OHIO'S COMMUNITY CONNECTORS PROGRAM

by Amy Cummings

FOREWORD

This first contribution to the series by Amy Cummings analyzes a state-level initiative designed to expand student mentoring: Ohio's "Community Connectors" grant program. A handful of key decisions made by the program's creators brings to the surface some of the most important issues government leaders will face when trying to use policy to strengthen civil society. For example, Community Connectors used a competitive-grant approach instead of formula-based funding or state-level mandates. A school district had to be a member of an applying partnership, but a nonprofit had to be the lead. Each partnership also had to include at least one faith-based group. Such decisions empowered a wide array of non-governmental bodies to use different approaches to accomplish a state-identified goal. Likewise, a number of the program's challenges—how to engage small, low-capacity nonprofits; how to ensure results from new nonprofits created in response to the grant program; how to maintain civil-society engagement in the issue when government funding ends—highlight crucial questions policymakers should try to answer before launching any new program.

— Andy Smarick

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Despite efforts in recent decades to raise test scores and graduation rates, today's youth are increasingly disconnected from their schools and communities, and lack mentorship that could help them be more connected and successful. In 2014, Ohio's Governor John Kasich, along with State Superintendent Richard Ross, created the Community Connectors grant program to encourage community organizations to partner to provide mentoring services to young people, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Although the program is ending in 2019, during its short life, it provided 172 partnerships with a total of $36 million in grants to mentor tens of thousands of Ohio students. Community Connectors required that nonprofits—not school districts—serve as partnership leads, and required that a faith-based group be included in every partnership. Moreover, the program had to take extra measures to ensure small nonprofits participated, and it learned that newly started nonprofits could struggle to meet the program's requirements. The program's cessation after only three budget cycles demonstrates the benefits and costs of temporary government programs that aim to catalyze civil society rather than funding a cause in perpetuity.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, the education community has been laser focused on policies and reforms aimed at increasing test scores and graduation rates. In the wake of The No Child Left Behind Act (signed into law in 2002), which increased schools' accountability for student outcomes, states and districts implemented sweeping changes to areas like standards, assessments and teacher evaluation.

Nevertheless, approximately one in eight youth (or about 4.6 million young people aged 16 to 24) are considered "disconnected" from their schools and communities.[1] Although the proliferation of technology and social media has allowed youth to be constantly connected online, headlines like "'Disconnected Youth' Is a Growing Crisis" and "Millennials, Generation Z: Connected with Thousands of Friends—But Feeling All Alone" indicate that these connections do not necessarily spill over to the real world.[2]

Today's young people also appear to lack guidance in setting educational, career and personal goals. In 2014, Civic Enterprises conducted a nationally representative survey of 18- to 21-year-olds to learn about their perspectives on mentoring and found that over a third had never had an adult mentor.[3] This means that approximately 16 million young people grew up lacking mentorship, including nine million at-risk youth.

1 out of 8 are considered "disconnected" from their schools and communities.

This is cause for concern, as research indicates that mentoring can be beneficial for young people, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds. For example, the same Civic Enterprises study found that mentored youth are more likely to aspire to and enroll in college, participate in sports and extracurriculars, hold leadership positions and volunteer in their communities.[4]

[1] Michelle Chen, "'Disconnected Youth' Is a Growing Crisis," The Nation, Feb. 28, 2019.

[2] Ibid; Sharon Jayson, "Millennials, Generation Z: Connected with Thousands of Friends, But Feeling All Alone," USA Today, March 7, 2019.

[3] Mary Bruce and John Bridgeland, The Mentoring Effect: Young People's Perspectives on the Outcomes and Availability of Mentoring, MENTOR, January 2014.

[4] Ibid

A 2011 meta-analysis from the Association for Psychological Science came to similar conclusions: Mentoring improved behavioral, social, emotional and academic outcomes for young people.[5] In 2002, Child Trends reviewed experimentally designed evaluations of local and national youth mentoring programs and found that young people involved in these programs were "likely to have fewer absences from school, better attitudes towards school [...] less drug and alcohol use, more positive attitudes toward their elders and toward helping in general, and improved relationships with their parents."[6] Further, they found these benefits were greatest among disadvantaged youth.

