A national push to improve students’ math and literacy skills has caused many schools to double up on those subjects, sometimes at the expense of a balanced and engaging education. To meet the demands of narrowly-defined accountability, schools have sacrificed time spent on science, social studies, arts, physical activity and well-rounded skills.

A primary goal of ExpandED Schools and many expanded learning time and after-school initiatives is to give 21st Century students more time and a wider range of opportunities to learn than in the conventional school day. These schedules show how three ExpandED Schools have re-engineered time and resources to provide what everyone wants for their children: a well-rounded education, quality instruction and a fighting chance to succeed.

In the ExpandED Schools national demonstration, 11 elementary and middle schools in New York City, Baltimore and New Orleans partner with experienced community organizations to expand the learning day. They restore or expand time for subjects such as science. They offer arts, movement, small group support and project-based learning activities that require creative and critical thinking.

Students get about 35% more learning time than their peers in traditional public schools.

Together with their community partners, ExpandED School leaders re-engineer schools to align their resources to meet shared goals for students. Community organizations add to faculty by bringing in teaching artists and AmeriCorps members, among others. In some schools, community educators help teachers deliver small group instruction before 3 PM. Teachers have the flexibility to work beside community educators as kids explore enrichments and leadership opportunities which would otherwise be squeezed out of the school day.

School teams often adjust schedules and curriculum throughout the year to diversify opportunities and meet changing needs. These schedules are a snapshot from spring of the 2011-12 school year.

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McDONOGH 32 LITERACY CHARTER SCHOOL

Wednesday, 3rd Grade

CITY
New Orleans

COMMUNITY PARTNER
Young Audiences of Louisiana

GOALS
Leaders at McDonogh 32 use exposure to high quality arts programming as a catalyst for students’ academic success. The school partnered with Young Audiences to add more visual and performing arts activities throughout the school day.

HIGHLIGHT
By expanding the school day and staff, McDonogh 32 was able to revive the school band. This year, McDonogh 32 students marched in Mardi Gras parades under Young Audiences.

A conventional school day: 6 hours, 30 mins
A day at McDonogh 32: 9 hours, 30 mins
HILTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Wednesday, 3rd Grade

CITY
Baltimore

COMMUNITY PARTNER
Child First Authority

GOALS
In addition to providing more opportunities for individual and small group learning, leaders at Hilton Elementary School wanted to offer their students more time for science and the arts.

HIGHLIGHT
Child First Authority community educators lead STEMulated Minds, which helps kids develop critical thinking skills and teamwork through engaging STEM projects.

A conventional school day: 6 hours, 30 mins
A day at Hilton Elementary: 9 hours, 50 mins

INTERVENTION GROUPS
Students are matched in small groups with teachers with whom they have strong relationships. Teachers mentor them and model different ways to build their skills in reading, math, and science.

BEYOND MILK AND COOKIES
The Hilton partners use snack time for character development and building relationships, while also helping students with homework. Students take leadership roles in planning activities, take attendance and deliver snacks. Music sets the tone for guided conversation.

STEMULATED MINDS

SUPPER

DISMISSAL

BREAKFAST

ENGLISH

MATH

LUNCH

RECESS

MATH

SOCIAL STUDIES

STEMULATED MINDS

VIOLIN

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IS JUST ONE CHOICE DURING THIS HOUR. OTHERS INCLUDE KARATE, CHESS, VISUAL ARTS, BASKETBALL AND INVENTREPRENEUR, WHICH COMBINES INVENTION WITH ENTREPRENEURSHIP.
GOALS
School leaders use additional learning time to differentiate instruction based on students’ learning styles. Together the partners look at students’ achievement, attendance and behavior data and construct a schedule that addresses learning needs and offers students choices. This year’s focus is math, science, arts and English.

HIGHLIGHT
The expanded school schedule allows morning time for yoga and quiet reflection, which helps students start their day focused and ready to learn.

A conventional school day: 6 hours, 30 mins
A day at TMALS: 9 hours, 30 mins