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Tocorra Johnson, Senior Director of Program Operations; and school partner, Gail Huffstutler, Principal of East Ridge Elementary School

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Vicki Connely, Executive Director

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I. INTRODUCTION

“Partnering with schools is an incredible way to deliver cost-effective, high-impact programming and to reach more kids. It’s one of the best moves our affiliate has made.”

Amy Dillon, Girls Inc. of Shelbyville

Why Partner with Schools?

For many years, center-based programming was the primary service delivery model across the Girls Inc. network. Programming delivered through school partnerships was generally categorized as ‘outreach,’ one-off or lower-dosage efforts that served to introduce Girls Inc. to the wider community and draw more girls to centers. Over time, a number of affiliates, particularly those in larger cities with very high real estate costs, pioneered the delivery of the Girls Inc. Experience with high-dosage, high-quality Girls Inc. programming in schools, both during and outside of the school day. As the school-based service delivery model took root at more and more affiliates, several major advantages became clear:

- **Reaching More Girls from Low-Income Communities:** by partnering with the schools they attend, delivering programs in schools is the most effective way to reach the girls who need us most. The flexibility of this model also allows affiliates to respond quickly to shifts in population and demographics.

- **Economics:** While the model of serving girls in a Girls Inc. center is economically viable, expansion through the opening of multiple centers generally is not. The costs of obtaining and maintaining additional real estate, and the corresponding increases in transportation and insurance expenses, quickly mitigate any additional fundraising opportunities that arise from opening a center in a new location. The primary cost of delivering programming in schools is staffing, meaning that more of every dollar raised can go directly to serving girls.

- **Ecosystem:** Being a part of Girls Inc. can transform a girl’s life for the better, but Girls Inc. programming doesn’t exist in a vacuum. Contact and coordination with the teachers, guidance counselors, and others who see a girl every day can provide a clearer understanding of what she needs and multiply the impact of Girls Inc.

Today, nearly 80% of affiliates have at least one school partnership, and many deliver the Girls Inc. Experience exclusively in school settings. While affiliates have also partnered with, or operated under, other types of organizations, including YWCAs or community centers, no other type of partnership has seen the success and opportunity for expansion that schools have demonstrated. Along with a focus on serving girls from low-income communities, the current, network-wide Strategic Plan has a primary goal of growth through school partnerships.

Why This Guide?

While the trend towards partnering with schools has been evident for some time, guidance from Girls Inc. National has been limited, and the burden of figuring out how to make school partnerships work has fallen squarely on affiliates. There was a clear need to survey how things were done across the network, to study and identify the ways the most effective affiliates succeeded in creating and maintaining great partnerships, and to codify findings and report back to all.
For those planning to partner with schools for the first time, this Guide will provide a solid overview of everything needed to get started in researching, negotiating, staffing and funding effective partnerships. This Guide was written with experienced affiliates in mind as well. Through research and talking to many affiliate and school staff, a wide variety of practices and different, creative solutions to the many challenges that arise in the course of delivering effective school-based programming emerged. Whether in one school or 50, there are lessons every affiliate can take away from the experience shared by peers.

**Methodology**

In creating the *School Partnerships Guide*, it was important to 1) understand the current state of partnerships across the network; 2) tap into the experience and knowledge of affiliate staff who have been creating and delivering successful partnerships for years; 3) learn more about what makes partnerships work for the schools themselves by hearing directly from principals, after-school coordinators, and others who make these partnerships possible; and 4) get a sense of how other out of school time organizations approach partnering with schools. Following are the steps in the process:

1. Convened a cross-functional team tasked with developing the guide, including staff from Learning Central, Research and Evaluation, and Development.

2. Compiled and studied information from the Annual Survey to understand the number and size of partnerships and basics about how they function, as well as how the network has grown through the school partnership model.

3. Created a School Partnerships Survey, completed by 36 affiliates, to supplement the information captured by the Annual Survey and to provide a clearer picture of grade levels served, spaces utilized, key relationships, successes, and challenges.

4. Conducted two School Partnerships workshops at Annual Conference, attended by affiliate staff, which allowed affiliates to participate in and record discussions of successful strategies employed and challenges faced in working with schools.

5. Held a strategy workshop with a broader group of National Staff.

6. Compiled and analyzed data on how other organizations approach school partnerships, including Communities in Schools, 4-H, and an in-depth interview with Playworks, as well as a review of literature on out of school time/school partnerships by Child Trends, the Wallace Foundation and others.

7. Conducted in-person Case Study Interviews with 12 affiliates and their school partners, across all four regions, in communities ranging from small towns to large cities, and covering a wide variety of demographics. Interviewees included affiliate executives, Program Directors, and Outreach Coordinators, school principals, after school coordinators and district officials.

What emerged were a number of core principles and best practices that lead affiliates to success. No “one size fits all” model exists for partnering effectively. There are considerable differences between large and small communities and great variation in the ways different school systems operate. Affiliates have created a variety of effective approaches to researching local schools, getting in the door, and cultivating effective, long-term relationships with key personnel.
There are a few areas, where pressure to compromise is common, that warrant highlighting:

- **Space.** Creating a safe, girls-only, pro-girl space is more challenging away from a center. Flexibility is a virtue in developing partnerships, but not every space can be made suitable. The section on *Negotiating Partnership Terms and Responsibilities* addresses common issues in detail.

- **Facilitators.** As the number of school sites multiplies, so do the challenges of training and supervising staff to deliver Girls Inc. programming. See *Staffing and Communications* for strategies to bring staff to scale effectively.

- **Dosage, Duration, and Balanced Programming.** Compared to a center, time is at a premium at school sites, especially when programming is delivered during the school day. It takes planning and effort to reach girls for 50 hours a year for two years or more, and to ensure that girls receive programming from all three Core Essential Service areas. The section *Know the Market and Partners* shows how affiliates have developed a pathway model to follow girls from elementary through high school. *Negotiating Partnership Terms and Responsibilities* will help affiliates negotiate for the time needed.

Vigilance, creativity, and continuous negotiation are required to ensure that girls served in schools receive a high-quality Girls Inc. Experience. But, it IS possible, and everything recommended here has been successfully implemented by affiliates. What follows will help reach the girls who need Girls Inc. the most, and provide them with a Girls Inc. Experience that will help them transform their lives and create better futures.
II. STATE OF THE NETWORK

A snapshot of the current state of school partnerships across the network is a good starting point, beginning with a comparison of the most recently available Annual Survey data (2016), with data from five years prior:

**Number of School Sites per Affiliate 2011-2016**

The preceding chart shows steady growth over the last five years, with more affiliates (%) serving at least one school in 2016 as compared to (%) in 2011. Affiliates in aggregate have moved towards partnering with more sites.

**Number of School Sites by Grade Levels Served 2011-2016**

In 2016, the total number of school partner sites network wide exceeded 1,000, up 21% over the last 5 years, with 102 elementary school and 38 middle school sites added during that span. High schools are the fastest-growing partner site category, with 41 schools added, representing a 33% gain network-wide.
Survey Results

We surveyed all affiliates about their current partnerships, with 55% (36 out of 65) of affiliates who currently serve girls in schools responding. Here are some highlights:

- **Experience:** More than half (54%) of the affiliates surveyed have been partnering with schools for five years or more, 23% have for 3-5 years and a further 23% have 2 or less years of partnership.

- **Space:**

  ![Graph showing distribution of dedicated space and storage across all sites, some sites, and no sites.]

- **Data Access:** Affiliates were able to access data as follows:

  ![Graph showing access to contact information, demographics, disciplinary data, standardized test scores, and grades.]

- **Program Time:** Affiliates served girls before, during, and after the school day, most commonly after school and during class periods.

![Graph showing program time distribution across after school, regular class period, lunch, physical education, before school, and recess.]
Various school personnel served as key contacts:

- Principal: 90%
- Guidance Counselor: 77%
- Teachers: 53%
- Social Worker: 33%
- Superintendent: 33%
- Parent’s Groups: 17%
- Other (most often After School Coordinator): 27%

Funding: A majority of affiliates reported receiving public funding for their school partnerships: 61% receive local funding, 61% receive district funding, 33% receive state or county funding, and 56% receive funding directly from schools.

Around the Network: Case Studies

Case study interviews with 12 affiliates and their school partners were conducted in preparing this guide. Following are some highlights from around the network:

- **Girls Inc. of Chattanooga** uses a “mosaic approach” to school partnerships where they both serve girls in schools and transport them to their center.

- **Girls Inc. of Greater Indianapolis** has long delivered short-term programming in conjunction with a large number of partners across the city, and has recently begun to focus on deepening their service at current partners, spending more time with girls and establishing pathways to follow them from elementary through high school.

- **Girls Inc. of Jacksonville** effected a quick turnaround from a troubled multiple-center model to one focused on delivering a comprehensive Girls Inc. Experience directly in schools.

- **Girls Inc. of Greater Los Angeles** rebooted their organization around a strong model of school partnership and has been very effective in leveraging board connections to help fund their partnerships.

- **Girls Inc. at the YWCA Nashville & Middle Tennessee** is leveraging their Growth Grant to add depth to a strong in-school model, exploring ways that they can add dosage for girls who receive programming during the school day.

- **Girls Inc. of New York City** had great success using a large staff to deliver comprehensive programming to most, or all, of the girls at several of their partner schools. They built relationships with schools over years of outreach, and when significant city funding for after school programs became available, they were able to ramp up very quickly.

- **Girls Inc. of Orange County** is developing a more deliberate approach to school partnerships to build a diversified network of partner schools to meet their funding needs and serve girls with the greatest need.
• **Girls Inc. of the Pacific Northwest** had recent success extending their pipeline into high school, and has recently moved beyond Oregon to begin programming at schools in Washington State.

• **Girls Inc. of Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey** developed a promising practice of training college interns to facilitate programming at schools.

• **Girls Inc. of Shelbyville and Shelby County** has built up partnerships in and beyond their small community, and has had impressive success delivering Healthy Sexuality programming in a conservative area.

• **Girls Inc. of St. Louis** is an excellent example of featuring a center to reinforce school partnerships - their center is regularly used to showcase Girls Inc. to potential partners, and many girls reached through partnerships attend summer programming at the center.