The same year the Civic Enterprises report came out, Ohio's then-Governor John Kasich saw an opportunity to increase mentorship opportunities, especially for at-risk youth. This led him to create, in conjunction with then-State Superintendent Richard Ross, Ohio's Community Connectors program, which has since provided more than $36 million in grants to 172 unique partnerships of community organizations to provide mentoring services to tens of thousands of young people across the state. Unlike most recent educational initiatives, Community Connectors was not directly aimed at improving test scores or graduation rates. Instead, it was intended to motivate students in a broader sense and help them see a positive future by connecting them with role models in their community.

Governor Kasich and Superintendent Ross also viewed Community Connectors as an opportunity to spur civil-society activity in Ohio by encouraging new and existing community organizations to come together to mentor students. By encouraging and supporting these partnerships, the Governor's Office and the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) hoped not only to improve the education, health and workforce readiness of Ohio youth, but also to bring communities together in a new way. As Esquire explained of the initiative: "Ohio's approach recognizes that great mentoring can be at 'the heart of it all.'"[7]

Community Connectors is expiring at the end of its current grant period (funded in fiscal year 2019), which offers an opportunity to reflect on the program and whether it fulfilled its mission to connect people to their communities through mentorship and enliven non-governmental activity throughout the state.

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[5] David L. DuBois et al., "How Effective Are Mentoring Programs for Youth? A Systematic Assessment of the Evidence," Psychological Science in the Public Interest 12 (2009), pp. 57-91.

[6] Susan M. Jekielek et al., Mentoring: A Promising Strategy for Youth Development, Child Trends, February 2002.

[7] "Mentoring," Community Connectors, last accessed Oct. 22, 2019.

THE COMMUNITY CONNECTORS PROGRAM

Community Connectors was a state-level program in Ohio that awarded three-to-one matching grants to partnerships of community organizations to provide mentoring services to students. For each dollar a partnership raised for its mentoring program, the state would contribute three dollars. In order to apply for a grant, Community Connectors partnerships had to consist of at least three different entities—a business, a faith-based organization and a school district—though most partnerships involved an array of different groups in addition to these requirements, including local parent networks, volunteer organizations and other community organizations.

Community Connectors was intended to bring these groups together to "strengthen communities, encourage mentoring opportunities and create new pathways for civic engagement that will result in higher educational achievement, higher levels of well-being and health, and workforce readiness" across Ohio.[8] According to the ODE: "The goal is to help students get excited about their future—to be encouraged to dream big—and to learn what it takes to put their dreams and goals into action."[9]

[8] "About," Community Connectors, last accessed Oct. 22, 2019.
[9] Ibid.

In his 2014 State of the State Address, Gov. Kasich said:

> " *The power of mentorship holds a great promise to help us better connect our communities with our schools, and lift up our educators and our kids. We can show them why learning matters, we can teach them about workplace culture and professional etiquette. We can help them appreciate how important good character is to success in life as well as values like hard work, discipline, and personal responsibility—all of which can help motivate and inspire them to find their purpose and reach for the stars.*[10]

The Community Connectors program was jointly established by the Governor's Office and the ODE through two key policy documents. The first was an amendment to Ohio House Bill 483. In 2014, Ohio's 130th General Assembly amended Section 263.320 of House Bill 483 to allot $10 million in the state budget for the State Superintendent of Public Instruction to create the Career Advising and Mentoring Program.[11] This was an addition to the state budget—in other words, it was not funded through cuts to other areas—and would be up for renewal annually. The money was to be awarded through competitive matching grants to partnerships of community organizations that provided mentoring services to students in eligible school districts, as defined by the state superintendent.

The second key policy document was Executive Order 2014-05K, which was signed by Kasich on Nov. 3, 2014, and established the Community Connector and Mentoring Program Advisory Board.[12] Its job was to develop the guidelines of the program and to review potential grant recipients.

The House Bill 483 amendment and accompanying executive order are the only two policy documents detailing the Community Connectors program (i.e., it is not authorized through other statutes, nor is it embedded in a new, official bureaucracy). This decision to be lean was intentional, as the program was not designed to create a large, permanent role for government in mentoring, but instead to spur civil-society activity by providing seed money and giving community partnerships flexibility for innovation in designing their mentoring programs.

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[10] Community Connectors, "Kasich Signs Executive Order 2014-05K, Creating Advisor Board for Ohio's New School Mentorship Program," Press Release, Nov. 3, 2014.
[11] Am. Sub. H.B. 483, 130th General Assembly (Ohio 2014).
[12] "Kasich Signs Executive Order 2014-05K."

