

2010

**BOOST Conference
Palm Springs Convention Center
April 28 – May 1, 2010
After School Programs Help Close the Achievement Gap**



Presented By:

**Joshua D.S. Brady,
Consultant**

**Yvonne Evans,
Consultant**

**California Department of
Education, After School
Programs Office**

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State Superintendent
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Objectives

- Define the Achievement Gap
- Discuss how after school programs can be a strategy to close the gap
- Discuss the importance of data

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The Achievement Gap Is Real!

From the National perspective the achievement gap (GAP) is:

- A matter of race and class
- One of the most pressing education-policy challenges that states currently face
- A focal point of educational reform

National Definition: the disparity in academic performance between groups of students.

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The Achievement Gap Is Real! (cont.)

In California, the Gap is defined as the disparity between:

- The academic performance of white students and other ethnic groups
- English learners and native English speakers
- Socioeconomically disadvantaged and nondisadvantaged students
- Students with disabilities as compared with students without disabilities

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Could this be a Civil Rights Issue?



Based on the rate of improvement from 2003 to 2009, it would take 105 years to close the white/hispanic achievement gap and at least 189 years to close the white/black achievement gap, which has failed to narrow by even a point in English since 2003, according to scores released today.

(SF Chronicle Aug. 19, 2009)

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From California State Superintendent of Public Instruction

"Sadly, too many people view (California's) diversity as a big problem. I don't. Instead, I say: Imagine! Imagine the potential of that diversity in today's—and tomorrow's—global economy. If we educate these students well, our state would not only be able to compete more effectively, but it would be able to lead our nation and the world economically."

Jack O'Connell, California State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SSPI)

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What determines the Gap?

- Comparing academic performance
 - Grades
 - Standardized Test Scores
- Comparing the highest level of educational attainment
 - Course Selection
 - Dropout Rates
 - College Completion Rates

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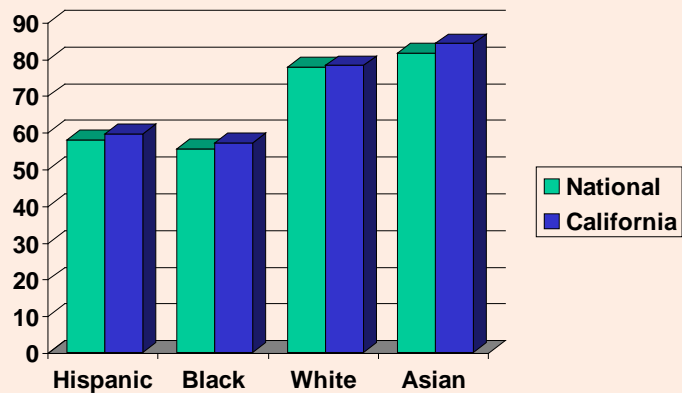
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Let's Look at Data

The graduation profile for the class of 2005 states the National average is 70.6 percent of students earn their high school diploma; in California that average is 70.1 percent. The average is less for Hispanics and Blacks.



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Let's Look at Data (cont.)

- Almost 2,000 schools across the country graduate less than 60 percent of their students
- These schools are labeled as “dropout factories”
- 1 in 3 minority students (33 percent) attend a dropout factory compared to 1 in 13 white students (8 percent)

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Why Closing the Gap Matters?

- To strengthen our economic base and competitive advantage in the global market
- Provide the viability for a diverse, pluralistic and democratic society to power California's prosperity
- Provide a better quality of life for **all** Californians

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What Has Been Done?

Standards-Based Reform

- Steady gains in nearly every subject and grade level tested
- More students proficient in English Language Arts and Math
- More students taking Algebra II and other advanced math courses
- The number of students taking AP courses has increased by 56 percent in five years

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**Although students are
improving...**

the Gap is not diminishing

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What More Can Be Done?

**California's Closing the Achievement Gap
(CTAG) Initiative:**

SSPI Jack O'Connell, convened a council to develop, implement, and sustain a specific, ambitious plan that holds the State of California accountable for creating the conditions necessary for closing the achievement gap.

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CTAG

4 key factors that address successful learning for all:

1. Access

- Qualified and effective teachers
- Rigorous curriculum based on the state academic content standards
- “Safety Nets”
- Accelerated interventions

2. Culture and Climate

- Safe learning environment for all students
- An environment that promotes a sense of belonging and fosters positive relationships
- An effective collaboration exists between school, home and community

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CTAG (cont.)

