opportunity to use data to inform decision-making and to adopt a data-driven continuous quality improvement (CQI) approach. CQI is a method, arising from the manufacturing world, that focuses on a cycle of taking action for improvement, measuring results, and then taking informed further action for improvement. Adding time to the day creates options for schools and teachers about how to use that time to improve what students learn. This is a perfect opportunity for teachers and principals to engage in a constructive, ongoing dialogue about what kids are learning, how that learning can be measured, and how it can be improved. Then, as the school collects new results, these results become the subject of additional conversations, and

school leaders can decide whether the choices they've made for how to use the added time are meeting their objectives or whether they need to be adjusted.

It is also important to focus on measuring things beyond just academic test scores. Schools need to look at attendance, behavior, engagement, and measures of physical health and social-emotional development as well as reading and math scores. Parent satisfaction and school climate matter; so does teacher satisfaction. There is a management saying: "You can only manage what you can measure." The corollary is also true: Those who value dimensions beyond academic skills must find ways to measure them reliably and use them to guide their strategy.

In our visits to new day schools, we've seen several excellent examples of continuous assessment. At Boston's Roxbury Prep, for example, the math teachers analyze their students' performance — in great detail — on a variety of standardized tests each year to see how well their students are using what they've been learning and where the curriculum needs reworking for the coming year.

### Time for Teacher Collaboration, Planning, and Professional Development

Under the current school schedule, teachers have surprisingly little time to meet with each other regarding their teaching goals, techniques, or even lesson plans. One of the real hallmarks of charter public schools with new school day schedules like the KIPP Academies and Roxbury Prep is the amount of planning and collaboration time teachers are expected to engage in grade-level and subject-level planning. And beyond planning time, teachers need enough time for targeted professional development to learn more effective teaching strategies.

At Achievable Dream Academy, Principal Catina Bullard-Clark spoke enthusiastically about planning:

“Planning is a huge part of the whole school. Until a few years ago, just the middle and high school got planning periods, and the elementary school didn’t. ‘We teach all the subjects — we need time to plan,’ they said. So we went to a shortened Wednesday schedule, and now teachers are involved in rigorous planning. Without planning, the extra time would be wasted.” Teachers “get some time in the morning [when the kids are in a pep session] for a quick grade-level meeting. They don’t eat with the kids so they have time to get together to do additional planning.” Resource teachers and instructional assistants cover activities when the kids just need monitoring to keep the peace, and the teachers make good use of that time.

All the Massachusetts Expanded Learning Time schools develop plans to add substantial time for teacher planning and professional development, so they can make better use of the expanded schedule. They have learned what other new day schools know — one of the most important and challenging aspects of developing a new day schedule is to balance the focus on student learning time with the focus on teacher planning and learning time. Both are important and neither can be allowed to overwhelm the other.

## Individualization

Perhaps the greatest blessing of the new school day is the opportunity to individualize education for children — to match it to their needs, skills, and preferences. Too often the conventional school day makes a one-size-fits-all approach necessary, with little time for genuinely individual instruction. But children are all different, and the new day offers the chance to break the mold.

In academic classrooms, individualization means leaving plenty of time every day for students to work in small groups and on their own at their proper level and pace. For the most advanced, that means more challenge. For the struggling, it means more help, and for the rest it means a sensible pace and more depth. It definitely means tutoring. Time and again we visited new day schools and looked for the magic curricular bullet, but what we found instead was an approach that allowed so much time for teachers to work with students individually that everyone gets what they need.

Beyond core academics, individualization means a generous breadth of enrichment offerings and plenty

of choice left to students, even young ones. Kids really appreciate that opportunity to select, and it gives them a chance to discover and then pursue their own interests. It also means plenty of time for socialization and for socioemotional learning, since how children learn to deal with others ends up being a big part of their lives at work and at home long after they leave school.

