

**Updated**

**October 14, 2020**

## WALTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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### 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers

# Sustainability Plan FY21



*"In Pursuit of Excellence"*



THE PARTNERSHIP FOR  
FAMILIES, CHILDREN AND YOUTH  
**family connection**  
**Chamber**  
OF COMMERCE



**Communities  
In Schools**  
Walton County



SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

# 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center

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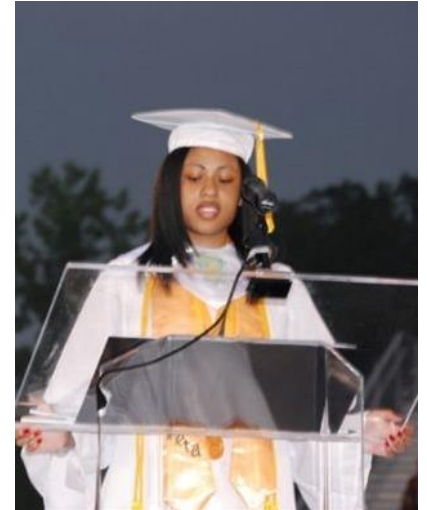
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# 1 Executive Summary

## PURPOSE:

All students graduate on time prepared for college and/or career.



*Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) provide high quality after school programming that responds to identified needs of students and families. We focus on academic enrichment through small classes, tutoring, homework help, recreation, and engaging cultural experiences within a safe environment.*

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### Our goals:

- 1** Increase academic performance through academic enrichment & tutorial services.
- 2** Offer students a broad array of additional services, programs, & activities to reinforce & compliment the regular school day.
- 3** Offer families of 21st CCLC students opportunities for literacy & related educational development.

**Walton County School District** provides *21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers* (CCLC) at ten school sites. The ten centers operate outside of regular day school hours for at least 12 hours weekly. The centers serve ten K-12 Title I schools. The 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs provide high-quality afterschool programs that respond to the identified needs of students and their families. They specifically address academic under-achievement, limited cultural experiences, low attendance rates, and the inability of working and poor families to provide **safe, quality supervision** and constructive activities for school-aged children. Partners work with the co-applicants to provide an afterschool program that aligns with the regular school day and assures all resources are in place. Afterschool programming focuses on increasing academic performance by providing academic enrichment through small classes, tutoring and cultural/ recreational experiences in a safe environment. Furthermore, literacy opportunities, GED preparation, and college/career education for caregivers are available. We make concerted efforts to engage families at every opportunity and welcome them to attend with their children during program hours at any time. The centers also provide education to caregivers on ways to help their students succeed in school. The goals are to: (1) increase academic performance through engaging academic activities; (2) improve positive student behavior (including homework completion and class participation) through cultural, recreational and technology activities in a positive and safe environment that empowers students to grow socially, emotionally and academically; and (3) to increase family involvement through literacy and related educational activities. Goals are measured through the increase in: EOG and EOC scores; grades; homework completion; class participation; positive

behavior changes; and positive student, teacher and parent feedback. Centers utilize baseline data on grades, attendance, and behavior, then measure the goals and objectives throughout the school year.

### **Background**

The first Walton County 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC sites were established in 2002. Currently, the program plays a unique role in Walton County as it enables many Community Partners to coordinate efforts in order to assure all resources are in place to best serve approximately 1200 youth each year. These coordinated efforts work to resolve specific, researched challenges that are present in the county.

### **FY21**

We are pleased that many partners have become involved in the program over the years. Our Co-applicant, Ga Family Connections Walton – The Partnership Collaborative, is comprised of approximately 70 organizations. Partners for FY21 include the Walton Chamber of Commerce, Monroe Downtown Development Authority, Faith in Serving Humanity, Four Winds (safe housing and career opportunities for at risk youth), Bridge to Success and College to Career Training Programs (teen and young adult), Action (Adult literacy), Open Heart Counseling (teens and parents), National Youth Advocate Program (counseling, mentoring, and transitional homes), Church at The Grove, A Child's Voice Advocacy Center, Foothills Charter School, Walton Youth Advocacy Board, Walton Youth Project, GCAPP, Georgia Farmers Market Association, Walton County Soil and Water Conservation District, Walton Wellness, Walton County Sheriff's Department, Athens Technical College, On-Stage Theatre, and Communities in Schools (Student Success Alliance).