• **Girls Inc. of the Tennessee Valley** has grown from serving a primarily rural audience to connecting with urban communities via school partnerships.
In addition to looking at the Girls Inc. network and how affiliates partner with schools, research was conducted externally, looking to best practices for developing and implementing effective ways to work with schools. One organization stood out.

**Playworks** helps kids to stay active and build valuable social and emotional skills through play. Respected for their evidence informed services and strategic approach to scale, Playworks has successfully grown from one state to having 23 regional offices across the United States. With an extensive history of school partnerships, a strong value statement, and strict school funding model, Playworks emerged as an excellent source of practices, prompting an interview to learn more about how they have partnered with schools.

Playworks positions itself to schools as solving “the problem of recess.” Alongside its problem-solving pitch, Playworks markets its comprehensive value to the school by using data to communicate its positive impact on emotional learning outcomes. Playworks also tracks and responds to national trends in education, federal legislation, and local movements, in order to stay relevant to educators. Expanding its role beyond direct service, Playworks works with schools to build their internal capacity, offering professional development trainings and workshops to teachers.

Playworks does not work with schools for free. It has three formal packages for school partners which vary in cost and intensity. With different service levels and a menu of options, the organization is able to find a way to partner with schools, even if they are unable to afford the most expensive and intensive option. Playworks also communicates the entire cost of its services in its materials and the percentage that the school is required to pay (which may or may not be subsidized for Title I schools). This helps emphasize the full value provided to school partners. Playworks has found that school funding comes from many different sources: discretionary funds, Title I, or through the PTA. While the organization requires a contribution from a school, it will not help school partners with any fundraising.

Once Playworks has partnered with a school, it will create an MOU, a schedule for regular check-ins with school personnel, and an approach to communicating with parents. The organization trains its staff to view the principal as their customer, and regularly conducts assessments on the status of these relationships. With its most intensive service option, Playworks becomes embedded in its partner schools. Their staff will spend the entire day in the school and participate in school wide events, allowing them to become a part of the school’s identity and culture.

Playworks’ success can be attributed to several best practices and applied to the Girls Inc. approach to school partnerships:

- Clearly communicate the value brought by articulating the problem Girls Inc. can solve. Examples of problems and solutions are found in the section Making the Case – The Value Proposition, below.
- Use data to demonstrate effectiveness and impact.
- Help schools increase their internal capacity to effectively work with girls. During one conversation with a school principal, she shared with the interviewer that she would like Girls Inc. to conduct an in-service training for teachers and counselors around girls’ development.
- Stay current with the issues and trends that are important to educators, positioning Girls Inc. to respond quickly and thoughtfully when challenges arise.
- Establish defined boundaries and expectations for the partnership. Playworks has clarified three specific service models that explicate the return on a school’s investment.
- Develop systems of communication to share successes and verify value added. Girls Inc. of Orange County sends one-page monthly reports detailing attendance, programming specifics and anecdotes, including pictures, to the principal and or/primary contact at each site.

Other valuable sources for ideas for improving school partnerships are other youth development organizations in the community. **Communities in Schools** is an intensive model that can provide best practices and **4-H programs** across the country have been partnering with schools for decades. The relationships these organizations have with schools may look different, but can still provide valuable learning about how best to manage a Girls Inc. partnership.
III. KNOW THE MARKET AND PARTNERS

Developing strong school partnerships requires an understanding of who the girls are that need Girls Inc. the most, where they live and go to school, and how to reach them with opportunities and programming that make a difference. Outlined below are resources that can assist in the process of getting to know the market and partners, and guidance on how to utilize this information to develop a compelling value proposition that responds to local issues and relevant to national conversations on education.

To help guide affiliates through the kind of research process that will illuminate the market and partners, Girls Inc. has developed a resource checklist. The list (found in Appendix A) is divided into three sections: Get to Know the Market, Get to Know Partners, and Making the Case for a Partnership.

Get to Know the Market: The following sources can inform expansion efforts and help determine schools in the area who serve the girls with the greatest need:

- Census Data, such as information on Communities of Poverty, presents a variety of demographic information about a community. This tool allows for a search by county, city, town, or zip code for indicators including income level and poverty levels.
- Title I Schools: Targeting expansion efforts in schools that receive Title I funding is a great way to reach more girls in low-income and under-resourced communities, as Title I funding is given to schools and districts serving high percentages of students from low-income families.
- Distressed Communities: The Distressed Communities Index measures several indicators of economic health, such as education rates, housing, labor force participation, poverty rates, income rates, and changes in employment. Explore zip codes in the area by Distress Score to find high-need populations.
- Schools without Partners: Recent research from the Harvard Graduate School of Education found that, while partnerships with external organizations are often identified as a means to reduce inequality between schools, in practice, the opposite often happens. Schools with community partners find it easy to attract further partnerships, while those without partnerships find it difficult to get started. There are likely to be additional challenges in developing a partnership with a school with no partnering experience, but the extra work will be rewarded in reaching girls who have few resources they can access.

Get to Know Partners: Use resources like the school and district website, community, and local data to explore the issues, gaps and strengths of the school; understand their culture and structure; and identify specific issues to address together.

School/District Website:

- The mission or vision statement for potential school partners may show common themes with the mission and vision of Girls Inc. and help to better understand the school’s priorities.
- Determine what other organizations the school partners with and their history with partnerships. Information about other collaborations, past and present, can provide information about what needs are being met and where Girls Inc. fits in. Talk to these organizations to gain their perspective on partnering with the school.
• Gather demographic information for the school. Racial and ethnic diversity, students receiving free or reduced-price lunch, the population of English Language Learner (ELL) students, students with Individual Education Plans (IEP), and other high-needs populations clarify whether partnering with this particular school will target the girls in the community who could most benefit from the Girls Inc. Experience.

• Use the school’s website to identify and understand the school’s policies and procedures like those for selecting or approving external programs and organizations. Being aware of policies and procedures in advance helps smooth future negotiations and demonstrates preparedness. Be sure to apply the information when crafting MOUs.

• Gather information on the structure of the school and identify key players. Knowing who’s who ahead of time will help direct the best approach.

• Make note of the school’s calendar for the academic year, including when they create their budget. This will aid in the planning and scheduling process, and clarify when to negotiate for more time where dosage is an issue.

• Read school board minutes, follow school social media pages or local news coverage of the school or district by setting up Google Alerts, and attend school board meetings to better understand the school’s priorities and where Girls Inc. can support their girls.

**Community Knowledge:** An affiliate’s community - staff, parents, the girls, donors, and board members - are often the most valuable connection to potential school partners. These individuals are often the first source of information about a potential partner, providing insight on community needs and challenges and how to best position Girls Inc. to solve these problems through school partnerships.

• Network and join coalitions and collaborations focused on public and private education, child or adolescent health, science and math, economic literacy, and other relevant issues. In addition to people directly employed by schools, individuals and organizations who have good working relationships with schools will be involved.

• Ask people who are familiar with how the school works to determine the most strategic person to approach for the particular programming or partnership.

• Hold discovery meetings with school staff or administrators, parents, or school board members. Ask questions about the school’s priorities - and gather information on the problems they are looking to solve, who the decision makers are, and begin to build a diverse set of advocates.

**Local Data:** Some states/provinces, school districts, or individual schools provide information on a school performance and detailed information on areas where schools are excelling - or where they may need support. Many districts and schools develop School Improvement Plans that identify their priority areas and strategies for the upcoming year that are available to the public, usually on the school or district website. For more information on where to find this and other data, see Appendix A.

• Girls Inc. of New York City uses the site InsideSchools, a resource that collects and compiles data on New York City Public Schools and produces reports on demographics, school quality, academics, and graduation outcomes. The data allows Girls Inc. of New York City to target specific schools and populations, and tailor their messaging to respond to each school’s needs.

• Girls Inc. of Chattanooga and Girls Inc. of Orange County both utilize school report cards from their states’ Departments of Education to inform which schools they partner with; particularly helpful
is the way data is broken out by proficiencies. Girls Inc. of Chattanooga used state report cards to identify schools with a D or F in reading that could serve as potential sites for their Bookworm Club. Girls Inc. of Orange County looks at school accountability report cards that are available online.

**Word of Mouth:** Strong community connections - and a deep understanding of both market and partner have led a number of Girls Inc. affiliates to develop school partnerships through referrals, schools approaching them directly, or building partnerships using a pathway model.

- Ask principals and staff from other partner schools (or who think highly of Girls Inc.) to make initial contact or to provide testimonials. The fact that there can be competition among schools, and principals don’t want to be “shown up” by their counterparts, can work to Girls Inc.’s advantage.

- When approached directly by a school, affiliates need to be direct about their current capacity, understand the timing of a potential partnership, and still hold a discovery meeting. Interest doesn’t necessarily equal a match, but does benefit Girls Inc. during negotiations.

- A **pathway model** allows affiliates to expand to serve girls of other age groups, retain girls over time, and support girls through critical transitions. Some affiliates are implementing a pathway model as a way to grow, in other cases the approach was initiated by schools.
  - Girls Inc. of Los Angeles is developing pathways both from their elementary school partners to potential middle school/high school partners and in reverse, from high school down to the feeder schools. The approach has been successful with public schools and charter schools. Their research efforts and the connections they make with other schools, often from principals at existing partners, are targeted to that approach. Girls Inc. at YWCA Nashville & Middle Tennessee uses a similar pathway model for feeder schools.
  - Girls Inc. of the Pacific Northwest looks at district demographics, and works to fit potential school partners into their existing pipelines. In Vancouver, they have been approached by school personnel to help girls transition from elementary to middle school.
IV. MAKING THE CASE - THE VALUE PROPOSITION

The information gathered through the research process on the market, the school’s other partners, and its key players will inform an effective strategy for positioning Girls Inc. as the solution to problems faced by the school and its girls. Every value proposition contains 1) a statement of the problem, 2) a description of how Girls Inc. can help solve that problem, and 3) data to back up the claim. Several key elements for positioning Girls Inc. remain constant:

1. Girls Inc. is comprehensive. With our intensive, holistic approach to the whole girl, Girls Inc. provides the skills and supports girls need for emotional, physical, social and academic wellbeing.