## Time for Up-Front Planning

Converting a school from a standard schedule to the new school day takes a lot of planning before the fact. So whenever schools consider conversion, we cannot emphasize enough how important it is for them to have a significant block of time — eight months to a year, at minimum — to consider how to change the day, how to reorganize the curriculum, how to adjust teacher schedules, how to build support for the change. There also are the myriad other considerations from the logistical — buses and snacks — to the profound — what should education at our school include? Without the planning grant stage of the Massachusetts Expanded Learning Time Initiative, we doubt that the program would be nearly as successful or effective. For a change of this magnitude, preliminary planning time is vital for everyone concerned. It allows for a deliberate process, one in which doubts can be raised and answered, proponents can get more educated on the subject, skeptics can be gradually brought on board, and communities can get informed. Without building in substantial planning time before a school makes the decision to take the plunge, conversion efforts are setting themselves up for likely failure.

Time alone is not sufficient to ensure a strong planning process. Strong leadership, broad participation, and sufficient resources to do the work are all critical as well. Efforts must include both considerable attention inside the school from the principal and the teachers and well-executed communications outside the school with parents, potential community partners, policymakers, and the teachers’ union.

## Partnerships With Outside Resources

The new school day offers a tremendous opportunity to bring more outside partners and resources to bear on the goal of helping fully educate the students at the school. While the expansion of core academic time should

almost always be delivered by existing teachers, the addition of other subjects, the inclusion of enrichment in arts, music, drama, and sports, and even the injection of more project-based and experiential learning into core subjects all offer opportunities to bring outside organizations and individuals into the school. The instinct of most schools considering a new school day is to focus chiefly on how to deploy more of the existing resources. That is a mistake if it is at the expense of dismissing the potential for specialized, enthusiastic, and cost-effective partnerships.

Whether it is Worcester's Hiatt School's creative use of cultural and other organizations' capabilities right in the curriculum, or Boston's Edwards Middle School's partnership with Citizen Schools to offer apprenticeships with citizen volunteers for every sixth grader, or Boston's Mario Umana Middle School Academy's partnership with the YMCA, which provides swimming lessons for the students, or any of the dozens of other working partnerships we have observed at new day schools, expanded learning time can mean expanded learning partnerships. Many potential partners have invested considerably in developing outstanding approaches to their subject of interest, and many have the ability to bring in people, ranging from college students to community members to professionals to retirees, who would not otherwise necessarily cross paths with students. Besides taking advantage of their ability to provide the enrichment itself, bringing in these other people creates many positive opportunities for constructive relationships and broadens the civic investment in local educational success.

This type of partnership needs to be a two-way street that benefits both the school and the outside organization. It takes somewhat more time and certainly more communication to pull this off, but the benefits can be powerful and long-lasting.

Schools should look to but also beyond traditional youth-serving organizations when considering such partnership opportunities. Nearby colleges and universities can offer a variety of ways to help on both the school's campus and the college's campus. Organizations that don't normally offer such programs can sometimes help — Hiatt School has formed a strong working relationship with the Paul Revere House in Boston, for example. Finally, the community may include individuals such as retired teachers or others willing to help flexibly on a part-time basis. In Miami-Dade's Improvement Zone, schools have

learned that retired teachers make terrific teachers for their remediation classes in literacy and math.

## Starting With Individual Schools, Building for Scale

We advocate rolling out the new school day by starting with individual schools that want to put it to work, have a good plan to do so, and have the capacity to execute a plan. But we also believe it's crucial that the new day strategy move beyond the one-of-a-kind, pioneering, experimental school world into large-scale use. Already, more than a thousand such schools are in operation. Many are singular like Roxbury Prep and Achievable Dream. Some have begun to spread out, like the KIPP Academies. But we believe that far more students, families, and communities could benefit from the new day and that we need approaches that hold out the potential for reaching them in large numbers.

The Massachusetts Expanded Learning Time approach can be scaled fairly widely, and more than a hundred additional schools have entered the planning process to consider converting. Several states are working with the National Center on Time & Learning to develop plans modeled on the Massachusetts approach. Federal support may also emerge: At the time of this writing, Senator Edward Kennedy and Representative George Miller, each Chair of the Education Committee in their respective branches of Congress, have proposed that a national demonstration program be funded by the federal government to allow more states and districts to begin to roll out expanded learning time new day schools.

