



grantmakers^{for}education **ge**

GRANTMAKERS AND THOUGHT LEADERS ON OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME

SURVEY & INTERVIEW REPORT

**Grantmakers for Education's
Out-of-School Time Funder Network**

SUMMER 2014

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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- Dara Rose and Pam Mendels of The Wallace Foundation for insightful feedback;
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- the thought leaders who gave their time and insights during interviews; and
- the Grantmakers for Education Out-of-School Time Funder Network Steering Committee for their guidance and leadership.

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INTRODUCTION

It is often noted that children spend most of their waking hours out of school. What they do during non-school hours is important, because access to high-quality learning, both in and out-of-school, is key to cognitive, social-emotional, and physical development.

In the United States today, demand for after-school programs outstrips supply: 8.4 million children currently participate, while parents of more than 18 million children would enroll their children in a program if one were available.¹

Ensuring equitable access to high-quality out-of-school programs is becoming more urgent as we deepen our collective understanding of the transformative potential of informal learning on children's academic and social success. In recent decades, education philanthropy has played a key role in supporting the evolution of "out-of-school time" from discrete programs focused on child care into a field

characterized by "a body of knowledge, funding, policy, and advocacy in support of the work, a professional workforce, and standards of practice."² As in any field, out-of-school time stakeholders have strong and often divergent opinions about the best way forward.

Last year, Grantmakers for Education's Out-of-School Time (OST) Funder Network, as part of its strategic planning process, gathered insights from a diverse group of grantmakers, practitioners, researchers, educators, and advocates on questions such as: what is the status of the OST field? What progress have we made and what are the key challenges that remain? Where should grantmakers direct limited philanthropic resources? How can and should the OST field inform and contribute to education reform efforts?³

What we learned provided essential context for the development of the network's strategic plan, but we did not want to hold onto the data for our own purposes only. This brief report shares our results more broadly with stakeholders in the out-of-school time

and education reform communities. We created this document with the hope that, by identifying several key issues that arose in survey and interview results, we can help spark productive conversation and action toward providing young people with positive, productive learning experiences in and out of school.





BACKGROUND

The Grantmakers for Education OST Funder Network was created in 2009 as a forum for philanthropic organizations interested in increasing access to high-quality OST experiences for young people and building systemic supports to sustain the field.

The network's primary strategies include sharing knowledge and effective practices; forging collaborations among grantmakers; and building alliances with K-12 education reform, youth development, and other grantmaking communities. The network has 260 members representing 177 philanthropies. Participation in the network can act as a catalyst for funders to assess and improve their investment strategies, and work in concert toward mutual goals. Last year, supported by The Wallace Foundation, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the network

completed a three-year strategic plan that drew on the results of the research summarized in this report.

Data gathering for the strategic planning project, completed by network coordinator Kathleen Traphagen and consultant Pam Stevens, included:

- A grantmaker survey administered in March-April 2013. The survey list included Grantmakers for Education members who had indicated an interest in out-of-school time, and OST Network members as of March 2013. Ninety-five out of 238 grantmakers solicited completed the survey for a 40% response rate.
- Interviews with eighteen thought leaders and nine OST Funder Network Steering Committee members

Please note: Because our interviews were not conducted with the assumption of public release, we have not identified the sources of specific quotes.

PROFILE OF GRANTMAKER SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Our 2013 survey updated similar efforts in 2004 and 2008. In 2008, we distributed the survey to 252 grantmakers and received a 30% response rate.