2. Girls Inc. is a national leader in girls’ informal education and development; backed by 150 years of experience and a nationwide network.

3. The Girls Inc. Experience - the people, environment, and programming - equips girls to navigate gender, economic, and social barriers and grow into healthy, educated, and independent adults.

4. Girls Inc. makes a measurable difference in the lives of girls.

Problems and Solutions

Presenting Girls Inc. as a solution to issues facing girls in a school or a community makes a compelling case for partnership. Girls Inc. affiliates collaborate with schools to confront bullying, create a safe environment and “sisterhood” in schools, expand opportunities for girls to access STEM education, improve literacy rates, address teen pregnancy or STIs, help girls develop healthy relationships, get girls on track to graduate, and prepare girls for college and future careers. Schools are under-resourced and often look to youth-serving organizations or community partners to supply programming and expertise and create opportunities for their students to access otherwise unavailable experiences. When building a case around a particular issue, be careful to demonstrate the value of being comprehensive: sometimes affiliates have been pigeonholed as the provider of a single program and found it hard to grow a partnership to encompass all Core Essential Service areas.

The Girls Inc. Experience has a clear and demonstrable value, and the difference Girls Inc. makes in the lives of girls is relevant to many current conversations on the national stage. The Girls Inc. Experience can be framed as a support for social and emotional learning, trauma-informed care, comprehensive sex education, lowering high school dropout rates, literacy, STEM, violence against girls, and school pushout. While many schools are invested in these conversations, they may be without the resources necessary to solve these problems and offer additional support. If a potential partner is interested in addressing one or more of these issues, position Girls Inc. as an expert or as a co-curricular collaborator:

Social and Emotional Learning: Schools today are increasingly interested in dimensions of positive youth outcomes beyond academic achievement. Emphasize to partners, and reinforce with data, that at Girls Inc., girls learn valuable social and emotional skills such as conflict resolution, resiliency, and stress management. The Girls Inc. Experience promotes “whole girl development,” both through mentoring relationships and through programming in three Core Essential Service areas: Strong (Healthy Living), Smart (Academics), and Bold (Life Skills).

Trauma-Informed Approach: Girls Inc. serves girls in low-income and under-resourced communities. Youth who grow up in these circumstances face many barriers to success, which for girls, intersect with gender-specific risks. They are more likely to have experienced domestic violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence and other traumatic events. Girls Inc. creates a safe, supportive environment, where girls develop lasting, mentoring relationships with facilitators
trained to help them access additional resources when necessary. For more information on trauma-informed approaches: SAMHSA's Efforts to Address Trauma and Violence, Youth.gov, National Resource Center for Mental Health Promotion & Youth Violence Prevention

**Violence, harassment and bullying:** Girls are more likely to experience forms of violence, such as bullying, sexual, and dating violence, than boys (YRBS, 2016). Girls Inc. girls learn strategies to live safer lives. Girls Inc. offers a safe, supportive space where girls can develop their abilities to resolve conflicts, build resilience, and manage their personal stress and anger.

**Substance Use:** A girl’s adolescent years are important in terms of her growth physically, emotionally, and socially, and substance use can endanger these developmental processes. Girls Inc. helps girls develop refusal skills, healthy relationships with mentors and peers, and strategies to positively manage stress. These and other life skills learned at Girls Inc. give girls the tools they need to avoid behaviors that can negatively impact their futures.

**Comprehensive Sex Education and Teen Pregnancy Prevention:** Girls Inc.’s pro-girl, sex-positive environment empowers girls to become informed agents of their own sexual health. Built upon a foundation of accurate information, inclusivity, and respect, Girls Inc. gives girls the opportunity to embrace their sexuality, understand their bodies and health, and build healthy relationships. The Girls Inc. Healthy Sexuality programming also helps girls to understand the lasting consequences of unsafe sexual activity. One such consequence, early pregnancy, poses many challenges for adolescent girls, as teens who raise children are more likely than their peers not to graduate from high school and to live in poverty (USDHHS, 2017).

**Dropout rates:** Girls Inc. helps to ensure that girls are on track to graduate high school and achieve those positive life outcomes through not only academic enrichment, but through our “whole girl development” approach. For girls, high school graduation is instrumental to achieving positive life outcomes. Obtaining a high school diploma amounts to almost $10,000 in additional annual earnings compared to those who do not finish high school (Jones, D., Crowley, D.M., & Greenberg, M.T., 2016). Equally important, girls who graduate from high school are more likely to have higher paying jobs, to have healthier lifestyles, and are less likely to be involved in the criminal justice system (Child Trends, 2015).

**Literacy:** Children in under-resourced communities are less likely to be proficient in reading (Hernandez, 2012). Girls Inc. plays an important role in empowering girls, especially girls in poverty, through literacy programming, with two-thirds of girls who participated in 2 or more years of intensive literacy programming reading at grade level. Girls Inc. supports school-based instruction through engaging literacy programming that helps foster a love of reading. A safe, supportive environment helps girls become comfortable reading out loud, and fun activities alleviate anxieties that can arise in a formal, academic setting.

**Girls and STEM:** Women, especially women of color, are underrepresented in STEM career fields (Landivar, 2013) and many girls in low-income communities lack opportunities to engage in STEM in a fun, safe, and hands-on environment. Girls Inc. provides girls with ways to engage in STEM activities, lets girls hear directly from women who have pursued careers in STEM fields, and encourages and supports girls to succeed academically.

**College and Workforce Readiness:** In order for youth and adolescents to be ready for college and the workplace, it is critical that they have developmental supports such as safe and welcoming environments, positive mentoring relationships, and engaging opportunities that allow them to explore their interests (Krauss, Pittman, and Johnson, 2016). Girls Inc. provides girls with these
supports in an inclusive, pro-girl space and equips girls to navigate gender, economic and social barriers and grow into healthy, educated, and independent adults.

**School Discipline and Pushout:** Girls Inc. equips girls with the supports they need to stay engaged in school, build healthy relationships, and reduce risky behaviors, with the desired outcome of preventing girls from being pushed out of school. Girls are the fastest growing population in the juvenile justice system, and girls of color and girls with disabilities are disproportionately more likely to experience exclusionary punishments, impacting their academic achievements and “pushing girls out” of school and into the juvenile justice pipeline (NWLC, 2017).

**Different Audiences**
Effectively marketing value also largely depends on the audience. School stakeholders (district officials, principals, teachers, school counselors, parents, etc.) all prioritize different issues and it is important to refine a pitch to resonate with these various key players. Many Girls Inc. affiliates find that principals and district officials respond positively to the value proposition “constants,” such as Girls Inc.’s research-based curricula, and Girls Inc.’s expertise on national education topics. School counselors, teachers, and parents respond positively to the impact programming has on individuals. Some Girls Inc. affiliates have also successfully demonstrated programs at PTA meetings or conferences for teacher. Research and knowledge of the community should inform how to adapt language and messaging. More examples of what works for different Girls Inc. affiliates follows.

- Girls Inc. of Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey varies their messaging depending on who they are speaking with; they find that school principals respond most positively to strong outcomes, while school counselors want to understand the specifics of a program.

- Girls Inc. of the Pacific Northwest shared that administrators tend to focus on issues that lead to graduation and educational outcomes, while other stakeholders are more concerned with how issues manifest in individual girls.

- Girls Inc. of Greater Indianapolis has found that their mission resonates with parents, while school leadership tends to be interested in how Girls Inc. can provide conflict resolution and social-emotional learning.

- Girls Inc. of Orange County and Girls Inc. of Greater Indianapolis both provide a “menu” of programs to school stakeholders, which is effective in showing their breadth of services.

The section on Key Relationships, below, offers more insight on the motivations of various stakeholders.

**Using Data**
Student outcomes, such as test scores or attendance, make the case for specific Girls Inc. programming like literacy and STEM. Community data positions Girls Inc. as a collaborative partner who can help alleviate some of the problems students deal with outside the classroom.

Some examples:

- Girls Inc. of Shelbyville and Shelby County knew teen pregnancy and lack of sexual health education was a problem in their community. They have successfully positioned Girls Inc. as an expert on this issue, and now provide Healthy Sexuality programming for all girls in Shelbyville Central School District and have expanded to other districts in the area.

- Girls Inc. of St. Louis reviews crime, pregnancy and STI statistics in order to determine the need for particular programs, like Healthy Sexuality, or Friendly PEERsuasion.
Girls Inc. of the Pacific Northwest uses Count Her In, a report produced by the Women’s Foundation of Oregon that details the status of women and girls in Oregon. Data from this report, specifically mental health statistics, supports the need for comprehensive girl programming.

Strong outcomes data make the case that a partnership with Girls Inc. will make a difference. Pairing school data against local or national Strong, Smart, and Bold Outcomes Survey (SSBOS) data can be especially effective. For instance, if a particular school has low attendance rates SSBOS data will show that a large majority of Girls Inc. girls, or better yet a Girls Inc. affiliate’s girls, have not skipped school in the past month.
V. NEGOTIATING PARTNERSHIP TERMS & RESPONSIBILITIES

“We do just about whatever a school wants in order to get our programming to girls. I figure a little Girls Inc. is better than no Girls Inc. at all.”

“When we compromise on what we believe makes for an impactful Girls Inc. Experience, we give girls less than our best and the girls who need us most get less than they deserve. We are willing to say “no” to schools that don’t or can’t provide the kind of support we think is critical.”

These two perspectives, although not direct quotes, reflect the opposite ends of the spectrum when it comes to negotiating with school partners to provide the Girls Inc. Experience in schools. Each is built on a commitment to making sure girls can participate in an Experience that provides some level of impact. Schools value and respect Girls Inc. for the effect they observe on girls, even if the amount of time that girls participate is just once a week for an hour or less, but several school personnel interviewed noted that they only began to observe a change after months of participation.

Even when trying to better understand the relationship between various aspects of the Girls Inc. Experience in school settings and positive outcomes for girls, it’s clear that there are some areas of negotiating the particulars of school partnerships that are critical “must-haves” (non-negotiables) to make the partnership worthwhile for the affiliate and girls. Some areas were gleaned as best practices from experienced affiliates, and some are negotiable, largely dictated by the circumstances and priorities of the school and of the affiliate.

