

Proceedings of the Northern Indiana Afterschool Summit
May 15, 2009, Indiana University South Bend (IUSB)

1. Welcome: Dr. Jeffrey Jones, Vice Chancellor for Enrollment & Student Services (IUSB)

Initial welcoming remarks were provided by Indiana Afterschool Network Board Member Herb Higgin. Herb informed the attendees that over the last several years, a group of individuals had been working to develop a statewide network that could support afterschool programming. Progress has been made over time and within the last two years, Mott Foundation funding was approved and this has led to the formal development of the Indiana Afterschool Network (IAN).

Mr. Higgin provided a brief summary as follows: Dr. Jones is currently a School Board member for the Michigan City Area Schools; he has served as a mentor for the Hours for Ours mentoring program; and he has supported the Michigan City Safe Harbor afterschool program.

Dr. Jones welcomed all attendees of the IAN Northern Afterschool Summit and he began his remarks by identifying some commonalities between IUSB and the Northern Region attendees. Dr. Jones stated that most students attending IUSB were from a 40 to 50 mile radius of the campus. The IUSB staff strives for a seamless transition for students from high school to college; however, many IUSB students are first generation college students and are unfamiliar with the expectations of being a college student. This leads to a high emphasis on retention efforts; with the cornerstone of retention being “connectedness”.

Studies of successful college student retention efforts indicate several initiatives that work:

- Having students perform work-study at the campus within the various offices and departments of IUSB;
- Student involvement in intramural programs;
- Student involvement in clubs and committees;
- Community involvement.

Dr. Jones stated that these initiatives are many of the same efforts that afterschool providers are involved with. Thus, there is a common focus for conference attendees and IUSB staff.

With respect to the IUSB campus itself, Dr. Jones explained that currently there are 7,712 students enrolled at IUSB, with 5,000 full-time equivalent students, or 64% of the student body. This ratio of FTE students to the overall student body is a reversal of 10 years ago when there were more part-time students.

IUSB has recently opened Phase 1 of their student housing plan which includes 400 beds. In 3 to 5 years, IUSB hopes to complete Phase 2 with another 400 or so more beds. A factor driving enrollment up at IUSB is the increasing selectiveness of the main campus.

IUSB offers a wide range of academic study, with a particular concentration and excellence in Health Care and Fine Arts. Within the category of Fine Arts, Music and Art are particularly strong programs.

A challenge at IUSB is increasing the percentage of students that graduate in 4 years. Currently, 27% of a freshman class earns a degree within 6 years of beginning their college studies. Additionally, after completing their first year, 62% return for their 2nd year. This means that 38% **DO NOT** return for their 2nd year and IUSB has placed a high emphasis on reducing this number. In analyzing factors that lead to students leaving campus, the tipping point is “2.0” GPA. If a student’s GPA is less than 2.0, there is a 50% chance of that student leaving.

Dr. Jones spoke of President Obama’s commitment to education and the President’s challenge that by 2020, the United States would be #1 in the world in post-secondary education; with post-secondary education including apprenticeships, vocational programs, associate degree programs and bachelor degree programs. Dr. Jones paraphrased President Obama’s words as follows: “If we cannot participate educationally, we cannot participate economically.” To help in these efforts, President Obama has advocated for increased financial aid to college students.

With respect to funding, Dr. Jones stated that we have witnessed two decades of cost shifting in funding. With smaller levels of state funding that do not keep up with increased operating costs, colleges are left with having to increase fees. With 50% of funding for IUSB from the State of Indiana, raising funds becomes a balancing act with having to charge students more.

Looking forward, Dr. Jones recommended that the conference attendees read a report from the Indiana Commission for Higher Education entitled, “Reaching Higher: Strategic Initiatives for Higher Education in the State of Indiana.” This report stresses degree and course completion, rather than simply measuring attendance—the number of students occupying seats.

In addition to degree completion, higher education must be better connected to K-12 education, particularly when it comes to remedial studies. Two-thirds of incoming college freshman require remedial math and this illustrates the disconnect between high school and college. High schools are not graduating students that are prepared for college.

