

April 16, 2009

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: All Faculty and Research Staff in the California State University System

FROM: Dr. William D. Leach
Program Director
Faculty Research Fellows Program
Center for California Studies
California State University, Sacramento

SUBJECT: Request for Proposals: "Extended Learning Time in Public Schools and its Effect on Academic Achievement"

The California Senate Office of Research has requested assistance from the Faculty Research Fellows Program at California State University to synthesize new or existing data on the effectiveness and/or cost-effectiveness of extended learning time (e.g. longer school days or school years) in public schools.

Research proposals are due **May 22, 2009**
Funding decisions will be announced **May 29, 2009**
The funded project must be completed by **December 1, 2009**
The anticipated award amount is **\$13,500**

Please refer to the attached RFP for details.

**Faculty Research Fellows Program
Center for California Studies
California State University, Sacramento**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Project Title

“Extended Learning Time in Public Schools and Its Effect on Academic Achievement”

Background

In this era of increased accountability and renewed attention on student academic outcomes (such as test scores) some public schools are looking to extended learning time as a means of improving student success. Extended learning time can take many forms: a longer school year, Saturday school, or a longer school day (either an extension of the traditional instructional day, or quality after-school programs, or a blending of both).

The issue of extended learning time as a tool for school reform is not new. Twenty-five years ago, the report, “A Nation At Risk” urged schools to add more time – longer school days and a longer school year. Now, as schools are implementing the federal No Child Left Behind Act, this tool is receiving renewed attention. Of note, Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA), released the Time for Innovation Matters in Education (TIME) Act, which is modeled after the Massachusetts Expanded Learning Time Initiative in August, 2008. This follows efforts by schools and school districts across the country to extend their learning time in various ways.

The impetus for local efforts to extend instructional time may be varied. Some schools are expanding learning time to add more enrichment-type activities, in response to the criticisms that No Child Left Behind Act has led to a narrowing of the curriculum. Others are adding learning time in an effort to close the persistent achievement gap. Yet others are expanding learning time in an effort to engage students and reduce the dropout rate.

Purpose of Research

The Faculty Research Fellows Program solicits proposals that address one or both of the following research objectives:

- A.. Conduct original research or summarize and synthesize the findings from existing studies on the effectiveness of extended learning as a strategy to improve student academic achievement (including graduation rates) and close the achievement gap.
- To what extent have these efforts demonstrated positive results in terms of academic achievement (as demonstrated by data involving graduation rates, test scores, or other achievement indicators)?
 - Are some forms (extended day, extended year, Saturday) more effective than others?
 - Are there accompanying factors that increase effectiveness (such as a change in curriculum; teachers’ role in designing the extended time)?
 - Is time better spent on enrichment, traditional instruction, tutoring, or workplace skills?
 - Is extended learning time more or less effective in certain grades?
 - Is additional professional development advisable for teachers participating in extended learning time initiatives?
 - Should teachers be involved in the design and development of the extended instructional program?

- What obstacles have schools encountered in expanding learning time, and how have schools overcome them?

B.. Conduct original research or summarize and synthesize the findings from existing studies on the cost-effectiveness of extended learning time as a strategy to improve academic success (achievement and graduation rates) as compared to other approaches (such as class size reduction, targeted professional development, school restructuring, curriculum re-design, etc.).

While this RFP focuses primarily on the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of extended learning time, a secondary objective is to obtain descriptive data on existing efforts to extend learning time in California and other states. Researchers are invited to propose studies that compile such data, if feasible, in the course of pursuing either of the two main research objectives, A or B. For example:

- How many efforts are there and where? How are they initiated? Are they typically initiated by the state, school districts, charter schools?
- What form does the extended time take? Longer year? Longer instructional day? After school programs? Saturday school?
- In which grades is this occurring?
- What is the impetus for most of the efforts? Enrichment? Academic achievement?
- How are schools spending their additional time? On enrichment, tutoring, traditional instructional time, workplace skills?
- Are teachers typically involved in developing these efforts?

Expected Research Products and Timeline

1. Provide a progress report to the Faculty Research Fellows Program by September 1, 2009
2. Provide a draft report by November 1, 2009.
3. Provide a written report by December 1, 2009. The report should summarize the methods, data, analysis, and findings of the study, including and resulting policy considerations relevant to public school districts and/or the California legislature.
4. Present research findings to the Senate Office of Research by December 1, 2009.

Budget

\$13,500

Who May Apply

Faculty and staff at any California State University campus may submit proposals. Preference is given to principal investigators who are full-time faculty or staff. Part-time faculty may also apply. Part-time faculty and students can be included as secondary investigators and assistants.

How to Apply

Proposals are due **May 22, 2009**

Notification of award occurs on **May 29, 2009**

Proposals should be no longer than seven pages (excluding vitas and evidence of approval from applicant's campus office of research).

The proposal should include the following:

1. Introductory statement that demonstrates an understanding of the subject matter.
2. Description of researcher's(s') qualifications to perform the study. If available, please include evidence of successful and timely completion of projects for public sector clients.
3. Explanation of how the desired data will be gathered, analyzed, and reported.
4. A specific timeline for completing the project requirements in the allotted period.
5. A proposed budget that indicates the portion to be devoted to faculty time (including incidental expenses) and any need for non-incidental operating expenses.
6. Contact information for at least two references who could comment on the quality and timeliness of the principal researcher's work.
7. Telephone and e-mail address for principal researcher(s).
8. A resume or vita for each person funded under the project.
9. Evidence that the proposal has been approved by the principal investigator's campus office of research and sponsored programs.¹

Submit proposals by email to wleach@csus.edu, subject line: FRFP-0809-3

Questions about this RFP may be directed to:

Dr. William D. Leach, Program Director

[Faculty Research Fellows Program](#)

Center for California Studies

California State University, Sacramento

Sacramento, CA 95819-6081

wleach@csus.edu

(916) 278-5591

¹ Sign-off by the principal researcher's campus research office is required as is conformance with Chancellor's Office's Executive Order Number 890 (<http://www.calstate.edu/EO/EO-890.pdf>). Researcher(s)' salary, travel, and incidental expenses are usually paid through CSU, Sacramento. If researcher(s) desire the payment of travel and incidental expenses through the principal researcher's home campus, indirect cost can be paid on these items provided the total budget (including indirect cost) does not exceed \$13,500.