

August 28, 2007

Ms. An-Me Chung
Program Officer
C.S. Mott Foundation
Mott Foundation Building
503 S. Saginaw St., Suite 1200
Flint, MI 48502-1851

Dear An-Me:

I am pleased to submit our proposal, which builds on *A New Day for Learning* by helping schools create extended learning opportunities linked to college and career readiness. Our proposed work, in partnership with Policy Studies Associates, leverages the extraordinary success of the nationally watched New Century High School Initiative, a unique public-private partnership that, since 2001, has created 83 small schools in New York City through deep and meaningful partnerships with an array of nonprofit organizations.

With support from the Mott Foundation, we believe that we can put into practice the ideas and values espoused in *A New Day*. Through case study research and the planning and launch of a campaign leveraging extended learning opportunities tied to college readiness, we can build the case for other schools, school districts, and education reform organizations to take on greater and deeper partnerships, redefining their own school day.

As discussed, attached is our proposal requesting \$500,000 in support over the next two years. Thank you for your guidance as we work to develop the next phase of this critical reform.

Please feel free to call or email if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Robert Hughes

**Bringing *A New Day for Learning* to NYC
A Proposal to the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation**

New Visions for Public Schools

If America is to achieve greater equity for its students and remain competitive in the 21st century economy, it must rethink the school day and develop new strategies around instruction, the school schedule and the relationship between educators, social service providers, the public and private nonprofit sectors and the broader community. As highlighted in the Mott Foundation’s recent report *A New Day for Learning*, too few schools, afterschool groups and other youth service providers are seizing the opportunity to integrate school and community resources into a single, seamless delivery system for young people.

To examine how integrated services could drive student achievement, six years ago, New Visions for Public Schools established the New Century High Schools Initiative. In contrast to many other school reform strategies throughout the country, the New Century high schools were created in a partnership between educators and a diverse array of nonprofit partners, working together to close large, low performing schools and replacing them with new, themed small schools. Consistent with the vision articulated in *A New Day*, each school was expected to reflect—both in its conception and its practices—a working partnership that focused the efforts of educators and partner staff on the shared goal of graduating at least 80 percent of their students. The expectation was that partnerships would create new extended learning opportunities for young people—including redefinitions of coursework, new forms of support for students after school, during weekends and over the summer, the integration of community resources into the school day, and broader integration of schools into their communities.

Preliminary data suggest that this strategy has proven successful in integrating partners and raising student achievement; our first cohort of students posted graduation rates 20% higher than the citywide average (78.5% compared to 58%.) Many New Century high schools have embraced a blended model where schools and partners have adopted a much more holistic approach to student learning. They offer concrete examples of the learning system described in *A New Day*, one where schools, community organizations, civic resources and after-school providers create a “seamless learning experience providing students with multiple ways of learning anchored to high standards and aligned with educational resources throughout the community.” Within our 83 schools, there are now 225 different partners taking responsibility for students’ academic and developmental success as well as increasing the relationship of the school to the broader community. These partners provide an array of services during and after the school day, and some partners have moved beyond providing specific services to supporting governance and other operational functions within the school.

Partnerships are playing a central role in defining new measures for student success, a key message of *A New Day for Learning*. New Visions believes that the extended learning opportunities provided through partners can bridge the gap between the minimal, though still important, requirements for high school graduation and genuine readiness for success in college and in a career. In our view, college readiness must be the singular, concrete goal for the many stakeholders in the education system, including students, parents, educators, and the multiple youth and civic organizations that work with schools. In the 21st century, some

form of post-secondary education will be necessary for economic success—even survival—in an economy where the exchange of information dominates the world of work. Yet, despite this fundamental economic reality, too many high school students graduate without the skills they need to be successful in college-level courses. Accordingly, we have shifted the performance goal for our work with schools from graduating at least 80 percent of students on time to graduating at least 80 percent of students on time and ready to succeed in college and a career.

Building on our successes to date and the challenges ahead, New Visions, working closely with Policy Studies Associates (PSA), proposes to undertake a multi-pronged agenda to better study and document extended learning opportunities in select New Century high schools, as well as in comparable Boston schools, and then take what we have learned to develop and launch “*A New Day* Campaign for College and Career Readiness.” This campaign will increase the alignment of multiple school and community resources around the academic, social and developmental challenges students face as they prepare for success beyond high school. These complementary strategies will generate principles, artifacts, tolls, processes and agreements around the key levers of change identified within *A New Day for Learning* that New Visions will disseminate throughout New York City and in other settings, advancing local strategies to increase student achievement by rethinking the school day. New Visions respectfully requests a two year grant of \$500,000 to fully embrace and operationalize the *New Day* model and move to the next phase of extended learning opportunities—the comprehensive development of multi-school, multi-partner strategies to enable an entire community to align existing and new resources around a single goal: graduating more students prepared to succeed in careers or at college.

A New Day for Learning and the New Century High Schools Initiative: Breaking the Graduation Barrier through Partnership

Since 2001, New Visions has created and supported 83 New Century high schools, which today serve 38,155 students—numbers exceeding those of many urban school districts. The majority of our students come from low-income households, with 81 percent qualifying for free or reduced-price lunch.¹ As documented in the most recent report by PSA, “relative to public high school students citywide, students in NCHSI schools [are] more likely to be female, African American or Hispanic and poor.”² They also are more likely to enter high school below grade level (scoring at levels 1 and 2 on eighth grade standardized tests) than the average public high school student. In other words, our schools serve a population of students for whom a rigorous high school education is the single best hope for future educational and career success. Recognizing that the stakes were high, early in the Initiative, New Visions articulated an “80-92” metric, a shorthand way of saying that every school and their partner embraced a “no excuses” commitment to graduate at least 80 percent of their students in four years and to maintain high levels of student attendance. It has since become a very public measure of success and created a shared goal around which to align resources, manage across agencies, establish priorities and evaluate success.

