

ANGEVINE MIDDLE SCHOOL CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL

AN EXPANDED LEARNING TIME MODEL



THE
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INTRODUCTION

Boulder Valley School District's Angevine Middle School in Lafayette, Colo., gives new meaning to diversity. "We have kids from so many different backgrounds," says teacher Liz Barcheck. "We're one of the most diverse schools in our district. We have kids who are really on the high end [of achievement and opportunity] and kids on the other side."

Twenty-two percent of Angevine's more than 550 students are English language learners, 44 percent receive free and reduced lunch, while many others come from upper middle class homes.¹

"There are kids who take yoga and Chinese after school," says Assistant Principal Amanda Holden, and many who don't have those opportunities. In fact, the gap in opportunity and achievement was glaring, and staff members at Angevine realized that if they wanted to meet the needs of *all* students, educators were going to have to reconsider their learning model.

WHY EXPAND LEARNING TIME?

Time is the critical element in Angevine's learning environment. "I know from my 30-plus years of experience [that] the school year isn't long enough," says Principal Mike Medina.

Larry Peters, who has been teaching math at Angevine for eight years after a career in business, wholeheartedly agrees. Peters teaches a math academic support for students who are behind. "Kids in our classes had a growth of 94 or 95 percent in two years, but they are getting twice the amount of math. It was really obvious that they certainly are not incapable; they just started way behind" and needed more instructional time.

"It's really clear that we need more time," Medina says, "[but] the paradigm of the structure in the school day is so entrenched [that] trying to change it is difficult." Change is hard, especially when it's deeply engrained in people's perceptions and understanding of a system. But Angevine had been

piloting different approaches to student learning for a few years.

One of its first iterations was Saturday school and workshop-based summer courses, both of which took an interdisciplinary thematic approach to instruction for struggling students. Angevine staff knew that providing more of the same type of instruction that struggling students already disliked was not going to move the needle. "Just because you give kids more of what they already hate and aren't good at doesn't mean it's going to change things," Medina says. "You have to captivate, motivate, and intrigue kids to go to the next level."

A summer bicycle workshop is one example of how this looked in practice. During the workshop, students wrote essays about how bikes are used and the transportation mode's history; studied the physics of how bikes worked; and incorporated the two-wheeled machines into math problems. The summer culminated in a partnership with Boulder Cycle, a local bicycle store that helped each student design and build his or her own bike.

The result? *Huge* student engagement. Educators and leaders were hooked and began asking how they could replicate the culture and feel of the Saturday workshop into Angevine's "normal" school day. After meeting with the TIME Collaborative, they found their answer: expanded learning time.



Nathan showing off his learning.

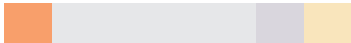
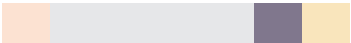
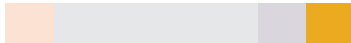
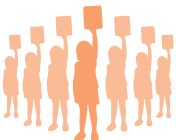





UNDERSTANDING THE TIME COLLABORATIVE

One of the most valuable resources in education is time and how it is used. Next generation learning environments intentionally use time to personalize learning, provide deeper interventions, and create learning opportunities beyond the classroom.

The TIME Collaborative is a partnership of the Ford Foundation and the National Center on Time & Learning (NCTL), the Colorado Department of Education (CDE), and The Colorado Education Initiative (CEI) to help three Colorado districts and 12 schools, including Angevine, rethink the role time plays in their learning environments.

THE MODEL

To incorporate expanded learning time into the school day, Angevine leaders and educators ultimately chose to develop three enrichment areas: early arrival, after-school extracurricular, and Saturday school and summer enrichment. Details of these enrichment areas are given below.