Because neither the respondent list nor the questions match exactly, we are drawing only loose comparisons between past efforts and the most recent survey. That said, the 2013 respondent profile was largely similar to that of 2008:

- Most respondents were representing either **private (31.9%) or family (38.3%) foundations**, with smaller numbers representing community foundations (13.8%), public charities, corporate, and operating foundations.
- **Just over half (55.3%) are local grantmakers**, while 20.2% identified themselves as giving in one or two states, 6.4% as regional, 10.6% as national and 7.4% as international.
- Just over two thirds (68.2%) of respondents reported that their **average OST grant is less than \$100K** (with 45% \$50K or less).
- Respondents have **annual OST grant budgets that range from under \$50K to over \$5 million**, with the largest cluster of respondents (40.2%) reporting annual grant budgets between \$100K-\$500K and 20% each at \$500K-\$1 million and \$1 million - \$5 million.
- **Respondents' organizations devote most of their grantmaking dollars to issues other than OST:** For 82% of grantmakers, out-of-school time makes up 40% or less of their organization's total grantmaking.



CHART 01.
Type of OST Grants

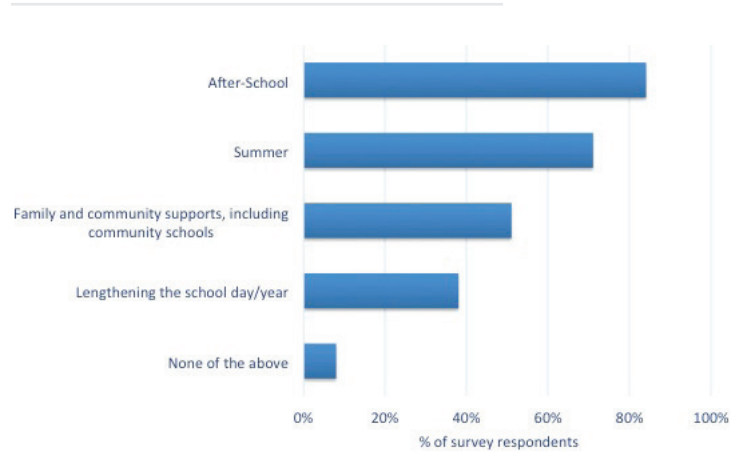


CHART 02.
Foundation Type

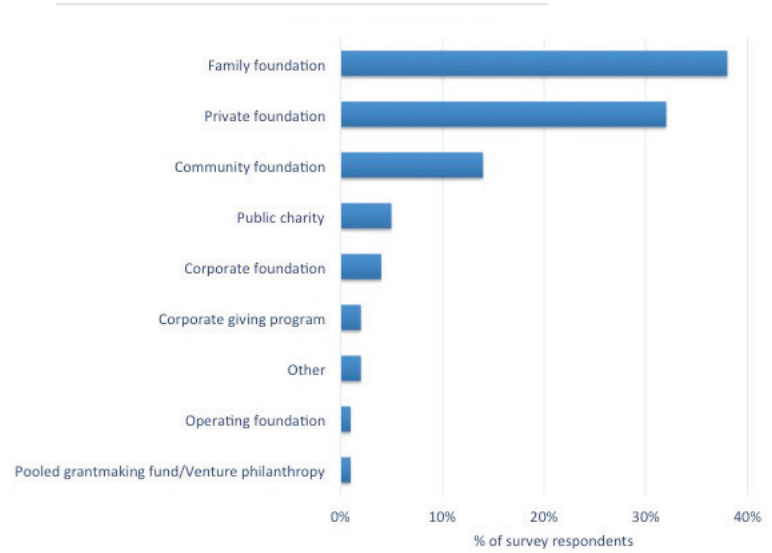


CHART 03.
Geographic Scope of Grantmaking

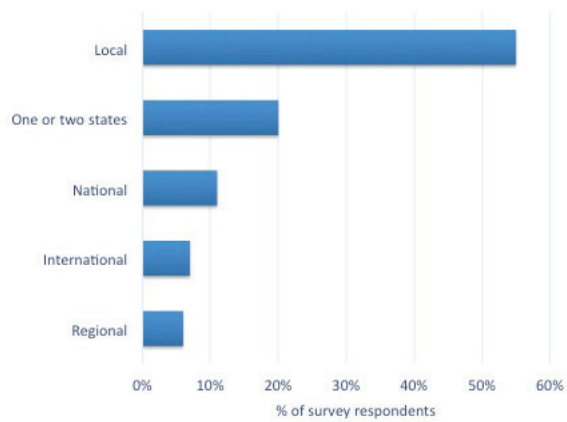


CHART 04.
Average size of OST Grant

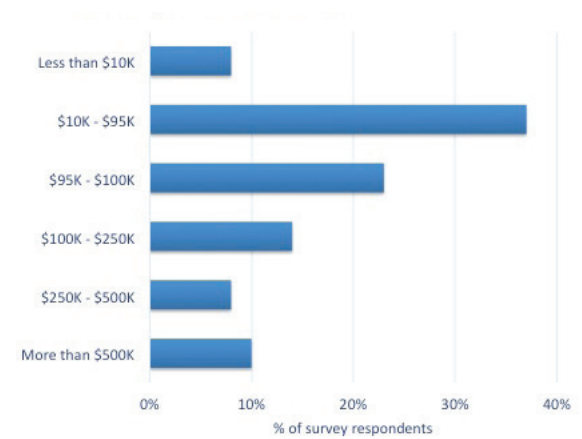


CHART 05.
Annual OST Grants Budget

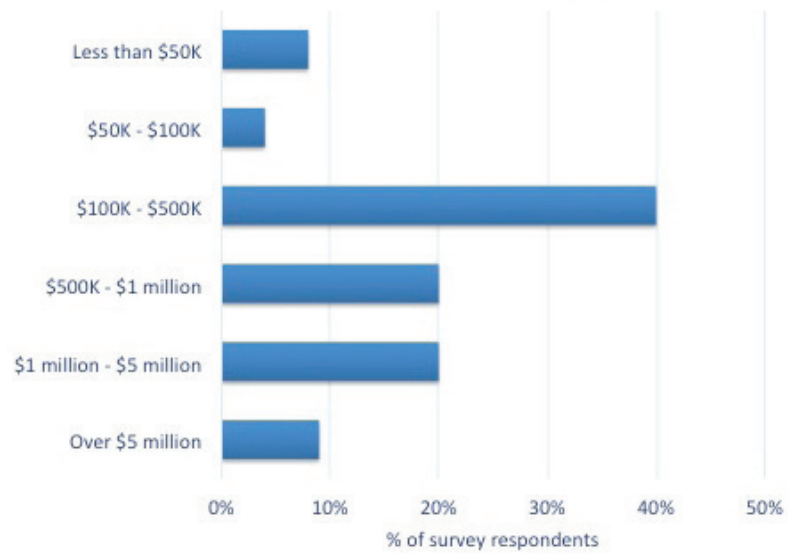
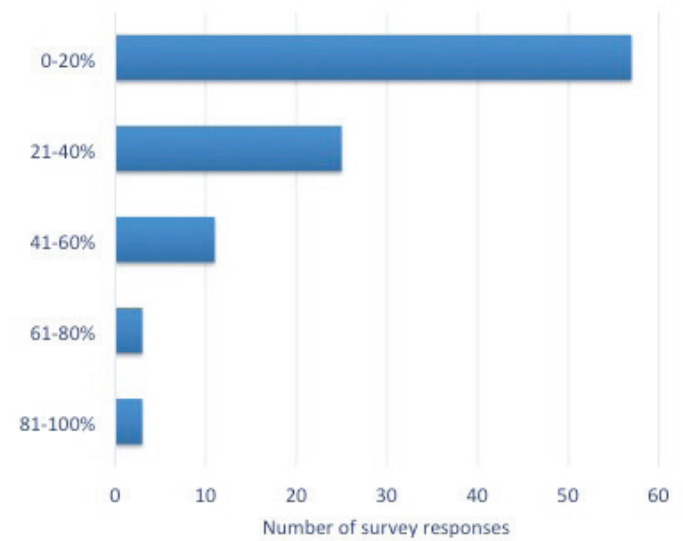
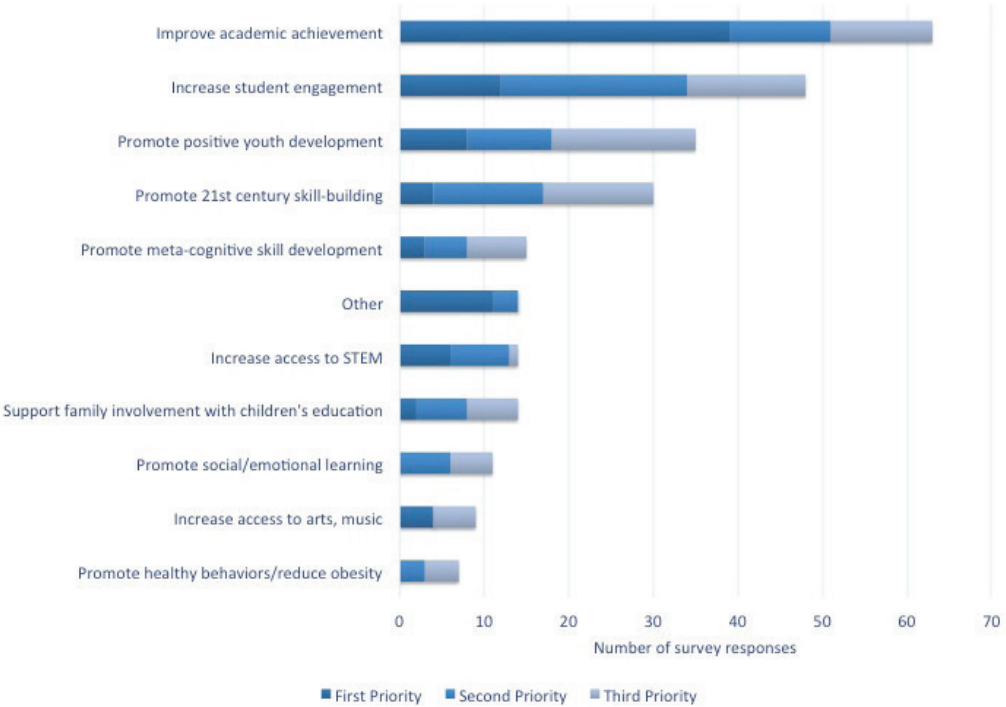