¹ *Evaluation of the New Century High Schools Initiative: Report on the Third Year*. Policy Studies Associates, March 31, 2006. 35.

² *Ibid.*, iii.

As reported in the most recent study by Policy Studies Associates, partnership is playing a vital role in the life of two-thirds of these schools.³ Indeed, across diverse organizations and strategies, the organizations working with the schools are addressing each of the needs identified by the *New Day* task force:

- **“redesigning the whole day”**
 New Visions structured the NCHS creation process to encourage schools to integrate services within the school day. Partners were encouraged to infuse resources in all aspects of the school day, not simply provide disconnected services. For example, Eagle Academy, an all male school in the Bronx, was created in partnership with 100 Black Men. Through the partnership, every student is matched with an adult male mentor who meets with the students on a weekly basis and plays a critical role as an advocate and overall source of support for the student. The school credits the mentor relationship with its solid attendance and more disciplined approach to learning.
- **“a seamless learning experience”**
 Partnerships in schools are not limited to the traditional 9-3 school day, but were also encouraged to offer learning experiences that span the school day, the after-school hours, many Saturdays during the school year, and many school-vacation days. Often these Saturday sessions and school-vacation sessions are devoted to college-prep activities including college visits and preparation for college entrance exams and state Regents exams required for high school graduation. For example, at the Global Enterprise Academy, the South Bronx Overall Economic Development Organization provides staff for an afterschool program that can include credit-bearing classes for student in need of credit recovery. Teachers working alongside partner staff are learning valuable youth development skills as well as project-based pedagogy, which they are using during the regular school day.
- **“providing students with multiple ways of learning”**
 The extended learning opportunities that partners make possible translate key academic skills into more relevant learning experiences for students. At New Explorers High school, students learn filmmaking through a partnership with Ghetto Film School. One student, Joseph, began freshman year far below grade level in reading and writing. He was excited to adapt a short story he had read in class into a short movie, but needed to write and successively re-draft his script. Working closely with partner staff as well as his English teacher, his writing skills dramatically improved and his motivation in school increased. Joseph graduated as valedictorian of his class and is now an English major in college.
- **“anchored to high standards”**
 Pelham Prep is a college preparatory New Century high school that partners with the University of Vermont. One of the first writing assignments incoming freshmen have to complete is a college admissions essay, which is

³ Ibid, pg.55.

rigorously graded by an admissions staff member at the University of Vermont. Students learn to hold themselves to a higher standard and the expectation of going to college is made explicit from day one.

- **“aligned to educational resources throughout the community”**
The deep involvement of external partners in designing and implementing school themes has meant not only that students choose schools that appeal to their particular interests, but also that the NCHS schools can offer many avenues for learning to students. As highlighted in *A New Day*, students at the Brooklyn Academy for Science and the Environment, which partners with Brooklyn Botanical Gardens and Prospect Park Alliance, take classes and participate in internships at the Brooklyn Botanical Gardens, and scientists and other staff of both institutions work in the school as co-teachers, tutors, and mentors. The botanical content and the partners’ approach to scientific observation and investigation have been infused throughout the school’s curriculum, including language arts and history. Other schools have built varied curricula around theater arts, the New York harbor, social justice, sports, city planning, music, and other topics.

Taken as a whole, the partnership strategy embraced by New Visions, together with other key strategies including the intensive push for greater personalization, the use of student data, strengthening the role of the principals, and pushing for greater accountability, has improved the core academic features of the school. Indeed, many of these schools are beginning to produce positive academic results. Among the first 14 NCHSI schools, which opened in 2002, 78.5 percent of the first student cohort graduated on time in 2006. In 2007, the 39 NCHSI schools with senior classes are expected to graduate more than 70 percent of their students. This represents striking progress when compared with New York City’s 2005 graduation rate of 58 percent, and is even more noteworthy when compared with the graduation rates, ranging from 26 percent (Bushwick HS) to 54 percent (Columbus HS), of the large, failing high schools that these new, small schools replaced. The most recent report by PSA states that “available data show that students educated in NCHSI schools...were better prepared for graduation than comparable students in traditional schools. All precursors—attendance rates, credit accumulation, promotion rates, and the number of Regents exams passed—pointed in the right direction.”⁴

PSA’s upcoming fourth-year report will include several new correlates with student success, most notably that New Century schools in which teachers and other school and partner staff participate extensively in collaborative work on core instructional processes are more likely to exhibit high levels of student achievement than are other New Century schools. These types of professional behaviors are more highly related to student outcomes than are any other instructional characteristic measured in the evaluation. PSA has concluded that schools with these types of professional effort, including planning for extended learning opportunities, are schools with fundamentally strong instructional cores—and that the strong instructional cores promote high levels of educational engagement by students and hence improved student achievement.

⁴ *Evaluation of the New Century High Schools Initiative: Report on the Third Year*. Policy Studies Associates, March 31, 2006. 61.