CHANGES TO COMMUNITY CONNECTORS OVER TIME

There were minor changes to the Community Connectors program over time. There were three budget biennial cycles from which funding came for the program and four corresponding rounds of grants. In the first round, which spanned fiscal year (FY) 2014-2015, the state allotted $10 million for Community Connectors grants, which were awarded in fiscal year 2016. In the next budget cycle, which spanned FY 2016-2017, the state allotted another $20 million for the program, with $10 million awarded in fiscal year 2017 (for round two) and $10 million in fiscal year 2018 (for round three). In the FY 2018-2019 budget cycle, the program's budget was cut to $8 million, all of which was awarded in fiscal year 2019 (for round four).

This budget cut in the final year of Community Connectors was further complicated by changes in the amount of grant money for which each applicant could apply. In the first three rounds, applicants could request up to $100,000. In the final round, they could request up to $150,000. This combination of less money overall and higher potential award amounts meant that fewer partnerships could earn grants. In the first three rounds, 118, 108 and 116 partnerships were awarded grant money, respectively. In the final round, 71 partnerships were awarded grants.

THE POLICYMAKING PROCESS

Governor Kasich was the primary initiator of the Community Connectors program and was highly involved in its creation. He was concerned that too many young people lacked adult role models, and wanted every child, regardless of socioeconomic status, to have access to a mentor. His office therefore worked closely with ODE to launch the program in 2014.

The Governor's Office and ODE also worked with a number of outside groups to shape the program. For instance, they consulted with existing mentoring organizations, such as the Cincinnati Youth Collaborative, to develop an understanding of what good mentorship looks like. They also worked with other state-level departments, including the Department of Aging, the Department of Job and Family Services, the Department of Health, the Department of Mental Health and the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, to determine who the program should target and how to get different groups involved in mentoring.

Community Connectors' supporters and critics did not fall along party lines as one might expect. In general, the program's purpose enjoyed support. Criticism was generally directed at one particular element of the program: the requirement that a faith-based organization be one of the partners in Community Connectors grant applications. A great deal of attention focused on the concern that state dollars would be used by religious organizations to proselytize. Soon after the program was announced, the Cleveland Plain Dealer, for example, ran an article with the headline, "Schools Need a Religious Partner If They Want Any of Gov. Kasich's Student Mentorship Money."[13] The following year,

[13] Patrick O'Donnell, "Schools Need a Religious Partner If They Want Any of Gov. Kasich's Student Mentorship Money," Cleveland Plain Dealer, Dec. 12, 2014.

the same outlet published a report that found that just 16 of the 118 partnerships awarded grants in the first round of Community Connectors were non-religious. This lead Church & State Magazine to run an article written by the staff of Americans United for Separation of Church and State declaring, "Ohio Mentoring Program Gives Most Funds to Religious Groups, Says Report."[14]

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) went so far as to say the program may be unconstitutional. In an early statement, the ACLU said Kasich and Ross "injected religious criteria" into the program and that "conditioning a public school's receipt of government funds on collaboration with a religious organization raises serious constitutional concerns."[15] Although school districts could not serve as a lead applicant for a Community Connectors grant, and therefore did not directly receive state dollars through the program, the concern of critics was that students might receive religiously oriented services through programs funded by the state.

The ODE responded by modifying the language of the program, acknowledging that Community Connectors was not designed to proselytize using public money. Rather, many of Ohio's rural communities are home to strong churches and religious organizations that are deeply ingrained in the community, and the ODE wanted to encourage these groups to become involved in mentoring. Hence, it adopted a loose definition of faith-based organizations as "those whose mission is based on the belief that every child's life has a purpose and that instilling values such as hard work, discipline, and personal responsibility are necessary for ensuring that purpose is fulfilled."[16] This meant that organizations did not have to be affiliated with organized religion to meet the faith-based requirement; they just had to show in their application that their mission was focused on finding and nurturing a sense of worth in every child.

This new definition, however, did not satisfy all critics. In particular, the ACLU expressed concern over whether this truly removed the religious requirement, saying: "The new language regarding what type of group qualifies for their faith-based requirement is purposely vague and confusing." However, they adopted a "wait-and-see attitude to assess the program" and never moved forward with official legal action."[17]

[14] AU Admin, "Ohio Mentoring Program Gives Most Funds to Religious Groups, Says Report," Church & State Magazine, January 2016.

[15] Patrick O'Donnell, "ACLU of Ohio Says State Can't 'Inject Religious Criteria' Into Gov. Kasich's Student Mentoring Program," Cleveland Plain Dealer, Dec. 17, 2014.