*Students enjoy an outside activity on the breezeway at Harmony Elementary School*

### **Future Plans and Timeframe**

Ideally, the number of participants at all ten sites will increase within 3 years, and the hours and activities will remain the same. However, unless funding and resources continue to be identified, services will decrease.

### **Financial Status and Financing Plan**

The total program cost is just over 1.3 million dollars. Walton 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC is positioned to sustain the strategies and activities of 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC in Walton County through FY22. This will be achieved through 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC funding, local funding, Partner contribution, Title 1, volunteers, and other grants.

If funding decreases student numbers will reduce and the following strategies will be used to continue programming. Teachers and benefits will be provided through grants, Title I, CIS, and volunteerism. Supplies will come from FISH, CIS, Family Connections, and the Walton Partnership Collaborative.

The only activity that, at this time, has no potential funding source and will have to be eliminated is transportation. Program personnel and partners will seek assistance of other transportation service partners to the extent possible. Hiring of an external evaluator will be eliminated. However, with a strongly formed Advisory Board that includes additional educators and school administrators, goals and objectives can still be measured. Grades and behavior data will be monitored through the LEA. Personnel will continue to survey parents, teachers, and students.

## 2 History, Progress, and Future Plans

### Background and Organizational Structure

As a solution to issues revealed in the county-wide Community Assessment, Walton County Schools sought 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC funding for the initial year (2002). Information derived from *Walton County Community Assessment: Profile on Families & Children*, 2008 and updated 2013, confirmed the great need for after-school programs to reach a wide array of youth in all geographic areas of the county. A comprehensive **FY19 Community Assessment** again

supported the continuing need for after school programming to provide a safe place for struggling students to grow academically, socially and emotionally. According to citizen and service provider responses, the following are perceived as main challenges in the county: high school dropout, joblessness, affordable



childcare, teen pregnancy, single parent families, mental illness, drug abuse and lack of transportation. Students cited bullying, cyber-bullying, suicide, drug abuse, binge drinking and violence. Data confirmed those perceptions even stronger today than in previous years. Strategy teams composed of stakeholders including students, parents, teachers, and other citizens determined that these challenges could be met with more educational and recreational after school programs, parent education, mentoring, and transportation to educational opportunities. Since the first site opened in 2002, 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC has addressed those challenges. In that year, 1 site began serving 50 children and their families. Based on the successes



during the first year, WCPS was able to open 3 sites in 2006. Positive evaluation data has insured continuation of the programming in Walton County. Now, in 2020, ten centers are in operation. Core to Walton County 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC governance is the Advisory Council. The group consists of community partners, administrators, teachers, community members, and parents. The Advisory Board meets monthly; members review policy and procedure, assess progress, and plan for the future. This active group maintains and annually updates information about community resources for our families.

The Program Director, with input from Advisory Council members, school principals, and district leadership, manages the overall project. Program Director, Anne E. Mitchell, after serving 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC at the administrative level for 12 years, moved to another position in the



school system on October 1, 2020. Carolyn Akridge was selected as the new Program Director and began serving in this capacity on October 1, 2020. Carolyn Akridge brings 28 years of experience as a public school educator to the position. She has experience with grants and is certified in educational leadership. As a WCS employee, Anne E. Mitchell will remain

available for consultations and to support the program as needed. This will allow for a seamless transition. Site coordinators oversee day to day site operations, including direct supervision of instructional staff and tutors. Key to their successful performance within schools is the on-going communication with the regular school day staff and school administration. Fiscal management is the responsibility of the WCS District.