	EARLY ARRIVAL ENRICHMENT	AFTER-SCHOOL EXTRA- CURRICULAR ENRICHMENT	SATURDAY MORNING AND SUMMER ENRICHMENT
WHEN	 Weekdays, 7:45-8:40 a.m.	 Weekdays, 3-5 p.m.	 Saturday morning and summer
WHO	 150-200 students daily	 More students than any other school in the district	 Students who need to catch up or are interested in additional learning opportunities
WHAT	10-13 programming options and classes, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal breakfast for all early arrivals • AVID model of pre-college preparation for students of low socio-economic status • Additional focused instruction corresponding to core academic classes • Student-driven offerings, such as book clubs and writing workshops under the guidance of teachers, at the direction of students • Community partnership with the local YMCA to offer homework help on Monday mornings 	A range of clubs and teams open for all students, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track and Field • Basketball • Minecraft Club • Yearbook Club • Orchestra and Band • NXT Robotics • Club Mestizo • <u>Many, many more!</u> 	A thematic, interdisciplinary approach to education, through Saturday school and summer courses. Students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catch up to peers in math, literacy, and science • Experience opportunities for greater discovery and inspiration • Engage deeply with a variety of specific topics through discovery and investigation 



These teams worked closely with NCTL, CEI, and CDE to design a school day and year that is personalized to the unique needs of their students and community. The redesign process involved technical assistance and targeted coaching with each school team. Plans focused on integrating NCTL's Seven Essential Elements for more and better learning time with school and district priorities.

REGARDING WEEKDAYS

“We have a lot of kids who would rather be at school,” says Barcheck, who runs a handful of enrichments. “Whether it’s at 7 a.m. or 5 p.m., their family and home lives are not ideal. It feels like we can offer this extra, safe place for them to be. At 7:45 a.m., before the halls fill up with the student body, it is really calm and great.

“And because it’s opting in, the kids who come really want to be here,” she says. “They really want to be in the classrooms that they signed up for, and it’s not weird or shameful for kids to be here early. There are so many different opportunities that if kids outgrow one, they don’t necessarily need to come into a certain class anymore. We have so many places for them to shine.”

MORE ON AVID

The AVID course helps learners prepare to succeed in college. “We work on writing, reading, critical thinking, and collaboration skills,” says Barcheck, who leads AVID. The class is incredibly practical and useful. Students learn how to set goals by writing short- and long-term goals, they work on organizational skills by keeping a planner and binders, and they learn self-advocacy — how to have a difficult conversation with a teacher, adult, or peer, or how to ask for something they need.

AFTER-SCHOOL EXTRACURRICULAR ENRICHMENT

The Angevine team has created a vibrant extracurricular scene, with significantly more students choosing to participate in before- and after-school activities than students in any other school in the district. For example, the middle school has more than 100 students in track and field, fills four team rosters for girls’ basketball, has produced a district champion chess team, and has a thriving Minecraft Club and yearbook staff with overflowing membership roll.



IMPLEMENTING THE MODEL

To close the opportunity gaps and achieve its redesign, the Angevine team relied on support and coaching from the TIME Collaborative and buy-in from the entire school community. Key strategies included:

Discovering what's possible and setting goals.

"The first thing that the TIME Collaborative did was open our eyes to the possibilities — and that was huge," Peters says. "If you don't see the vision, then you just shut down." Second, the Angevine team, with the help of NCTL and CEI, focused on one *true* goal for expanded learning time and innovation, and everything else was seen through that lens. "In a school, there are a million different ways to get sidetracked and a latest, greatest way of teaching every other year," Peters says. This new method kept reinforcing to staff that every time they made a decision, they had to decide whether it was helping the school hit its 85 percent proficiency in reading, writing, and math.

Staffing and compensating well. Angevine leadership crafted a formula to offer additional compensation to teachers running early morning and extracurricular enrichments. "If you ask people to do something and you want them to do it well, you need to pay them well," Holden says. Teachers also had to apply for positions, and they were only accepted if they had literacy or math backgrounds, which aligned to the expanded learning time's overall goal. "I have our top teachers who are the most effective" running the enrichments, Medina says. Without a really powerful teacher, the impact will be minimal, he adds.

Creating a welcoming and engaging space.

Many of the students participating in expanded learning time were once disenfranchised, Medina says. "Yet some teacher has motivated and captivated their interest, and now they are intrigued and want to take it to the next level." Eight years ago, more than 245 students were suspended from Angevine in a given year, "and the reason was the structures weren't right," he says. "Kids were misbehaving because they were reacting to poor programming, poor teaching. In many parts of the country, school has become a

STAFFING MODEL



Educators

Angevine divided the resources from 1.5 full-time educator positions, allowing the school to redistribute a 0.14, or 14 percent, increase in compensation to educators running classes during expanded learning time. "We have our top teachers — who are the most effective, have the best relationships [with students], and can really captivate [students] — teaching morning classes," Medina says.