[16] "FAQs," Community Connectors, last accessed Oct. 22, 2019. **Note:** Since the program has expired, various parts of its website, including the FAQs, are no longer available. The links in this (and subsequent) notes are therefore to the page where the information was originally found.

[17] "ACLU Skeptical of Changes to Kasich's Mentorship Program," ACLU Ohio, Jan. 16, 2015.

COMMUNITY CONNECTORS
AND CIVIL-SOCIETY ACTIVITY

Community Connectors grants went to partnerships serving students in fifth through 12th grade in low-performing, high-poverty schools, which the ODE defined as those with at least 40 percent economically disadvantaged students and/or a graduation rate below 92 percent.[18] The grant money was distributed through a reimbursement process and had to be spent on expenses directly related to the partnership's proposed mentoring program, which could include grant administration, safety, training and essential supplies. One of the biggest differences between Community Connectors and other ODE programs was that the money did not go directly to school districts. Instead, the idea was to encourage greater activity among local nonprofits.

Community Connectors grants were awarded in four rounds, detailed above. In the first round, awarded in July 2015, 118 partnerships received a total of $9,498,225. In the second round, awarded in July 2016, 108 partnerships received a total of $9,308,356. In the third round, awarded in July 2017, 116 partnerships received a total of $9,953,647; and in the final round, awarded in July 2018, 71 partnerships received a total of $7,988,504. In total, 172 unique partnerships were awarded $36,748,734 in Community Connectors grants over the duration of the program.

Partnerships had to reapply for grant money on an annual basis, and there was no advantage to being a recurring applicant. Twenty-six partnerships were awarded grants in all four rounds, 43 were awarded grants in three rounds, 35 in two rounds and 68 in one

[18] "FAQs."
[19] Ibid

round. Further, organizations could apply for multiple grants, and there was not a limit to the number of projects that any one organization could submit for funding.

To be considered for a grant, partnerships submitted applications through the Community Connectors website.[20] Applications had to consist of at least three different partners, one of which served as the lead applicant. Lead applicants could be community or values-based organizations, businesses or other nonprofits. Each application had to include a business partner, a faith-based organization and a school district, though the school district could not serve as the lead applicant. Some partnerships included more than one school district.

To assess applications, the ODE hired evaluators who were trained on a scoring rubric. Three reviewers scored each application, including a reviewer from the education, nonprofit and business perspective. Reviewers were trained to look for five key elements in potential grant recipients' applications. First, the application had to show how the proposed mentoring program met Community Connectors' five core principles: setting goals to be prepared for twenty-first century careers; building character; developing pathways to achievement; building a sense of resiliency; and believing in a positive future.[21] Second, it had to propose a clear budget and explain how the program would be sustainable. Third, it had to demonstrate evidence of a strong partnership and a plan for recruiting volunteer mentors. Fourth, it had to propose a clear and high-quality mentoring process, including everything from incorporating mentoring best practices to ensuring student safety. Lastly, it had to include a plan for evaluating the success of the program and explain how the program was both realistic and aligned with the vision of Community Connectors.

Grant recipients varied widely, and partners ranged from small, local organizations to large, well-known nonprofits. However, in the first year of the grant program, the awards tended toward larger nonprofit organizations as opposed to the smaller community groups the state wanted to involve. This was apparently due to the larger organizations' greater capacity and experience in the grant-application process. This led the ODE to become more intentional about encouraging smaller organizations

[20] "Apply," Community Connectors, last accessed Oct. 22, 2019.
[21] "About."

to apply for grants, and they made efforts to market the program across the state in places like community centers and churches. The ODE also provided technical assistance to these smaller organizations on everything from bookkeeping, to setting realistic goals and targets for their mentoring programs, to how to submit their online application.

The state did not prefer any particular partnership "model." The Department's view was that local communities have a better understanding of their needs and resources than the state, so they allowed flexibility for a number of approaches to emerge. The majority of partnerships involved existing community organizations that came together to co-design mentoring programs. Often, these organizations had not previously worked together closely—Community Connectors offered the chance for them to do so. In some instances, community partnerships already existed, and Community Connectors enabled these partnerships to launch a mentoring program. Other times, an organization already provided mentoring services, and Community Connectors provided the opportunity for them to partner with other organizations in the community.