I. Building the Research Base: Understanding Successful Partnerships in Greater Detail

We believe that the New Century High Schools Initiative is one of the deepest experiments at scale on the academic impact of extended learning opportunities. While our evaluations have shown high-level correlations between core educational processes, including those shaping effective partnership and improved academic outcomes, we do not know enough about the connections between elements of partnerships, other core educational processes, and the outcomes that signal student readiness to succeed after high school. Reading *A New Day* prompted us to consider more closely the relationship between extended learning opportunities and student achievement in our schools, with regards to:

- The need to redefine student success;
- The challenge of using knowledge about how students learn best throughout the day;
- The importance of integrating various approaches to acquiring and reinforcing knowledge;
- The need to identify methods for promoting intentional collaboration; and
- The need for replicable models of leadership and professional development.

The report also prompted us to think more deeply about the national context and to seek out another school district engaged in leveraging extended learning opportunities to ratchet up student achievement. We determined that Boston is the closest analogue for our purposes, in terms of its trajectory in secondary reform and its commitment to bringing outside partners into the school, while still providing rich points of contrast for exploration.

Secondary reform in both communities has focused, to varying extents, on redesigning the high school experience to deepen students' engagement with challenging, standards-driven curricula and to personalize the educational experience so that every student is known, valued, and missed whenever he or she is not present as expected. In the NCHS schools, this effort has paid off, as evidenced most vividly in their high graduation rates relative to the city's rates.

We are requesting support from the Mott Foundation to rigorously seek answers to key questions posed in *A New Day* within the contexts of New York City and Boston and build a body of findings for dissemination to the broader education community.

Theory of change: The proposed research and campaign will be grounded in a theory of change that will permit PSA and New Visions to distill essential processes and resources. The theory of change will inform the selection of and research on four New Century partnerships, as well as two schools in Boston. It will set out the hypotheses to be tested on the role of partnerships, community linkages, and other externally based resources and supports that are capable of extending learning opportunities to boost achievement in NCHS schools and similar schools in Boston. The change theory will consider research literature on the involvement of community organizations in improving school curriculum and instruction, school governance designs that involve external school partners, dropout prevention, the redesign of urban secondary schools to improve student outcomes, small schools and the

personalization of instruction, efforts to increase the relevance and appeal of schooling to disadvantaged youth, and efforts to extend learning beyond the regular school day. The theory of change will be used as the roadmap for assessing how conditions and opportunities outside the conventional school organization, curriculum, staffing, and schedule are likely to improve schools' essential instructional processes, the relevance and personalization of student experiences, and hence the conditions supporting student achievement.

Case studies: This theory of change will ground the field research, which will use a case study methodology to answer central questions about school-partnership roles and effectiveness in a small set of high-performing NCHS schools. Schools will be identified based on student educational outcomes relative to students' characteristics as incoming eighth-graders. They will represent a variety of emphases and approaches to partnership. The questions guiding the research will include:

In a sample of high-performing NCHS schools, how does each school employ community partnerships and other external resources and tools, including extended learning opportunities, to improve the school's educational processes and the achievement of its students?

- Is there a consistent process or sequence by which partnerships and other resources and tools, including extended learning opportunities, support positive educational processes and high levels of student achievement? If not, is there evidence of consistent partnership-related principles across schools, including principles regarding intentional collaboration and opportunities for leadership and professional development?
- What are the benefits and resource requirements, including opportunity costs, of each common configuration of community partnerships, other external resources, and tools?

What is the experience of schools in another improvement-oriented, urban school system in employing community partnerships and other external resources and tools for purposes of supporting positive educational processes and high levels of student achievement?

What lessons for the improvement of urban schooling emerge from examination of these efforts?

- What structures and approaches are particularly promising and relevant to urban educators and to leaders of nonprofit community-based organizations who wish to improve students' educational success? To what extent do different configurations of educational needs and resources call for different approaches to educational partnerships?
- How do parties working in the schools, including teachers, administrators, and partners, learn from one another and build on one another's efforts?
- What are the school-organization implications and capacity requirements of each of these approaches?

Two sets of case studies will be produced, highlighting the ways that extended learning opportunities provided through partnership are affecting student achievement in New York City and Boston. We believe that Boston provides a rich vein of evidence to be mined for contrast and comparison to the New Century High Schools Initiative.

Case study set #1: Past survey data has suggested that that educators and partners engage in a wide variety of practices at the school level to support the academic core of schools. These include efforts to align instruction with Regents standards, infuse the school's instructional theme throughout school operations, support effective school leadership, enhance and increase professional development, support teacher influence in school operations, and promote instructional collaborations. In addition, our research of prior partnerships suggests that partners contribute a wide array of resources to expand educational services at the school level. Preliminary analysis indicates that in some instances this may include an additional dollar for every dollar contributed from private sources as part of the initiative.

To gain a more comprehensive and in depth understanding of the role of partners and the support they provide to the academic core, PSA will identify four high-performing New Century high schools for case studies based on variation in partners' relationships with the school and the schools' use of other external resources and supports. PSA will collect case study data in each of the schools to explore the extent to which the approaches identified in the theory are demonstrated in school and partner operations and in student experiences.

Case study set #2: To test the hypotheses in a very different urban community, PSA will conduct a parallel set of case studies in two carefully selected public schools in Boston, a well-managed, improvement-focused school system that faces the same challenges of urban poverty as New York City and other urban districts. The Boston school system and the city's private nonprofit community are supporting the development of full-service schools and extended-learning schools, all of which involve community partners working with educators to bring an array of student and family services into the school, while keeping each school open before and after school, on weekends, and over the summer. PSA will work with Boston Public Schools and the Boston nonprofit community to select two schools that use approaches to student and school improvement that are consistent with the theory of change developed in this project. Like the NCHS case studies, the purpose of the Boston case studies will be to assess each school's implementation of principles embodied in the theory of change.

