

**MAJOR FINDINGS:
YEAR THREE EVALUATION OF PUBLIC ACHIEVEMENT
2001-2002**

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I. INTRODUCTION

This draft report builds upon what we have learned over the past three years of program evaluation of Public Achievement (PA).¹ While in previous years we had specific research foci (students, coaches, sites), this year we worked with regional staff to identify and evaluate their specific concerns. We therefore visited a range of sites—new, innovative, struggling, etc.—and the result is a set of findings that contains several topics. We also worked with staff to build capacity to do their own evaluation and on how to utilize our findings and recommendations.

This year we visited sites in Greater Kansas City, Minnesota, and Milwaukee. We did in-depth individual and group interviews with youth (98), coaches (64), principals (5), site coordinators (7), coach coordinators (5), teachers (12), Public Achievement staff (7), and others (2). We also observed Public Achievement in action.

We asked everyone to reflect on both “how Public Achievement is working at their site” and “what PA means to them in their lives, at school, at home, in the community, etc.” Our goal was to listen—to the stories, accounts, and descriptions of Public Achievement. From these talks, we looked for patterns, themes, and issues within and across sites, and it is some of these that we include.

This report is not exhaustive of what is going on at all sites or at any one site. Everything is place, time, and person bound, and we don’t generalize to all of PA. Rather our goal is to report what we saw and heard, and not to judge, conclude, or create expectations of “success” or “failure.” This report is intended to invite conversations on the deeper purposes and meanings of PA so as to make it a stronger and more meaningful experience for the participants, for their schools or organizations and for their larger communities.

¹ Persons new to Public Achievement should read the Year 1 and Year 2 evaluation reports.

How to read this report

This report is divided into five sections. The Executive Summary contains our major finding and recommendation for a more comprehensive and cooperative approach to program development. The next section provides detailed findings and recommendations for each element of the major finding. Sections Four and Five presents significant findings and recommendations for select PA roles and sites.

We have limited our recommendations for each section, leaving “blank” the final recommendation in each section as a way to encourage you to come up with your own recommendation based on these findings and on your unique experience with PA.

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This year our major recommendation is an imperative: **the need for a more comprehensive and cooperative approach to site program development.** We base this recommendation on our conclusion that Public Achievement is more effective for its participants and hosts when:

- A. PA is organized in such a way that reflection, evaluation, planning, and action are integrated, basic, and carried out regularly;
- B. Ongoing training is provided for all PA personnel (coach coordinators, coaches, site coordinator, regional staff) clarifying roles and mastering necessary skills;
- C. Structural constraints (e.g. time, organizational structures, and culture) are recognized, defined, and responded to;
- D. The connection between PA and a school or site's own mission and work is recognized and connected in ways that are transparent (especially, how PA fits with school district and state standards of student learning);
- E. All this work (A-D) should be done in conversation with and complementary to PA as a whole. This means integrating all of this into regional and national accountability, training, technical assistance, and support structures.

Each of these points is important and a necessary component of a fully flourishing PA site, but **each alone is insufficient.** Part of the recommendation calls for integration of these components.

We have seen how intentional planning and evaluation leads to site improvement. Intentional planning and evaluation strengthens and formalizes the critical relationship between the site coordinator and coach coordinator by clarifying roles, establishing clear communication, and setting goals. This process can go a long way towards preventing crisis as well as providing a framework to deal with emergent crisis. With planning and evaluation, people are more attuned to, can identify and can develop effective ways of responding to structural constraints. However, this work takes some skill and practice.

Many people we talked to called for more and better training. This means establishing regular and systematic training for all major roles. While systematic training can definitely help individuals carry out their roles and can deal with structural constraints, it cannot change systems (you train people, not systems). For example, you cannot train individual site coordinators to change their job description to free up time to do PA. Such system change must be part of a coordinated effort with principals, PA staff, school districts and possibly outside funding agencies. Currently PA does not work at district or state levels, with curriculum, and does limited work with education schools.