There was also variation in the ways partnerships engaged students. Some targeted high-school juniors and seniors as they prepared to enter college or the workforce. Others worked with middle schoolers in the early stages of career exploration and continued with the students throughout high school. Other times, the partnership did not target a particular group of students and instead had an open call for any students who wanted to participate. In most cases, the partnerships relied heavily on their school-district partner, consulting with guidance counselors and teachers to identify and invite students to become involved in their mentoring program.

One program, Elyria Teens Achieve Success, was focused on high-school freshman and was created by a former Elyria High School teacher and the executive director of a youth outreach group called Save Our Children, the lead applicant on the grant.[22] The local Boys and Girls Club housed the program, which met three times a week for three hours and focused on college and career exploration, leadership development and community service. Elyria Teens Achieve Success received $75,000 from Community Connectors, along with $25,000 from a third-party organization, to provide mentoring services to 48 freshmen: 24 boys and 24 girls. The program worked closely with Elyria High School to identify students that could most benefit from mentoring. The partnership included Save Our Children, Elyria Schools, Elyria YMCA, Effective Leadership Academy, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Lorain County and the Boys and Girls Club of Lorain County. These organizations were all established in the Elyria community, and all previously provided services to local youth, but Community Connectors funding enabled them to collaborate on mentoring activities for local students.

Another successful partnership, the Kenton Professional Mentoring and Leadership Initiative, targeted a wider range of students and structured the progression of its mentoring services based on the varying needs of students at different grade levels. The program's partners consisted of the Hardin County Chamber and Business Alliance (HCCBA), Quest Federal Credit Union, Hardin County Ministerial Association (HCMA), EnvisionEdPlus and Kenton City Schools; the collaborative was awarded $100,000 to mentor 250 students in grades five through 12. In grades five and six, HCCBA members visited students and conducted informal mentoring, and at-risk students received 1:1 mentoring on academic and social-emotional skills through Club ROAR and HCMA. In grades seven through 10, 1:1 mentoring was expanded for at-risk students and informal mentoring was deepened through asset-based clubs and activities. Students also began attending college visits and industry tours. In grades 11 and 12, students participated in an internship and capstone program, conducted job shadowing and attended job fairs.

[22] Lisa Roberson, "Elyria Youth Outreach Group Earns $100,000 Grant," Community Connectors, July 11, 2015.

> More than 97 percent of these students lived in poverty, 70 percent had reported family histories of alcohol abuse and 56 percent had reported family histories of drug abuse.

The Hardin Community, Lima City and Perry Schools program focused its efforts on students who fell behind. Big Brothers Big Sisters of West Central Ohio housed the program, and partnered with the Hardin County Common Pleas Court's Juvenile Division, the Hardin County Sheriff, Our Savior's Lutheran Church, US Bank, Hardin Community School, Lima City Schools and Perry Local Schools through an $86,000 grant to mentor high-risk middle and high-school students. The program targeted students with a history of truancy, chronic inappropriate behavior, substance abuse and academic failure, and matched them with either an adult mentor or a high-school student mentor. More than 97 percent of these students lived in poverty, 70 percent had reported family histories of alcohol abuse and 56 percent had reported family histories of drug abuse. According to a survey of teachers whose students were enrolled in the program: "71 percent saw an improvement in self-confidence, 64 percent in a sense of belonging to the school, 63 percent in class participation, 63 percent in relationships with peers and 51 percent in academic performance."[23] The program is still seeking out mentors, hoping to continue services after Community Connectors expires.

Not all partnerships were successful. Some consisted of new nonprofits that emerged in response to the grant program, and these organizations occasionally struggled. For instance, one nonprofit started from scratch and did not have the foundation to manage the grant-reporting requirements and the work that was required to get their program off the ground. Another had similar challenges, lacking a volunteer base equipped to deal with the issues that students brought in from their home lives. While these programs had compelling visions, it appears that organizations with stronger operational foundations and more experience tended to be more successful.

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[23] Jennifer Peryam, "Fostering Friendships: Mentors in High Demand for Big Brothers Big Sisters," LimaOhio.com, March 9, 2019.

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The power of mentorship holds a great promise to help us better connect our communities with our schools, and lift up our educators and our kids. ...

—all of which can help motivate and inspire them to find their purpose and reach for the stars.

— Gov. Kasich

LESSON LEARNED

Since its first round of grants in 2015, Community Connectors funded 172 unique partnerships. Nonprofits were awarded more than $36 million to mentor young people in their communities. According to the ODE's most recent data (June 2016), 14,000 students were served by 5,300 mentors in 45 out of Ohio's 88 counties; young people received 67,000 hours in 1:1 mentoring and 91,000 hours in group activities.[24] It is safe to say that much of this work would not have occurred if not for this program.

