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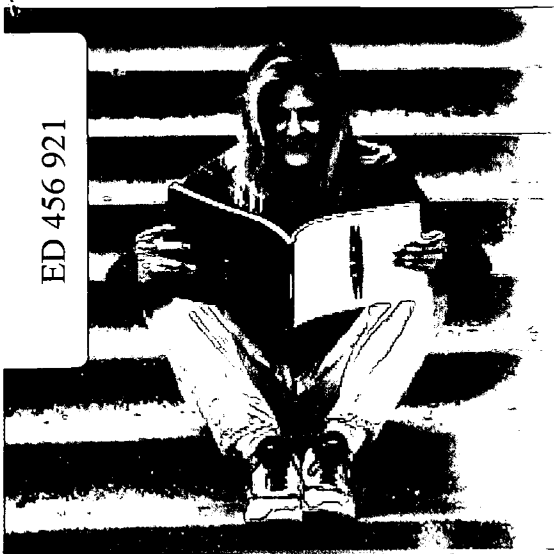
ABSTRACT

Noting that the past decade has seen a rapid increase in the number of out-of-school time and community school initiatives and that finding funding for these initiatives remains a challenge to their success, this strategy brief discusses the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) as an important long-term source of funding. The brief provides an overview of CCDF, its requirements, and considerations for its use. The brief then highlights four strategies for using CCDF funds: (1) accessing subsidies for eligible program participants; (2) becoming a CCDF contracted provider; (3) using CCDF to enhance the quality of programs; and (4) using CCDF to create systems of out-of-school time care. The brief discusses considerations for each strategy and provides examples of innovative approaches that policymakers, community leaders, and program developers can employ to support out-of-school time and community initiatives. The brief concludes with a list of pertinent resources and organizations. (KB)



Using CCDF to Finance Out-of-School Time and Community School Initiatives

Strategy Brief

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TOOLS FOR
OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME
AND COMMUNITY
SCHOOL INITIATIVES

The FINANCE PROJECT

Using CCDF to Finance Out-of-School Time and Community School Initiatives

Strategy Brief

By Sharon Deich
with Erika Bryant
and Elisabeth Wright

The past decade has seen a rapid rise in the number of out-of-school time and community school initiatives. Not only do these initiatives provide a safe haven for young people while parents work, but they also enhance academic achievement, offer constructive alternatives to risky and delinquent behaviors, and strengthen families and communities. Often out-of-school and community school initiatives are started with a time-limited or "seed grant" that typically provides funding for three to five years. Program leaders are then expected to generate the resources needed to continue their work. Yet, finding sustainable funding for out-of-school time and community school initiatives can be a real challenge to long-term success.

One important long-term source of funding for out-of-school time and community school initiatives is the Child Care and Development Fund. The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) was authorized by the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 to help low-income families, families receiving temporary public assistance, and those transitioning from public assistance obtain child care so they can work or attend education or training programs. In FY2001, federal CCDF funding to states, territories, and tribes totaled over $4.5 billion dollars.[1] CCDF funding levels are significantly higher than appropriated federal funds because of transfers from Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF, see next section) to CCDF and required state expenditures (matching and Maintenance of Effort funds). With over one-third of subsidy recipients being school-aged children, CCDF is an important source of funding for out-of-school time and community school initiatives.

This strategy brief provides an overview of CCDF, its requirements, and considerations for its use. The brief then highlights several strategies for using CCDF funds. It discusses considerations for each strategy and it provides examples of innovative approaches that policy makers, community leaders, and program developers can employ to support out-of-school time and community school initiatives.

BACKGROUND AND GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Child Care and Development Fund is the largest federal child care subsidy program, funding both direct services and quality enhancements. It is administered at the federal level by the Child Care Bureau, located in the Administration for Children and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. In 1996, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act consolidated several federal child care subsidy programs into a single, integrated child care system now known as CCDF.[2] While federal law establishes requirements that states must meet to receive CCDF funds, the states have broad discretion in how the dollars are spent. Every two years, each state submits a plan to the federal government, indicating how the funds will be spent. CCDF also requires a state match or contribution in order to receive the maximum amount of funding. CCDF regulations (45 CFR 98.53) stipulate the kinds and amount of funding required as a match.

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[1] *FY2001 Child Care and Related Appropriations.* U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families, Child Care Bureau.