Analysis and reporting of research findings. In the final research task, PSA and New Visions will analyze data collected from the experiences of the New Century schools and comparative examples of the Boston schools to identify the essential components of an expanded definition of successful school-community partnerships. Extensively illustrated with examples from schools in New York and Boston, the summary research report will highlight lessons learned and describe the most promising methods for redesign of the schooling experience consistent with *A New Day*.

These studies will be complemented by a set of ethnographic case studies on partnerships being conducted by Dr. Janice Hirota in collaboration with the Youth Development Institute and funded by the Carnegie Corporation. Each case study seeks to understand how

strong, well-integrated partnerships contribute to the life of mid- to high-achieving schools, and will illuminate more “on the ground” practices to supplement PSA’s work.

Documentation and dissemination: Through the case study process, we will document how partnerships work at a granular, operational level, focusing on how personnel work together and assess progress. As part of PSA’s field research, they will collect evidence of each partners’ contributions, including examples of the materials they have developed in collaboration with educators and others. In addition to the final report, the PSA research team will obtain tools and resources used in the case study schools and share them with New Visions staff, who will adapt artifacts such as schedules, staffing plans, MOUs, and meeting agendas. These artifacts will deepen the utility of the research and help other schools grasp and operationalize the hypotheses and action steps outlined in the research findings.

These artifacts, tools and best practices will be disseminated across New York City and beyond through New Visions’ KnowledgeBase, our online open source knowledge management platform, designed to spread the most successful practices in education reform for further application, adaptation, and improvement. The system will enable these exemplary partners and their schools to share, test refine their work more rapidly and rigorously, and make the findings of this research project available to partnering organizations, peers, school and district administrators, researchers, policymakers and a wider community of interested users. The school community and partners will be able to develop more meaningful and sustainable partnerships that best support student learning by building on the experiences of others.

II. Extending the Model: Applying Research-Based Principles in the Launch of “A New Day Campaign for College and Career Readiness”

The Context

New York City schools have recently been given a wider range of choices for how the DOE supports them, creating the conditions for New Visions to work even more closely with schools in piloting new approaches to extended learning opportunities. As a newly appointed Partnership Support Organization (PSO) to the New York City Department of Education, New Visions for Public Schools will directly support 63 schools serving close to 30,000 students. In this role, New Visions will lead school improvement in an environment in which we share accountability for student achievement and are encouraged to innovate to meet student and school needs. Our track record with using data to drive instruction, creating systems to spread knowledge systematically across practitioners, and disseminating our findings through publications and other vehicles ensure that our efforts can be applied to other New York City schools and nationally. The New Visions PSO has a dual imperative: 1) maintain and exceed a goal of 80% graduation and 92% attendance rates; and 2) ensure that students enter college and careers prepared for success.

Taking advantage of this moment in time, we propose to pilot a strategy that builds off the New Century High Schools Initiative and creates a broader process for aligning school, partner and community resources, producing higher levels of student achievement and preparing students for work and citizenship in the 21st century. We seek to ground this work in our schools’ central challenge; raising the bar for student achievement to embrace college

and career readiness. This Campaign, “*A New Day* for College and Career Readiness,” will specifically draw upon the strategies proposed in the *New Day* report. This pilot will, by the end of the project period, help schools and communities use data to identify and implement extended learning opportunities that prepare students for success in college.

Redefining Student Success as College Readiness

A New Day for Learning underscores the importance of new measures for student success. As previously outlined, New Visions is now shifting the performance standard for our schools from achieving at least 80% high school graduation to 80% college and career ready graduation. We believe that a high school diploma is not enough to ensure economic success over a student’s lifetime, and that the diploma’s requirements must incorporate the assets necessary to succeed in college. While more of our students are making it to their high school graduation ceremony, across the country, far too few are making it to their college commencement.

Recent and ongoing changes in the global economy and U.S. demographics have intensified the demand for strategies that work for under-prepared adolescents. More than two-thirds of American jobs require some post-secondary education.⁵ But even if individual students do not go onto further education, they still need to be equipped with a higher level of academic and interpersonal readiness to succeed in their career beyond what the high school diploma demands. ACT, for example, has conducted a statistical analysis of respective college and workforce training readiness levels (as measured by vocationally geared WorkKeys⁶ assessments and ACT tests in reading and mathematics) and concluded that they are comparable. Regardless of whether a student intends to enter a workforce training program or college after high school graduation, the expectations placed on students by schools should be the same.

Clearly, our students need to be going to, and succeeding in, college. Numerous studies that have tracked the impact of a high school versus college diploma on lifetime earning potential show an increasingly stark disparity.⁷ But almost all of our students are the first in their families to even consider attending college within their families. Myths and misperceptions about the cost of college, what it takes to get in, and the level of rigor a college education demands persist. On top of these barriers, students face even more challenges once they arrive on campus. Researches have found that to be successful in post-secondary settings, students must master a combination of solid content knowledge and achieve competency in

⁵ *Ready for College and Ready for Work: Same or Different?* ACT, Inc., 2006. Retrieved April 2, 2007, from <http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/readinessbrief.pdf>.