Although Community Connectors was a state program initiated by state-level leadership at the Governor's Office and the Department of Education, it did not require a new state bureaucracy or a single state-mandated model. Rather, the government aimed to energize non-governmental actors, which included allowing different groups to pursue different paths. This led to an array of approaches tailored to communities' various strengths and needs.

The Community Connectors program will end at the end of its current grant period, primarily because of leadership changes in the Governor's Office and at the ODE. The new administration's priorities shifted away from mentoring and toward other issue areas, including early childhood education and the opioid crisis. However, the state's experience with Community Connectors offers the following valuable lessons to those interested in using public policy to catalyze civil-society activity.

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[24] Community Connectors, "$9.4 Million in New Community Connectors Mentoring Grants Awarded," Press Release, June 10, 2016.

(1) **Focus on nonprofits, not local governments.** Often state programs work through lower levels of government, such as counties, cities or towns. This is frequently the case in education programs, where the state department of education works through local school districts. This might be efficient, but it keeps dollars and initiatives inside of the government. This program took a very different approach. Although school districts were a required partner, they could not serve as lead applicants on Community Connectors grants. Instead, the lead had to be a nonprofit, and the partnership had to include multiple non-governmental bodies. Policymakers aiming to use policy to energize civil society should follow suit: The government should distribute money and authority, not maintain it.

(2) **Tailor grant programs to help smaller nonprofits compete for grants.** The state was especially interested in having small nonprofits participate in this program, so small grants were offered to entice such groups to apply. Nevertheless, larger nonprofits still had greater capacity and experience when it comes to grant-writing , and they won most early awards. As a result, the Department needed to develop a different strategy to engage smaller groups, eventually conducting more outreach and marketing and then providing support to smaller community organizations in the application process. Governments interested in working through small nonprofits via competitive grant programs should consider such issues early in the process.

(3) **Carefully consider how to engage faith-based groups.** Including a requirement that applications include at least one faith-based partner brought a fair amount of early resistance. Amending the faith-based requirement to make it more flexible did not stop criticism about the constitutionality of the program. But ultimately Community Connectors was able to proceed and fund hundreds of partnerships that included faith-based organizations. Given that religious organizations make up a large part of civil society and are often an area's oldest and most well-known nonprofits, governments should seriously consider how they can best be included in these types of programs. But policymakers also need to weigh the political and legal challenges involved.

(4) **Consider program longevity.** There are clear downsides to the program's short life and swift end: Organizations that had built programming around the grant are left in the lurch and we have to wonder about the long-term effects of a program that did not last all that long. However, there may be upsides. If the government gets involved in a civil-society activity only briefly, there should be fewer concerns about the state's distortion of the nonprofit sector. In fact, perhaps a short-lived program is best for spurring new thinking and the development of new partnerships and activities. Similarly, the case could be made that if nonprofits are unable to sustain an initiative absent perpetual government funding, then the initiative should come to an end. As they draft similar policies in other locations, policymakers should consider if they want the government to be engaged in the activity in perpetuity or if a short-lived program is ideal; if the government is trying to foster civil-society partnerships and catalyze philanthropy or if it wants to direct an area of work for the long term.

(5) **Choose whether to catalyze new nonprofits or support stable, existing entities.** A government could decide that a grant program's purpose is to foster the growth of new nonprofits—as a means of bulking up civil society. But this program demonstrated one pitfall with this approach: namely, building a mentoring program requires significant capacity to recruit and train mentors, select mentees, conduct background checks, ensure the quality of the services provided, track student outcomes, and so on. A brand-new start-up—even one with a quick influx of state dollars—is unlikely to be able to immediately do all of this well. Policymakers should therefore consider whether their program intends to foster the growth of new civil-society bodies and, if so, whether the activity at the heart of the program is something that new nonprofits can handle.

6 **Determine a program's priority and then decide how to measure success.** If a program's priority is to foster civil-society activity, we need to think carefully about how to measure success. That is, if the students in this program benefited from the mentoring but nonprofit activity was short-lived and with no long-term, civil-society consequences, then the program failed to achieve its ultimate aim. But, we also need to consider if it would have been a success had students not realized dramatic benefits but sustainable partnerships were formed, philanthropy for mentoring grew over time and new nonprofits were created. This program highlights that if policymakers want to use the government to revitalize civil society, they need to be clear about which outcomes will be prioritized and how they will be measured.

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