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The Wallace Foundation Awards Baltimore up to \$765,000 to Help Bring High-Quality After-School Programs to More Kids *Family League of Baltimore City to Administer Grant*

BALTIMORE – [The Wallace Foundation](#) has awarded a new grant of up to \$765,000 to Baltimore to strengthen its efforts to provide more high-quality after-school programs for students from low-income families.

The [Family League of Baltimore City](#), the grant recipient, will use the funds over four years to make high-quality after-school programs more available by more formally knitting together the municipal agencies, schools, nonprofit youth programs and other institutions vital to providing these services, an approach Wallace calls “system-building.”

“This opportunity will enable our city to make sure more children can participate in after-school programs,” said Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake. “These programs provide rich opportunities for growth, learning and fun. And we know that when a city coordinates its after-school programs, the result is that more children benefit.”

Baltimore will use the new funding to improve the quality of after-school and summer programs around the city and gather reliable data to measure program effectiveness. Specifically, over the next four years Baltimore will:

- Expand the its youth program quality improvement system to enhance after-school and summer programs;
- Develop and implement a comprehensive professional development plan to ensure after-school staff attain the core competencies they need to serve youth effectively;
- Increase the use of data to further measure the effectiveness of after-school and summer programs by tracking key youth outcomes such as attendance and school performance;
- Use youth outcome and program quality data to guide investments, expanding those programs that are most effective.

“This new funding from The Wallace Foundation will touch the lives of many kids in Baltimore by helping us provide better after-school programs,” said Kevin Keegan, President and CEO of the Family League. “We are constantly working to improve programs to make sure young people are getting the best possible programming to help them learn, explore and be successful in school and beyond.”

For more than a decade, the Family League has worked with Baltimore City, the State of Maryland and a range of community partners to increase the quality and quantity of out-of-school-time opportunities for Baltimore City children and youth. This year, the Family League is providing funding, oversight and support to 35 community- or faith-based organizations and public agencies that oversee more than 60 programs serving more than 5,000 young people.

Baltimore is one of nine cities selected by Wallace for this initiative. The other locations are Denver, Fort Worth, Grand Rapids, Jacksonville, Louisville, Nashville, Philadelphia and St. Paul – all cities where at least half of public school students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch.

The chosen cities were seen as having already made substantial progress in setting up a citywide system with the key building blocks in place – committed mayoral leadership and a sound ongoing planning process.

“Research tell us that more children and teens can get access to high-quality after-school experiences when communities coordinate the work of the many different groups involved,” said Nancy Devine, director of communities at Wallace, a national foundation based in New York. “We want to encourage more cities to adopt this system-building approach, and one of the things we can expect to see is more cooperation between schools and after-school programs as they collaborate to better the education of our neediest urban kids.”

The nine new grants are the second phase of an initiative Wallace began in 2003 to help cities better coordinate after-school programs to improve opportunities for poor children and teens. That first phase revealed six building blocks essential to strong after-school systems: mayoral leadership and commitment to after-school; multi-year planning; a coordinating entity to lead the work; access to reliable data; efforts to improve the quality of programs; and efforts to increase participation of youngsters in them.

An analysis of the first phase of the initiative can be found in a recent report from RAND Corporation called [Hours of Opportunity: Lessons from Five Cities on Building Systems to Improve After-School, Summer, and Other Out-of-School-Time Programs.](#)

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The Wallace Foundation is an independent, national foundation dedicated to supporting and sharing effective ideas and practices that expand learning and enrichment opportunities for children. The Foundation maintains an online library of lessons at www.wallacefoundation.org about what it has learned, including knowledge from its current efforts aimed at: strengthening educational leadership to improve student achievement; helping disadvantaged students gain more time for learning through summer learning and an extended school day and year; enhancing out-of-school time opportunities; and building appreciation and demand for the arts.

The [Family League](#) of Baltimore City, Inc. is a non-profit, quasi-governmental organization mandated by the City and State to provide resource coordination and development, and to inform, prioritize and implement strategies that will improve the well-being of Baltimore’s children, youth and families. The Family League believes that by providing leadership, creating public/private partnerships, leveraging funding and using data to drive decisions, we will improve outcomes in our neighborhoods and communities.