Many teachers and site coordinators asked for ways to link PA with their school's mission as well as with district and state standards of learning. This lack of connection is an important structural constraint. Often, PA is seen as a program or add-on that takes time away from the "core work of the school." Making these connections transparent allows schools to recognize how PA "fits with" and enhances the core work of schools.²

In sum, this calls for **coordinated work**— within school sites, between sites, with regional staff and with districts. Coordinating this mutual work is the responsibility of regional and national staffs and should be formalized as part of regional and national accountability structures. This starts at the level of the site where, creating a work plan with goals and evaluative measures allows a site to hold itself accountable. This coordination also provides an accountability mechanism at the regional level. Sites let regional staff know what they are doing and can be clear about what forms of training and technical assistance they need. Regional and national staff³ should then be held accountable to provide the necessary training and technical assistance. It is important to note that sites and regions cannot be held accountable for program outcomes without appropriate training.

² This idea also applies non-school and after school sites where PA is combined with existing youth programs (like the Girl Scouts or YWCA).

³ There is confusion among participants and some regional staff about what is the "national staff" or "national office" and their relationship to the Center for Democracy and Citizenship.

However, there are many structural constraints that will not likely change regardless of individual planning, evaluation and training. To respond to these, calls for coordinated work among sites with regional and national staff workings together to devise strategies, marshal resources, and take action. Without such a response, PA is unlikely to be effective for participants and hosts.

III. DETAILS FOR MAJOR FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

A. Planning, Communication, Action, and Evaluation

“Things went really well this year. It was a big improvement from last year.”
-PA Site Coordinator

Findings:

1. *This year saw how intentional planning and evaluation made a difference at several sites in the quality of PA.* Some sites still do not do necessary planning and evaluation. Many of those who do take advantage of the June conference or the summer months to do this work. During the school year, most site teams have difficulty finding time to plan and evaluate.
2. Intentional planning and evaluation prevented “regular” crises and fires. At the most basic level, we saw significant improvement in the work of PA by sites that evaluated problems, assessed what was possible given local conditions, and devised and implemented new approaches and practices. Planning and evaluation allowed for more effective communication between coach and site coordinators.
3. Equally important, mid-year evaluation provided a way for struggling sites to re-think and change how they did PA. These evaluations helped both site and coach coordinators to agree on roles, responsibilities, and outcomes. This mid-year work created the conditions for a substantive end of year evaluation where both site coordinator and coach coordinator could assess outcomes and make informed judgments as to whether to continue working together.

Recommendations:

1. We recommend that **all site teams meet regularly for ongoing reflection, planning and evaluation.** Time must be made available for this during the school year. This work should be done in consultation with regional staff. This

process should be formalized in order to clearly define roles and responsibilities, set goals and develop ways to evaluate whether goals have been met. Greater Kansas City PA's compact and evaluation tools are good **instruments** for this. The challenge is to insure that they are useful and used.

2. We recommend that **dedicated resources be secured from school, PA, or external sources for site coordinators to be given sufficient time to do ongoing planning and evaluation** (in addition to basic program maintenance). This could take the form of revising job descriptions, paying for substitutes, hiring new personnel, using volunteers, or dedicating an administrative fiscal augmentation, etc.

3. _____

B. Training

“Does PA offer any training on how to be a site coordinator?”
-PA Site Coordinator

Findings:

Last year we recommended that training should to be given to site coordinators and coach coordinators, while also refining and systematizing coach training. This has not been done at the national level. A consistent request from site coordinators, coach coordinators, teachers, coaches and regional staff was that they would like (better) training and more time for reflection on the work, and ways they might work together. Currently, PA focuses primarily on coach training.⁴ Training for other PA roles happens ad hoc, often by individual consultants. The result is inconsistent messages about the different PA roles

⁴ Our findings from last year on coach training still hold that “there are different styles and methods for the orientation, training, and on-going support of coaches across sites” and that “there is little evidence of systematic sharing of best practices for coach coordinators across sites.”

and about how to train people to carry these out. Greater Kansas City Public Achievement's quarterly meetings for all Site Teams are training opportunities, and a good start. However these meetings are designed to cover many topics besides training.