⁶ Developed with input from employers, labor organizations, educators, and policymakers, ACT’s WorkKeys tests are criterion referenced tests anchored to the skills needed for workforce readiness in nine areas. Jobs are profiled using the same levels to assess individuals’ workforce readiness skills. An individual’s readiness for a particular job can be compared to the requirements of the job, as defined through the job profiling process. *Ready for College and Ready for Work: Same or Different?* ACT, Inc., 2006.

⁷ *Tough Choices or Tough Times: The Report of the New Commission on Skills of the American Workforce.* National Center on Education and the Economy, 2006. *America’s Perfect Storm: Three Forces Changing Our Nation’s Future.* Educational Testing Association, 2007. *Beyond NCLB: Fulfilling the Promise to Our Nation’s Children.* Commission on No Child Left Behind, 2007. *From Cradle to Career: Connecting American Education from Birth Through Adulthood.* Education Week, 2007.

core skills such as reading comprehension, written communication, research, and analysis of complex material.⁸ Moreover, beyond academic skills, students must have organizational skills that enable them to function on their own, plan ahead, prioritize, and negotiate between educational and personal commitments.⁹ They must be able to work independently and collaboratively to solve complex problems, and exhibit personal characteristics such as perseverance and resiliency in the face of frustration and disappointment.

Involving the Community: A New Day Campaign for College and Career Readiness

As *A New Day* makes abundantly clear, school officials cannot tackle all of their students' needs alone. In fact, extended learning opportunities can address both the barriers to applying to college and the assets students need once there. To align student needs with the right extended learning opportunities, school leaders need: 1) a mobilized community that understands a need for strong instruction and supports student achievement in a broad array of areas, 2) the development of a comprehensive array of opportunities to reinforce, supplement and broaden learning opportunities for students unbounded by the school's location and schedule and 3) the coordination of these resources by multiple stakeholders around the specific objective of improving career or college readiness for a specific set of students.

New Visions proposes to launch "A *New Day* Campaign for College and Career Readiness," to pull all stakeholders together behind a single, heightened performance goal of graduating 80% of our students ready to succeed in college and the workplace. Key design principles that make this Campaign unique include the rigorous use of student data to drive extended learning opportunity outreach and our focus on using extended learning opportunities to bridge the gap between high school graduation requirements and the full array of skills necessary to succeed in college.

From our history, New Visions knows that meaningful and deep community engagement over time is absolutely necessary for our schools to garner the public support they need to sustain their success. Academic literature on the subject suggests that focusing on a singular and significant goal is crucial to avoid the unproductive trap of community engagement for the sake of community engagement:

We define community engagement as the collaboration of constituency groups and the mobilization of specific constituencies into active and accountable relationships. Furthermore, these constituencies should aim to accomplish a common mission, goal or purpose, one that improves schools and increases student achievement. A smart system can consistently create ongoing opportunities for a range of stakeholders and constituency groupings to debate, negotiate, and articulate the education goals or purposes they share, and to build relationships and structures that link the capacity of those various players to the pursuit of common purposes.¹⁰

Our proposed works brings together four unique opportunities:

⁸ Le, H., Cassillas, A., Robbins, S.B., & Langley, R. Motivational and skills, social, and self-management predictors of college outcomes: Constructing the student readiness inventory. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 65(3), 482-508, 2005.

⁹ Conley, David T. *College Knowledge: What It Really Takes for Students to Succeed and What We Can Do to Get Them Ready*. Jossey-Bass, 2005.

¹⁰ Gray, Richard and Lamson Lam. "The Role of Community Engagement in a Smart Education System." From *City Schools: How Districts and Communities Can Create Smart Education Systems*, ed. Robert Rothman, p. 88.

New Visions’ ambitions shift to college readiness requires a wide array of support from current and new partners at the school level to create extended learning opportunities;

The research phase of this project will provide clear and fully documented examples of what others in the field are doing to link extended learning opportunities with higher levels of student achievement;

Having a focused, clear goal provides a rallying point for partners and other stakeholders, and will lead to deeper and more meaningful community engagement; and

New Visions’ decision to raise the bar is cutting edge—and we believe that in the coming years, others in the education reform world will want to follow our lead and study how we were able to take a variety of urban schools and get them to 80% college and career ready graduation.

Making student data more transparent and accessible to multiple constituencies, including parents and partners, will be a key design principle of this entire project. For example, last year, we developed a number of data tools gauging if students were on, almost on, or off track to on-time high school graduation that practitioners are using to identify students at risk and analyze what they need to get them back on track (see Appendix A for a sample of our tracking metric). In the past year, New Visions has piloted the use of the student tracker (Appendix B) with students and parents alike, which translates transcript data into an easy to understand visual presentation on exactly what an individual student needs to get on track for graduation. We are currently developing an on/almost on/off track metric (Appendix C) for the academic components of college readiness, and plan to develop rubrics on the softer skills necessary to succeed in college to field test with parents, partners and other stakeholders as a key component of the Campaign.

Our workplan draws on key elements of *A New Day’s* blueprint for success and builds on the change theory and case studies already described:

Steps for Collaborative Leadership ¹¹	Campaign Element
Redefining student success as the ability to thrive in a global economy and to function as citizens of a progressive nation	Redefining our performance metric as college and career ready graduation—using research to create a new metric that encompasses the academic and soft skills necessary for success
Going to the public with the facts	Reaching out to the community to equip all stakeholders with data on student achievement and what college and career readiness will require, as well as the gap between where students are and where they need to be. Assessing the overall success of the project through an independent advisory board.