Outside Partners

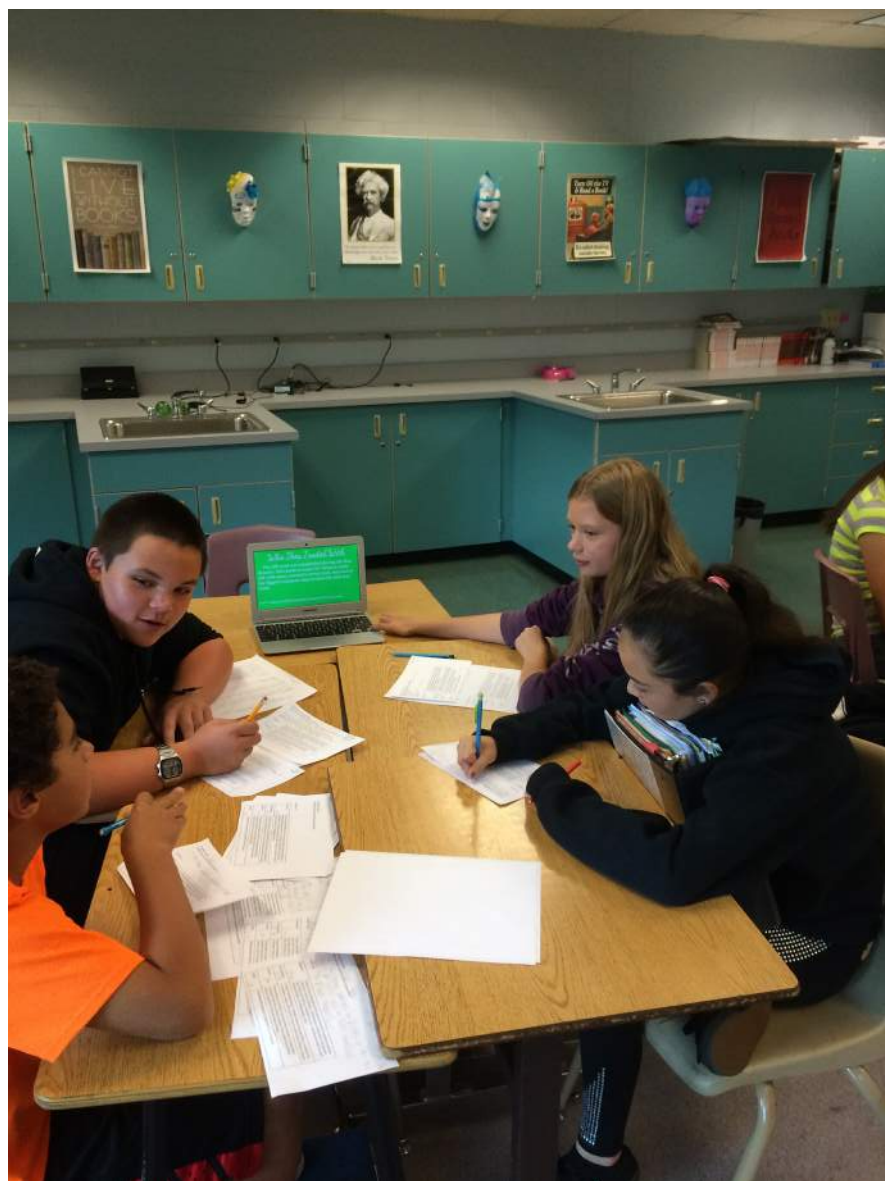
Angevine also has a relationship with the local YMCA, which is awarded grants to manage educational activities within school. The YMCA runs a homework club in the library and other activities like sports and art, giving teachers more collaboration time.

place where kids come to watch teachers work. They sit passively in a classroom, and then they do some type of rote exercise, and the teachers do all the work and all the teaching. When you have a vibrant environment, it's student-centered and the kids are allowed to be creative. If you come into our school, we have kids out and about. It really is that engagement; kids love to come to school and are respectful. We are really diverse, yet the kids live in harmony."