CHART 06.
OST Giving as % of Grant Budget



KEY SURVEY FINDINGS

CHART 07.
Top Priority OST Grantmaking Goals



GRANTMAKER GOALS & STRATEGIES

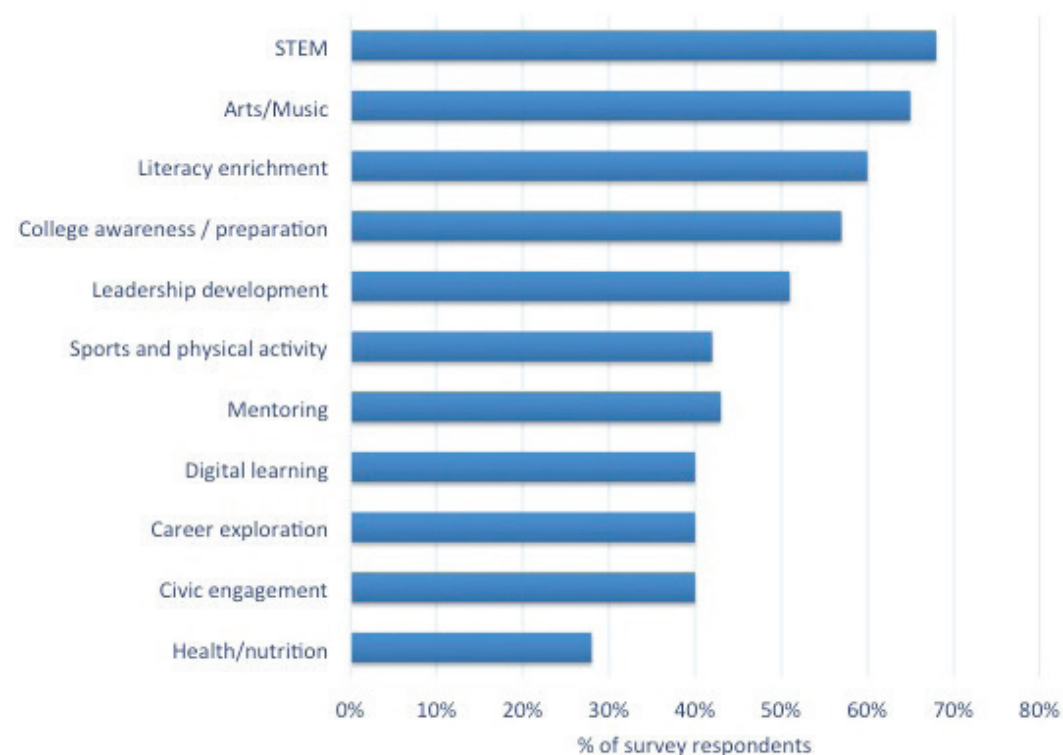
As in 2004 and 2008, grantmakers cited improved academic achievement as their top goal for OST investments.

