



Executive Summary

Measuring Supply of and Demand for Expanded Learning Programs in Lynwood

This study examines supply and demand for expanded learning (EL) afterschool programs in Lynwood, Calif. as part of the Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation's initiative to improve access to high-quality EL opportunities throughout Los Angeles County.

We developed this study as a pilot to explore how well providers are meeting parents' needs in one community, and to highlight the importance of understanding both that and local context in attempting to improve access to EL. Results contribute to understanding of how to improve access to quality afterschool programs.

Approach

To understand how provided services in Lynwood match parents' needs and to what extent, we collected data from parents and service providers using surveys and focus groups. We translated parental demand for EL and provider supply into full-time equivalent program slots, defined as a three-hour program meeting five days per week.

Through surveys and focus groups, we attempted to uncover gaps and barriers that may either prevent families from accessing EL programs at all or make these programs undesirable.

A relatively small, non-random sample of parents responded to the survey, and we collected data from only about half of identified providers. Therefore, both descriptive results and estimations of population-level unmet demand and provider capacity are likely to contain biases and should not be taken as definitive.

Key Findings

Parent Demand. The majority (58%) of surveyed Lynwood parents enroll their selected child in afterschool programs, with participants attending an average of four days per week for 2-3 hours per day. Among non-participants, the primary reasons for not enrolling were parental preference (44%) and child preference (23%), rather than logistical barriers like transportation or cost. These reasons differ from prior data collected through surveys of LA City parents, which demonstrated more prominent logistical barriers.

Most parents (78%) are satisfied with their child's afterschool programming. Both participants and non-participants recognize afterschool programs' benefits, such as providing supervision, supporting working parents, and offering opportunities for socialization and skill-building. Parents expressed desire for more programming in STEM, athletics, and the arts, along with improved communication and attention to safety and supervision.

Provider Supply. We identified 82 relevant EL providers serving Lynwood, categorized as school-based programs (22), outside nonprofits/public entities (37), and private organizations (23). School-based programs, primarily managed through Think Together at schools in the Lynwood Unified School District (LUSD), offer significant advantages to parents with respect to convenience, free enrollment, and no need for transportation. However, most LUSD programs are approaching capacity, limiting their ability to expand significantly without additional resources.

While providers not based at schools offer more specialized programming, parents may face barriers accessing them, such as mid-day transportation requirements, high fees for (median \$450 per semester), and shorter durations than school-based programs. While these providers often have capacity for additional enrollment, they may not align with parents' preferences or logistical needs.

Supply/Demand Analysis. Using the results from the surveys of parents and providers, we estimate Lynwood parents desire approximately 1,000 additional full-time equivalent (FTE) slots, representing a 28% increase over current enrollment FTEs. Meanwhile, providers have about 750 FTE slots of available capacity, suggesting there could be almost enough slots to meet demand in the community. However, because parents are looking for additional programming while providers have unused capacity, this suggests challenges remain:

1. Most available capacity is at non-school sites, requiring parents to solve transportation issues and (potentially) pay fees.
2. There may be mismatches between available programming and parents' preferences.
3. Parents may lack awareness of relevant programs.

Again, due to potential biases within the data, we caution these results are suggestive only.

Implications

This study demonstrates that while Lynwood does not suffer from a considerable lack of afterschool programming, there remains unsatisfied demand that could be addressed through better alignment of existing capacity with parents' needs as well as improved communication about available options. Based on the results, we suggest several actionable recommendations to improve EL opportunities in Lynwood and beyond:

For Lynwood Unified School District:

- Clarify branding and enhance communication about available programs, especially specialized offerings including STEM, arts, and sports.
- Address capacity limitations by securing additional funding for staffing and space.

- Improve staff training and supervision ratios to address safety concerns.
- Enhance communication with parents about daily/weekly activities within programs.
- Demonstrate the academic and social benefits of EL participation to engage non- participating families.

For Community Providers:

- Strengthen partnerships with schools to address transportation needs.
- Better align offerings with parents' needs regarding programmatic focus (STEM, arts), logistical accessibility, and (potentially) cost.
- Improve outreach to ensure parents are aware of available options and their benefits for students.

For Policymakers:

- Incentivize partnerships between schools and community-based organizations (CBOs).
- Establish data systems for tracking key metrics, including program availability, enrollment, and unmet demand while also establishing standard approaches to capturing program quality.
- Provide targeted grants for providers offering enrichment activities aligned with parents' preferences.

For Foundations:

- Fund other localized assessments of EL needs, recognizing that the needs themselves and strategies to meet them will vary across communities.

- Strengthen provider capacity to deliver quality programming through improved staff development and training.
- Invest in outreach campaigns to inform parents about available programs and their benefits.
- Support the development of data infrastructure to enable data-driven decision-making.
- Incentivize providers to develop innovative offerings in high-need areas, and support collaborations between schools and CBOs to further enhance programmatic diversity.