



## **COMMON DEFINITIONS**

**Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELOs)** ELO is emerging as the main term used to describe afterschool and summer learning programs. ELOS help improve outcomes for youth by providing expanded academic enrichment and engagement, leveraging community resources to offer instruction and experiential learning opportunities in core and other subjects. ELOS incorporate strategies such as hands-on learning, working in teams and problem solving to contribute to a well-rounded education. Services may be delivered through a variety of approaches, including afterschool, before school, summer and extended day, week or year programs. Partnerships between schools and community organizations are at the core of strong ELOs.

**Afterschool Program** Afterschool programs encompass academic, enrichment and recreational offerings—they can occur before school, after school and in the summer months. Afterschool programs are typically provided by licensed school age care programs, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, teen centers, community organizations and schools.

**21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC)** The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program is the only federal funding source dedicated exclusively to after-school programs. The No Child Left Behind Act transferred the administration of the grants from the U.S. Department of Education to the State Education Agencies.

**Citywide Systems (or Systems Building)** This term refers to the movement by communities and cities around the country in building systems that seek to make the most of public and private resources to provide accessible, high-quality, expanded learning opportunities for youth. These systems create an overarching city-level infrastructure for ELO programs and can minimize service duplication, streamline efforts and leverage community resources while increasing access to programming. Coordinated city/community wide systems require organizations in multiple sectors to collaborate—mayoral and school district support are critical components of successful citywide systems.

**Community-Based Organizations** Most often, the term “CBO” is referring to common after-school programming providers such as YMCAs or Boys & Girls Clubs, or even museums and libraries. However, a CBO can also be a local sports franchise, a law enforcement group, an arts council or even a fraternal organization such as the Rotary Club.

**Quality standards** Standards, or “common elements of quality”, promote consistency, enhance quality, and increase recognition. They define the principles and practices that lead to the delivery of quality programming for youth. Quality standards are a set of agreed upon benchmarks that research has shown as being essential to successful programs. They also serve as guides for continuous improvement and accountability.

**STEM** There is a growing movement to increase young people’s interest in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). STEM activities are meant to be more than just content—they are designed to motivate and excite youth so that they will be interested in pursuing STEM activities and eventually careers beyond the life of any one activity or program.

**21st Century Learning/Skills** The Framework for 21st Century Learning consists of core subjects and themes that revolve around three core skills: life and career skills, learning and innovation skills, information media and technology skills. These are the skills that students need in order to be successful in the 21st century. Principles of 21st Century skills include authentic learning, mental model building, internal motivation, multi-modal learning, social learning and international learning.