[2] Many refer to the CCDF as the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG); for purposes of this brief, the two are interchangeable.

For information on CCDF state plans, visit the Web site of the National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC) at www.nccic.org/dirs.html. The site lists CCDF state contacts and links to state child care home pages, many of which post CCDF state plans. NCCIC also has an aggregate summary of state plans.

CCDF Uses

CCDF funds are used for two main purposes—to provide child care subsidies for low-income children under the age of 13 and to enhance the quality of child care for all children. The vast majority of CCDF dollars are used to provide subsidies.[3] States provide subsidies to eligible low-income families through vouchers or certificates. States can also choose to extend contracts and grants to eligible providers. Roughly half the states use this option. To improve the quality of child care, the CCDF appropriation also includes a minimum 4-percent quality set-aside and a special earmark for resource and referral and school-age care. In recent years, an additional appropriation earmark above the $4.1 million has funded quality improvements. In FY2001, the earmark was $272 million, $100 million of which must be used to improve the quality of care for infants and toddlers. In addition, recent welfare reform changes have allowed states to transfer funds from their Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) grants into CCDF. Each of these uses is discussed below in more detail.

Service Dollars. Since 1991, states have been required by federal law to offer vouchers to parents receiving subsidies. For parents receiving child care subsidies, this voucher provision helps increase access to the same providers used by families whose child care is not subsidized by CCDF. Child care vouchers or certificates can be redeemed with various types of providers, including center-based care, group-home care, family child care, and in-home care, as long as the providers meet the requirements of the state (including health and safety requirements).

Many states also issue contracts or grants to eligible providers to reserve a certain number of child care slots for subsidy-eligible children. Parents can then choose to use a contracted provider in lieu of receiving a voucher. Generally, providers prefer contracts because they provide a guaranteed income. The provider receives payment for each eligible ***enrolled*** child, regardless of the child's attendance on any given day. The flexible nature of contracts and grants also allows states to use them to help low-income communities address child care shortages and to enhance quality.

Quality Enhancements. The CCDF regulations require states to spend a minimum of 4 percent of their grant to improve the quality and availability of care. Some states spend more than 4 percent on quality enhancements and the state plans detail how these funds will be spent. Quality enhancements can include a variety of activities, such as supporting resource and referral counseling, making grants and loans to providers to meet licensing standards, enhancing monitoring efforts, providing training and technical assistance, improving the compensation of providers, and building the capacity of states and programs to deliver high-quality services. Moreover, funding for quality improvements is not limited to subsidized child care providers. The quality dollars are the most flexible funds in the CCDF, and many states dedicate a portion of these dollars to out-of-school time activities.

Another way that the CCDF supports quality enhancements is through a special earmark to improve school-age care and resource and referral services. This $19-million earmark is divided among the states, providing each a small amount of funding dedicated to out-of-school time.

TANF Transfers. Since the inception of the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program in 1996, states have been allowed to transfer up to 30 percent of their TANF funds into the CCDF to support parents transitioning into work or partici-

[3] Federal regulations require that not less than 70 percent of the funds shall be used to meet the child care needs of eligible families (CFR 98.50(e)).

pating in training programs. In FY2000, states transferred \$2.03 billion from TANF into CCDF.[4] Once transferred into CCDF, TANF funds are subject to all of the CCDF rules and requirements (see next section).

TANF dollars transferred into CCDF increase the overall amount of funding available for subsidies and quality enhancements. Transferred TANF funds can provide subsidies to families on waiting lists, either by increasing income eligibility levels to serve more families or increasing subsidy payment levels. Likewise, TANF funds transferred to CCDF can expand out-of-school time capacity-building and quality-enhancement efforts by providing money for start up or expansion, funding partnerships to coordinate resources, leveraging private sector investments, and providing technical assistance.[5]

CCDF Requirements

Community leaders and program developers seeking to tap CCDF funds for out-of-school time and community school initiatives must keep in mind the following program requirements.

Eligibility. Eligible recipients of CCDF subsidies are children under the age of 13 who reside with a family whose income does not exceed 85 percent of the state's median income and whose parents are working or attending a job training or educational program.[6] States have flexibility to set additional criteria, such as a lower income threshold, that restrict eligibility. Currently, only a handful of states set income eligibility at the 85 percent federal maximum.