¹¹ *A New Day*, p. 26

Assessing the resources available to change the learning environment	Mapping and aligning the school's existing and prospective external resources and partners against the students' and school's needs as shown through the data
Seeking different perspectives, identifying common goals, and insisting on share support for the goals	Outreach to partners, parents, businesses and other community leaders to identify: What are you doing to get kids to college readiness? Can you do more? What can we do together?
Inspiring public engagement by providing examples of programs that show students can thrive in environments that offer different ways of learning	Making PSA's research, case studies and tools public through KnowledgeBase, publications and capacity building seminars
Developing an action plan that leverages links	Creating a School-Community Action Team to assess the school's progress towards college readiness and craft and implement data-driven projects
Regularly monitoring and reporting progress on the action plan to the public; looking for ways to expand partnerships and collaborations	Constantly and collaboratively assessing progress and iterating new resources to access
Developing a strong and flexible infrastructure with shared responsibility for carrying out the action plan	Creating the processes, structures and tools for collaboration as modeled in the case studies
Making sure the infrastructure stays in place through changes in leadership by embedding <i>A New Day</i> in the culture of communities and institutions at every level	Helping schools and their partners access their local and state decision makers to align public funding streams to the college-readiness goal driving their work

Identifying Resources and Strategies to Support the Campaign

New Visions proposes to create a two-step competitive RFP process that will

- Identify school sites that best fit with the Campaign's objectives;
- Encourage schools to pull together teams of diverse stakeholders to craft a plan; and
- Begin to build foundational capacity with interested teams to embrace the college readiness goal and work with student and school data.

Application will be open to any school or cluster of schools serving 1200+ students collectively. The planning teams will be selected to receive planning grants of \$3,000. The two final clusters of schools will receive implementation grants of \$42,500 each. Both rounds of grantees will be selected by a national Advisory Board convened by New Visions.

Advisory Board: To guide the progress of this work, New Visions will convene an independent advisory board to select which teams to give grants to and assess the project at a high level. We plan to include stakeholders from the Mott Foundation, the Annenberg Institute for School Reform, elected local officials, and members of key community organizations. The team will also ensure that theory of change developed by PSA on high-impact extended learning opportunities guides the selection criteria for the planning and implementation grants, as well as the RFP process as a whole.

RFP Process: We have carefully staged the research tasks so that the research findings will inform the entire campaign roll-out. Accordingly, PSA will have a research scan and theory of change in place after three months of work. This theory of change will inform the development of an “open call” RFP. The development and release of the RFP will take place in January and February 2008. Applicants can be clustered by theme, geography, student population, or by any other self-organizing principle; what matters is that they are committed to using student, school and cluster data to identify student needs, to learning from each other, and to seeking extended learning opportunities. The RFP will be released across New Visions PSO schools and supported through a series of informational sessions throughout the city, built around highlights from the case study research in process. Interested teams (either from a single large school or a cluster of smaller schools) will be asked to submit a letter of intent, due in mid-March. The process of completing the letter of intent will begin to coalesce the formation of “School-Community Action Teams,” which will include teachers, parents, parent coordinators, school leaders, guidance counselors, partner staff, community members and other stakeholders.

Planning grants: Criteria for selection will likely include factors such as the depth of stakeholder commitment expressed in the letter, how representative the team is of the internal community, the articulation of the school’s goals on where they want students to get to and why they need greater community engagement, the commitment of school leaders, how this campaign could build on current efforts, and potential impact on student achievement. Five of these teams will be selected for planning grants of \$3,000 each by mid-April. For the teams that are composed of clusters of schools, some of their work will be done at the individual school level and then reported back to the larger group, and conversely, some of the work described below will take place in a full team setting, with team members bringing results back to their schools for refinement. Each of the five teams will have four months to work with New Visions staff to create a plan for how to organize an array of community resources around college readiness. Over the course of the four months, New Visions will provide intensive professional development on how to design and implement the Campaign through bi-weekly meetings with New Visions staff members and a one-day planning intensive, including:

Close work with New Visions’ data team, using tools designed by New Visions, to assess student needs and the gap between where students are and where they need to be for college readiness at the school level, and additionally using qualitative data to examine the “softer skills” required for success in college;

The identification of internal and external community resources that could be leveraged to build the Campaign, both at the school and the cluster level;

Geo-mapping of students' needs to their own neighborhoods (given New York City's school choice system) to locate the possibilities for extended learning opportunities close to where the students live;

The development of a plan to fully commit to and implement the Campaign for submission to the implementation grant competition, with concrete strategies, objectives and benchmarks; and

Ongoing incorporation of new partners and stakeholders in the Team along the way.

This planning process will serve as professional development to build the teams' capacity, commitment and collaborative skills in using data to identify and implement extended learning opportunities for building college readiness.

Implementation grants: The Campaign Advisory Board will review the five plans and select two teams to receive full implementation grants of \$42,500 in August. Criteria for implementation grant selection include: clusters identifying matching funds to foster ownership at the school level, the viability, breadth and depth of stakeholders involved, and proposed impact on student achievement. This funding may help underwrite shared, dedicated staffing and act as seed funding for schools to allocate more attention, and funds, to strengthening the extended learning opportunities offered to their students.

