

NAZA Enhancement Partners ITP

Invitation To Participate™ Alignment Nashville Middle School Committee



**Ozzie of the Nashville Sounds with Brick Church student at TCAP University event
Date of release: May 16, 2012**

Project Overview

The Nashville After Zone Alliance (NAZA) provides MNPS middle school students with easily accessible, high-quality afterschool programs by strengthening and coordinating existing youth programs and community resources in a geographically-defined AfterZone or Z. NAZA reflects Mayor Karl Dean's commitment to increasing high school graduation rates. It also supports the *Middle School Committee*'s commitment to 'Creating a Culture of Kindness' within MNPS middle schools.

The NAZA sub-committee of the Middle School Committee is seeking proposals from community groups who wish to provide appealing and high-quality activities that enhance the academic, social/emotional, and/or physical growth of middle school students in support of these outcomes:

- Enrolled students regularly participate in their Z. program, as indicated by a minimum of 70% average daily attendance recorded for the program.
- Participating students agree/strongly agree that the program is fun, interesting, and challenging, as measured by the Youth Assets Survey.
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Services Request

The committee has identified the need for the following services in MNPS schools

The committee has identified the following categories of activities that will be needed:

1. Performing and/or visual arts (for example, arts and crafts, theatre arts, chorus, music, writing, storytelling)
2. Health, nutrition, cooking
3. Individual or team sports/fitness, traditional and non-traditional
4. Career exploration, workforce readiness, financial literacy
5. Life skills, like critical-thinking, decision-making, and goal-setting
6. Service learning
7. Academic supports, project-based learning aligned with state standards for the middle school years
8. Mentoring
9. Healthy relationships, resistance skills, violence prevention, and communications

However, entities may propose services outside of these listed categories, as long as they support the outcomes listed above.

Introduction

The **Middle School Committee**, established in 2004, identified a need to “create a culture of kindness” in the schools to help eliminate bullying from the school culture. It identified out-of-school time programs as a service that would address this need. Meanwhile, given research-based links between regular participation in high-quality afterschool activities and improvements in student educational outcomes, **Mayor Karl Dean** launched **NAZA** in spring 2010 with a pilot in the Northeast Zone, encompassing the geographic area of the **Maplewood** and **Stratford** clusters and managed by **Martha O’Bryan Center** as the **Coordinating Agency**. Six **Anchor Partners** (like **YMCA**, **Y-CAP**, **Village CAC**, and **Martha O’Bryan**) served 250 youth at 3 schools and 4 community-based sites. They engaged a few **Enhancement Partners** (like the **Village Cultural Arts Center**, **UT Extension Service**, teaching artists through **YMCA ArtEmbrace**, the **Nashville Public Library**, the **Frist Center**, **Metro Health Dept.**, **Oasis Bike Workshop**, and **Junior Achievement**) to provide enriching and appealing activities to supplement their core programming. Given the strong endorsement of these enhancements by the students in their **Youth Assets Survey** results, **AN** and **NAZA** propose to integrate these enhancements more formally into **NAZA** offerings, not only in the Northeast zone, but in the South Central Zone (**Glenclyff and Overton clusters**) and the Northwest Zone (**Pearl-Cohn and Whites Creek clusters**).

Committee Members

Amy Downey - Chair, **MNPS**
Lisa Beck, **YMCA of Middle Tennessee**
Judy Freudenthal, **Oasis Center**
Joanna Geller, **Vanderbilt HOD**
Beverly Goetzman, **MNPS** - Lead Family Involvement Specialist
Jeri Hasselbring, **Adventure Science Center**
Anne Henderson - Vice Chair, **Frist Center for the Visual Arts**
Audrey Holloman, **MNPS**
Anthony Johnson, **Alignment Nashville** - Associate Director Community Engagement
Morlunda Lattimore, **YWCA**
Candy Markman, **Mayor’s Afterschool Initiatives**
Marcy Melvin, **Centerstone**
Illia Moore, **Project for Neighborhood Aftercare**
Maury Nation, **Vanderbilt University**
Carol Nixon Edvantia
Juliana Ospina Faughnan, **Conexion Americas**
Denise Rollins, **MNPS**
Jim Williamson, **PENCIL Foundation**
Glen L. Biggs, **Alignment Nashville** - Associate Director
Sandra Harris, **PENCIL Foundation** - Art2STEM Program Manager

Goal Selected

We will provide all middle school students with safe and nurturing learning environments.

Strategy Selected

Create a “Culture of Kindness” in the schools that fosters safe and nurturing learning environments.

Tactic Designed by Committee

Enhance the safe and nurturing afterschool programs with appealing, high-quality activities offered by qualified community partners.

Project Explanation

General Description

The **Coordinating Agency** in each **NAZA** zone contracts with existing afterschool providers to act as **Anchor Partners** at middle schools or community-based sites within the zone. **Anchor Partners** commit to program for two hours after school, Monday through Thursday, for a 12-week session each semester. The **Z** operates on days when **MNPS** is in session. Additional activities may take place outside of this time framework, without **MNPS** transportation support.

The typical 2-hour program begins with 15 minutes for check-in and snack, followed by 45-60 minutes of tutoring, homework help, or project-based learning. The remaining time is devoted to enrichment activities delivered either by the anchor staff or an **Enhancement Partner**. Anchors offer these enrichments on different schedules; for example, one might offer a set of enrichments on Monday and Wednesday, and another set on Tuesday and Thursday, every week for 6 or 12 weeks; another might program one set of enrichments every day for several weeks and then switch. Some have more flexibility to adapt to the specific requirements of potential **Enhancement Partners** than others.