### **Current Status**

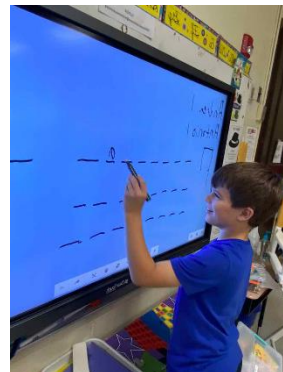
With purposeful direction and a sincere passion for children, the leadership of Walton 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC assures the seamless delivery of high quality services at the ten sites. With intense deliberation by the Advisory Council, stakeholders, partners, staff, and administration, barriers to service delivery are removed. Initial planning centered on strategies that would ensure coordination and linkage of community supports and opportunities for students and their families. This would be impossible without cooperation and commitment from a broad base of Partners who advocate for children and healthy families. Students and their families are able to achieve success due to delivery of remedial as well as preventive services. The project believes in teaching families life skills for success and how family members can realize their full potential.

Logically, planners determined that WALTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT was the best home for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC, and that remains true today. The district's commitments assure continuation.

1. We value all students as individuals with unique intellectual, physical, cultural, social, and emotional needs.
2. Students, parents, teachers, administrators, staff, district office personnel, and community members will share in the responsibility for providing a safe, supportive learning environment.
3. We will use researched-based best practices, data-driven decision making procedures, and differentiated learning strategies to meet and exceed high expectations for student achievement.



4. We are committed to continuous improvement that enables students to become confident, self-directed, lifelong, independent learners.
5. We will integrate technology throughout Walton County School District to compete in a global society.
6. We will maximize the use of resources to ensure high quality instruction for all students.
7. We are committed to improving the quality of life in Walton County.

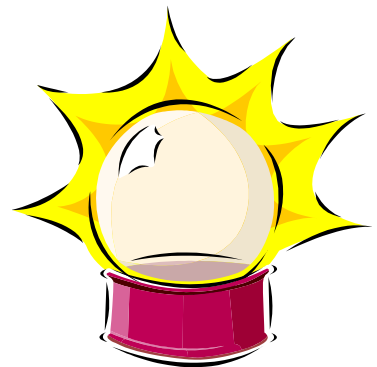


Non-traditional strategies to teaching are very vital part of the success of the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC afterschool program. Hands-on activities create a fun learning environment for students.

### **Future Plans**

The following strategies and activities will be sustained over the next year at eleven sites Monday-Thursday (selected sites M-F) for the target group K-12:

1. Academic Enrichment
  - a. Tutoring
  - b. Homework Help
  - c. Project based learning (i.e., STEM, etc.)



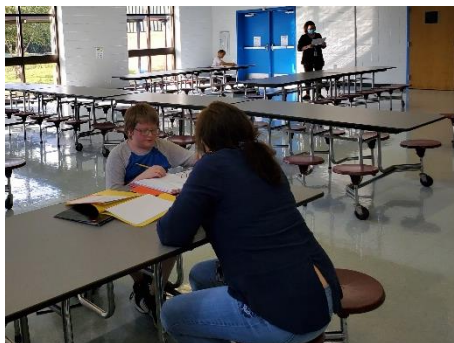
2. Personal Enrichment – includes a wide variety of sessions meant to expose youth to opportunities that may not otherwise be afforded to them (i.e., cultural, wellness, technology, the arts, family consumer sciences, fitness, college and career exploration, life skills and critical thinking education). Such activities help breakdown academic learning barriers as well.
3. Transportation
4. Family Literacy and Family Engagement sessions
5. Supplies
6. Healthy snack
7. A safe environment to learn for 3 hours after school dismissal

The following will also be sustained over the coming years:

8. Support Services for high need caregivers and participants
9. Family literacy sessions for Caregivers
  - a. GED Preparation
  - b. Awareness, school involvement – for students and caregivers.



Progress will be measured through outside evaluations when possible, through The Partnership's Community Assessment, and through Communities in Schools Annual Assessment.





# 3 Achieving our goals: Strategic Considerations

## Environmental Context

Efforts by downtown authority agencies are increasing and having positive effects in some areas, but local economic downturn has increased in more pockets of the community. This has been most evident in the last five years of the Walton County 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC grant cycle creating an atmosphere in which Partners have a more difficult time mobilizing resources. Walton County conducted its most recent Community Needs Assessment. Organizations from all over the county participated (civic, service, faith based, municipalities, business, educational, youth and family services, physical and mental health services). The overall findings were grim. The number of those in need has increased, putting more of a strain on existing resources. Mental illness, homelessness, and substance abuse is on the rise. Vaping, binge drinking, sex trafficking and teen suicide is increasing. More frequently, grandparents are raising the children with no parent in the home. The number of students who qualify for free and reduced lunch has increased.

