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April 28, 2016

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New Report Explores Value of Expanded Learning Time for Students in the Early Grades
*Research Shows How Schools Can Foster a Positive School Culture, High Expectations for All,
and a Well-Rounded Education for Young Students*

(Boston, MA) - A new report released today by the National Center on Time & Learning (NCTL) offers proven practices for elementary school educators across the U.S. seeking ways to address the myriad of learning and developmental needs of children. [***Creating Learning Environments in the Early Grades That Support Teacher and Student Success***](#), examines best practices from schools that have converted to an expanded schedule and how they have been able to better meet their educational objectives with younger students. Three expanded-time elementary schools in low-income communities in Massachusetts, Colorado and Connecticut are profiled in this report, and exhibit how the expanded day facilitates healthy learning and development.

“With poverty rates on the rise and opportunity gaps widening, children from low income backgrounds need the highest quality educational and developmental opportunities possible,” said **Jennifer Davis**, co-founder and president of the National Center on Time & Learning. “The schools profiled in this report are providing more comprehensive educational experiences as well as more informal play time and social development opportunities that too many schools today are not able to provide simply because they don’t have enough time to do so.”

The three schools profiled include John Barry Elementary School in Meriden, Connecticut, Centennial Elementary School in Denver, Colorado, and Hill Elementary School in Revere, Massachusetts.

NCTL has frequently documented how an expanded schedule, when harnessed well by educators, can overcome the limitations that traditional schools face. Across the three schools, ***Creating Learning Environments in the Early Grades That Support Teacher and Student Success*** identified five effective practices that have led to student and teacher success. These practices are:

- ❖ **Creating and adhering to a developmentally appropriate schedule** – Teachers organize classrooms to include: individual and small group play; academically-oriented instruction; activities that emphasize non-academic skills, physical movement, along with rest and dynamic social interaction.
- ❖ **Fostering interaction with a number of qualified adults throughout the day** – Children have several regular opportunities throughout the day to form relationships with adults other than their single

classroom teacher, such as with enrichment specialists, classroom paraprofessionals, volunteer tutors, and language and math specialists.

- ❖ **Carefully monitoring each student's academic and non-academic progress** – Not only do the schools employ traditional methods of tracking children's academic progress, they also have students track their own learning and development (e.g., using playful artwork displays to keep track of how many new vocabulary words they've learned, etc.).
- ❖ **Communicating with families frequently in order to build strong relationships to benefit children** – Educators at the three schools welcome parents and other family members into their classrooms often to emphasize that they are partners in each child's growth.
- ❖ **Regular teacher collaboration focused on continuous improvement** – Within the substantial time dedicated to teacher collaboration, teachers design rigorous curricula, review individual student progress, and, more generally, support each other to meet high expectations.

"Expanded learning time for all our students has really boosted what we can do as educators," said Principal Ed Moccia, of Hill Elementary School in Revere, Mass. "Our teachers feel empowered to think creatively about their daily schedules, which has improved academic outcomes and enrichment opportunities for young learners, as well as created a welcoming, truly collaborative environment for students, teachers and the community."

"Research shows that formal schooling plays a particularly influential role in the lives of young people in poverty. Too often our most needy children do not have access to learning and developmental opportunities beyond school hours. For that reason, providing disadvantaged children *more* time in schools in the early grades can boost the positive impact schools furnish," explains report author, **Dr. David Farbman**. "For practitioners looking to set their students on a trajectory of success, this report demonstrates the powerful value of a longer school day to children in early grades. It also offers ways educators can optimize use of that time."

This report was made possible with support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

To see the complete report, please visit: <http://www.timeandlearning.org/publications/creating-learning-environments-early-grades-support-teacher-and-student-success>

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About National Center on Time & Learning

The National Center on Time & Learning (NCTL) is dedicated to expanding learning time to improve student achievement and enable a well-rounded education. Through research, public policy, and technical assistance, NCTL supports national, state, and local initiatives that add significantly more school time for academic and enrichment opportunities to help all children meet the demands of the 21st century. For more information, please visit <http://www.timeandlearning.org>