The following discusses most of the areas that affiliates need to address during negotiations with the school partner for shaping the partnership and ensuring a quality Girls Inc. Experience for girls. Before starting any negotiations, make sure to work with the school staff, in most cases the principal or superintendent, with authority to sign and ensure that the school is following through on commitments.

Who gets to participate/how many: While the “who” may seem obvious – as Girls Inc., by definition, is girls only and pro-girl – at some point most affiliates get the “what about the boys” question during initial talks with school partners. The good news: Once an affiliate is known and trusted in the community and by schools, this question rarely surfaces. Still, when it does come up, it is important to make clear that Girls Inc.’s expertise is girls. A school partner may need help to understand that the responsibility for finding suitable alternatives for boys rests with the school under Title IX. This is true no matter how much the school may try to make it seem the other way around or make this a condition of letting Girls Inc. into the school. (For more guidance on the provisions of Title IX regarding single sex programming in schools, refer to the memo on Affiliate Central from the Girls Inc. Public Policy Department.) Regardless, it will help to come prepared to identify (or even already having identified) potential boy-serving organizations, coed programming, or other options particularly when early talks with the partner indicate that the concern is primarily logistical.

Some affiliates do negotiate with schools partners for a minimum number of girls who need to sign up for the affiliate to conduct a program, usually about 15 girls. The affiliate’s concern is two-fold: making sure that the investment of resources in the programming is worthwhile and that they can ensure a quality Girls Inc. Experience for participating girls. A few affiliates similarly set a maximum, also to ensure that girls have a quality experience. Most affiliates do admit, however, that they will go ahead and conduct a program with a lesser number of girls to build familiarity with and confidence in the quality of programming as well as girls’ enthusiasm for Girls Inc. to share with other girls.

For considerations about which girls, see Recruitment below.
**Programming space:** There are several considerations when it comes to negotiating for programming space that affect its suitability for programming. Space is often at a premium in schools, particularly those in low-income communities, with few resources, or those at or over their student capacity. This means that programming will take place in rooms or in spaces that serve other purposes, such as a regular classroom, the teacher’s lounge, the library, or a cafeteria. Permanent assignment of space for Girls Inc. programming for the duration of a school term or school year is most likely when Girls Inc. programming takes place several hours a week, several days a week. Conversely, the less amount of time devoted to programming (for example, one day a week versus four to five days a week), the less likely it is that the school will agree to set space aside exclusively for Girls Inc. use. Be sure to view the proposed space prior to agreeing to use it.

Non-negotiables for programming space include that the space:

- Be offered free of charge
- Be designated for Girls Inc. use only during programming time, including a short amount of time for the facilitator to prep the room for the day’s session or programming
- Is consistently available for Girls Inc. during programming, meaning, the space in which programming is to take place does not change from one day to the next (although this may happen due to unforeseen circumstances, it should be rare)
- Be large enough to comfortably accommodate anticipated group size, including allowing the participants to work in small groups, move around, and be physically active as needed
- Be free from distractions of and intrusion by other activities or by school staff and students coming in during Girls Inc. time
- Make allowances for at least minimal branding or signage during programming (such as a small Girls Inc. poster on the door or a larger poster on an easel outside the room)

Points that are more negotiable for programming space include that it:

- Provide for substantial Girls Inc. signage and other branding to make the space visually appealing and shout that this is where Girls Inc. happens
- Include permission to move furniture and other objects around to accommodate the Girls Inc. Experience
- Have sufficient wall space where it is acceptable to display posters, put up chart paper, and share girls’ work on a long term, if not permanent basis
- Allow staff to make other changes as appropriate to help make the space inviting to and reflective of participants, and to create an informal learning environment where girls can relax and learn in a different, more social setting
Negotiating and scheduling programming time with schools can be difficult and logistically complex, and it can be easy to get caught up in the details. It’s important to take a step back and look at the bigger picture – ensuring that girls served in schools receive a high-quality Girls Inc. Experience, and can participate for enough time for mentoring relationships to form and for programming to make a lasting difference. Here are some key considerations:

- **Dosage** refers to the level of a girl’s participation within a given year or semester. The recommended minimum dosage outlined in the Affiliate Model is 50 hours per year. This can pose a challenge in school settings, particularly when programming is delivered during the school day, where one hour a week is often the maximum time a school is able to offer. (Once breaks and absences are factored in, this often only adds up to 30-35 hours per year.) It is important when planning for the year to explore alternative avenues to offer 50+ hours. Recruiting girls served in schools for summer programming is one option. Many schools have in-service days, when teachers are at schools for workshops and students have the day off. Girls Inc. of the Pacific Northwest has had success in bringing girls in during these days, often for a full 6-7 hours of programming. Be intentional, creative, and persistent, and higher dosage will be within reach.

- **Duration** is as important as dosage. Girls who attend Girls Inc. programming for more than one-year form stronger mentoring relationships and see better results. Within schools, negotiate to ensure Girls Inc. can follow girls from grade to grade. For example, start by serving girls in sixth grade in the first year of a partnership. Following them to seventh grade the next year, while adding a new group of sixth graders, will both provide greater duration and double the number of girls served. Ultimately, a pathway model, where an affiliate partners with an elementary school and the middle and high schools it feeds, provides the opportunity to serve girls from kindergarten to their high school graduation.

- The **Core Essential Services** are what make the Girls Inc. Experience comprehensive. Planning to make sure each girl receives programming from the areas of Healthy Living, Academic Enrichment and Support, and Life Skills Instruction can prove difficult, especially if she is only participating for an hour a week. One approach is to rotate programming, often in 8-10 week periods. For example, a girl might experience Operation SMART in the fall, Healthy Sexuality in the winter, and Project BOLD in the spring. Some types of programming lend themselves to a more comprehensive approach. Literacy programming for younger girls, through an intentional selection of activities and books, is an example of a program well-suited to a comprehensive approach.
**Programming time, scheduling, and content:** Finding a time and day (or times and days) to deliver the Girls Inc. Experience is often a matter of what is available and how many hours of programming are to be provided. Keep in mind that academics take precedence over what some schools see as ancillary or supportive activities when they think about programming delivered by Girls Inc. and other youth-serving organizations. Making the case for how the Girls Inc. Experience contributes to academic goals or outcomes for girls will be critical to helping the school partner prioritize finding days and times that better accommodate and face less competition for girls’ participation.

The question of whether it is better to negotiate for programming during school and/or afterschool also has no hard or easy answers. Both have benefits and challenges for staff schedules, the affiliate business model, transportation after programming, competition with other programming, girls’ attendance, and so on.

For during school programming time, there is likely to be less competition from other out of school time program providers for girls’ time, and attendance is likely to be more consistent. A few affiliates have been successful with connecting the Girls Inc. Experience to a specific class or content requirement of the school.

One important area to avoid is assignment of lunch or recess for Girls Inc. programming. Girls may view these times as losing out on unstructured time with friends and peers. If these are the only alternatives, work with the school to ensure that girls can get their lunches as quickly as possible or are given a few minutes to run around to expend excess energy. Emphasize with girls and school staff the opportunity for comradery afforded by participation in the Girls Inc. Experience as well as the opportunity for the group mentoring that the Girls Inc. staff provides.

For after school programming, negotiate with the school about providing bus transportation afterwards and smoothing the process for checking students out of programming when they are picked up by parents or other family members.

At some point, the school is likely to want to know specifically what program will be implemented with girls. It is rare that carte blanche is given to just “do the Girls Inc. Experience.” Funding may also drive content. Research about girls in the community will be invaluable here for positioning Girls Inc. as the local expert on girls and identifying how the specific programs of the Girls Inc. Experience address those issues. However, be sure to ask for, listen to, and address the school’s concerns for girls, including how specific programming delivered in the context of the Girls Inc. Experience can help. It will be helpful to start with what school staff see as primary concerns to better position the Girls Inc. Experience as the answer, and to have written materials to support the case.

**School staff roles/responsibilities:** Probably one of the most critical negotiables identified by several affiliates is that of school staff serving as on-site contact or coordinator, particularly for working with the affiliate to ensure that programming meets the school’s and girls’ needs and to address issues that affect the affiliate’s ability to provide the desired program experience. This person could be someone on the school’s staff designated by the principal, a Communities Coordinator working for the district’s Community Schools program, a parent facilitator, or another person in a similar role. This person is the most familiar with the Girls Inc. programming and staff and often becomes a champion for the affiliate who advocates with administration and other staff about the importance of the Girls Inc. Experience. A less involved role that a few affiliates require is a school assigned teacher to be in the room during programming to help handle discipline issues. Most affiliates point out the importance of securing the
school’s agreement for them to be present at teacher meetings or meet regularly with school leadership for building support among school staff for Girls Inc., and the value of identifying the teacher or other school staff who will be most helpful in the desired role.

**Access to ancillary or supportive space, equipment, and facilities:** Providing the Girls Inc. Experience in partnership with schools requires more than programming space. Most interviewed affiliates consider access to ancillary and supportive space, equipment, and facilities to be non-negotiables, although there is variety in which things are considered absolutely necessary. Again, the more time that programming is to take place at the school, the more likely it is that the school partner will be willing to provide ancillary or supportive access.

Common non-negotiables include:

- Having a secure place to keep and lock up records and sensitive information
- Access to the school’s wifi (Determine if the school uses firewalls that block access to important program-related content.)
- Access to computers (for girls if dictated by the program being offered)
- No charges for utilities or janitorial services (if provided)

Most affiliates do not consider other to be deal breakers in partnership negotiations if the school partner is unable or does not agree to provide access, including such things as an office or program planning area for Girls Inc. staff, access to a copier/printer and phone, use of the school’s computers/laptops/pads (by Girls Inc. staff who will likely carry their own or one provided by the affiliate), and use of other technology (for example, a smart board).

This is not an exhaustive list. Consider discussing administrative and support needs to make for a better programming experience for girls as well as make it easier for the facilitator to focus on the girls versus other concerns. Example: One affiliate was able to negotiate for a convenient parking space for staff so she could more quickly bring things back and forth from her car.