Copayments. CCDF requires each state to establish a sliding fee scale that provides for cost sharing by families receiving subsidies. States may choose to waive the copayment for families with incomes at or below the poverty level.[7] The fee scale must be based on income and the size of the family. Although eligible providers in many states are required to adopt the state copayment schedule,[8] nearly half of the states (24 states) allow providers to charge more than the copayment rate.[9]

Rate Scales. States must establish payment rates (reimbursement rates) for the provision of services under CCDF. These payments are informed by a market rate survey and must be high enough to ensure "equal access" for families receiving subsidies.[10] Eligible providers must be willing to accept the reimbursement as payment for services.

Health and Safety Requirements. To be eligible to collect a CCDF subsidy payment (either voucher/certificate or grant/contract), the provider must meet state health and safety standards.[11] Regulated providers typically meet CCDF health and safety requirements through the state's normal licensing process. States have discretion in determining how nonregulated providers meet CCDF health and safety requirements, and some states rely on provider self-certification. In many states, some providers receive subsidies without being licensed.

Reporting Requirements. To receive payment for services rendered to eligible children, providers must typically submit information monthly on who is being served and the number of days or hours they were served. This often happens as a part of the payment process.

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4 *Use of TANF for Child Care in Fiscal Years 1999 and 2000: Transfers to the Child Care and Development Fund and Direct Spending on Child Care,* Rachel Schumacher, Center for Law and Social Policy (February 2001); *Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) Overview of Federal Funds Spent in FY 2000 through 4th Quarter FY 2000,* U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2001), available at http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ofs/data/q400/overview.htm.

5 States also have the option to spend TANF funds directly on child care and out-of-school time programs. Funds spent directly from TANF are not subject to the eligibility requirements, allowing more flexibility to serve older children and youth. For a fuller discussion of TANF transfers, see *Using TANF to Finance Out-of-School Time and Community School Initiatives,* Margaret Flynn, The Finance Project (October 1999).

6 *Regulations 45 CFR 98.20.*

7 *Regulations 45 CFR 98.42*

8 *The fee scale adopted by the state often varies by locality and is based on a bi-annual market rate survey.*

9 *Access to Child Care for Low-Income Working Families,* U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (October 1999).

10 *Regulation 45 CFR 98.43*

11 *Regulations 45 CFR 98.40*

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR USING CCDF FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME AND COMMUNITY SCHOOL INITIATIVES

Accessing CCDF dollars takes time and resources. Community leaders and program developers will need to compare the costs of getting started with the potential payoff in resources as well as the fit between administration requirements and initiative goals. The following issues will affect this decision.

Age Eligibility. The age eligibility cutoff for CCDF (13 years) typically happens during the middle-school years. When deciding whether or not to become a CCDF provider, programs aimed at middle-school children will need to consider how many of their children are eligible for subsides and for how long. Also, a few states are now using other funding sources, such as TANF, to extend the subsidy age to cover older children. Check your state plan or contact your state officials for this information.

Waiting List. CCDF is a block grant to the states. Unlike entitlement programs that guarantee services to all eligible recipients, the amount of CCDF funding is limited and many states have waiting lists for subsidies. Community leaders and program developers should investigate the current waiting list status and the priority for subsidy distribution before investing the time and resources needed to become an eligible provider.

Copayments. Many out-of-school time and community school initiatives are able to provide service for free or for a very nominal amount, especially for lower-income children and families. CCDF requires programs to collect a copayment that is determined by the state based on income. Program developers will need to consider if this copayment provides a philosophical or practical obstacle and explore ways to help parents satisfy the copayment requirement.

Turf Issues. Policy makers, community leaders, and program developers looking to access CCDF for school-aged children should be aware that the early care and education community—the primary recipient of CCDF—is also seeking to increase subsidies for younger children. Partnerships and dialogue with the early child care community and its advocates can help avoid potential conflict and better serve the needs of all children.

FINANCING STRATEGIES

This section describes four strategies for using CCDF to support out-of-school time and community school programs and services. These strategies involve the use of both service and quality CCDF dollars.

The first two strategies are most applicable for program directors who are providing direct services to school-aged children. The last two strategies are more relevant for community leaders and policy makers seeking to improve larger systems of out-of-school time care. Examples of how CCDF funds are currently being used and considerations for each strategy are also included.

1. Accessing subsidies for eligible program participants.

Programs have to take the following steps to receive subsidy payments.