In 2013, the four most common outcomes grantmakers seek for youth through their OST grants are:

- 1. Improved academic achievement (84%)
- 2. Increased student engagement (78%)
- 3. Positive youth development (75%)
- 4. 21st century skill building (70%)

Improved academic achievement was cited as the top goal far more often than any of the other goals. The other three goals were chosen more often as second or third in importance when respondents were asked to rate their top three. These results also track to the 2004 survey, where 86% of respondents cited academic achievement and 72% of respondents cited promoting positive youth development as major funding goals.

CHART 08.
Top Funded OST Activities



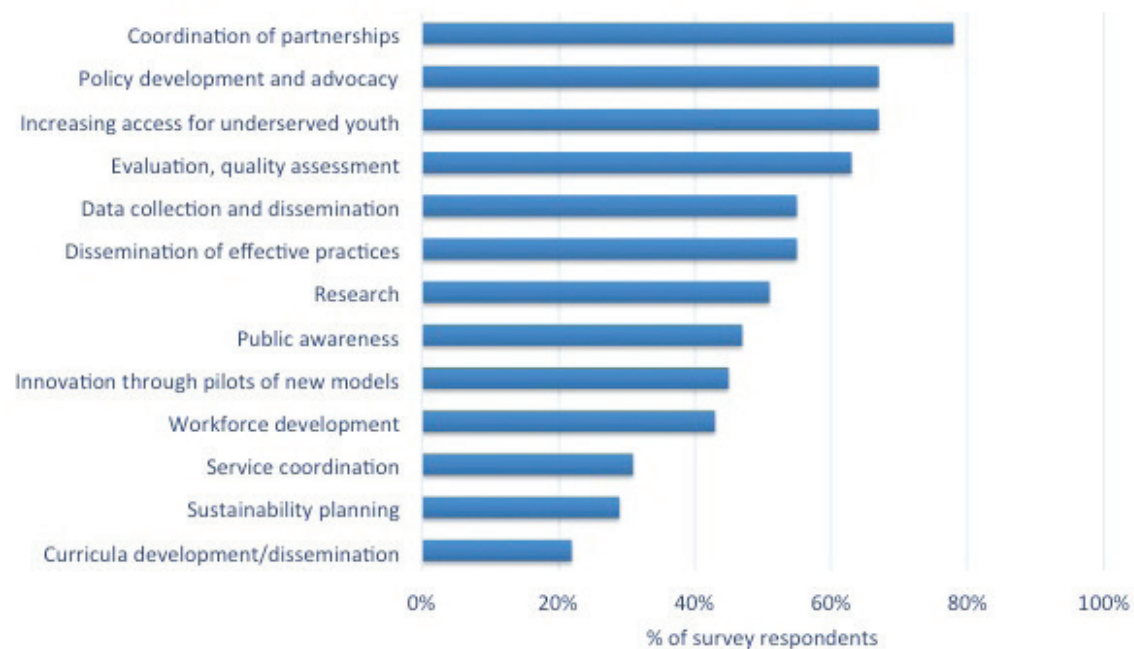
As in 2008, we asked grantmakers to note their top focus areas for specific OST activities. Particularly notable is the increase in the percentage of respondents choosing STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) as a top area of focus, up from 51% in 2008 to 67% in 2013.