**Recruitment and attendance:** Schools, usually through the on-site liaison or coordinator, will either assist with recruitment or ensure there are fruitful opportunities for recruitment. Negotiations clarify those opportunities and how school staff will either be responsible or help. Recruitment opportunities include a table at the school’s student/family orientation at the start of the school year or semester, participating in a community resource fair, presentation at assemblies, classroom presentations during homeroom/at the start of the day, PTA/PTO meetings, and disseminating fliers or to girls or parents. The liaison or coordinator will also be helpful in communicating with parents about the opportunity for their daughters to participate in Girls Inc. and in securing parental permission.

Be sure to clarify which girls can participate. From the affiliate perspective, this will probably be any girl who attends the school, particularly if that school is determined to be a priority because of need. Still, school staff may want to target specific girls for Girls Inc. by grade, academic performance, family situation, or simply as “a good fit” for Girls Inc. This is probably fine unless the school sees the program as a club for girls who are leaders or excelling in school, leaving out other girls who could better benefit from the Girls Inc. Experience. Resist limiting the Girls Inc. Experience to girls in only one or two grades because it will have a negative impact on sustained exposure. If limiting to specific grades within a school is a pilot test for the partnership, be sure to talk about how programming will expand to other grades once the pilot is over.
In making the case for the Girls Inc. Experience, help the school understand how important girls’ participation is for achieving positive outcomes. The more a school makes the connection between what Girls Inc. offers and girls’ achievement of academic and other goals, the more likely it will view Girls Inc. time as critical and worth supporting. One affiliate noted how often girls were pulled from programming because their time in Girls Inc. was not viewed as a priority. The strongest case for making sure girls attend programming is the Girls Inc. program being delivered is part of the school curriculum for which girls can earn credit. As one example, Girls Inc. of New York City has worked with a school partner to have the Girls Inc. Healthy Sexuality program meet the requirement for sexuality education for participating girls.

**Access to and sharing data:** Given the Girls Inc. network commitment to making a measurable difference in the lives of girls, ability to collect personal information, conduct surveys (preferably the Strong, Smart and Bold Outcomes Surveys (SSBOS) for girls ages 9-18), and have access to academic, school attendance, and other data is an essential area to cover with the school partner. Affiliates have found that sharing SSBOS data demonstrates openness to assessment and commitment to work with school partners to improve results.

Schools are understandably concerned about sharing student data and having students participate in surveys conducted by other parties. As such, this can be a difficult area to negotiate, but it is important. Girls Inc. of NYC has this written into its MOU. Seeking parent permission to access or share the grades and other information data is another approach used by affiliates, but be sure that the school is aware of and agrees to this. Girls Inc. of LA requires that all girls complete an application as a means of collecting some critical information and permissions.

The district Community Schools program that Girls Inc. at the YWCA Nashville & Middle Tennessee partners with is invested in measuring how well students do academically and behaviorally when participating in community programs. Consequently, it shares reports with partners and has plans to share individual student data to better assess and take actions to improve student performance. It is also vital to clarify how, and how often, student data is accessed or shared. An agreement in principle for data sharing won’t necessarily cover the “who” and “when,” but these specifics should be discussed upfront so it doesn’t become a roadblock later.

**Funding:** Many affiliates are successful with securing funding specifically for providing programming in partnership with schools, usually through grants from private foundations, local businesses/corporate giving, private contributions, from the district or the school’s discretionary or Community Schools programs, Title I, community foundations, and so on. Girls Inc. of New York City and Girls Inc. of Los Angeles have successfully become vendors approved by either the city or state educational agency, which allows them to invoice and be paid for the programming services provided. Still, all affiliates indicated that there are circumstances under which they would provide programming even if the school is unable to provide funding. Girls Inc. of the Pacific Northwest indicated that it may forgo funding during the first year of a partnership with a promise to work on securing funding for the next year, including submitting joint proposals.

Regardless of funding, a recommended practice is to invoice the school for the value of programming provided. In doing so, take into account the costs of providing program that are not present in center – transportation and staff to get to and from the sites and set up, tools and equipment that support mobility, and increased planning time for gathering and organizing supplies not readily accessible. Any payment or funds that are provided to Girls Inc. toward the cost of the programming can be indicated on
the invoice. Even if there is no expectation of payment, the invoice will help establish the value Girls Inc. is providing and will help frame subsequent negotiations.

**Memorandum of Understanding/Formalizing the Partnership**

A written MOU that details the specific tasks and responsibilities of the school partner and affiliate is a great tool for making sure each party makes a commitment it is prepared to live with. This really is a non-negotiable to help hold each party accountable. Some schools, whether at the district or local level, may require that the affiliate sign an agreement that has more to do with management of facilities and building than serving girls. These rarely cover all the areas that are critical to providing an impactful programming experience. The MOU should cover the areas described above, plus others that are important for working with girls and delivering programming in school settings, such as policies and procedures for handling reportable events, process for contacting parents when a student is injured or there is a serious infraction of school rules (physical fights, for example), and so on.

A sample MOU on Affiliate Central provides space for indicating what the program and non-program related areas are and how they are to be handled.

**Maintenance and Upkeep of the Partnership**

An MOU establishes ground rules and expectations that will determine the shape of the partnership, but it must be regularly monitored and enforced by both Girls Inc. and its school partner for the agreement to be meaningful. An affiliate may negotiate a wonderful MOU, but let the school off the hook when resistance or problems are encountered. One example: The school does not help with recruitment and the MOU requirement to ensure that a minimum (or maximum) number of girls to be enrolled is not met. The affiliate provides the program anyway, diminishing the girls’ experience because the activities didn’t work with the group size. It is important to monitor critical aspects of the partnership and agreements, identify and communicate issues early on, and find ways to diplomatically remind the school when it fails to hold up its side of the partnership. Be open to the school bringing issues to Girls Inc. if staff encounter problems in meeting the terms. Have frequent check-ins with the liaison or contact as well as occasional check-ins with other groups (for example, teachers and front office staff) to identify and address concerns early on. The MOU can include the process and persons for settling issues, particularly important if someone other than the signee is responsible for working with Girls Inc. on a day to day basis.

**Tips for negotiating school partnerships**

As one ad put it: “When trying to get the best deal, you don’t get what you deserve, you get what you negotiate.” So, ask with confidence for what is critical, important, or helpful: this includes funding. Most affiliates find that they don’t turn partners off by doing so. If asked for something non-essential that they can’t provide, they will say no and then the negotiations can move on to other areas. Be patient in developing and negotiating partnerships with schools. Understand that schools may not see the Girls Inc. Experience as a high priority. Research on potential partners and on issues for girls in the school or community will have helped make the case for Girls Inc. Even then, there may be a need to make the case again and again to build support with other key individuals, particularly if the agreement to partner originated with a different department or administrator.

Make a checklist of items that you need to discuss and reach agreement on, being clear which items are non-negotiables or must-haves. Have the checklist on hand so as not to miss anything. Draft the MOU based on the notes so that it clearly outlines the particulars of the partnership.
Understand what the school partner requires of Girls Inc. concerning expectations of the organization and staff (such as having Girls Inc. participate in meetings of or collaborate with community partners) and concerning its policies and procedures (such as the need for background checks of Girls Inc. staff and any volunteers). Identify and address any areas of disagreement between expectations or how their affiliate and the school partner normally handle a particular issue.

When the end date for the MOU is reached (or at the end of a semester or school year), meet with the school partner to assess not only the benefit to girls, but the partnership itself, including how well each party was able to carry out its responsibilities. Determine if the partnership is worth continuing, or what changes are needed to improve the MOU, and how well the organizations work together to support each other’s goals and serve girls effectively.
VI. KEY RELATIONSHIPS

Successful partnerships depend on a web of relationships between affiliate staff and a variety of stakeholders, from principals and superintendents to counselors and parents. A great deal of variance exists in how things are organized from state to state, city to city, and even within districts, which can make it difficult to know where to get started and whose influence will be key. In some communities, district approval may be required to deliver a curriculum or even to set foot in a classroom; in others, it may be possible, and easier, to build from the support of parents or other local champions who want to see Girls Inc. programming in their daughter’s school. Regardless of where it starts or the approvals required to partner, maintaining good relationships with people in many different roles is paramount.

While stakeholders in various positions define their roles differently, for them and Girls Inc. staff alike, there are some common hats that someone, or several people, need to wear for each partnership to function. To help keep track of these common threads, here are the ‘hats’:

Who Wears Which Hat?

Decision Makers: In the most formal sense, the person who approves the partnership and signs the MOU for each side - for Girls Inc. this is likely the affiliate executive, and for the school, the Principal or district-level staff. Day to day, teachers or other school personnel, Program Directors or Site Coordinators may have decision-making responsibilities.

Supervisors: Supervision is also formal and informal. Supervisory roles for Girls Inc. include the training of facilitators, group and individual check-ins, and troubleshooting issues with school contacts. Principals and other supervisors at the school level help ensure that the terms of the MOU are being met and that the right girls are finding Girls Inc. programming.

Planners: The people responsible for fitting a partnership into a broader organizational vision. For Girls Inc., this means establishing where a school fits into overall growth goals, target populations to serve, pipelines, and evaluating the ongoing pros and cons of each partnership. For schools, this means understanding the problems Girls Inc. can help solve, fitting Girls Inc. programming alongside other community partners, and helping determine which grades to reach.

Facilitators: Facilitators deliver Girls Inc. programming. This is usually Girls Inc. staff or volunteers, but teachers often serve as effective co-facilitators for during-school programming. They are the day-to-day face of Girls Inc. at each school site, and the primary champions and relationship stewards. Their attitudes and effectiveness to a large extent define how Girls Inc. will be perceived at a school.

Doers: Doers literally open doors for us. A Principal may sign an MOU agreeing to give Girls Inc. space, but it’s the administrative, custodial and security staff who make sure those spaces are accessible, acceptable, and safe.

Champions: Champions let the world know why Girls Inc. is so great. When relationships are cultivated at all levels, educating and stewarding the work of Girls Inc., champions emerge to spread the word and increase the demand for Girls Inc. programming across entire communities.
The Cycle of Cultivation

The development of school relationships follows a similar cycle to fundraising: research and local connections lead to discovery meetings lead to a request to partner. Once the partnership is established, good stewardship is essential, meeting formally or informally to reinforce the value Girls Inc. is providing and address any concerns that may arise. Every year, or every semester, the partnership is renewed with meetings to reexamine needs and renegotiate terms.