Step 1: Contact state officials to find out what actions you need to take related to health and safety requirements and paperwork. All CCDF providers must meet health and safety requirements set by the state. In addition, some states require certification or registration of providers. Many states have streamlined this process and some even allow completion of paperwork online. States may also require new providers to attend a short orientation as part of the certification process.

Step 2: Once state requirements are met, you can begin to serve eligible children—children with vouchers or certificates. This can happen in one of two ways. The first way is for agencies that help parents locate school-age care (such as resource and referral agencies or welfare-to-work agencies) to direct families with vouchers or certificates to your program. The second way is for your program to help low-income families who already receive services become qualified to receive a voucher or certificate. Helping qualified families apply for vouchers is a more labor-intensive and time-consuming effort than serving children that already have a voucher or certificate. Many programs employ both strategies.

ACCESSING CCDF FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME AND COMMUNITY SCHOOL INITIATIVES

While the federal government provides the framework and guidance for CCDF spending, state officials have wide discretion in how CCDF dollars are spent. In addition, some states grant counties considerable discretion in allocating CCDF dollars. Out-of-school time and community school initiative leaders and advocates need to be aware of how CCDF is administered and allocated in their state or county in order to access these funds strategically. Following are a few suggestions for getting started.

Get to know the decision makers: Find out which state or county agency administers the CCDF (in most cases, it is the state human services or welfare agency), identify key officials within that agency, and build relationships. Schedule meetings with key officials and introduce them to your initiative, and add them to your mailing list to keep them informed of developments and successes in your program.

Be familiar with the state CCDF plan: Each state is required to have a CCDF plan that (1) defines how the state plans to implement CCDF according to federal regulations (this includes the fee schedules, copayment scales, health and safety requirements, etc.); (2) specifies the lead administering agency; (3) delineates any additional eligibility criteria that the state will impose; and (4) details the activities that will be undertaken with CCDF funds. States are required to renew their plans biennially in consultation with local governments, related state agencies, and the public. The most recent state plans were due July 1, 2001, and are effective October 1, 2001.

Get to know how the child care payment system works: Each state establishes its own eligibility levels; priority uses for CCDF funding, including how the quality dollars and the set-asides will be used; and reporting and health and safety requirements. Find out about these requirements in your state. Talk with state or county officials as well as other program providers currently receiving CCDF subsidies to get a complete picture of how the system works.

Join a coalition of child care advocates: There are many benefits to joining a coalition of advocates. First, you can access up-to-date information on the most pressing child care issues in your state or county, including when and where public hearings for CCDF are being held. Second, you can see how out-of-school time issues fit into the child care discussions. And last but not least, you can lend your voice to organized efforts to improve the quality and availability of child care and hopefully receive the support of other advocates on out-of-school time and community school issues. For example, the National School-Age Care Alliance (www.nsaca.org) has affiliates in most states. The Afterschool Alliance (www.afterschoolalliance.org) is another useful advocacy resource.

Find out about current TANF spending on out-of-school time programs and child care: As discussed above, TANF funds can be transferred into CCDF or can be used directly to fund child care and out-of-school time services. In fact, many states are using TANF dollars to support and enhance out-of-school time and community school efforts and activities. Like CCDF, states are required to submit a state plan for TANF (TANF plan summaries are posted on the Welfare Information Network at http://www.welfareinfo.org/SPD_reports.htm). Understanding how your state is spending TANF dollars in support of out-of-school time and community school programs and services is the first step in accessing these funds.

For a more detailed discussion of TANF transfers, see *Using TANF to Finance Out-of-School Time and Community School Initiatives*, Margaret Flynn, The Finance Project (October 1999).

Step 3: Applying for and receiving reimbursement is the last step in the process. Each state has its own method for processing reimbursement claims. During the certification process, providers will learn when and how to file for reimbursements.

Considerations:

- In many places, health and safety requirements can be barriers to program certification. Community or public agencies often can provide programs with the technical and financial resources needed to meet health and safety requirements. (CCDF quality funds can be used for this purpose.) Start by inquiring with your local CCDF administrative office or with your local resource and referral agency to find out about resources to help meet licensing standards.
- Under the voucher system, providers may, depending on state policy, be reimbursed only for days that the children attend the program. This situation can result in fluctuations in revenues that are difficult to predict or plan for. In addition, in most states, CCDF reimburses only after services have been provided.
- Families can enter the subsidy system through a variety of organizations and agencies in the community. Developing relationships with these agencies can help you inform subsidy-eligible families about the services that you provide.
- Helping families access subsidies requires someone on your staff to be knowledgeable about the child care payment system. You will need to allocate staff time for helping parents complete the required forms and getting information to the right agencies and offices. Forming relationships with the CCDF administrative staff, who ultimately "qualify" parents, can help smooth this process.