This leads to the following **SERIOUS PROBLEM**: effective for the fall 2011, Indiana colleges will no longer be allowed to offer remedial math classes. This could have the effect of driving more students to institutions such as Ivy Tech. However, Ivy Tech is experiencing a 20% increase in enrollment now at may not be in position to handle large numbers of additional students in 2011.

In closing, Dr. Jones reflected back on the past 20 years and stated his belief that we’ve come a long way and have made magnificent strides. However, today, expectations rise quicker than accomplishments. This dynamic requires that we seek to work smarter.

Dr. Jones encouraged everyone to continue to work to keep kids safe, well fed, healthy and prepared for the future.

2. IAN Brief Overview

Herb Higgin introduced special guests as follows and thanked them for their attendance: Michigan City Area Schools Superintendent Michael Harding and Beth Barrett.

Herb asked the attendees about their backgrounds and there was an equal distribution of afterschool providers, administrators and advocates.

IAN Executive Director David Klinkose welcomed all attendees to the Northern Region Summit. Director Klinkose stated that, as an organization, we need to keep driving toward how to open more afterschool programs. This can be accomplished through being connected. It takes not just one group, but many groups to accomplish this goal.

Director Klinkose stated that in one sense, IAN has been together informally for 7 years. Now, with the Mott Foundation grant, we have completed 1-1/2 years of a formal organizational structure. In this time, we have prepared a brochure about afterschool in Indiana; created a website; and served in an advocacy role for afterschool efforts. IAN is almost complete with developing standards for afterschool programs as we need to complete the mapping project that identifies where afterschool programs are located.

State Senator Jim Arnold addressed the conference and stated that he had a general awareness of afterschool programs. And then, constant phone calls from Chip Cotman, the manager of the mentoring program in Michigan City, led him to visit afterschool programs in Michigan City. Through these visits, Senator Arnold said he saw the quality programming provided to the students who participated in the programs.

Senator Arnold explained that several weeks ago, Director Klinkose, Dan Diehl and Al Walus visited him in his office at the Statehouse and made him aware of the number of Indiana students that don't have access to afterschool programs. That visit, with unified representatives from the north in Michigan City, the center of Indiana from Indianapolis, and southern Indiana in Evansville, led him to respectfully submit Senate Resolution #52 that asks for a Summer Study Program that would examine the impact of afterschool programs in Indiana.

IAN Associate Director Debbie Zipes provided a summary of the new IAN website. She began by highlighting how afterschool programs can add their site(s) to the IAN database that tracks programs across the state. The database will assist in defining gaps where afterschool programs are needed. Associate Director Zipes also highlighted the information pertaining to stimulus funding opportunities.

3. Plenary Presentation: Using Evaluation to Identify and Engage the Hard-to-Reach Youth, Dr. Roy Fowles, Associate Professor of Social Work, Purdue University North Central

Dr. Fowles was recently added as a Board Member of the Indiana Afterschool Network. He explained that his recent involvement in afterschool programming was a result of an inquiry from Chip Cotman regarding graduated discipline sanctions in local juvenile court pertaining to 14 and 15 year olds. Chip asked Dr. Fowles if social work professionals could determine factors that would identify kids at risk at an early age.

Dr. Fowles stated that seeking opportunities to prevent delinquency is a joy. This speaks to many parents' concern: when the school bell rings at the end of the day, is my kid ok? There are many latchkey kids across the nation and human services professionals know the data: a significant amount of all violent juvenile crime occurs between 3:00 and 4:00 p.m.

Afterschool programs are very important and communities are the ones who create the programs. Through afterschool programs, kids find safety, a sense of peace, academic support and opportunities to build self-esteem. As parents see the benefits of afterschool programs, parents now want and demand them.

Since much gang activity occurs once school lets out, afterschool programs compete for the hearts and minds of our youth; providing role models that are different from teachers. Many citizens do not understand this dynamic, but afterschool staff members do and the afterschool staff are people we should salute. For example, in Michigan City, 65% of kids live in single parent homes and afterschool programming provides critical support for the kids.

Based on the data, who are they? The kids are socialized by family, church and school; forget about the labels of "good" or "bad".

For the concept of graduated sanctions to work, kids must be confronted early. The correlates for juvenile delinquency include: poverty, single parent home, displacement, 75% are boys, live in a high crime neighborhood, ethnicity and negative school experiences.