Everyone involved has one thing in common: they are all invested in the success of the girls to be served. The form that investment takes is framed differently based on a person's role and their priorities. Some people respond more to facts and data and for others emotions predominate. With these things in mind, let's take a look at some of the key players in school partnerships:

Superintendents

**Comparable and Alternate Titles:** Various district-level officials  
**Girls Inc. Points of Contact:** Affiliate Executives, Board Members, Program Directors  
**Hats They May Wear:** Decision Maker, Supervisor, Planner, Champion  
**Motivating Data:** Attendance, Safety, Academics

Some local educational systems are organized hierarchically, requiring district-level approval before Girls Inc. programming is allowed in schools. Some affiliates must even submit curricula for approval before delivering programming. Top-down organization can prove frustrating, as sometimes one person's sign-off may stand between an affiliate and a whole city's schools. On the other hand, it also means that one meeting may open any number of doors. In approaching a community that functions this way, the affiliate executive may need to be the best person to form a relationship at this level.

If possible, approach schools first. If not, the district can still be an important ally. It may be necessary for Girls Inc. to be registered as an official provider or vendor either to implement programming or to receive different types of funding. District bureaucracies can be frustrating to navigate; scheduling meetings with the right officials can require persistence, and their time to meet may be short. Start early, be persistent, and come prepared with a tight value proposition backed up with data.

Principals

**Comparable and Alternate Titles:** Assistant or Vice-Principal  
**Girls Inc. Points of Contact:** Affiliate Executives, Board Members, Program Directors  
**Hats They May Wear:** Decision Maker, Supervisor, Troubleshooter, Planner, Champion  
**Motivating Data:** Attendance, Safety, Academics

Principals often play the most important role in establishing and maintaining solid partnerships, with 90% of respondents saying they were a key point of contact. Principals generally make the decision to partner with Girls Inc. and sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). It is important to recognize that they balance a wide area of responsibilities to a diverse array of stakeholders. They answer to their district, to parents, and to the students they serve, and oversee both teachers and the support staff who keep schools running.

The demands on their time can be immense, and this can pose a challenge in getting in the door or in getting a meeting to address an issue that is hampering programming. As one Program Director phrased it, “I have never had a meeting with a principal that wasn’t interrupted more than once.” Be patient, and
be prepared to make the case succinctly, whether in a discovery meeting, negotiating the beginning of a partnership, or planning for the next year. Providing materials before the in-person meeting and/or as a follow up, may be a way to share basic information on the organization and program if in-person time is limited.

High-level, high-quality data is usually motivating to principals: demonstrating that Girls Inc. programming can help increase attendance, reduce bullying, and improve girls’ academic motivation and performance will get their attention.

Many affiliates cited planning and scheduling as two of the biggest challenges to implementing partnerships. Understanding a school's calendar and budgeting process can help ensure a meeting with the principal in time for the next school year’s planning process - often in the late winter/early spring of the prior academic year.

One other concern is turnover: just as the approval of a principal can seem to unlock every door of a school, the transition to a new principal can close doors just as abruptly. Sometimes an incoming principal will see Girls Inc. as their predecessor’s program and look to move on without understanding the relationship. Be prepared for this: look to schedule a meeting as soon as possible and plan to demonstrate the value of the relationship as if pitching to a new partner.

Finally, principals provide the best references to other principals. Once the principal of a school is a true champion, more likely than not, word of mouth will result in Girls Inc. fielding requests from multiple schools.

Guidance Counselors and Social Workers

**Comparable and Alternate Titles:** Family Engagement Specialist, Community and Parent Liaison, Communities Coordinator

**Girls Inc. Points of Contact:** Affiliate Executives, Board Members, Program Directors

**Hats They May Wear:** Decision Maker, Supervisor, Planner, Champion

**Motivating Data:** Attendance, Safety, Healthy Sexuality, Healthy Relationships, Academics, Social and Emotional Learning

After principals, Guidance Counselors and Social Workers were most commonly named as a key school contact in the School Partnerships Survey, cited by 77% of respondents. Social service professionals often have the best sense of what the school’s girls need, which girls need support, and how Girls Inc. can make a difference. Even when they aren’t driving a partnership, they are powerful allies.

At schools with particularly vulnerable student populations, counselors and social workers may spend the majority of their efforts helping children with the most pressing needs to access critical services. Often, they know that the larger population of girls they serve, who are also at risk of drug abuse, bullying and unhealthy relationships, pregnancy and STDs, can benefit from Girls Inc. programming and are likely to champion a partnership. Good counselors and social workers know the students well and will be able to help identify and recruit the girls who need Girls Inc. programming the most.

At schools where the Counselor is the primary day-to-day contact with Girls Inc., be sure to schedule regular time for someone in a supervisory role to check in, particularly if the Girls Inc. point of contact is an Outreach Coordinator or other position supervising facilitators at multiple schools.
After School Coordinators

**Comparable and Alternate Titles:** n/a

**Girls Inc. Points of Contact:** Program Directors, Site Coordinators, Facilitators

**Hats They May Wear:** Decision Maker, Planner, Champion

**Motivating Data:** Academic, Program Specific Results, SEL

Not all schools have an After School Coordinator, but for those that do, they are an obvious point of contact. Coordinators are already sold on the value of after school programming and Social and Emotional Learning, they know the students’ needs and provide a pre-existing structure for Girls Inc. programming to slot into. The common challenge is that they may also have a relatively full slate of afterschool offerings and Girls Inc. will need to find a niche. Even if it’s STEM or Economic Literacy that opens the door, demonstrate value and negotiate over time to provide programming from all Core Essential Service areas.

When a school does employ an After School Coordinator, they will more than likely be the day-to-day point of contact for Girls Inc. As with counselors, work to ensure that they have regular, scheduled contact with someone in a supervisory role to ensure that issues are promptly elevated and addressed.

Teachers

**Comparable and Alternate Titles:** n/a

**Girls Inc. Points of Contact:** Site Coordinators, Facilitators

**Hats They May Wear:** Facilitator, Champion

**Motivating Data:** Attendance, Safety, Academics, Individual Stories

Teachers can be a source of resistance to Girls Inc., or they can be incredible champions. By delivering programming in schools, particularly during the school day, we are on their turf, and their understanding and support can make or break a partnership. Very often, programming is delivered in a teacher’s classroom during time she could otherwise use for planning, so it is critical to be respectful of her space and time. Getting permission to introduce Girls Inc. to teachers at a faculty meeting early in the partnership is a great way to build understanding and trust.

Some affiliates who deliver programming during the school day require that a teacher be present. Unlike after school programming, where it’s relatively straightforward to reset girls’ expectations and create an atmosphere that feels like Girls Inc., girls will tend to see school-day programming as a separate class. Facilitators who don’t have a teacher’s support will be responsible for managing classroom behavior and should be trained accordingly.

Parents and Parent Associations

**Comparable and Alternate Titles:** PTA, PTO

**Girls Inc. Points of Contact:** Program Directors, Outreach Coordinators, Site Coordinators, Facilitators

**Hats They May Wear:** Planner, Champion

**Motivating Data:** Attendance, Safety, Academics, Program Specific Results, Individual Stories

Parents have the clearest view of the difference Girls Inc. makes in their daughters’ lives, and are often excellent champions. Some districts and schools have strong parent organizations where this power is wielded directly and the organization’s support is enough to open the door for a partnership. Even a single passionate parent can make all the difference in gaining the trust and support of decision makers. Girls Inc. of the Pacific Northwest has institutionalized the practice of cultivating “super-volunteers” - parents and community members who want to see Girls Inc. in a local school, who are tasked with the doing
legwork of generating support and getting meetings with principals and other decision makers. They report that having the awareness and support of a community well before beginning programming makes for better relationships than partnerships that have begun because of grant funding or other outside decision making.

**Support Staff**

*Comparable and Alternate Titles:* Administrative Assistant, Custodian, Security Guard, many more  
*Girls Inc. Points of Contact:* Facilitators, Site Coordinators, Volunteers  
*Hats They May Wear:* Doer, Champion  
*Motivating Data:* Safety, Girls’ Stories

Anyone who has worked on a school partnership will say that there can be a world of difference between what’s been agreed to in an MOU and the reality of the first day of programming. A teacher may be surprised and annoyed about her classroom being used during her planning time, the “classroom” may turn out to be half of a noisy cafeteria, or there’s simply no access to space at the school. The administrative staff, custodians, security guards and support staff keep the school running and know how things get done. Cultivating good relationships with them by respecting their rules, request and workloads, and by working closely together, can make all the difference.

**Other Considerations**

Here are few other considerations that came up repeatedly in the Partnerships Survey and Case Study interviews:

- Don’t close doors: Relationships take time to build and may not come to fruition as expected, and today’s roadblock may not be there tomorrow. People also move from school to school and change positions - keep in mind there may be contact again later.

- Everyone plays a part: A volunteer facilitator who leaves a messy classroom can annoy a teacher and undo any work done to build a relationship with a principal.

- Become a part of the school community: Attend events whenever possible - Family Nights, PTA meetings, faculty meetings, and student assemblies are all opportunities to build relationships and support.
While School Partnerships offer considerable economic and logistical advantages for expansion, they also create formidable challenges which can only be overcome through careful planning, training and supervision. Unlike at a center, where staff are clustered together and can easily communicate and support one another, school-based staff are more isolated. They must be able to think on their feet and solve problems independently, with well-established lines of communication and supervision, partnerships will suffer.

**Staffing Structure**

The way program staff is structured is a function of the number of school partnerships, how many girls they serve, and the dosage of programming each girl receives. The simplest structure is an Affiliate Executive or Program Director directly supervising part- or full-time program facilitators at school sites. The demands of remote logistics and communication, however, quickly require greater staff resources as sites and girls are added, or dosage is increased. Consider the following two (partial) organizational charts:
Affiliate A maintains a thriving center, and relatively recently branched out to serving girls in schools. Their staff for school programming is relatively straightforward; the Outreach Director both oversees their partnerships and facilitates some programming herself, along with one full-time and two part-time facilitators whom she oversees. Programming takes place one day a week at each school, so the affiliate is able to serve girls at a dozen different schools with just four staff, two of whom are part time, though each girl participates for just one hour a week. The Outreach Director wears many hats, which at a larger affiliate would be split between a number of different positions.