Anchor Partners are paid on a per-enrollee basis and are expected to negotiate with **Enhancement Partners** to offer enriching activities based on the interests of the enrolled students.

NAZA is intended to enhance middle school students' learning and development and to lay important foundations for sustaining quality youth programming in Nashville. **Anchor** and **Enhancement Partners** are expected to create and assess their offerings in accordance with the 5 principles of **Positive Youth Development** adopted by the **Nashville Youth Coalition**:

- 1) **Promote a Sense of Physical, Social and Emotional Safety.** Youth must feel as though the adults in this setting will protect them from any harm. They also must feel they are valued and accepted by the group.
- 2) **Encourage Relationship Building.** Young people need many supportive long-term relationships to help them navigate their adolescence. They need guidance from caring adults as well as emotional and practical support from their peers.
- 3) **Foster Meaningful Youth Participation.** Youth must have an active role, voice and choice in shaping their experiences. They must have the opportunity to practice and develop leadership skills, and they must know their contributions are valuable.
- 4) **Provide Opportunities for Building Purpose.** Young people must live purposefully and contribute in meaningful ways. Creating opportunities for youth to become involved in the community and for community members to interact with youth is a powerful way to foster a sense of purpose and develop positive values.
- 5) **Engage Youth in Learning Experiences that Build Valuable and Healthy Life Skills.** Young people need opportunities for experiential learning that will help them build skills needed to succeed in every area of life. In addition, **NAZA** has adopted a set of Standards and Indicators of Program Quality, developed by a cross-section of local youth-serving agencies. Providers of enriching activities must reflect to the following sub-set of those indicators in order to be eligible to be a **NAZA Enhancement Partner**:

- Staff, volunteers, and other program partners are cooperative, collegial, and respectful of each other, providing role models of positive adult relationships.
- Programming and activities facilitate positive and respectful relationships, peer-to-peer and adult-to-youth.

- Programming and activities are responsive to the developmental and physical needs, as well as the learning styles, of the age groups being served.
- There are enough materials for the number of youth in the program, as appropriate.
- Materials are age- and culturally-appropriate, accessible to all youth, and used appropriately.
- Staff and volunteers are well prepared to lead programming and activities.
- Staff use youth-centered approaches to guide behavior, re-frame conflict and promote inclusive relationships.
- Programming and activities accommodate youth with special needs and encourage their active participation.
- Youth have opportunities to reflect on their learning and its application.
- Youth actively participate in activities and are working toward a product or goal.

NAZA has developed a process for helping providers incorporate the principles and standards into their programming. Standardized assessment tools are available, along with a menu of professional development and training opportunities. This professional learning community is open to all **Enhancement Partners**, and they are particularly encouraged to attend the Intro to **Positive Youth Development** workshop, which is offered regularly. In addition **Enhancement Partners** are asked to attend the **NAZA Enhancement Partner Fair**, scheduled in early August, a “meet and greet” with the **Anchor Partners**. They may be asked to participate in recruitment activities at the schools. They are also asked to give feedback either by survey or at a “debriefing” session on their experiences in **NAZA**.

Target Population

Middle school students attending the **MNPS** schools and residing within the boundaries of the geographically-defined **NAZA** zone.

Needed Information from Community Service Providers

The sub-committee is looking for partners committed to principles of **Positive Youth Development** who can provide one or more of the following categories of activities on school days in the late afternoon:

1. Performing and/or visual arts (for example, arts and crafts, theatre arts, chorus, music, writing or storytelling)
2. Health, nutrition, or cooking
3. Individual or team sports/fitness, traditional and non-traditional
4. Career exploration, workforce readiness, or financial literacy
- 5 Life skills, like critical-thinking, decision-making, and goal-setting
6. Service learning
7. Academic supports or project-based learning aligned with state standards for the middle school years
8. Mentoring
9. Healthy relationships, resistance skills, violence prevention, and communications

However, entities may propose services outside of these listed categories, as long as they support the outcomes listed above.

Expected Dates of Implementation

NAZA operates for 12 weeks each semester. For the 2012-13 school year, for example, programming begins September 4 and ends April 18. Students have an opportunity to showcase their accomplishments at a year-end event scheduled for April 20.

Expected Outcomes

Ultimately the **NAZA** sub-committee seeks to improve academic and developmental outcomes for middle school students and to support the **Middle School Committee** in creating a culture of kindness. In support of those goals, **NAZA** expects the following outcomes for each **NAZA**-affiliated program site:

- Enrolled students regularly participate in their **Z.** program, as indicated by a minimum of 70% average daily attendance recorded for the program.
- At least 90% of participating students agree/strongly agree that the program is fun, interesting, and challenging, as measured by the **Youth Assets Survey**.

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Assessment Strategies

1. Students are enrolled in **NAZA** via the **MNPS Chancery** database. **Anchor Partners** record and report attendance on the daily basis. Average daily attendance is a function of the number of students attending vs the number enrolled.

2. The **Youth Assets Survey**, developed by **Search Institute** and the **YMCA of the USA**, is administered to **NAZA** participants each spring near the end of the school year. It is one of the standardized assessment tools used by all **Anchor Partners**. There are items specifically related to student perceptions of the program as fun, interesting, and challenging.

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