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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Wednesday, Feb. 1, 2012

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The Wallace Foundation Awards Denver \$765,000 to Strengthen Collaborative Efforts to Support After-School Programs

(Denver, CO) [The Wallace Foundation](#) today announced the awarding of a \$765,000 grant to Denver's Mayor's Office for Education and Children to strengthen its collaborative efforts and infrastructure to support quality programs for youth during non-school hours.

Denver will use the grant, along with \$250,000 in local matching resources, to make high-quality after-school and summer programs available to more children and youth by aligning the resources of the City and County of Denver, Denver Public Schools, nonprofit youth programs and other key partners, an approach Wallace calls "system-building."

"To better support our after school and summer programs, we need to develop a comprehensive and long term strategy to better connect city resources with those of Denver Public Schools and our community partners," Denver Mayor Michael Hancock said. "Denver is committed to leveraging the Wallace grant to ensure that our children and youth have the support they need around the clock. Not only are engaged children and youth more successful in school, they're building skills that set them up for life-long success."

More than four decades of research demonstrates the positive impact of quality after-school and summer programs for children, families, schools, and communities. While the school day is an essential time for learning, young people spend far more time outside of the classroom. Improved coordination of these essential programs will connect service providers to the City and Denver Public Schools establishing shared goals and outcomes for youth development and educational achievement.

"The Piton Foundation is happy to partner with the City of Denver, DPS, and other funders and community partners to support a more integrated system of academic and after-school programming and data," says Terry Minger, President and CEO of the Piton Foundation. "We support the notion that developing well-educated and healthy children requires a strong partnership between educators, families, and the broader community."

Denver's work will focus on two key areas – reliable data gathering to identify the capacity of current programs and services through the launch of a community-based data platform, and the creation of a coordinating entity to develop and implement a shared vision and citywide strategy that will increase access and improve program quality through the use of a quality improvement system.

Denver Public Schools Superintendent, Tom Boasberg said, “the opportunity to leverage funding from the Wallace Foundation with district resources and community support comes at a pivotal time. Together, we can truly elevate the services provided to our students and their families and ultimately make progress towards our shared goal of graduating every DPS student prepared for college, career and life.”

The result will allow the city to use shared data to identify gaps and make strategic decisions to assure more young people have expanded learning opportunities outside of the school day and school year. These programs provide rich experiences for growth and learning through a diverse delivery system that includes academics, arts/cultural, leadership, technology, and sports/recreation activities provided in safe and structured environments.

Denver is one of nine cities selected by Wallace for this initiative. The other cities are: Baltimore, Fort Worth, Grand Rapids, Jacksonville, Louisville, Nashville, Philadelphia and St. Paul. Wallace selected these cities because they have already made substantial progress in setting up a citywide system with several key building blocks in place – committed mayoral leadership and a sound ongoing planning process.

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The [Wallace Foundation](http://www.wallacefoundation.org) 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 [Mayor's Office for Education and Children's](http://www.denvergov.org/education) works collaboratively with community partners to increase access to quality programs and services for Denver's children, youth, and their families from cradle to career. The office has actively supported after-school and summer programs for over a decade by spearheading and participating in numerous collaboratives that fund after-school and summer programs, support program evaluation, provide training and technical assistance and link organizations so that the sharing of best practices and leveraging of resources is realized. As the City's liaison, the office works in close partnership with Denver Public Schools. For more information visit www.denvergov.org/education.