2. Becoming a CCDF contracted provider.

In the past few years, at least 11 states have distributed a portion of their service money, though grants or contracts, to providers to retain a specified number of slots for school-aged children.[12] Each state establishes a process for awarding these grants and contracts. Many use a competitive "Request for Proposal" process to select the providers. Once a contract is in place, providers can serve eligible children and apply directly to the state for reimbursement.

JACKSON MANN COMMUNITY CENTER

Like many other states, Massachusetts administers its CCDF subsidy program in part through local entities such as child care and referral agencies. In Boston, the Jackson Mann Community Center works with Child Care Choices of Boston (CCCB), an administering agency, to provide CCDF-subsidized child care to eligible families. Eligible families include those who receive TANF benefits, those who are enrolled in job-training programs, and others who are income-eligible. Child Care Choices of Boston provides these families with CCDF-subsidized vouchers and then refers them to one of many participating child-care providers in the area.

The Jackson Mann Community Center is one of the participating providers that receives CCCB referrals. Of the 100 children who attend Jackson Mann's after-school child care program, approximately 10 percent use CCDF vouchers from CCCB to defray expenses. To receive reimbursement for those vouchers, Jackson Mann's administrative staff tracks the attendance and participation data of subsidized children. On a monthly basis, they provide this information to CCCB, and CCCB submits the required information to the state for voucher reimbursement.

To maintain its status as an eligible child care provider, each year the Jackson Mann Community Center signs a contract with CCCB stating that it is licensed by the state of Massachusetts to provide child care and that it will abide by other CCCB eligibility requirements.

For more information, contact Tom Regan at 617-635-5153 or tregan@mann.boston.k12.ma.us

[12] As reported in the Child Care and Development Fund Report of State Plans for the period 10/1/99 to 9/30/01, Arkansas, California, the District of Columbia, Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, and South Carolina reported awarding contracts for school age care. For more information, see www.nccic.org.

THE MARYLAND CHILD CARE ADMINISTRATION

Recognizing the urgent need for summer care options for school-aged children, especially those in low-income neighborhoods, The Maryland Child Care Administration uses a portion of its service funding to operate summer programs in conjunction with local departments of social services throughout the state. For example, Baltimore County's Department of Social Services contracts with the YMCA to provide summer care to 300 children. The contracts are awarded to providers in low-income neighborhoods that lack summer programs. The contracts provide enough funding to support all costs of operating the programs. Additionally, these summer programs are open to all children – not just children who are eligible for subsidies. By awarding these contracts, the state of Maryland is fulfilling the CCDF mandate to increase the supply and quality of care while extending the benefits of the CCDF to a wide range of children and families. *For more information, contact Linda Zang, Child Care Administration, Maryland Department of Human Services, at (410) 767-7813 or lzang@dhr.state.md.us.*

In addition to awarding a portion of their service dollars in the form of contracts for slots, some states award contracts from their service funding to improve the quality or build the supply of care.[13] These contracts can serve a variety of purposes, from expanding summer opportunities to establishing services in under-served areas. (See the Maryland example box). If your state awards contracts for care, contact your state administrator to find out about application requirements.

Considerations:

- The competitive nature of the selection process and the added reporting burden mean that programs need to have sufficient staff and resources to apply for and manage these awards. Therefore, providers need to consider their administrative capacity in examining whether or not to apply for a contract.
- Once awarded, contracts provide a stable, long-term (several years) source of revenue for programs, because providers typically receive payment for each eligible child ***enrolled***, regardless of the child's

[13] States are required to spend a *minimum* of 4 percent of CCDF funding on quality enhancements. States spending more than 4 percent are choosing to use some of their service dollars for quality.

USING SERVICE DOLLARS FOR CONTRACTS AND GRANTS

The following states use CCDF service funds to contract with school-age providers.