21<sup>st</sup> CCLC will seize this opportunity to engage more families who, in these times, should be more willing to cooperate with paperwork requirements for help. It will also be an excellent teachable moment for the community at-large, many of whom have been impacted by the hard economic environment for the

first time. Also, more students are moving to the school district and this will allow for continuity of services.

### **Demographic**

Walton County's population has steadily increased since 2000. At the same time, the median household income has decreased. Currently, Walton County School District has ten schools that are designated Title I; only five are not. Ten years ago only five schools were Title I. This has created some negative perceptions in the community as the students and families are frequently stereotyped in a negative way. 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC recognizes this will bring more resources into schools; thereby creating an opportunity for programmatic and strategic linkage in order to meet objectives.

### **Community**

Walton County continues the practice of implementing planned residential communities, high-tech industry growth, and increasing cultural attractions. The Downtown Development Authorities, progressive thinking community leaders and Chamber of Commerce are working cooperatively in effort to increase growth and prosperity to be enjoyed by all citizens. Utilizing block grants, Freeport exemption, idyllic location, and private donations, Walton County is reviving abandoned or run-down areas with niche communities for both active adult and for young adults to attract and encourage people to live and be active in community growth, sprout economic growth, and attract visitors and new residents. However, there is disconnect between those in need and those who can experience these improvements. This will provide opportunities for 21<sup>st</sup>

CCLC to bridge gaps, recruit more volunteers, resources, educational and cultural opportunities to the students who need help. It will also model and encourage youth to become active good citizens within their own community - whether returning to contribute after college or becoming employed in a new exciting industry within their community.

### **Strategic Directions**

Through purposeful contact with key champions in Walton County, new opportunities for funding and in-kind support will be recognized and encouraged. These are people who are aware of financial opportunities, such as grants or donors, and resources that may be shared. Communication will be achieved through personal contact, social media, brochures, fliers and other media presentations at meetings.

### **Board Effectiveness and Improvement**

A review of Advisory Board effectiveness was conducted in FY18. It was determined that a Board with higher representation from schools as well as more community service partners and parents – who are willing to meet monthly and be more active in 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC – should be formed. Beginning FY19, the Advisory Board was formed by Family Connections, The Partnership for Families, Children and Youth, representatives from several churches, schools, DFCS, Foothills, government officials, parents, civic organizations, health organizations, literacy organizations, Walton Youth Advocacy Board, FISH, and former 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Site Coordinators. 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC will maintain a Board composition representing the community geographically, professionally, and

demographically. Sub Committees will be (1) Site Operations, (2) Partnerships, (3) Program Evaluation. Several (already) identified members will participate in strategic networking activities on behalf of 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC and will create at least one formal partnership each year to provide resources. Through a working Board, 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC will seek more ways to co-implement special events and youth programming with other agencies in the community. The Board will continue to engage students to serve on the Board. The Walton Youth Project (WYP) oversees a group of teens committed to advocating for teens with regard to issues facing teens today – the Walton Youth Advocacy Board (YAB). Members of WYP will serve on 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Board. YAB will work with students in the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program. Opportunities for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC students to serve on YAB will be made available. The 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Project Director will serve on the Partnership Board and the Walton Youth Project Board. The Partnership Director will serve on the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Board. Positive connection and relationships with mutual vision equals success.

**Influential community leaders:** Walton 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC will maintain the positive relationship established with key community leaders. Working together on collaborative boards enables opportunities to work together on mutually helpful projects. Those identified have been working on funding strategies since the onset of the program:

- Dena Huff, Director - Family Connection, The Partnership
- Dr. Nathan Franklin, Superintendent - Walton School District
- Shane Short, Director - Development Authority
- Local community foundations



**Elected officials and government agencies:** Personal relationships with elected officials on county as well as state level will be strengthened by updating the following on cost savings of preventive efforts of 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC:

- State Representative Bruce Williamson
- BOC Chairman Kevin Little
- Monroe Mayor John Howard
- Loganville Mayor Rey Martinez (and former mayor Dan Curry)
- Sheriff Joe Chapman

**Business Leaders:** Effort will be made to recruit business leaders to serve on more committees and promote 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC through partner Walton Chamber of Commerce, social media, news outlets. At every opportunity, 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC leadership and partners will demonstrate partnering on mutually helpful projects, and most importantly, will frequent their business.