Recommendations:

1. We recommend that **regular (at least yearly) training opportunities be made available to all of the major roles in PA (including training of trainers)**. Regular training should be carried out at the regional and national levels and should be part of regional and national accountability, including evaluation.
2. Before instituting such training, **national PA should convene a group of practitioners from all regions to deliberate and decide on role clarity and core training** for coaches, coach coordinators, site coordinators, and possibly faculty and principals. In addition there should be a menu of training options for sites to tailor to their particular contexts and support should be give to co-create alternative training curricula, pedagogy, and practices.
3. We recommend that **youth take an active role in at least the training of coaches (and possibly teachers)**.
4. _____

C. Structural Barriers to PA in Schools

"I never have enough time to do the work I need to improve PA." -PA Site Coordinator

Findings:

There are structural constraints in schools that make PA difficult to carry out, sustain and deepen over time (see last year's report for a detailed account of structural constraints). Again this year we saw the structural constraints (organization, practices, culture, etc.) that contribute to creating fires or crises at sites and among regions. We heard how these crises occur and how certain sites worked intentionally to change them.

1. PA seems to continually create crises or fires (i.e. conflict of schedules, restricted time and space) This is expected for several reasons:
 - a. PA involves coordinating three distinct groups of people— students, coaches, and teachers, each with their own calendars and schedules. The logistical work needed to coordinate these three sets of players requires significant time, willingness, and clear communication among participants. There is inherent potential for things to go wrong given this complex arrangement.
 - b. School organization, practices, and culture all create “crises” in how PA fits into the school and is carried out in practice. PA challenges regular school scheduling since students are beyond the regular supervision of teachers, move to different places within the building, work in difficult spaces (hallways, cafeteria, auditorium), etc.
 - c. Site Coordinators often do PA in addition to full time responsibilities and with limited resources. This means that they have little time to attend to PA, and “fires”—everyday problems—require much of their time. Through Public Achievement’s expansion into non-school sites, we have seen how it operates under different organizational, cultural and other, constraints. One major difference is that the site and/or coach coordinator roles at many non-school sites was included as part of their regular job

description.

- d. Regional staff spend considerable time responding to crises, e.g. coach coordinating, site coordinating, substitute coaching, driving people to events, etc. They hold themselves responsible for making PA work at each site everyday and therefore stand ready to and try to actually take over at sites when “things fall apart.”

Recommendations:

1. We recommend that **sites continue to formalize planning and evaluation as a regular part of what sites do**. This could provide a framework for dealing with emergent crises by clarifying site and other roles and responsibilities and could offer a way for sites to set local outcomes and assess their performance.
2. We recommend that **National PA co-create with regions and sites clear guidelines for all major PA roles**. Again, this will help delineate who is responsible for emergent crises. This will also help integrate these responsibilities (or a realistic assessment of these responsibilities) into the position descriptions of participants at each school site.
3. We recommend that **regional staffs and sites take an inventory of “crises” in schools in order to create a list of “expected problems” and possible strategies**. We further recommend that site teams and Public Achievement staff make an inventory of the organizational, cultural, managerial, and time constraints that shape and have consequence for Public Achievement at their site. Technical assistance from national and regional offices should be provided to help site teams determine which constraints are reasonable, possible, and practicable to take on.
4. _____

D. There is a Lack of Clarity About How Public Achievement Enhances Schools' Efforts to Meet Required and Recommended Local, State, and National Standards of Student Learning

"I am giving up 17 class periods for Public Achievement, how do I know my kids are getting something out of it?"

-Teacher

Findings:

Schools today are under increasing pressure to meet state and school district performance mandates. Many teachers struggle to find the connections between PA and their school's curriculum, and without such, they find it difficult to justify the amount of time students participate in PA. Yet teachers continue to support PA because they understand the pedagogic and personal benefits for students and themselves. Young people consistently demonstrated to us the breath and depth of their learning, including knowledge (e.g. about their focal issue, issues in their communities, how power operates), skills (e.g. plan projects, work in a group, write letters, talk with adults) and greater self-confidence and efficacy (e.g. "I can speak my mind," "I can do things"). Typically, this learning is not documented in PA and therefore the faculty (especially those not directly involved) may not recognize it. Students indicated that they would like to be recognized both for their work and learning resulting from their PA participation.