Other activities chosen significantly more often by funders in 2013 vs. 2008 include college awareness and preparation (57% vs. 47%), mentoring (43% vs. 33%), civic engagement (40% vs. 27%), and sports/physical activity (42% vs. 33%). Digital learning, a new category, came in at 40%.

As in 2008, a crosswalk of funded OST activities vs. priority outcomes reveals that while grantmakers have a variety of goals for OST, they tend to fund similar types of activities. For example, STEM, literacy enrichment and arts/music were cited as a top priority activity by funders seeking academic achievement, student engagement, positive youth development, and 21st century skill building.

CHART 09.

Focus Areas for System-Building



Similar to 2008, **slightly more than half of respondents (54%) reported supporting OST field-building**. Focus areas for these grants have shifted however. Fewer respondents report funding dissemination of effective practices and curriculum development, while more report funding policy development and advocacy, increasing access for under-served youth, evaluation and quality assessment. Focus areas for field-building grants included:

- Coordination of partnerships (78% of those who support field-building report making grants in this area)¹
- Policy development and advocacy (67%, up from 50% in 2008)
- Increasing access to under-served youth (67%, up from 47% in 2008)
- Evaluation and quality assessment (63%, up from 47% in 2008)
- Dissemination of effective practices (55%, down from 68% in 2008)
- Workforce development (43%, up from 38% in 2008)
- Curricula development and dissemination (22%, down from 47% in 2008)
- Sustainability training and planning for grantees (28%, down from 38% in 2008)

AREAS OF HIGH GRANTMAKER INTEREST

There were notable shifts between 2008 and 2013 in the respondents' choices for what topics the network should focus on in its programming. The role of OST in K-12 reform and the intersection of expanded learning and afterschool topped the list in 2013, while in 2008 these subjects were sixth and seventh on a list of twelve. Quality improvement, evaluations/standards/outcomes, and expanding access for under-served populations held high interest for funders in 2008 and 2013. In a shift, even though more funders cited policy development and advocacy as part of their investments, fewer are interested in the network engaging on this topic.

CHART 10.
2008 Top Choice for Network Focus

1. Financing/sustainability
2. Expanding access for underserved populations
3. Quality improvement
4. Evaluations/standards/outcomes
5. Policy development and advocacy
6. Role of OST in K-12 reform

CHART 11.
2013 Top Choice for Network Focus

1. Role of OST in K-12 reform
2. Intersection of expanded learning and afterschool
3. Expanding access for underserved populations
4. Financing and sustainability
5. Evaluation and outcomes
6. Quality improvement & standards

THOUGHT LEADERS INTERVIEWED

Kristin Anderson Moore

Senior Scholar

Co-Director for Youth Development
Child Trends

Patrick Duhon

Director of Expanded Learning

Providence Public Schools /
Providence After School Alliance

Carol Emig

President

Child Trends

Donald T. Floyd, Jr.

then President & CEO

National 4H Council

Lucy Friedman

President & CEO

TASC

Ellen Gannett

Executive Director

National Institute on Out-of-School Time
at the Wellesley Centers for Women

Bob Granger

then President

William T. Grant Foundation

Eric Gurna

President & Chief Executive Officer

Development Without Limits

Robert Halpern

Professor

Erikson Institute

Gary Huggins

then Executive Director

National Summer Learning Association

Gil Noam

Founder & Director

Program in Education
Afterschool and Resiliency
Harvard University and McLean Hospital