Under the Massachusetts law, districts must apply with their schools and must highlight how converting one or a few schools can lead to districtwide gains. Some of the initial districts are now considering a change in all their schools, or at least all the elementary and middle schools, to the new day schedule. This would greatly simplify many things, ranging from contracts with employees and bus companies to the expectations of children and parents, and would eliminate the risk of conflict between those that have more time and those that do not. It would also address issues such as what time extracurricular activities and town sports should start. We encourage policymakers to think about the long-term goal even while beginning the new school day on a more limited scale.

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## Some Key Questions Yet to be Answered

While we believe that the more than 1,000 public schools currently employing some version of the new school day offer ample evidence of its effectiveness and potential, we recognize that several important issues need further analysis, discussion, data, and experimentation. We raise them here in the spirit of full disclosure and in the hope of provoking further work in this emerging field of time and learning.

### High School Models

The schools cited in this paper and profiled in our book, *Time to Learn: How a New School Schedule is Making Smarter Kids, Happier Parents, and Safer Neighborhoods*, are predominantly elementary, K–8, or middle schools. KIPP does operate some high schools now and Achievable Dream has begun adding grades to become a K–12 school. And the Miami-Dade School Improvement Zone has some high schools. Quite a few charter high schools use the new school day to achieve their respective mission. In Massachusetts, the first high school to join the Expanded Learning Time Initiative did so in the fall of 2007 and another high school is in the late stages of planning for potential conversion in 2009.

Nonetheless, we find that in considering conversion to the new day, two major concerns unique to high school students have not been as fully answered as we would like. Those two issues are student jobs and time-intensive extracurricular activities (including sports). About one third of sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds hold part-time jobs, and the rate is much higher in some schools. Many work to earn money for personal expenditures, some to help meet their family's basic needs. In any case, the hours of that work may overlap with time targeted for

expanded learning, and that creates several hurdles and questions for the new day effort.

Meanwhile, almost half of all high school senior boys and a third of high school senior girls report spending considerable time on athletic teams, while a quarter report significant time commitments to music or performing arts, 15 percent to academic clubs, and 10 percent each to a newspaper or yearbook and to student government. These are clearly worthy activities and should be incorporated into any new day schedule. But they are also time-consuming and not immediately easy to integrate.

Further, the academic focus of high school is quite different and may require considerably different pedagogical and curricular approaches to harness expanded time to great benefit. Where elementary and much of middle school is focused on acquiring core basic skills that definitely benefit from more student time on task and more opportunities to individualize instruction for students, high school involves a greater emphasis on advanced skills and on critical thinking. High schools pursuing cutting-edge change such as the career academies approach may be best prepared to benefit from greater time to achieve their goals.

Lastly, high schools need to prepare their students for college or work. They need to offer students an ever wider variety of specialized courses. These considerations, not relevant to elementary or middle schools, must factor into a new day design for high schools.

We are convinced from both a needs point of view and from the success of the few existing models that high schools can and should adopt the new day. But we also believe that it will take more creativity to address and incorporate the work and extracurricular activity considerations, and to customize the new day structures to the academic and social developmental stage of older teens. We think that the day for these students could be quite a bit more flexible and could allow, especially for

those students doing adequately or well academically, the opportunity to work, to pursue extracurricular activities, and to pursue advanced courses, including college courses, all as part of their new day schedules.

## Cost and Funding

We have cost data from many existing new day schools and we know that in Massachusetts an annual state contribution of \$1,300 per student has been adequate to enable multiple districts and schools to proceed. But we do not fully know what the new school day should cost and will cost in different places and versions. The price of the highest cost item — personnel time — is inextricably entwined with the overall agreements with employees — mostly teachers — on compensation and hours. Also, schools are notoriously weak on cost accounting systems, so allocating costs accurately to the traditional day versus the new day is not always easy.