Recommendations:

1. We recommend that **the national office make explicit PA pedagogy and learning outcomes**. PA should be put into conversation with experiential education (service-learning, action learning). Clarifying the similarities and differences between and among these and PA is one way that teachers may understand Public Achievement and come to see it as a legitimate and effective approach to teaching and learning. The following actions could be taken:

- X National and regional offices make available to sites national,⁵ state, and district learning outcomes that PA is well designed to meet.
- X From these, individual schools can specify learning outcomes for their school.
- X Each school can then engage PA coach coordinators and coaches to name and document these. This will ensure the academic relevance of PA.⁶

2. To prevent PA from becoming simply another “program,” curriculum or service experience, we recommend **regional and national offices develop and conduct school in-services for teachers and staff on the Public Achievement pedagogy**. In-service should include the ways PA can enhance a school’s current curriculum and meet the district and state learning outcomes. In addition, such meetings will give faculty an idea of how PA works and what to expect from coaches and students. Importantly, such meeting could facilitate the integration of PA into the larger ethos, practices, and life of the school.

3. _____

⁵ A national standard of student learning such as SCANS: Secretary’s Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills can serve as a guide to developing PA standards of student learning.

⁶ A cautionary note: we need to be careful not to make PA “like school.” These standards should be used as an evaluation tool not as a requirement or grade.

IV. MAJOR FINDINGS: ROLES

There are many roles in Public Achievement– youth team member, coach, coach coordinator, site coordinator and the like. These roles are constituted by expectations (how the role should be carried out), practices (how this role is carried out), evaluation (was the role carried out well or poorly), the particular context of the work (site), the structural position of the role within the site, and the personality of the individual taking on the role.

A. Youth

As before, the youth we interviewed and observed this year again taught us how Public Achievement can be a profound experience for them. PA remains a place and time where young people can accomplish meaningful work while enriching their understanding of self, others, family, school, community, and becoming more knowledgeable, skillful, and changing how other adults and young people see them.

Findings:

1. Interviews with young people highlighted Public Achievement as a protected space where young people experience themselves as free to express their ideas, and not be “put-down” by other young people.

“In PA you get to be yourself and speak your mind. Even if your friends have other opinions it doesn’t mean yours is wrong.”

“It is the idea itself that counts not who said it.”
2. PA is a chance for young people to show their school and community that they can accomplish real goals. Young people told us that they are often viewed as “problems” and sources of concern. Young people understood their involvement in PA as a way to illustrate how they can make a difference to their school, community, family and the larger world.
3. Young people continue to tell us that PA projects are important. The opportunity to work on and accomplish a meaningful project makes the PA experience

unique in contrast to most of school. Youth recognized that when adults did too much work and/or created projects for them the project was no longer theirs. To them, having ownership means they do it themselves, with adult support, whether or not they complete the work. “Success” does not necessarily mean finishing the work. Not finishing too has learning value. This is a tension for adults who don’t want to let kids “fail” (i.e. not complete the project).

- “In PA you get to set your own goals and it is ok to mess up.”
- The high point of PA was “finishing the projects” and that everyone participated in some way.
- “My group really wants to get something done.”

4. Few youth we interviewed had mastery over PA’s core concepts. Those that did could use concepts to reflect on their work and had a more sophisticated interpretation of the work, world and themselves. PA core concepts provide a meaningful frame for reflection. When used as such, young people developed a deeper understanding of their PA experience and what they learned by participating in PA.

5. Youth continue to say how important it is for them to have good coaches. According to youth, good coaches are not “too nice” (so kids can’t take advantage of them), need to listen and to care about the group and the group’s project and come regularly and on-time throughout the whole year. Youth want to work with coaches but not have the coaches do the work for them.

“We want coaches to help and to participate.”