Cultivating a mindset where challenges are embraced. Angevine strives to attract and encourage people who "embrace the challenges," Medina says. "When there are obstacles in the path of progress, we work around them and are creative."



Top
Parent-student success meeting.



Left
Seventh-grade students working collaboratively on digital presentation.

CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

Implementing a new learning model was not without challenges. Below are some of the challenges Angevine experienced:

- **Transportation.** With 56 schools in the district, Boulder Valley was unable to provide transportation during expanded learning time, leaving transportation up to committed students and parents.
- **Parent support.** Not all families welcomed an extended school day, especially those with students who were highly involved in activities outside of school. In response, Angevine made expanded learning time an opt-in choice, ensuring those students who wish to engage have the opportunity while allowing some parents to choose other options within the community for their students.
- **Funding and community partnerships.** Without additional resources to support the work, Angevine leadership has had to be creative with staffing, but that doesn't allow the program to expand substantially.

PROOF OF IMPACT

Angevine has made remarkable progress since implementing an extended school day. More students are on the honor roll than ever before. Although the district is unable to provide early morning transportation, 150 to 200 out of 700 students participate in morning expanded learning time and find their own transportation to school. (Up to 300 kids stay after school for activities.)

WHAT'S NEXT?

Angevine has designed several initiatives to continue improving its expanded learning time model, including:

- **Continue to reform the school day.** *Address the current unproductive time within the school day.* Redesign the schedule to ensure every student maximizes the time he or she spends under the guidance of teachers and in collaboration with peers. "Secondary schools have so many transitions that lead to unproductive time and a disconnect," Medina says. Angevine is going to work to change that condition.
- **Integrate learning.** *Redesign the day to connect classes and subjects in a more integrative fashion.* Provide students with a sense of continuity in their academic pursuits. In connecting classes, potentially through block scheduling, teachers will have fewer students each day, students will be able to find more relevancy in their coursework, and, together with their teachers, students will be able to understand the principles that lead to a more holistic approach to academic engagement.
- **Give students more voice.** *Focus on co-creating opportunities to give students a voice in the process and structure of school* so that students become more passionate, committed, and motivated to excel.
- **Implement an eight-hour school day.** *Meet the TIME Collaborative goal of an eight-hour school day.* Creating a formal eight-hour day for learning will help bring equal opportunities for academic enrichment to all students, especially those who are currently unable to provide their own transportation to and from extended learning time activities.
- **Evaluate for impact.** *Implement schoolwide evaluations of impact.* While students seem happier, attendance has increased, extracurricular participation has flourished, and more students than ever are making the honor roll, Angevine hopes to develop measures specifically related to academic growth and progress that can be universally shared across the school. Many teachers use spreadsheets, Google Docs, and other tools to maintain impact evaluations; however, a broad, universal system is essential to ensure all teachers and students can excel in the classroom.

“JUST BECAUSE YOU GIVE KIDS MORE OF WHAT THEY ALREADY HATE AND AREN'T GOOD AT DOESN'T MEAN IT'S GOING TO CHANGE THINGS. YOU HAVE TO CAPTIVATE, MOTIVATE, AND INTRIGUE KIDS TO GO TO THE NEXT LEVEL.” — MIKE MEDINA, PRINCIPAL

THANK YOU

TO ALL THE ANGEVINE STAFF, FAMILIES, COMMUNITY MEMBERS,
AND STUDENTS WHO SHARED THEIR STORIES WITH US.

YOU'RE AN INSPIRATION FOR WHAT
THE FUTURE OF LEARNING CAN HOLD.



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The Colorado Education Initiative is an independent nonprofit working in partnership with the Colorado Department of Education, educators, schools, districts, and other public education stakeholders to unlock the unique potential of every student by incubating innovation, shining a spotlight on success, and investing in sustainable change that improves outcomes for all students. CEI envisions that every student in Colorado is prepared and unafraid to succeed in school, work, and life, and ready to take on the challenges of today, tomorrow, and beyond.

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