- **District of Columbia:** Using CCDF service funds, the District of Columbia contracts with providers around the city to increase the supply of school-aged care. Contracts support providers serving as few as 10 children to the DC Public School System, which serves 10,000 youth in school-age activities. Other large school-age contractors include the DC Department of Parks and Recreation and the National Child Day Care Association.
- **Illinois:** Officials view contracts as important not only to increase the supply of school-age care, but also to ensure accessibility. For the numerous eligible families living in rural communities, awarding contracts to local providers eliminates the need for families to travel long distances to resource and referral agencies that oversee the voucher program.
- **Massachusetts:** More than any other state, Massachusetts uses service dollar contracts to expand the supply and quality of school-aged care. According to state officials, contracts serve two functions: 1) to sustain an active state role in school-age care; and 2) to help programs increase stability and develop capacity. Providers bid competitively for these dollars in response to state solicitation. Contractors include both individual providers and larger organizations providing school-aged care.
- **Nevada:** Nevada contracts for before- and after- school programs with established providers around the state such as Boys and Girls Clubs, recreation departments, and YMCAs. Each contractor receives service and quality dollars to increase both the supply and quality of programs.

attendance on any given day. In low-income communities, where stable funding for programs is often difficult to obtain, contracts can increase the capacity and quality of available programs in targeted or under-served areas.

- When states use CCDF dollars for quality enhancements, they can build on or enhance existing services to provide opportunities for all children, even some who may not be eligible for subsidies.

3. Using CCDF to enhance the quality of programs.

As discussed above, all states are required to spend a portion of their CCDF grant on quality enhancements. Many states devote a portion of their quality-enhancement funding to improving the quality of and supply and access to care for school-aged children. The federal government encourages states to use their quality-enhancement funds to meet a variety of needs, from supporting staff development, to starting programs, to improving monitoring and compliance with state requirements.[14] Out-of-school time and community school program developers can learn how their states are utilizing the quality-enhancement funds by reviewing the state plans or contacting state officials. Once familiar with the quality-enhancement priorities and objectives in your state, program leaders can devise a strategy to access these funds. The following brief examples demonstrate the range of activities currently funded with quality-enhancement dollars.

According to the most recent summary of state plans, the most common uses of CCDF quality funds for out-of-school time include: starting or expanding school-age programs; providing operating support through subsidies or grants/contracts; supporting training and technical assistance activities; promoting school-age care program accreditation; bringing together school-age program leaders; and funding statewide or regional school-age child specialists to work with programs.[15]

Considerations:

- The quality funds are the most flexible dollars in the CCDF, and states have wide latitude in how these funds are spent. By building relationships with the state and local CCDF program administrators, out-of-school time and community school initiative leaders can learn more about how these quality funds can support their programs, as well as influence how future funds are spent.
- Some quality funds are distributed on a competitive basis and, therefore, require the time and resources necessary to prepare a proposal. Program developers must consider the costs of applying for funds relative to the payoff.
- CCDF quality funding provides an opportunity to extend the reach of CCDF beyond those families that are eligible for subsidies. Training programs and start-up grants, for instance, are targeted to programs and providers—not eligible children. Look for opportunities to tap into resources in your community that are supported by the CCDF and available to all programs or providers.

[14] *Regulations 45 CFR 98.51.*

[15] *Child Care and Development Fund Report of State Plans.* U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2001. Available at www.nccic.org/pubs/CCDFStat.pdf.

STATE USES OF CCDF QUALITY-ENHANCEMENT FUNDS

Establishing and expanding school-age care programs:

The Georgia School-Age Care Association, Inc. (GSACA) has an agreement with the state lead agency to use CCDF funds for the purpose of establishing and expanding school-age programs within the state. This project's goal is to increase the capacity, supply, and quality of before- and after-school programs that will serve low-income children. Eight new before- and after-school programs in targeted communities will receive start-up money and technical assistance in order to provide this care. GSACA will also select three year-round after school programs that will commit to program improvement leading to accreditation by the National School-Age Care Alliance.

Challenging grants to leverage additional resources:

Using CCDF funds, South Dakota initiated an innovative approach to leverage resources and expand out-of-school time programs. The state's Governor challenged school districts to become out-of-school time program hosts, rent-free. This challenge resulted in 39 applications and 28 programs funded for 1998-1999. Slots available through grant money increased from 350 to 1,996, a 450-percent increase.