**Community residents, parents, youth:** These individuals will provide students and staff and family members means to attend meetings and activities.

- PTO
- Booster Club
- Church youth groups
- Youth Advocacy Board

**Leaders of the Faith Community:** 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC will continue to ask churches and their pastors, not only to serve on the Advisory Council, but also to provide resources such as food, supplies and transportation. 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC will



acknowledge their assistance at every opportunity and keep them apprised of program accomplishments.

Additionally, churches will be asked to host 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC family engagement events. The community is overall a religious community and many parents sometimes feel more comfortable going to events at their church rather than a school. This is especially true if they had

a bad experience when they were in school.

- First Baptist Church
- Church at The Grove Loganville
- Church at The Grove Social Circle
- Grace Community Church
- Now House
- Greystone Church Monroe

### **Internal Capacity**

Staff of 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC for direct delivery of service includes The Project Director, Site Coordinators, Instructional Staff and Tutors. Site Coordinators regularly connect with day teachers. Student Success Alliance, a 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC partner, have staff located at the schools during the day and provide on-going communication with the regular school day staff as well. SSA strengthens the school day connection by working with 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Site Coordinators. SSA staff also assist in enrichment, life skills, and college career sessions.

Communication permeates every level of the organization, and partnerships have never been stronger.

### Walton County Leadership Involvement

Additionally, **unique in Walton County** is the ability to get immediate input, affirmation, or suggestions from leadership throughout the county – largely in part to The Partnership for Families, Children and Youth, who holds monthly community collaborative meetings. The Partnership is a central hub for many community partners and leaders - with diverse membership. Serving in the advisory capacity for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC, connected organizations are frequently apprised of 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC outcomes; the needs and future plans of 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC. Those members are an integral part of promotion and continuation of the program as its value in our community is realized.

**Most importantly for sustainability**, Partners are aware that the strategies of 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC are too valuable in addressing community problems to be abandoned. There is sincere commitment to sustaining and maintaining the project over time, while reviewing evaluations in order to eliminate what does not work and build on past successes. Since the goals, visions, and strategies of 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC are completely aligned with the community partners, there is **plan linkage** with the key Partners.



- **Faith in Serving Humanity (FISH)** “endeavors to respond to the needs of Walton County residents for food, shelter, utilities, clothing, medical care and transportation in verifiable situations.” FISH also provides a daily snack and

lunch each day for all Walton 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program students during the summer on each program day. Approximately 40 volunteers work tirelessly for program students each summer. FISH will continue to do so and also

provide meals for events. FISH joined The Partnership for Families, Children & Youth to facilitate the distribution of snacks through December 2020.

Funds for the snacks were donated by a private citizen when our usual source of funds for snacks through the school system was suspended. Changes were made to the school lunch program as a response to the pandemic leaving after school snacks out of the formula. We anticipate having snacks funded through our school lunch program beginning in January 2021.

- **SSA** “works within school system determining student needs and establishing relationships with local businesses, social service organizations and businesses, health care providers, parent and volunteer organizations to provide needed resources.”
- **The Partnership for Families, Children & Youth** has the vision that “All Walton County Children will grow to realize their full potential.” The organization exists “to build partnerships among local resources to advance quality of life for families as well as communicate the value and potential of combining services.” The Partnership is well established and is the connection “hub” for Walton County organizations and leaders.
- **Athens Technical College**, a unit of the Technical College System of Georgia, provides “educational programs and services through traditional and distance education methods to foster lifelong learning, facilitate workplace success, and promote economic development.”
- **Food Corps, Georgia Farmers Market Association, and Walton Wellness** – organic gardening and living, healthy eating, agriculture and other ways of life that are wellness related.