6. Young people told us that they do not always get recognized by the school, PA staff (site and regional), and other students for the PA work that they accomplished. They want to be noticed and recognized for what they accomplish in Public Achievement.

“Shouldn’t we get an award for doing something?”

B. Coaching

Last year's evaluation focused on coaches. This year, most of those findings were confirmed. What follows highlights several problems that we saw this year and gives attention to several coaching innovations.

Findings:

1. Coach commitment and consistency is crucial. Commitment means both consistent attendance (youth were angry at coaches who missed any sessions) and caring about the group and the group's project (coaches were excited about being there, working with this group on this issue). At several sites there were serious problems when coaches missed numerous sessions. There were also problems at sites with co-coaches, where not **all** coaches attended every session. This year reinforced previous findings when PA participants told us that they want coaches to come to every PA session and to engage in the project with them. For them, this is a "good" coach.
2. Coach orientation is crucial. At several sites, coaches were not given full information about PA or proper training on how to do PA. The coaches' anger over how they were introduced to PA spilled over into their work with students, resulting in poor practice and anger by both coaches and youth.
3. There is still an absence of meaningful reflection. There was the lack of guided reflection with fellow coaches and with youth. Where coach coordinators concentrated on PA reflection (MCTC, Girl's Project, Wyandotte Neighborhood Corps) their coaches were far better able to articulate the deeper meanings of coaching for themselves and for the group.

Coaching Innovations

1. Coaches participate in PA before taking on the coaching role. At MCTC, coaches participated in their own issue groups before beginning coaching. These coaches had a much better understanding of PA and PA practices. Nonetheless, even many of these coaches felt heightened frustrations coaching their own groups because they had experienced what PA could be. Many

struggled with expectations about what makes a “successful” group and “successful” coaching, in contrast to coaches without prior PA involvement, who simply tried to do their best.

2. Self-coached groups. Hartford University School introduced the innovation that PA is carried out four days per week. The first semester coaches met with PA groups twice per week, and young people worked by themselves the other two. Due to an administrative error, there were no coaches during the spring semester. Youth groups accomplished significant projects based on considerable research *without coaches*. Observed groups ran their own meetings effectively, were engaged and on-task.

However, young people stated that they wanted adults to know what they were doing and could use more adult help at times. They also had problems with intra-group conflicts. These youth also had not reflected on their own learning—about skills, themselves and the world. This finding points to the need to have some kind of coach role to attend to group dynamics, reflection and evaluation.

3. Parent coaches. PA was included as part of a St. Stephen’s Church (MN) faith formation program with parents as coaches. These particular parents proved to be capable coaches with sophisticated understandings of their role. Young people accepted them, while suggesting that they could have made more progress and had a different type of experience with non-parent coaches.

Recommendations:

1. We recommend that **PA continue experimenting with innovative approaches to coaching**. These efforts should be carefully evaluated and considered before being diffused throughout the PA network.
2. We recommend that **youth take an active role in at least the training of coaches (and possibly teachers)**.
3. _____

C. Site Coordinators

Findings:

1. We heard (again) the difficulties of being a site coordinator, and how these difficulties are magnified when the site coordinator is also a teacher. All the site coordinators we met were working hard for PA at their site. Several reported feeling “tired” or “burned out.” This confirmed last year’s finding concerning how role tensions and other structural (organizational, cultural, etc.) constraints contribute to burn out.
2. Many site coordinators want to involve others in their school, but find this difficult. They are in a double-bind– the structural constraints of schools make it difficult to involve others **and** it is difficult to address structural constraints without involving others. John F. Kennedy Elementary uses a team approach that allows for coverage so that one site coordinator is available for de-briefings, meetings, etc.