Affiliate B provides an example of a more complex structure, delivering intensive programming to girls at five schools and once-a-week programming at an additional 20. At the five ‘intensive’ schools, Girls Inc. offers in- and after-school programming for every girl in the school. This requires each school to have its own Site Director, supported by an Education Specialist and Program Director. This group oversees a group of six to eight part- and full-time Program Specialists, who facilitate all programming. Each Site Director reports to the Vice President of Programs, who is assisted by the Director of Training and Development and the Teen Leadership Program Coordinator in supporting the Sites. With this structure, Affiliate B is able to offer the dosage and comprehensive programming usually found in a Girls Inc. Center. Their Outreach staff also provide programming to a number of other schools in a less intensive manner similar to Affiliate A.
These two examples range widely in size and scope, but they are both designed to address the same key needs:

- **Sufficient Staff** – The Affiliate Model prescribes a ratio of one staff member to 15 girls. This can be trickier to maintain across multiple sites, as both under- and over-recruitment will be problematic. Volunteer co-facilitators, or teachers during class periods, can help support larger group sizes. Coverage is also a huge concern. Have a plan for substitute facilitators both for planned and unexpected absences, and in the latter case, a prior agreement with each school site on how to proceed if a facilitator must cancel last minute due to emergency.

- **Training and Supervision** - Providing regular training and oversight to program staff is more difficult when they are spread over more locations. In a smaller structure, this may still be relatively straightforward and piggyback on the regular training and supervision schedule already established at a Center. When programming is held at different times in Center and school sites, or when sites are far apart, supervision may not coordinate neatly, and must be planned for separately. Phone and video conferencing may be helpful for remote staff, but should not entirely substitute for in-person supervision. As staff and partnerships grow, more deliberate planning and structure are needed to ensure that frontline staff have sufficient opportunities to learn, receive feedback, and connect with their peers.

- **Communication and Troubleshooting** - Effective communication poses the greatest day-to-day challenge for delivering programming in schools, particularly as the number of sites and staff members increase. As intermediate positions are added and the chain of command from Program Director to Facilitator gets longer, it becomes harder for the Program Director and others to receive timely information about challenges at individual school sites and intervene accordingly. This is especially true of issues that may not be urgent, but which do ultimately require attention, e.g. lagging attendance at a site. Work to ensure that frontline staff a) have regular formal and informal opportunities to check in with a supervisor, and b) understand when and how to escalate an issue to someone who may be better able to intervene with a principal or other school personnel.

- **Stewardship** - With a program staff that is well-structured, and well-trained, everyone from the Program Director to volunteers is situated to go beyond their everyday responsibilities and work to cultivate more and better relationships at all levels. See the section on Key Relationships for more.

As the affiliate expands, utilize planning periods to evaluate how well the functions above are being performed, and consider adding staff to support if people are stretched too thin.

**Key Staff and Board**

**Board Members**

*Comparable and Alternate Titles:* n/a  
*School Points of Contact:* Usually none, in some cases Superintendent or Principal  
*Hats They May Wear:* Planner, Champion

The Board, in its role in setting organizational strategy with the Executive, may play a part in directing an expansion plan to new schools and communities. Be careful in drawing a line, however, between governance and operations, and keep the business of selecting specific schools on the ground with program staff where it belongs. It’s worth considering recruiting a board member with direct ties to the local School District; this can help in opening doors and securing funding for partnerships.
Executive Director

**Comparable and Alternate Titles:** CEO

**School Points of Contact:** Superintendent or Principal

**Hats They May Wear:** Decision Maker, Supervisor, Planner, Champion

At an affiliate with the capacity to take on multiple school partnerships, the role of the Executive should be relatively limited. The affiliate Executive will play a decisive role in shaping the affiliate’s expansion strategy, and will supervise the Program Director and other senior positions. It is also appropriate to have an affiliate Executive meet and negotiate initial agreements with Principals and Superintendents, but at some larger affiliates, even this is delegated entirely to the Program Director.

Program Directors

**Comparable and Alternate Titles:** Director of Operations

**School Points of Contact:** Superintendents, Principals, Counselors and Social Workers, After-school Coordinators

**Hats They May Wear:** Decision Maker, Supervisor, Planner, Champion

The Program Director is commonly the key leader driving an affiliate’s partnerships, but the job description varies considerably based on an affiliate’s size. At a smaller affiliate, the Program Director may facilitate programming when necessary, but those responsibilities are soon eclipsed by supervisory duties as staff grows. At the largest affiliates, the Program Director sets the overall strategy for partnerships, negotiates MOUs, and supervises a staff that trains facilitators and coordinates programming across dozens of sites.

Partnerships Coordinator

**Comparable and Alternate Titles:** Outreach Coordinator

**School Points of Contact:** Principals, After-school Coordinators, Counselors and Social Workers

**Hats They May Wear:** Supervisor, Facilitator, Champion

The role played by an Outreach Coordinator depends on the size of the affiliate and the number of school partners. In a smaller setting, she is likely to facilitate some or even all of the programming offered at school sites, while overseeing the hiring of facilitators and the day-to-day logistics of making sure both schools and facilitators are upholding the terms of the MOU and troubleshooting any issues. At the largest affiliates, she may oversee a number of Site Coordinators who are each responsible for the day-to-day oversight of multiple schools. At Girls Inc. of New York City, where the affiliate is fully embedded in several partner schools which each have a full staff, the Outreach Program Director and Outreach Coordinator oversee a distinct set of school where less intensive partnerships take place.

Site Coordinator

**Comparable and Alternate Titles:** Site Director

**School Points of Contact:** Principals, After-school Coordinators, Counselors and Social Workers, Teachers

**Hats They May Wear:** Supervisor, Facilitator, Champion

The Site Coordinator manages a number of facilitators at one site, or across several, and may also facilitate some of the programming. Often, the role is similar to that of the Outreach Coordinator at a smaller affiliate. In other cases, the Site Coordinator is responsible for multiple staff in a deeper partnership at a single school.
**Program Facilitator**

**Comparable and Alternate Titles:** Part-time Facilitator  
**School Points of Contact:** Principals, After-school Coordinators, Counselors and Social Workers, Teachers  
**Hats They May Wear:** Facilitator, Champion

While the requirements for being a trained and successful Girls Inc. facilitator have been described extensively in the Affiliate Model and the Program Planning Toolkit (LINKS) there are some significant differences in delivering programming at a school site rather than a center. Facilitators who have transitioned from a center to a school site have reported some culture shock at entering an environment where they may be the lone day-to-day representative of Girls Inc., rather than being surrounded by peers and colleagues. School facilitators have to be able to think and solve problems on their feet, for example when the expected space is unavailable or proves unsatisfactory. They also need to interact with and influence nearly the full range of school personnel described above, who have their own priorities and operate in a separate chain of command. Facilitators, particularly if they work alone at a particular school, are the eyes and ears of the partnership, and need to know when to communicate challenges while they are still manageable. When training new facilitators, or facilitators transitioning from center-based to school-based programming, be sure to prepare them for the particular responsibilities of facilitating programming in schools.

Planning time is also very different at a school site: it’s important to consider that a school-based facilitator needs time and space to plan their programming, and needs to be compensated for both planning time and travel between sites. If the school cannot provide space for the facilitator’s planning time, an alternate arrangement must be reached.

**Training Director**

**Comparable and Alternate Titles:** Volunteer Coordinator  
**School Points of Contact:** n/a  
**Hats They May Wear:** Supervisor, Planner, Facilitator, Champion

This is another role that would fall under the responsibilities of a Program Director at a smaller affiliate, but can grow to be a full time job when there are many facilitators spread across multiple sites. In addition to the usual training requirements for facilitating Girls Inc. programming, Directors training staff for school sites should ensure that those facilitators are know how to work independently, think on their feet, and interact successfully with a variety of school personnel.

Many affiliates have a traditional Volunteer Coordinator, responsible volunteers for one-time and ongoing opportunities to support programming and requiring minimal training. However, when an affiliate uses volunteers to facilitate Girls Inc. programming (see below), the Volunteer Coordinator may have a role more akin to a Training Director.
Volunteer Facilitators

Comparable and Alternate Titles: Program Intern
School Points of Contact: After School Coordinator, Teacher, Support Staff
Hats They May Wear: Facilitator, Champion

Having trained, professional facilitators to deliver programming is a hallmark of the Girls Inc. Experience. While the economic reasons for using volunteers as facilitators is obvious, the risks to the quality of programming and the full Girls Inc. Experience, and by extension, the organization’s reputation, are considerable. As a national organization, the Girls Inc. standard model requires that trained, paid staff serve as the primary facilitators deliver Girls Inc. programming, and are entrusted with the responsibility to develop lasting, mentoring relationships with the girls served. Trained and committed volunteers can and do serve as co-facilitators to trained staff at affiliates network-wide.
School-based programming provides a critical, cost-effective path to network-wide growth, but it also creates pressure to compromise on critical programming standards as outlined in the Affiliate Model. Not every partnership will be perfect, especially in its early stages, but the following framework can help to negotiate and implement better partnerships:

- **Best Practices** lead directly to the delivery of a high-quality Girls Inc. Experience, reflective of what one would expect to find at a well-run Girls Inc. Center.
- **Recommended Practices** reflect some level of compromise or adaptation, but have been employed successfully by affiliates to meet the core standards for programming in the Affiliate Model.
- **Not Recommended practices** compromise one or more core standards. The compromise in question may be practical and understandable, and, in some cases, potentially necessary to get a foot in the door with a new partner. We do, however, recommend taking a hard look at these practices and negotiating improvements over time.

