

# EXPANDED LEARNING TIMES

A quarterly newsletter of RCSD's More and Better Learning Time

Spring 2015

## Voices of More & Better Learning Time

The Expanded Learning Times e-newsletter provides information on a quarterly basis about the District's More & Better Learning Time initiative.

In this spring edition and in upcoming issues, we will share the stories of various audiences involved in this initiative – such as students, parents, administrators, principals, teachers, and community partners – in their own voices.

This issue features the perspectives and experiences of a student at Adlai E. Stevenson School No. 29, a teacher at Nathaniel Rochester Community School No. 3, and a community partner involved with multiple schools.



### Inside This Issue:

- Student Voice: Engaging Enrichments .....Page 2
- More & Better Learning Time Update .....Page 2
- Teacher Voice: Coming Out of the Comfort Zone .....Page 3
- Community Voice: Connecting Education and Rochester Community Youth Development Partners.....Page 4



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More & Better  
Learning Time

[rcsdk12.org](http://rcsdk12.org)

Welcome Page . . . . . 1

**Student Voice:** . . . . . 2  
Engaging Enrichments

More & Better  
Learning Time  
Update . . . . . 2

**Teacher Voice:** . . . . . 3  
Coming Out of  
the Comfort Zone

**Community Voice:** . . . 4  
Connecting Education  
and Rochester  
Community Youth  
Development Partners

## Student Voice: Engaging Enrichments

This is the first year at School 29 where we have expanded learning time. The enrichments I have participated in are Rhythm and Motion, Community Service, Tech and Journalism, and STEM.

I have enjoyed all of my enrichments, but the one I like the most is Rhythm and Motion. I like Rhythm and Motion because you get to dance and sing and you get to be yourself.

I also like Community Service because you get to do projects and you can be creative. We learned how to be a good citizen and volunteered at St. Mary's Hospital.

Another favorite enrichment of mine was STEM. In STEM you learn and have fun at the same time. One of my favorite projects was learning about volcanoes and playing a Jeopardy game about what I learned.

*Xavier, 4th grade student  
Adlai E. Stevenson School No. 29*



Rhythm and Motion

Community Service

Tech and Journalism

STEM

## More & Better Learning Time Update

### Congratulations!

- To our Cohort 3 schools — Schools No. 8, No. 19, and No. 41 — on the approval of their implementation plans
- To School No. 23, for demonstrating significant growth in NWEA ELA scores from fall to winter
- To the Rochester Summer Scholars team for recognition from the Wallace Foundation as a high-quality summer program

### Thank you, NCTL!

We greatly appreciate our ongoing relationship with the National Center on Time and Learning. Our expanded learning team looks forward to continued support from Loretta Johnson and Sue Kaufman in the 2015-2016 school year.



Welcome Page . . . . . 1

**Student Voice:** . . . . . 2  
Engaging Enrichments

More & Better  
Learning Time  
Update . . . . . 2

**Teacher Voice:** . . . . . 3  
Coming Out of  
the Comfort Zone

**Community Voice:** . . . 4  
Connecting Education  
and Rochester  
Community Youth  
Development Partners

## Teacher Voice: Coming Out of the Comfort Zone

The choice to create an expanded learning time for our district is one that I have seen some significant progress with. I have been participating in expanded learning or PIE time for the last two years at Nathaniel Rochester Community School No. 3.

This year, my students have had different focuses depending on the marking period. During the first marking period, we used the ELT block as a time known as comprehension commanders. During this allotted time, students worked on improving their reading comprehension and fluency by reading texts which were both engaging as well as culturally relevant.

I also had a class that emphasized storytelling, and the end result was the opportunity to attend a storytelling event at St. John Fisher College. Students learned how to speak in front of an audience, as well as to show emotion by telling a story. One student who attended this event, Ankita, is an outstanding student, but she is a bit shy. It was a very rewarding experience to see her come out of her comfort zone and learn how to express herself through the telling of the story "The Frog and the Princess" in front of her peers.

*Christopher Smith, 4th grade teacher  
Nathaniel Rochester Community School No. 3*



## Community Voice: Connecting Education and Rochester Community Youth Development Partners

The Education and Youth Development systems share common goals in ensuring a positive future for children and their families. Educators and youth providers can work together well when they approach each other with respect, take time to build trust, and define ways that their assets can be used to reach shared goals. Although shared goals, the paths, and strategies used by schools and youth programs are different, partnerships in which the partners share accountability are more likely to find ways around barriers and issues.

Community-based youth providers complement school learning through enrichment, creating opportunities to provide learning and development experiences that enhance the school curriculum during school time, after-school, and summer (e.g., community-based learning, social-emotional skill building, linked learning). The focus is not just on more time but better time — helping students connect to authentic learning experiences in which learning is active, meaningful, and collaborative, supports mastery, and provides opportunities to expand their horizons.

Just as the education system is focusing on quality of teacher instruction and curriculum content a parallel process is occurring in the youth development system. Through the Youth Program Quality Intervention (YPQI), a national-level quality process focusing on point of service delivery, endorsed by Greater Rochester Afterschool Alliance (GRASA), youth programs are participating in quality improvement involving external assessment, self-assessment, data driven planning, and implementation of

quality improvement practices. Curriculum resources and program planning support have also begun. A community baseline in youth program quality practice is being developed, based on the YPQI data. Strategies and methods to support youth practitioner enhancement are being designed and implemented at the national level and GRASA is supporting the application of the work locally.

Youth practitioners providing enrichment in expanded learning time schools have shared that when they are included in grade level meetings and data-driven discussions at their school sites with educators they have a much better understanding of how they can align what they do with youth to complement and enhance learning.

Given the similarities and differences between the sectors, it is important to understand that working relationships between the two sectors must consistently attend to building relationships, strengthening assets, and ensuring positive outcomes for young people. Monthly meetings of community program coordinators and ELT school coordinators/staff are beginning to build the communication, problem solving, and relationships needed to do the work. More opportunities at school sites for youth practitioners and educators to collaborate will help to grow the effectiveness of the work together for students' success.

**Christina Dandino, LMSW**  
**Coordinator/Consultant, GRASA YPQI**

Welcome Page . . . . . 1

**Student Voice:** . . . . . 2  
 Engaging Enrichments

More & Better  
 Learning Time  
 Update . . . . . 2

**Teacher Voice:** . . . . . 3  
 Coming Out of  
 the Comfort Zone

**Community Voice:** . . . 4  
 Connecting Education  
 and Rochester  
 Community Youth  
 Development Partners



A joint community partner and school coordinator meeting

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