From September 2008 to April 2009, New Visions will provide the two teams with extensive on-site coaching and regular trainings. Our supports will include:

Relationship Building: Modeling best practices for how to reach out to new partners and assets, build relationships, and work as a blended team through sessions on planning and conducting effective community conversations;

Ongoing Data Analysis: Through quarterly training sessions, New Visions will build the capacity of the team to use school and student data (including New Visions-developed tools like the school snapshots and student tracker) to identify needed student supports, develop differentiated approaches to involving different school constituencies, and assess whether or not their partnership work is having the intended effect;

Technical Assistance and Assessment: New Visions will assist teams in learning how to use community assets mapping tools, relationship building techniques, and advocacy skills (school systems diagramming, GIS mapping, community walks, town hall meetings, securing/leveraging public support), as well as designing assessment tools to enable them to continuously build the school's assets base, evaluate the impact of their efforts and sustain their work over time; and

Documentation and Dissemination: Each grantee will have a team page on KnowledgeBase, creating an online collaborative space for them to connect between meetings, access and refine tools and resources, and share emerging practice. Similar to the harvesting and sharing process described for the research phase of this project, New Visions' documentation team will cull, refine and share key artifacts

from the campaigns at both clusters as well as the planning process for the five clusters who receive planning grants.

The recipients of implementation funding will also serve as a testing ground for the tools and toolkits created through the research phase, which we expect will include student, school, community data tools, mapping tools for identifying, tapping and leveraging school and community assets including geo-mapping of student addresses against achievement trends, frameworks for collaboratively evaluating and refining the success of existing partnerships, and long-term planning resources. Dissemination through KnowledgeBase will ensure a broader impact through the system.

As an example of what the work of an implementation grant might encompass, a cluster of schools might identify math literacy as a major barrier to college readiness. Over the course of the planning period, they will articulate potential assets to leverage to build these skills inside and outside the school including internships and outside school projects involving math, new forms of professional development for math teachers driven by external partners, and partnerships with local colleges to provide math tutors to struggling students. Working collaboratively during the implementation period and with coaching from New Visions staff, the team will reach out to partners and begin to co-design and implement appropriate interventions.

Rallying the Public: New Visions has developed an array of publicity vehicles that we will specifically tailor to support the *New Day* campaign. Most visibly, New Visions develops and disseminates informational materials, including the annual citywide *College Planning Guide* (circulation 700,000) and *Scholarships for New York City Students* (co-published with the Department of Education; circulation 350,000), which provide students with an understanding of the college application process and increase their access to college. These materials are specifically geared to the needs of New York City public high school students and have been extremely well received.

Building on these materials, New Visions proposes to take our on-track metric for the academic components of college readiness and make them available to a broader array of students and their families. We propose to create a very specific publication, modeled on our *Family Literacy Guide*, which enables parents and students to fully understand what skills and attributes need to develop in multiple settings to become more prepared for college. To supplement this work, we are currently developing accountability measures that increase schools' sensitivity to the academic performance of traditionally alienated and ignored student populations, such as special education students and English language learners. Our constantly evolving data tools like these will allow us to "go to the public with the facts" in ways that we have not yet been able to.

New Visions has a strong track record of mobilizing our schools and partners to work with policymakers—at the Department of Education as well as local elected officials—to share the results of our work and garner needed support. To ensure sustainability, schools and partners need to have the capacity to advocate for themselves and their students. A short-term outcome of this project is that implementation grantees will begin to build deeper relationships, along with their partners, with policymakers. In the long term, we believe that

school stakeholders will be more fully equipped to go to the policymakers with the facts, and obtain needed support.

Campaign Outcomes: At the end of the project period, each participating school will have a School-Community Action Team in place, equipped in the use of student data and in the most effective way to reach outside the school to secure necessary resources. Each Team will be working on a college readiness campaign building on the needs and assets of the student body. Collectively, the Team will be creating an emerging model of integrated school-community partnership that drives towards a specific academic outcome—genuine readiness for college.

III. Outcomes and Deliverables

At the end of the project period, New Visions will have created:

- A theory of change that draws cutting-edge academic research together to articulate exactly how and in what ways partnership can and does impact academic achievement in the high school setting;

- Four case studies that describe how partnerships and associated extended learning opportunities are affecting academic achievement in New York City, and two case studies on how partnership and associated tools and resources are playing out in Boston;

- A final report articulating the theory of change and presenting key findings and recommendations from the case studies

- Toolkits, resources, artifacts on partnership development, assessing impact of extended learning opportunities and sharable with the larger education reform community;

- The beginnings of school-level capacity to advocate effectively with policymakers to created needed change and promote extended learning opportunities; and

- An action research lab testing strategies for a school or schools to utilize multiple partners to serve students' specific needs and articulate the impact of extended learning opportunities.

A New Day's clarion call to create a “seamless day,” one thoughtfully designed and filled with assets and resources from a rich array of adults and learning experiences, resonated with New Visions and lessons we have learned. When we began the New Century High Schools Initiative five years ago, we re-examined every aspect of the school experience with fresh eyes, knowing that our performance targets were unprecedented and ambitious, and that nothing short of thoughtful transformation would yield the results we wanted. Research is showing that deep partnership to create extended learning opportunities is clearly strengthening the instructional cores of our schools. An investment from the Mott Foundation will allow us to:

- Create a theory of change to focus our work;

- Ramp up a campaign on college readiness;

- Invest in lead players and study their experiences;

Build the capacity of schools to weave together streams of public and private funding and create policy change; and
 Cement commitment to using extended learning opportunities to get students ready for college for the long haul.