The following chart summarizes our recommendations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selection of Partners</th>
<th>Best Practice</th>
<th>Recommended Practice</th>
<th>Not Recommended</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partner schools serve high need, low-income communities; schools are selected as part of a coherent growth strategy with a pathway model so that girls can participate from kindergarten through high school</td>
<td>Partner schools serve high need, low-income communities</td>
<td>Schools are chosen haphazardly or for ease in developing a partnership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space</td>
<td>Dedicated Girls Inc. room or rooms with signage</td>
<td>Regular use of classrooms or other private rooms. Teachers understand and value Girls Inc. presence</td>
<td>Cafeterias, gyms, and other public or semipublic spaces where programming can be interrupted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storage space for computer equipment, materials, and records. A Girls Inc. office, in schools with multiple Girls Inc. programs and facilitators</td>
<td>Storage space for records and materials</td>
<td>Arrangements with no storage space for files or materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Best Practice</strong></td>
<td><strong>Recommended Practice</strong></td>
<td><strong>Not Recommended</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Staffing</strong></td>
<td>All staff and volunteers undergo formal onboarding process, receive regular training, and regular, scheduled supervision; there is a clear process to report and elevate any issues; there is a plan and staff in place to cover for facilitators in the case of unexpected absences</td>
<td>All staff and volunteers are onboarded and trained and receive regular supervision; it is clear how and to whom to report issues; unexpected facilitator absences can usually be covered; regular all-staff meetings are held with center and school-based staff</td>
<td>Onboarding is informal; staff and volunteers aren’t regularly trained; issues are likely to go unreported; there is no clear plan to cover for unexpected absences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dosage</strong></td>
<td>Girls are able to participate in 50+ hours of Girls Inc. programming per year, solely through regular attendance in school programming</td>
<td>Girls can reach 50+ hours of programming with school programming if supplemented by summer programming, in-service days, or special workshops</td>
<td>Many participating girls have no clear path to 50+ hours of programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration</strong></td>
<td>Girls can continue to attend Girls Inc. year after year at their school, and through a Pathway Model are able to participate as they advance to middle or high school</td>
<td>Girls can continue to attend Girls Inc. year after year at their school</td>
<td>Service is not continuous by grade, or Girls Inc. does not partner consistently every year; a girl may attend one year without the option to come back the next</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Core Essential Services</strong></td>
<td>All girls who attend for a year receive the equivalent of a full curriculum in each CES area</td>
<td>All girls who attend for a full year receive some programming from each CES area</td>
<td>Girls are likely to participate in a single program or CES area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Data</strong></td>
<td>Girls Inc. has access to contact information and demographic data from participating girls; 80% or more of girls take the SSBOS each year; Girls Inc. has access to grades, attendance and disciplinary data from the school; above data plus program attendance are logged in Trax</td>
<td>Girls Inc. has access to contact information and demographic data from participating girls; 80% or more of girls take the SSBOS each year; data is logged in Trax</td>
<td>Girls Inc. has only contact information; affiliate does not track girls with Trax or participate in SSBOS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Girls Inc. Network has embraced significant change as affiliates strive to bring the Girls Inc. Experience to many more girls. Measuring girls’ outcomes through the SSBOS, adopting an ambitious Bold Goal, aligning vision and practices with the Affiliate Model, understanding the needs and interests of external partners and using data to inform decision-making all ensure that girls’ strengths and needs are at the center of our work. Going to where girls are – schools – is the key growth strategy affiliates teach us.

This Guide is part of an effort to examine our current practices, reach more of the girls who need us the most, and provide them with a transformative Girls Inc. Experience.

It is a first step in developing a model for effectively delivering the Girls Inc. Experience in a school setting. A second volume, currently in planning stages, is forthcoming, and will more deeply examine best practices for planning programming tailored to the school calendar, training school based facilitators, and using SSBOS data to support partnerships, among other topics. We look forward to continuing to advance our practice as a network and growing to serve more girls through school partnerships.
APPENDIX A: RESOURCE CHECKLIST

This checklist is designed to help your affiliate gather important information about a potential school partner and any data that can help to make the case for a partnership and provide a guide to where this information is located. This checklist is divided into three sections: Get to Know the Market, Get to Know Partners, and Making the Case for a Partnership.

For more details on researching a potential partner, refer back to Chapter IV of the School Partnerships Guide, Know the Market and Partners.

Get to know the market:
• Title I Schools
• Distressed Communities
• Communities of Poverty

Get to know partners:
• General Information: School/District Websites
  - School/District Mission Statement and/or Strategic Plan
  - Academic calendar and schedule
  - School/District-Wide Policies
  - Other organizations the school partners with in your community

• Demographics: This information will help determine if a partnership with a school will help an affiliate serve girls in the community who need Girls Inc. most. If a potential partner is a public school in the United States, run a report using the Common Core of Data and the Civil Rights Data Collection Tool. These reports will show you:
  - Number of (girl) students enrolled
  - Racial and ethnic composition of the school
  - If the school receives Title I funding
  - Number of English Language Learner (ELL) students
  - Students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)
  - Age and grade ranges of students served
  - Number of students receiving Free or Reduced lunch

Some of this information may be available for U.S. private schools; run a similar report using the Private School Universe Survey search tool. School and district websites also may provide demographic information.

Making the case for a partnership with Girls Inc.:
• Student Outcomes: Various sources
  - Outcomes for students of various ages: NCES (United States); TIMMS and PISA (many countries—includes US and Canada)
  - Test scores: your state’s/province’s department of education
    (Tests can include SAT, ACT, (US) Statewide assessments, Advanced Placement, Canadian Achievement Test/Provincial Achievement Test)
  - Graduation Rates: Your state’s/province’s department of education
- **School Report Cards and Other Measures of Success**: School/district website. For example, the Los Angeles Unified School District publishes the [LA Unified School District Scorecard](http://www.lausd.net/scorecard) to highlight district-wide performance on key areas of success.

- **Retention rates**: [Civil Rights Data Collection](http://www.civilrightsdata.org)

- **Rate of disciplinary incidents**: [Civil Rights Data Collection](http://www.civilrightsdata.org)

- **Community Information**: This information can help position Girls Inc. as a partner that can help the school/district meet the needs of girls in the community.

- **Youth Health and Risk Factors**: [Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance](http://yrbss.cdc.gov) (United States), [Canadian Student Tobacco, Alcohol, and Drugs Survey](http://www.canadianstudenttobacco.com) (Canada)

- **Community Demographics and Poverty**: [American Fact Finder](http://factfinder.census.gov) (US) [Distressed Communities Index](http://www.distressedcommunities.org) (US), [National Household Survey](http://www.census.gc.ca) (Canada)

### Additional Sources of Information:

- [Common Core of Data](http://www.coreofdata.com) (United States)
- [Civil Rights Data Collection](http://www.civilrightsdata.org) (United States)
- [Pan-Canadian Indicators Program](http://www.pancanadiansurvey.ca) (Canada)
- Your state/province’s department of education
- [GLSEN School Climate Survey](http://www.glsen.org) (Data for 30 US states)
- School/district surveys for students and parents (examples: [Seattle Public Schools School Climate Survey](http://www.seattleschools.org), [NYC School Survey](http://nyc放学.org), [Toronto District School Board Parent and Student Census](http://www.tdsb.org))
- School/district websites
- Local education databases (example: New York City’s [InsideSchools](http://www.insideschools.com))
- State or local school board meeting minutes
- School/district social media pages
- PTA meeting minutes
- Local news station coverage of the school/district

For further information about using these or other sources of data, please contact the Research and Evaluation Department at [research@girlsinc.org](mailto:research@girlsinc.org).
APPENDIX B: SAMPLE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

Girls Inc. of and [SCHOOL NAME]

This Memorandum of Understanding establishes an agreement for services between Girls Inc. of ________________, and [SCHOOL NAME, SCHOOL DISTRICT], in support of Girls Inc.’s [CENTER AT SCHOOL] at [SCHOOL NAME].

The parties agree to collaborate as follows:

Girls Inc. of ________________ agrees to the following:

1. Serve as lead service provider at ________________ for [enumerate girls/grades], with programs open from [TIME] (except for designated staff professional development days). This program will include:
   a. [Enumerate any specific programming to deliver per your agreement with the school. Ensure that overall program plan delivers the Girls Inc. experience, covering each domain: Strong, Smart and Bold]
   b. [Enumerate what the staffing structure for the program will be and a broad overview of their roles]

2. [Enumerate daytime or auxiliary services to be providing: recess time programming, health class curriculum, professional development opportunities for school staff.]

3. To maintain ongoing, open communication with school administration, teachers and staff. [Codify any specific points of check-in that you have agreed upon, and specifics on who will be communicating with whom.]

4. [Enumerate how space, safety, keys, materials will be handled. For example: To establish and maintain the check out and use of keys for after-school spaces provided; to respect and maintain cleanliness of classroom spaces; To provide materials and supplies for program activities.]

5. [Specify who is responsible for generating needed parent authorizations for student data that will be shared, outcomes survey participation, field trips, media, etc…]

6. [Specify frequency and content of evaluation reports to be provided to school.]

7. [Enumerate any specific goals articulated by the school re: program content areas, outcomes sought.]

_______________ School agrees to the following:

1. To provide appropriate space [DAYS PER WEEK, NUMBER OF GIRLS], including appropriate space for after school family events and dedicated office space plus storage.

2. To provide access to adult restrooms and internet access for Girls Inc. staff. [Also enumerate key access, hours of building access, janitorial services for Girls Inc. rooms, etc… here]

3. To provide a daily snack that meets appropriate federal/state requirements
4. To provide access to outdoor space/athletic facilities, and kitchen space on an as-needed basis, with prior arrangement with school leadership.
5. To provide access to transportation for girls from school to home.
6. Willingness to underwrite [\% or flat $ or per girl $] to cover costs of Girls Inc. programming.
7. To provide a forum for both staff orientation and parent orientation meetings.
8. To provide Girls Inc. with relevant student data including state test results, student identification numbers, report cards, end of year GPAs and school attendance records.
9. To meet with Girls Inc. [enumerate who and how often meetings will take place, including pre-programming meetings at the start of school year or semester.]
10. To list Girls Inc. of _____________ as a partner on the school website and in parent/community materials, and allow visible Girls Inc. signage in the school building.

**Terms of Agreement:**
The term of this agreement is the 20__-__ school year. The agreement can be renegotiated by either party’s initiation, and must be amended in writing. This agreement can be expanded and refined over the term of the agreement at the mutual consent of the parties.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Representative</th>
<th>Girls Inc. Representative</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Title:</td>
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<td>Date:</td>
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<td>Signature:</td>
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Inspiring all girls to be strong, smart, and bold