



**History of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and U.S. Department of Education Partnership  
Excerpts from an award nomination form  
Secretary Richard Riley  
December 2008**

**2. Did you participate in the nominated activity? If so how?**

The immense importance of how this partnership began is instructive because it set the stage and the course of the nominated activities to this day – almost 12 years later. In 1997, my staff and I, together with White House officials, were analyzing policy and appropriation options to expand afterschool and community learning programs, especially in low-income schools and communities. We determined that the best option to move quickly on this agenda was to take the existing federal \$1 million 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center demonstration project and begin to grow it rapidly across the United States. There was White House interest in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center expansion approach; but there were other options outside of education, potentially causing the whole effort to get bogged down by competing interests.

At the same time, Bill White and I were invited to attend a White House Summit to explore the challenges of out-of-school time for children and youth. My staff and I approached Bill White and his staff about our interest in expanding the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers and how that might relate to the mission of the Mott Foundation. Recognizing a unique opportunity, Bill White offered to partner with the U.S. Department of Education and provide funding to roll out and implement the proposed initiative. The Mott Foundation partnership and initial commitment of \$10 million in funding were critical in building consensus within the Administration for this expansion of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers.

After that very important and critical beginning, my staff and I continued to work closely with Bill White and his staff to continue the expansion while we were in government (four years) and out of government (currently seven years).

**3a. Describe the public policy activity and the nominated organization's role in it.**

The public policy focus was to expand dramatically afterschool and community learning center opportunities nationwide, especially for children and youth in high-need school-communities, through a very rapid increase in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center initiative. At that time in 1997 when it was identified as a potential policy and appropriation vehicle, the initiative had been dormant for several years as a \$1 million demonstration project in 10 schools. But the reality was that thousands of school communities needed these opportunities.

We had indications that some in Congress might be willing to fund directly 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center applicants for direct services around the country. However, at that time, the Congressional majority **did not want any federal** leadership, training and outreach supporting this initiative because they felt that would exert too much federal intrusion. Yet my experience both as a Governor and Secretary of Education informed me that without strong, nationwide building of public will and education, leadership, technical assistance and professional development, such an initiative would flounder, be of poor quality and ultimately fail.

The initial funding from the Mott Foundation provided the support for the implementation – not directly from the US Department of Education, but from Mott-funded grantees.

The partnership solidified and the annual federal appropriation increased very significantly and quickly, as did Mott's increased commitment to \$50 million. This formal new commitment and government-



foundation partnership was announced at a much-heralded White House event that involved the President, Vice President, First Lady, Bill White and me.

Subsequently, Mott yet again increased its commitment to \$100 million. These funds were designated to strengthen the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center effort, as well as to help create 38 statewide afterschool networks to further statewide policies and to support a number of organizations that work to improve quality through research, technical assistance and training, not only for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers but also to many providers of afterschool and summer learning.

### **3b. What is the demonstrated or potential impact of the activity?**

The initial Mott Foundation commitment and partnership with the U.S. Department of Education was extremely critical to gain support for increased appropriations from the Administration and from Congress, initially from \$1 million to \$40 million in 1998. Because of that success, Mott increased their initial investment in this effort, which in turn leveraged their contribution and partnership many, many times over. By 2002, Congress had increased its investment in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers to almost \$1 billion per year. During this 4-5 year period, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center program quite possibly became the federal government's fastest-growing initiative.

Very importantly, the effort continued to grow in the first year of the new Administration (2001-2002). To help build and maintain bipartisan support at this time of transition, Mott partnered with the Bush Administration on how best to complement supplemental education services with afterschool initiatives.

In 2003-2005, when the Administration attempted to cut significantly the \$1 billion appropriation, Mott funded partnerships and allies rallied in opposition to the cuts. This included bringing to Washington, DC, Arnold Schwarzenegger, a major advocate of afterschool programs. As a result, cuts were avoided.

Because of Mott's staying power and continued efforts to build public will and partnerships, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers received a \$100 million increase in 2008, bringing the total annual federal appropriation to almost \$1.1 billion. In addition, nonprofits, schools and city governments in turn often match this locally. This increase in the federal appropriation alone means that almost 2 million children and families will be participating in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers in 2008-2009 through almost 10,000 school-community partnerships. With increased research and identification of best practices funded by Mott, other foundations and the U.S. Department of Education, program quality has improved and better technical assistance and professional development are being provided.

Through sustained commitment to the partnership and understanding of the inevitable challenges, the initial vision in 1997 now – almost 12 years later – includes and extends well beyond the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center program.