Student actions to look for as indicators of future delinquency include misbehaving, disrespecting authority and violent behavior. For a kindergarten student, 5 to 9 events per year is an indicator of future delinquency if intervention actions are not taken. Intervention actions include: participation in afterschool programs; having a mentor; having a positive involved relationship with an adult; and church membership. **Protective behavior works!** In the Michigan City schools, if a student is involved in the Safe Harbor afterschool program, a student is much less likely to be involved in misbehavior.

Challenge: high rate of African American boys in elementary school acting out. Solution: find mentors for the students, but, due to job restrictions there is a lack of mentors.

The type of behavior must be recognized also. For example, two students, Billy and Bobby, each had 10 incidents of misbehavior. Billy's incidents were related to being "mouthy" and he was characterized as "not charming" and Bobby's incidents were related to being "violent" and he was characterized as being "charming". To get to the root of each student's problem, one must know their behavior.

The benefits of afterschool programs include the following:

- a. A way of preventing juvenile delinquent behavior in a manner such that the alternative is positive.
- b. Improved grades; 10-15 hours per week = improvement.
- c. Better attendance/engagement; 1-4 hours of afterschool participation = 60% better graduation rate.
- d. Parental interest.

Afterschool programs are a very important aspect of the general socialization of kids. Kids become attached to afterschool staff.

In closing, Dr. Fowles stated that based on his 20 years of experience, kids with low levels of parental involvement get lost. Afterschool programs provide kids a chance **NOT** to get lost. Lost kids end up in delinquency. We need to save these kids as soon/early as possible.

What afterschool programs do is more important than we realize.

4. Break Out Sessions

Break Out sessions were conducted in the areas of evaluation, IAN resources and training.

5. Open Conversation: Critical Issues

Participants were asked to provide their assessment of critical issues and barriers to success. Discussion summarized as follows:

Barrier Identification: What are key challenges and barriers to afterschool?

1. Limitations of state mandated curriculum (Afternoons Rock) and staffing credentialing requirements – Department of Mental Health & Addictions
2. **Staff and volunteer retention because of low pay (see discussion notes below)**
3. **Transportation – parents lack transportation to get kids home**
4. **Seeing value of (staff) evaluation – and resistance to it; critical versus supportive**
5. Professional development – shared vision
6. Politics
7. Funding needs to expand to meet the need
8. **Collaborative messaging to leverage funds versus competing**
9. **Rigid thinking**

10. Parent and staff collaboration
11. True partnerships
12. Language – written materials
13. Cultural diversity; training/implementation

Discussion of Select Barriers

1. **Staff and volunteer retention because of low pay**
 - a. Paying people what they're worth
 - b. Support services and free training in order for staff can grow; keeps staff involved and provides incentive to stay
 - c. Recognition and positive reinforcement; say thank you for hard work!
 - d. Materials and consumables for program
 - e. Use Work Study students from local colleges and universities
 - f. Look at what's competitive in the field
 - g. Provide staff with training, tools, knowledge and orientation to make staff feel comfortable at their job
 - h. Staff should involve volunteers in worthwhile ways
2. **Transportation**
 - a. Write it in every grant
 - b. Partners may have transportation resources
3. **Seeing value of (staff) evaluation**
 - a. Necessary for \$\$'s
 - b. Parents and staff should know process up front
 - c. Nonjudgmental process to do the best job
 - d. Celebrating positive improvements
 - e. Get all the stakeholders to understand real intent of evaluation and celebrate results
 - f. Catch staff doing things right
4. **Collaborative messaging to leverage funds versus competing**
 - a. Invite new people
 - b. Share the glory and power
 - c. Do not remain stagnant; keep trying, be creative, change perspective; don't take it (rejection) personally, it might turn into an opportunity down the road
 - d. Non-traditional partners: businesses, government, etc.
 - e. Seek "win-win": basic needs for both organizations are met
5. **Rigid thinking**
 - a. Require at least one change per semester
 - b. Open communication – seek voice of parents, students, teachers, etc.
 - c. Encourage experimentation
 - d. Seek staff diversity

Respectfully submitted,

Al Walus, IAN Northern Regional Coordinator