**ATHENS**  
Technical  
College

- Walton County school district's mission is "All children will learn" and long term goal is "High Academic performance"

**Future:** Formalize and publicize, beyond the written Memorandum of Agreement (MOU), the organizational structure with clearly delineated roles for individual partners. Emphasize Partners' activities, missions, strengths, and resources. Implement a process so the Partners understand and accept the responsibilities of their role and the roles of all other Partners. This should alleviate any duplication or gaps of services.

## 3 Financing Plan

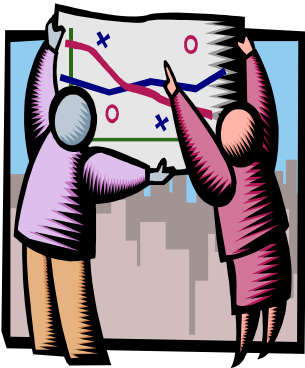
### Fiscal Needs



The full cost is based on the number of staff members providing academic and enrichment activities in proportion to students and family members participating at identified sites. Start-up and ramp-up costs require no cash. Planning and promotion, community assessment, initial staff recruitment and training, and equipment will all be in-kind donations.

Staff costs of approximately \$5000-\$8000 per 10-15 students will be provided mainly through partner and other community volunteers. Some teachers and benefits will be provided through Title I, CIS, SSA and volunteerism. Contracted instructors will also be volunteer or paid by CIS. Supplies will come from partners FISH and other secured grants. Clerical and cost for staff background

checks will be supplied by Walton County School District (WCSD). Retired educators will also be solicited for volunteer services. Equipment and supplies maintenance will increase from approximately \$4,000 in Year 1 to approximately \$12,000 in Years 2 and 3 as supplies and equipment are depleted and need to be replaced. Technology surplus items will be re-purposed. Supplies will be provided by district partners such as SSA and TPS. The facilities are no cost. Contractual services will be reduced or eliminated as partners take on contracted services. Infrastructure: Professional development and technical assistance as well as indirect costs will be in-kind or included in other WCSD budget areas. Planning and coordination are slightly reduced in Years 2 and 3 and will be provided in-kind. Evaluation will be conducted by the Advisory Council and school district personnel. The Data Specialist will be eliminated and those duties will be handled by the Project Director and a part time clerk hired by the school system. The Project Director will reduce his/her work days and WCSD will fund the remainder. His/Her supplies and travel will also be paid by WCSD. He/She will oversee site operations. Transportation is dependent on the number of students served but at least \$50,000 is needed. The only activities that, at this time, have no funding source and will have to be eliminated is transportation and a contracted evaluator.



### **Strategies for Securing Needed Resources**

Individuals responsible for planning and completion are Project Director, Advisory Council, and assistance from Partners. Walton County School District does support the vision of 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC and is behind it's continuation.

- ✓ Strategic Financing: Increase support from co-applicants and partners
  - Identify possible budgetary help
  - Fundraise
  - Maintain fundraising strategies
- ✓ Strategic Investing: Increase other streams of funding that are related to needs
  - Identify local funding streams: local foundations and grants
  - Develop relationships and begin applying for funding
  - Formalize funding and agreements
- ✓ Finding Common Ground: Utilize Partners
  - Meet with Partners regularly to fully understand all available resources, giving consideration to volunteerism, meeting space, supplies, or direct funding
  - Develop easy to follow plan to utilize resources
  - Maintain plan to utilize resources
  - Seek sponsorships
- ✓ Business Engagement: Utilize local business
  - Identify possible local business Partners

- Develop 5 strong partnerships around volunteerism, career planning, and job shadowing
- Strengthen partnerships and engage at least ten new business Partners
- ✓ Afterschool Outreach: Secure safe locations for children after school
  - Meet with churches, Boys & Girls Club, Recreation Department and others in neighborhoods who could provide a safe place after school
  - Recruit and train volunteers and establish alternate locations
  - Strengthen relationships with volunteers and establish more alternate locations



**Coming  
together  
is a beginning.**

**Keeping  
together is  
progress.**

**Working  
together is  
success.**

**- Henry Ford**