Providing training and technical assistance to school-age care providers:

In New Jersey, the School Age Child Care Training and Technical Grant (funded by CCDF) supports the development and expansion of School-Age Child Care (SACC) by providing training and technical assistance to new and existing SACC programs, as well as placing an emphasis upon special-needs child care and intergenerational programming.

Preparing and disseminating school-age curricula and materials:

The California School-Age Consortium and the California State University System use CCDF dollars to prepare and disseminate a variety of school-age materials. These materials, distributed in both print and electronic formats, facilitate the training and development of staff and promote high-quality school-age and after-school programs. Materials include a science activity guide; a handbook for college volunteers; a manual for program administrators working with volunteers; and a report on programs designed for young adolescents.

Providing support to achieve accreditation:

In Alaska, the School-Aged Child Care Committees (SACC) developed a three-year project for the purpose of increasing the quality of school-age child care programs through program accreditation and provider certification. SACC assists child care providers in obtaining program accreditation by distributing program accreditation kits, quality standards booklets, and surveys required for the accreditation process. Financial assistance is also offered to child care providers who work toward meeting accreditation and certification standards.

Implementing public education campaigns:

In North Carolina, CCDF funds are used to produce and distribute outreach materials that inform parents of the importance of high-quality school-age care and how to locate quality programs. In addition, recognizing the growth of the state's Latino population, some of these materials have been translated into Spanish.

Publishing of school-age newsletters:

In New York, CCDF funding supports efforts to provide support to child care providers through the publication of quarterly newsletters and the revision of the state's series of technical assistance papers that address a variety of issues related to the provision of care to school-aged children.

4. Using CCDF to create systems of out-of-school time care.

In addition to using the quality funds from CCDF to enhance the quality or supply of individual programs, a growing number of states are using CCDF dollars to establish or strengthen systems of care that build the capacity of state or local initiatives to address families' long-term out-of-school time needs. States have engaged in a variety of system-building activities. Some states have developed credentialing systems so providers have opportunities to enhance their skills; others support the development and ongoing work of school-age care coalitions so that providers and advocates can plan together and learn from each other; some states are finding ways to link school-age care initiatives to other supports for children and youth; and a growing number of states are supporting technical assistance centers to help programs with curriculum and management issues. In addition, states are looking for ways to modify funding streams and financing structures that would eliminate barriers to blending funds at the local level.

Considerations:

- Investments in infrastructure help ensure that all of the public and private resources currently directed at building the supply and improving the quality of care can be sustained over time. Opening new programs is only the first step. Building quality programs that are supported by dependable long-term funding requires a range of resources that are not available without investments in infrastructure.
- Decisions and the design of systems require the input of state policy makers. By getting to know state policy officials, out-of-school time and community school leaders can have input into system development decisions to make sure that investments in infrastructure meet the needs of the wide range of out-of-school time providers.
- Active state and local coalitions can help foster infrastructure development. By joining a state-level coalition, program developers can speak to state leaders with a unified voice about the need for these investments as well as other investments.

STRENGTHENING INFRASTRUCTURE: SOUTH DAKOTA OFFICE OF CHILD CARE SERVICES

In South Dakota, the Child Care Services office uses CCDF funding to provide technical assistance and training to child care providers, including out-of-school time providers, across the state. The office, for example, has assisted local school districts with applications for federal 21st Century Community Learning Center grants, securing over $7 million for 50 school districts providing out-of-school time care. In addition, two initiatives, the Early Childhood Enrichment Training System and the Rural Development Telecommunications Network, support the growing demand for out-of-school time and early childhood training and help recruit and retain quality providers across the state. These networks make support available to various types of providers, out-of-school time programs, teachers, and others involved in early care and education. In addition, each network has its own designated out-of-school time specialist.

Due to the success of these efforts, Governor William Janklow helped secure a $1-million appropriation from the legislature for further development of out-of-school time programs – the first time in history that state general funds have gone toward child care of any kind.

For more information, contact Loila Hunking, State Director, Out of School Time Programs, Office of Child Care Services, South Dakota Department of Social Services, at 1-800-227-3020. You may also visit www.state.sd.us.

DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP IN COLORADO

Colorado uses its CCDF dollars to increase shared knowledge, develop community and state networks, and enhance leadership around school-age care. State grants are available to start new out-of-school time programs or to increase the quality of existing programs. State officials target some of these grant dollars toward programs that can be held up as models for meeting a particular school-age care need (e.g., homelessness, needs of older youth) or that have been creative in using community resources (e.g., using retired teachers, partnering with a nursing home). An annual Leadership Institute for current and former state school-age grantees focuses on improving and sustaining program quality, engaging community partners, increasing public awareness, and advocating for school-age care in the policy arena. The state's Bridge Builders Project brings together leaders representing in- and out-of-school time programs to encourage them to find mutually beneficial ways to work with one another. Bridge Builders representatives include officials from various state agencies, public schools, park and recreation districts, safe- and drug-free schools programs, homeless education programs, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, and statewide professional organizations. Finally, state leaders are committed to having at least one school-age care representative attend any child care conference or grant review process.

For more information, contact Sharon L. Triolo-Moloney, Supervisor, Prevention/Early Childhood, Colorado Department of Education, at (303) 866-6781 or triolo-moloney_s@cde.state.co.us.

CONCLUSION

The CCDF block grant holds great potential for helping to fund out-of-school time and community school initiatives. Subsidies for eligible children, contracts to providers, and quality-enhancement funds can help address the wide range of financing needs faced by out-of-school time and community school initiatives. Understanding the structure of CCDF, the type and range of activities it can fund, and how states are currently spending their CCDF allocations can help program leaders make the best use of this funding source.

Resources on Using CCDF to Finance Out-of-School Time and Community School Initiatives

Resources of The Finance Project

Federal Funding for Early Childhood Supports and Services: A Guide to Sources and Strategies. Hansine Fisher with Carol Cohen and Margaret Flynn. June 2000.

"Financing School-Age Out-of-School Time Programs with Welfare Related Funding." April Kaplan with Heidi Sachs. *Issue Note* 3, no. 6. The Welfare Information Network, August 1999.

Finding Funding: A Guide to Federal Sources for Out-of-School Time and Community School Initiatives. Nancy D. Reder. April 2000.

"Child Care Subsidies: Strategies to Provide Outreach to Eligible Families." Michelle Ganow. *Issue Note* 4, no. 10. The Welfare Information Network, September 2000.

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Child Care and Development Fund Description. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care Bureau, 2000. Available at www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ccb/geninfo/ccdfdesc.htm.

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Organizations

Center for Law and Social Policy
1616 P Street, NW
Suite 150
Washington, DC 20036
(202)328-5140
www.clasp.org

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities
820 1st Street, NE, #510
Washington, DC 20002
(202)408-1080
www.cbpp.org

Children's Defense Fund
25 E Street NW
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 628-8787
www.childrensdefense.org

National Governors' Association
Center for Best Practices
Hall of States
444 N. Capitol Street
Washington, D.C. 20001-1512
(202) 624-5300
www.nga.org/center

National School-Age Care Alliance
1137 Washington Street
Boston, MA 02124
(617) 298-5012
www.nsaca.org

The National Child Care Information Center
243 Church Street, NW, 2nd Floor
Vienna, VA 22180
1-800-616-2242
www.nccic.org

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Child Care Bureau
Administration for Children and Families
330 C Street, SW, Room 204b
Washington, DC 20447
(202) 690-6782
www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/ccb

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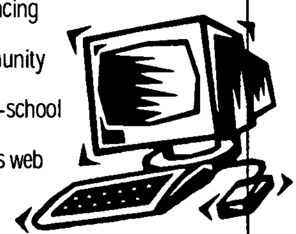
VISIT US ON THE WEB

For more information on financing out-of-school time and community school programs, vist the out-of-school time page on The Finance Project's web site at: http://www.financeproject.org/osthome.htm



The Finance Project

The Finance Project is a non-profit policy research, technical assistance and information organization that was created to help improve outcomes for children, families, and communities nationwide. Its mission is to support decision making that produces and sustains good results for children, families, and communities by developing and disseminating information, knowledge, tools, and technical assistance for improved policies, programs, and financing strategies. Since its inception in 1994, The Finance Project has become an unparalleled resource on issues and strategies related to the financing of education and other supports and services for children, families, and community development.

The Out-of-School Time Technical Assistance Project

This tool is part of a series of technical assistance resources on financing and sustaining out-of-school time and community school initiatives developed by The Finance Project with support from the Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds and the Charles Stuart Mott Foundation. These tools and resources are intended to assist policy makers, program developers and community leaders in developing financing and sustainability strategies to support effective out-of-school time and community school initiatives.

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