Recommendations:

1. We recommend that **dedicated resources be secured from school, PA, or external sources for site coordinators to be given sufficient time to do ongoing planning and evaluation (in addition to basic program maintenance)**. This could take the form of revising job descriptions, paying for substitutes, hiring new personnel, using volunteers, or dedicating an administrative fiscal augmentation, etc.
2. We recommend that **PA investigate the ways in which PA contributes to and may help prevent site coordinator “burn out.”**
3. _____

D. Principals

Findings:

1. As is well known and obvious, principals play a crucial role sustaining Public Achievement. They determine if PA will continue in their school and how much assistance the school will provide to make PA viable and successful. Principals have more power over structural constraints such as schedule (time), job descriptions, space, etc.
2. This year, we heard three primary reasons why principals come to support PA: it fits with their overall educational philosophy for the school, their goals for their school, and/or the student participants convince the principals and faculty by their PA work.
3. The national evaluators have often facilitated the first meeting between a principal and the regional staff, due to local priorities and time constraints (crises, staffing). Principals can too easily grasp PA as a “program,” curriculum or service, thus missing its profound invitation to the school and its people—young and adult, as well as to its pedagogy, practices, and curriculum.

Recommendations:

1. We recommend that **regional staff should meet regularly to work with all local principals** so that PA is seen as a way to carry out the school’s mission, goals, and principal’s educational philosophy. This could take the form of regular regional “PA principal meetings.”
2. PA must be presented as **a unique educational initiative being deeply rooted in necessary civic engagement**, and it is precisely this which certain principals (and faculty) can choose to use as an engine to school enhancement.
3. _____

E. Teachers (Involved in PA but not the site Coordinator)

Findings:

1. Faculty told us that they noticed differences in young people who participate in PA. These young people are recognized as being more respectful of other students and faculty and responsible citizens of the school. At one school, a teacher was surprised at how well the PA students organized their project work. “The teachers did not have to participate in organizing” at all. At another school, teachers attributed to PA participation students’ improved group work skills, public speaking, and planning.
2. Teachers saw that young people involved in work “real” to them really matters and shows in enhanced student performance in PA and sometimes in other school work. Teachers see the potential of PA, but some still question how to this potential can be realized within the structural constraints of schools and school curriculum goals.
3. There are many teachers who may not be formally or officially involved, but have PA taking place in their classrooms. There was confusion as to when and how these teachers should be part of what goes on during PA. Many believed that they should “intervene” only to “discipline.” Others took a more active role, facilitating the group process and/or helping to answer student’s questions.

Recommendations:

1. To prevent PA from becoming simply another “program,” curriculum or service project, we recommend **regional and national offices develop and conduct school in-services for teachers and staff on the Public Achievement pedagogy**. In-service should include the ways PA can enhance a school’s current curriculum and meet the district and state learning outcomes. In addition, such meetings will give faculty an idea of how PA works and thus what to expect from coaches and students. Importantly, such meeting could facilitate the integration of PA into the larger ethos, practices, and life of the school.
2. Site coordinators and regional staff should work with these teachers to clarify

their role and what it means to be “teacher” in a non-teaching PA moment in their classroom.

3. _____

F. Rest of School Staff

Findings:

1. Some teachers not directly involved in PA express a willingness to be more involved in PA but often do not know how to get involved.
2. There is little integration and connection to PA for those teachers not directly involved. Some non-involved teachers had difficulty seeing the educational and personal benefits of PA for young people, and for school staff. They liked that kids were “doing projects,” but did not see how the PA process as such was educational. In fact, some saw the process as “wasted time.”
3. At one school, a teacher reported that PA changed how a school is socially organized. She mentioned that PA helped break down traditional social groupings in the school, especially between older and younger students (i.e. between grade levels).

Recommendations:

1. We recommend that site teams in coordination with regional offices develop strategies to include more teachers in PA (e.g. supplementary curriculum, teacher in-service, inviting teachers to celebrations, etc.).
2. _____

V. MAJOR FINDINGS: SITES

A. School Sites

Findings:

1. Sites are variable in their effective implementation of PA. Implementation varied by school size, age of PA at the site, staff experience, etc.
2. Planning and evaluation made a real difference in improving PA at several sites. We saw how one school improved the entire PA effort within the school (e.g. involving greater number of teachers, improved communication) and with the coaching pool (consistent attendance and better attitude).
3. Sites struggle to integrate PA into the school's ethos, organization, practices, and efforts.
4. Some sites intentionally changing of structural constraints. At Hartford University School in Milwaukee, the principal gave teachers power to determine the school schedule. The teachers created a schedule in which PA was an option during "Challenge Time" where students participated in PA four days a week (with coaches and on their own). The result was greater quantity and quality of projects (see page 16 above).