We are excited by the opportunity to partner with the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation to dive deeper into schools where partnership is leading to greater student achievement, and examine ways in which their learnings can be brought to other schools, other cities, and other school reform models.

IV. Budget Narrative

Major line items for this project, which totals \$907,000 over two years, include:

- \$235,000 to Policy Studies Associates for the creation of a theory of change and six case studies, and related dissemination activities;
- Personnel costs of \$330,500 for program management and supervision, case study coordination, school-level work, data analysis and program documentation;
- Seven grants totaling \$100,000 to schools or school teams: five planning grants of \$3,000 each and two implementation grants of \$42,500 each, and
- Consultants for mapping applications (\$20,000), publication and dissemination support for toolkits and other products (\$20,000) and funding for conferences and workshops (\$14,000).

New Visions is requesting funding from the Mott Foundation of \$500,000 over two years to support the PSA research, the growth of our data capacity, and the grants. We will seek the balance of funding needed from other sources, including the Annenberg Foundation, the Cummings Foundation and Atlantic Philanthropies.

V. Project Timeline

Phase	Timeframe	Activity
Research	September-November 2007	Theory of change creation
	December 2007-August 2008	Case study creation
Campaign Rollout	January-February 2008	RFP development; information sessions
	Mid-February 2008	RFP released
	Mid-March 2008	Letter of intent due
	Mid-April 2008	Five teams selected for planning grants of \$3,000
	April-August 2008	Planning teams develop and submit full implementation plans
	September 2008	Implementation grants of \$42,500 awarded to two teams

	October 2008-April 2009	Team-based work and capacity building, including coaching, data training sessions and workshops, both at the school and cluster level if applicable
	May 2009	Cross team convening to assess progress of work, share emerging lessons, refine strategies
	June 2009-October 2009	Full publication of all tools and resources

VI. Organizational and Staff Qualifications

New Visions for Public Schools: New Visions for Public Schools is the leading innovation shop and incubator for change for the New York City public schools. Since 1989, we have developed aggressive solutions and made improvements within our schools by bringing various constituents together to improve student achievement. By acting as a catalyst and convener, New Visions works with partners to set the expectations, create the conditions and change the policies to make New York City schools successful. Our portfolio of small schools provide students and families in the most underserved neighborhoods in the city with significant choice by offering an array of thematic or career-oriented approaches that engage students in learning based on their interests and ambitions. When fully enrolled by 2010, New Visions’ schools will serve nearly 40,000 of New York City’s students.

New Visions staff assigned to the project: Barbara Taveras serves as the Director of Community Engagement. Her previous experience includes her role as president of the Edward W. Hazen Foundation and as a policy analyst in education for the Mayor’s office. Among her many community projects, Barbara is a co-founder of the Dominican Community Bridge Fund, a partner of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors.

Policy Studies Associates, Inc.: Policy Studies Associates (PSA) conducts research, evaluation and policy analysis in education and youth development. It designs and carries out rigorous, impartial studies or program implementation and effects in a wide spectrum of youth-related topics, including education improvement, youth development during out-of-school time, professional development of educators and youth workers, community involvement for the purpose of improving opportunities available to youth, and the scaling up of innovations. Most of PSA’s studies examine educational services and other youth development opportunities for disadvantaged populations, including youth from low-income families, low-achieving students, and youth who are at risk of dropping out of school. Other PSA studies review policies and strategies intended to stimulate learning improvement for all students, from kindergarten through higher education. PSA was founded in 1982 by Elizabeth Reisner and Brenda Turnbull, who continue to own and manage the firm. It employs 35 to 40 researchers and support staff.

PSA staff assigned to this project: The research components of the proposed project will be undertaken by the PSA staff responsible for the evaluation of the NCHS Initiative, Elizabeth Reisner and Eileen Foley. They are both very familiar with both the issues surrounding urban educational reform as well as the corresponding issues shaping efforts to increase and

improve the opportunities for skill-building and enrichment learning in the out-of-school hours. Ms. Reisner will serve as the principal investigator of the research, and Dr. Foley will direct research operations, including design, data collection, analysis, and reporting. They have worked together and with New Visions on the multi-year evaluation of NCHS and are very familiar with all of the methods required to carry out the planned research.

New Visions for Public Schools
A New Day
Proposal Budget
July 1, 2007 - June 30, 2009

Description	Year 1	Year 2	Total
Grants	15,000	85,000	100,000
- five planning grants			
- two implementation grants			
Program Personnel	89,500	241,000	330,500
- program management & supervision			
- case study coordination			
- school-community team facilitation			
- data analysis and program documentation			
Consultants	10,000	10,000	20,000
- geo mapping			
Conference & Workshops	3,500	10,500	14,000
- planning team meetings & retreat			
- resource mapping workshops			
- action team training sessions			
- national conferences			
Documentation & Evaluation	211,500	43,500	255,000
- six case studies			
- toolkit development & dissemination			
Travel Expenses	300	800	1,100
- local travel for site-visits and meetings			
Program Resources	1,700	3,300	5,000
- professional literature			
- memberships and subscription			
- campaign & instructional materials			
Occupancy & Org. Costs	7,000	20,200	27,200
- includes rent, utilities, security, and other organizational costs			
Other Office Costs	1,800	5,300	7,100
- includes telephones, postage, equipment rental, general office supplies, etc.			
Program Support	74,100	73,00	147,100
- includes supervision and work of president, finance, administrative services, and technology support			
Total Program Budget	414,400	419,600	907,000