



### DESCRIPTION

- Program provides academic and recreational activities to 7,200 school-age children
- A key source of support is a dedicated local tax developed to support crime prevention
- Leaders combined two programs under FWAS umbrella for greater operational efficiency

### Elements of Sustainable Programs

- Vision
- **Strategic Financing Orientation**
- **Broad-Based Community Support**
- Key Champions
- **Results Orientation**
- Adaptability to Changing Conditions
- Strong Internal Systems
- Sustainability Plan

## Fort Worth Afterschool Program – Fort Worth, TX

### *Dedicated Local Tax Developed to Support Crime Prevention*

#### Overview

The Fort Worth Afterschool (FWAS) Program, a collaboration between the city of Fort Worth and the Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD), provides afterschool programming for approximately 7,200 school-age children in Fort Worth, Texas. FWAS programming aims both to reduce juvenile crime in Fort Worth and to provide additional academic support to at-risk children. Programs offer a wide range of activities for children primarily in grades 3 to 12, including academic support, arts activities, physical fitness, life skills, and community service. While receiving funding from multiple sources with varied program goals, FWAS has developed a comprehensive system of afterschool supports that meet the needs of the Fort Worth community. The program's leaders are also taking steps to establish community support and track program outcomes in their efforts to plan for future sustainability.

#### Getting Started

FWAS was initiated in 1999, when increased gang activity prompted the Fort Worth Police Department to approach city officials about setting aside dedicated tax dollars to support crime prevention efforts. As timing would have it, the deputy superintendent of FWISD had also recently introduced the idea of creating a program to focus on preventing juvenile crime in the afterschool hours. The plans for the FWAS program were officially in motion when an Afterschool Task Force was established, consisting of 23 representatives from a variety of

local organizations, including the police department, parks and recreation, school athletics and fine arts, and Tarrant County Juvenile Services. After careful research on the benefits of out-of-school time programs and studies of success stories in other cities, the task force made the case to the City Council highlighting the potential positive impacts of afterschool programming both for school improvement and crime prevention. In response, the public approved a dedicated source of revenue for crime prevention that supports afterschool programs.

In 2000, FWISD won its first 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21CCLC) grant, for \$875,000 for each of five years to support afterschool programs in five Fort Worth school sites. While these 21CCLC programs originally operated separately from FWAS, they were combined into one large structure in 2005, allowing for greater coordination between the key players supporting each program.

#### ✓ **Strategic Financing Orientation**

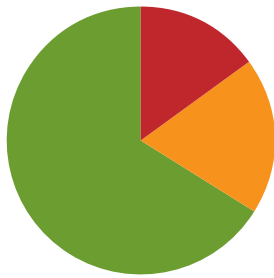
Knowing that a comprehensive system of afterschool programming in Fort Worth requires the coordination of many key partners and funding sources, FWAS leaders identified a range of strategies to support sustainable afterschool programming that both prevents juvenile crime and promotes academic achievement.

#### **Creating a Dedicated Revenue Stream**

School district and city leaders were instrumental in creating a key source of

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Funding Sources for the Fort Worth Afterschool Program



- Fort Worth Independent School District
- City of Fort Worth
- State 21CCLC grant

funding for afterschool programming in Fort Worth -- a dedicated local tax that supports crime prevention initiatives. In 1999, following the report of the Afterschool Task Force, the public overwhelmingly approved a half-cent sales tax and developed a Crime Control Prevention District (CCPD). The annual revenue from this tax, amounting to \$48 million, is used to provide more weapons, tools, cars, training, and resources for law enforcement, with \$1.4 million allocated toward afterschool programming for 74 sites in Fort Worth and three surrounding school districts. These funds have been a stable source of support for the FWAS program since 1999. The steady decrease in crime since the CCPD was passed helped convince voters in 2005 to re-approve this tax through 2010.

<b>Fort Worth Afterschool Program FY 2006 Budget</b>	
State 21CCLC grant	\$4,650,000
City of Fort Worth (sales tax revenue)	\$1,400,000
Fort Worth Independent School District	\$1,100,000
<b>Total Funding for 74 Sites</b>	<b>\$7,150,000</b>

**Maximizing Federal, State and Local Revenue**

Program coordinators were able to apply a combination of 21CCLC grants and local funding sources toward the FWAS program. Funding from the school district helped cover the salaries of FWAS staff as well as costs of programming, while the CCPD tax revenue is used to fund the bulk of the afterschool sites in Fort Worth as well as three surrounding school districts.

**Making Better Use of Existing Resources**

For five years, the Fort Worth Afterschool program and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers operated concurrently as two separately run programs. During this time, the programs felt an underlying tension due to differences in operating style and expectations due to the varied funding sources. For example, the programs run with 21CCLC funds placed greater emphasis on academic enrichment while the sites supported by the City were able to engage in more creative activities including field trips for the participants. Moreover, this system required the additional administrative burden of maintaining two separate sets of program leaders. Officials took a step toward greater efficiency when they combined the two programs under the FWAS umbrella in 2005. Under the newly combined structure, the program continues to be supported by a blend of federal and local funding, with 29 of its 74 sites supported by both 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center funds as well as general funds. Now, the 21CCLC programs are able to access additional services and benefit from the flexibility of resources while generating additional interest from young participants. For example, coordinators are able to recruit more participants by offering field trips, and coordinate their programming by securing reduced prices at local businesses, and make use of the streamlined online procedures that were previously only accessible by non-21CCLC sites. Ultimately, program leaders can more efficiently use administrative dollars from both funding sources and focus critical funds on programming.

**✓ Broad Based Community Support**

Fort Worth has forged a public-private partnership to build broad based

community support, leverage additional funding sources and gain exposure among local leaders. In an effort to provide oversight and direction for the FWAS program, the Fort Worth City Council and School Board launched a coordinating board with 13 representatives from a number of public and non-profit agencies. Within this group, three of the five community positions are at-large community members drawn from a range of professions, including legal, financial, health, media, and foundations to provide expertise in several key areas. The board offers various forms of support for the FWAS staff such as approving site selection, evaluating funding needs, and providing future program recommendations. The coordinating board serves as a vital resource in the program's strategic planning for the future.

✔ **Results Orientation**

The FWISD is also working with an independent organization to conduct a formal data collection process to be used for future evaluation purposes. Since 2000, preliminary data has been gathered for a longitudinal study that can track the academic performance of 4,000 kids over the span of 6 years along with statistics showing a decreased number of criminal incidences around schools. These results will be used as valuable evidence of program effectiveness in efforts to obtain additional funding in the future.

**Future Plans**

The leaders of the FWAS program are mindful of a number of key challenges it faces - the nature of dual funding streams, the difficulties of combining two programs, and the ongoing struggle to bring in additional funds. Community leaders and advocates of FWAS are committed to sustain funds for the program via private foundations, Medicaid fees, and additional funding from the CCPD.



For more information, contact The Finance Project at 202.587.1000 or visit our web site at [www.financeproject.org/irc/ost.asp](http://www.financeproject.org/irc/ost.asp)

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