3. Expectations

- Fostering a culture of excellence for students and adults
- High standards is the norm for all students and is the responsibility embraced by the school community

4. Strategies

- Practitioners employ evidence-based promising teaching practices
- Technical tools and data is available across the state
- Flexible policies in school and districts to permit innovation and creativity

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P-16 Council's Four Major Themes and Recommendations

- I. Access – All students should have equitable access to core conditions, such as qualified teachers, quality PreK and a rigorous curriculum.**

Recommendation 1: Provide High-Quality Prekindergarten Programs

Recommendation 2: Better Align Educational Systems from Prekindergarten to College

Recommendation 3: Develop Partnerships to Close the Achievement Gap

- II. Culture and Climate – How schools can offer the best environment that promotes learning and a sense of belonging for students, parents, and school staff.**

Recommendation 4: Provide Culturally Relevant Professional Development for All School Personnel

Recommendation 5: Conduct a Climate Survey

- III. Expectations – We must foster high expectations for all.**

Recommendation 6: Augment Accountability System

Recommendation 7: Model Rigor

Recommendation 8: Focus on Academic Rigor

Recommendation 9: Improve the Awards System

- IV. Strategies – Practices the state can promote that have proven effective or are promising for closing the achievement gap.**

Recommendation 10: Create a Robust Information System

Recommendation 11: Provide Professional Development on the Use of Data

Recommendation 12: Share Successful Practices

Recommendation 13: Fully Implement the California K-12 High-Speed Network

Recommendation 14: Create Opportunities for School District Flexibility

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After School Gap Closing Activity

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What Can After School Do?

Local After School Programs...

education and enrichment programs are perfectly positioned to assist schools and communities in their “gap closing” efforts



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How After School Programs Contribute to CTAG?

- Attendance and/or participation in regular school day increases
- Academic performance improves
- Students report feeling more “connected” to school and peers
- Increase in parental involvement which improves student academic and social progress

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How After School Programs Contribute to CTAG? (cont.)

- Youth development focus fosters positive relationships with caring adults
- Students can build a more positive view of the school community
- For middle and high schools in particular, after school can make “elective” or enrichment studies available and accessible

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How After School Programs Contribute to CTAG? (cont.)

- Through after school programs, students can engage in experiential learning opportunities:
 - Hands-on activities help students master concepts taught during the regular day
 - Service learning, innovative programs
 - Tap into multiple learning styles

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Examples of After School Programs Closing the Gap

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Remembering the Key Benefits of After School Programs

Academic Support

- Alignment and linkages with the regular school day
- Targeted support for students in need

Community partnerships, collaboration, family involvement

- Engage diverse community/school/family stakeholders in development, implementation, and support in after school programs.

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Remembering the Key Benefits of After School Programs (cont.)

Youth Development

- Staff has more time to understand students' personal and academic needs, have high expectations for all students
- Students develop life skills, resiliency, self-esteem, cultural awareness
- Youth participation/engagement: students participate in program development, content, and evaluation

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**It's A Safe Place To Be...
But There's So Much More!**

After school can be a place that:

- Allows students more time to grasp academic concepts
- Provides students more individual attention
- Allows students to learn conceptually through games, activities, manipulatives, and technology

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**It's A Safe Place To Be...
But There's So Much More!
(cont.)**

- Provides more opportunities to achieve critical thinking and problem solving skills
- Assists in developing social skills and work ethics
- Provides more opportunities to make learning fun

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Vital Components of California's After School Programs

Enrichment

- Fine Arts
- Recreational Sports
- Prevention (drug and violence, etc.)
- Life Skills
- Career Preparation
- Job Readiness
- Health and Nutrition Education
- Expressive Arts (theatre programs, poetry-out loud, etc.)
- Peer-to-Peer Mentoring
- Computer Training (Information/Media/Technology Activities)
- Service Learning
- Community/Civic Engagement
- Career Academies/After School On Campus Internship Clubs
- Clubs- like: chess, cooking, school farm, auto shop, entrepreneurship, etc.
- and more

Academic Assistance

- **CAHSEE Prep ***
- **Credit Recovery Courses ***
- Homework Help
- Extended Library Hours
- **College Preparation including information about the Cal Grant Program ***
- Peer-to-Peer Tutoring
- Reading/language arts
- Mathematics and science
- Tutoring

Family Literacy

- All grantees must assess the need for literacy services, and refer to/coordinate with existing services.

- Plan family literacy services that are of sufficient intensity in hours and sufficient duration to make sustainable changes for the family.

*** High School Specific Activities**

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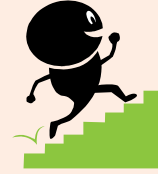
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Next Steps



- Develop a strong partnership with schools and school districts
- Participate in conversations about closing the achievement gap
- Collect and disseminate expertise, resources, and research on effective and successful practices that are proven or are promising in closing the achievement gap
- Continue to be involved and make a commitment to closing the gap. The work will not be easy but it's worth the effort.

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Superintendent Jack O'Connell's Closing the Achievement Gap Report

“Through collaboration, research, and implementation of strategies, the educational community will prevail in this quest of closing the achievement gap in California. Doing this will not be easy. But doing this is the right thing for California’s future.”

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Additional Resources

www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ba/

www.cde.ca.gov/eo/in/ag/

www.closingtheachievementgap.org

www.afterschoolnetwork.org

www.californiaafterschool.org

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Contact Information

Yvonne Evans, CDE Consultant
916-319-0623
yevans@cde.ca.gov

Joshua Brady, CDE Consultant
916-319-0206
jbrady@cde.ca.gov

Learning Support and Partnerships
Division, California Department of
Education

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