We do believe that it is possible to consider different models that would have different cost implications. The creativity and flexibility of the staffing plan, the degree of use of technology and partners, and the level of professional experience and compensation of the local teachers may all significantly affect the actual cost per student, one way or the other.

What long-term mix of local funding (especially in more affluent districts), state funding, and federal funding is appropriate remains to be determined. We believe and argue in our book that the case is compelling for the new day to far better serve the pressing needs of the most at-risk children from the lowest-income families in the lowest-achieving schools. These are the top-priority targets for state government and the federal government, and we believe that they should see the new school day as an opportunity to drive improvement where it is needed most — and where it will have the largest initial effect.

## Summer

We argue in our book for the new school day — more time every day for learning. The large number of successful schools based on the new day schedule and approach provide a great deal of evidence and role modeling for how others can and should proceed. We feel that extending the school year into the summer may also be valuable

and important, but that change is in need of new and persuasive models. Most summer experts argue persuasively that summer ought to have an academic component — but one that is more limited than the school year and perhaps one that feels quite different. KIPP schools, for example, use their summer expansion to start students into their next grade *before* they have their vacation and return to that grade in the fall. And during those three weeks, there is less homework and more exploration. Achievable Dream Academy runs 30 days a year longer but breaks up school periods with intersessions that include more academic work for those who need it and more enrichment for others. We believe summer should surely have a greater enrichment and social component. We suspect that many school systems will never want to fully run a summer term; many teachers may prefer vacation, and the costs and complexities may outweigh the benefits. As such, there may be an even greater role for outside organizations to lead such a summer term.

## Most Effective Teaching and Learning Strategies for Each Subject

While more time on task is worthwhile, we believe that the added time is even more valuable when it's used to do things differently as well. There needs to be considerably more formal research on what works well. We know of one recent carefully designed experiment that asked the kind of question we think needs to be investigated extensively. In this case, the researchers compared six different strategies for adding 20 minutes per day (less than we see in most new day schools) to literacy and carefully measured the difference in impact. Not all interventions were equally valuable. That is the kind of research we need for reading, writing, and math, and also for other subjects. We also need to understand the best ways to design the overall day. For example, does breaking up learning with engaging enrichment and sports help keep minds fresh?

## Effectiveness in Different Circumstances

Most experience with new day schools has come in urban schools with predominantly at-risk children from lower-income families. We argue here that the best proof of success comes from the schools that have voluntarily pursued the new school day, both the charter and experimental district schools and the Massachusetts Expanded

# About the Authors

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Learning Time schools. We know far less about how well it works in several other settings.

As discussed earlier, it is a pressing matter to determine how well expanding learning time, especially about an hour per day of chiefly academic time (which is at the moment the main strategy being tried), works in turnaround schools. The results in New York City's Chancellor's District and now in Miami-Dade's School Improvement Zone show moderate promise. The jury is still out on how effective and enduring an approach this will prove to be.

Less direct evidence has emerged about expanded learning time from middle- and high-income, suburban, and rural districts, and there is almost no evidence from vocational education schools. In many of these cases, the goals will be different, the time will be used differently, and the outcomes may be different. We need to know.

## How Much Time?

This is perhaps the biggest unresolved question. We chose to focus on one model — about two hours per day of additional time. Some of our example schools

use more — KIPP schools, for instance — and some less, such as those in the Miami-Dade Zone. Educators and policymakers need to know the minimum amount required to make any significant difference. We argue here that it has to be enough to cause redesign and real change. It's also necessary to know whether the benefits continue to increase as time expands further.

At some point, one must assume diminishing returns will cut in, and much above two hours per day seems both too expensive and too invasive for most schools and families. But we know that boarding schools — the ultimate expanded learning time schools! — work very well for many private school families and have begun (as in the SEED school in Washington, DC) to show promise for children at the highest risk. As with the others, it is unlikely that this question will have one best answer for all circumstances — but it is a question of crucial importance to every district and individual school contemplating the new day.

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