Recommendations:

1. We recommend that all sites participate in planning and evaluation. This is obvious, yet basic and requires some training and repetition.
2. We recommend that conversations take place and strategies be devised on how to further integrate PA more fully into school's ethos, organization, practices, and ethos. Possible strategies include:
 - X Create skill assessment tool that can document how PA can meet academic requirements. Have coaches evaluate mastery of skills with students. By the end of the year, students should have a

portfolio of skills masters, projects accomplished, lessons learned. Share this information with faculty.

- X Conduct in-service to introduce PA to entire school staff. Make sure to include pedagogic principles (including skills, knowledge and attitude outcomes) as well as what to expect from coaches, young people in how PA is carried out.
- X Invite faculty and staff to PA presentations and events.
- X Have students present their PA work to classrooms.

3. _____

B. Non-school and After-school Sites

This year Public Achievement expanded into its efforts to a variety of non-school and/or after-school sites. From a programmatic perspective, this is important as a way to diversify how PA is practiced. From an evaluative standpoint, this discloses how PA operates in different contexts and conditions. Non-school PA sites included integrating PA into already existing youth programming such as Girl Scouts or a church's faith formation work. After-school sites were either independent "stand-alone" components of after-school programs or were integrated into already existing after school youth programs (YWCA).

Findings:

1. One major difference between school and non-school sites is that PA roles site and/or coach coordinator at many non and after-school sites were included in regular job descriptions and not to be done in addition to full time responsibilities.
2. A second difference was that time was organized in different ways and this effected how PA was done. Some non-school sites had more than an hour to do PA work and others were not on typical academic schedules of "class period" or "school year." Unlike many students and coaches in school sites, participants in non-school sites did not assume projects needed to be completed within a school year. Non-school site participants told us that "this [project] may take many

years, and we are willing to work on it.” The Girl’s Discovery Leadership project spent the fall semester on group and individual leadership development before starting PA activities. This helped young people see themselves as “leaders” and helped them become a cohesive group. This creating the conditions for a much smoother PA project (in terms of teamwork, accountability, action and learning).

3. Integrating PA into existing agency work was here too a challenge. This requires significant discussion time before as well as on-going reflection on how different PA might be integrated into different after-school programs. These challenges are magnified when PA (non-curricular) is grafted onto curricular programs.
4. Regular attendance by young people was a problem at several non-school and after-school sites, adversely affecting PA.

Recommendations:

1. We recommend that PA continue to expand into non-school and after-school sites. PA should pay close attention to how these efforts evolve, cataloging difficulties as well as opportunities, and requiring intentional external evaluation.
2. _____

C. Evaluation Utilization

Over the last three years, the national Public Achievement office sponsored ongoing national evaluation efforts. In this time, these evaluations have produced findings and recommendations. While these reports have been used at the site level, especially during and after visits by the national evaluators, there is little evidence that evaluation use is wide-spread on all levels or indeed organizationally supported. Without a utilization plan we expect evaluation reports to remain largely unused.

Findings:

1. At local and regional levels, evaluation use is effectively facilitated by the national evaluators, according to participants.
2. At a national level, there are almost no organizational structures or systematic efforts to support the discussion, dissemination, and utilization of evaluation findings and recommendations.
3. PA accountability in the form of evaluation reports to funders and by local sites to their constituents and managers remains underdeveloped.

Recommendations:

1. We recommend national PA work with evaluators to create a utilization plan for PA evaluation work. This plan should focus on ways the last three evaluation reports can be used at national, regional, and local levels.
2. We recommend the continuation of ongoing evaluation visits by a national level group knowledgeable about PA. Currently, visits by the evaluators team is the only formal way PA practitioners learn how to use evaluation in their everyday work. And hence the value of evaluation to enhance PA effectiveness for young people, staff and sites.
3. _____