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The First-Ever Florida Afterschool Summit Brings Together Florida Education Community to Focus on Critical Time Beyond the School Day

FT. LAUDERDALE, FL – Leaders from across the Florida education community came together today for the first-ever Florida Afterschool Stakeholder Summit to focus on effective ways to leverage the time beyond school to accelerate student achievement and expand learning opportunities. Representatives from the Florida higher education community, school board members, superintendents and educators, as well as educational policy and decision-makers from throughout the state participated in the event, which was held on the campus of Broward College. The Summit is part of a series of Statewide Stakeholder Summits coordinated by the Expanded Learning and Afterschool Project. The event was hosted by the Florida Afterschool Network (FAN) in partnership with Broward College and the Children’s Services Council of Broward County with support from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation.

“The Afterschool Summit brought together highly influential and knowledgeable education leaders from across Florida at a critical time for students in this state,” said Joe Davis, Chief Operating Officer for the Florida Afterschool Network. “All levels of government are making budgetary decisions that will impact our students. Research has proven that high-quality programming for students after the school day can improve the academic performance, attendance, and behavior of students. We had the opportunity to review the afterschool landscape in Florida, highlight innovative programs, and discuss the critical role of quality afterschool and expanded learning initiatives in our educational system.”

High-quality afterschool programs are making a positive difference in the lives of Florida’s students and their families. Some of the state-wide data presented at the Summit included the following statistics:

- The Florida Legislature’s Office of Program Policy Analysis and Governmental Accountability (OPPAGA) **found that elementary and middle school participants in the Boys and Girls Clubs performed better on the FCAT in reading** (in elementary school) **and math** (at grade level) versus a comparison group of students who were not in quality afterschool programs.
- The University of Florida’s evaluation of Florida’s 21st Century Community Learning Centers found that **students participating in a minimum of 12 hours of afterschool per week have consistently higher math and reading scores on standardized tests.**
- A Florida Tax Watch study of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Florida revealed that **kids in afterschool programs had lower rates of serious disciplinary offenses such as gang activity and the possession and/or use of weapons, alcohol, or drugs.**

National data presented at the Summit included:

- A recent report from Loyola University Chicago the University of Illinois at Chicago indicates that high-quality afterschool programs are proven to accelerate student achievement, including:

- **Attendance: students are more likely to come to school** (a six percentage point gain in attendance).
- **Behavior: students behave better** (a twelve percentage point reduction in problem behaviors and a seven percentage point reduction in drug use).
- **Coursework: students do better** (an eight percentage point gain in standardized test scores and a nine percentage point gain in grades).

More information can be found on the Florida Afterschool Network Website at <http://www.myfan.org> or www.expandinglearning.org.

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The Expanded Learning and Afterschool Project is a 50 state initiative dedicated to helping schools and communities leverage the time beyond school to accelerate student achievement by sharing research and promising practices. The Project is led by a coalition of funders including the C.S. Mott Foundation, Noyce Foundation, David & Lucile Packard Foundation and Open Society Foundations. Visit: www.expandinglearning.org