Jennifer Peck

Executive Director

Partnership for Children and Youth

Karen Pittman

President & Founder

Forum for Youth Investment

Christian Schunn

Professor of Psychology & Senior Scientist

University of Pittsburgh Learning Research
and Development Center

Jen Rinehart

Vice President

Research & Policy
Afterschool Alliance

Elena Silva

Senior Associate

Carnegie Foundation for the
Advancement of Teaching

Gina Warner

Executive Director

National AfterSchool Association

Victoria Wegener

Founding Partner

Mainspring Consulting

INTERVIEWS - THOUGHT LEADERS' PERSPECTIVES ON KEY ISSUES

STATE OF THE FIELD - Despite Fault Lines, Finding Common Ground

Throughout the interview process, thought leaders soundly confirmed that the out-of-school time field is “on the map.” They pointed to the emergence of organizations such as the statewide afterschool networks supported by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, city-based intermediaries supported by The Wallace Foundation, and national organizations such as the National Summer Learning Association and the Afterschool Alliance as evidence that out-of-school time has become its own field. However, most interviewees thought that OST’s identity as a field is confused. Asked one person: “What is under the umbrella of OST? Expanded learning time, out-of-school time, community schools, student-centered learning? There is no consensus on this.”



Like the funders who completed the survey, thought leaders are interested in examining the role of out-of-school time in K-12 reform. One person noted that “expanded learning time has the potential to bridge the school/ out-of-school time gap, but right now, that potential is hindered by lack of resources, and differences in perspective, philosophies, and accountability parameters.”

Fault lines appeared between those who want OST to continue to claim its space as different from school vs. those who want to jettison the term and the notion of ‘out-of-school’ and move the field’s agenda to a more central place in the education reform debate. For example, one stakeholder explained: “OST provides a warm, kind space where young people’s humanity is honored and it is okay to define that as a priority. The OST field recognizes that artistic, creative, and physical development are necessary parts of being a whole, successful person. We need arts and sports and recreation and also we need to give kids time to take a breather. Other sectors don’t honor the importance of those things - other than how they function in the service of academic success.”

Another countered, “We should move beyond the term ‘afterschool.’ It has not been able to gain the traction we need. The general

public does not understand the high quality... of it. By continuing to define ourselves as afterschool we are minimizing our ability to influence the school day and also we are not accessing the stable long-term funding we need to create high-quality programming. Could expanded learning be a part of the education budget but have a protection so that some of those funds will go to community-based organizations? That would protect against the imperative that most school districts will hold onto the money.”

Potential common ground can be seen in the suggestions on the optimal path forward. One person noted that, “We have an opportunity to define high-quality learning settings. What are the features? Whether it’s OST, summer, expanded learning time, etc., we know some fundamental things about how kids learn that we should apply to any learning setting. We must stay focused on the experience we want for kids. And it is important that local communities make the decisions.”

“Fault lines appeared between those who want OST to continue to claim its space as different from school vs. those that want to jettison the term and the notion of ‘out-of-school’ and move the field’s agenda to a more central place in the education reform debate.”

IMPROVING QUALITY – Program Assessment & Workforce Development

Several stakeholders asserted that the starting point for the discussion of quality in out-of-school time is at a very different place than a decade or more ago. Many people agreed that there is consensus on the elements of what quality programs and interactions with young people look like – featuring positive youth development and asset-based approaches. For example:

**“What are the features?
Whether it’s OST, summer,
expanded learning time, etc.,
we know some fundamental
things about how kids learn
that we should apply to any
learning setting.”**

- “We have consensus on what **the key ingredients are**: relationships, active learning, inquiry-based approaches and choice, among others.”
- “Non-cognitive, or maybe we should call them super-cognitive skills, such as engagement, initiative, relationships with peers/adults, behavioral skills, problem-solving, and critical thinking -- **we can name these skills, teach them, and measure them.**”

The increasing use of common assessment tools to understand how to improve quality at the point of service was cited as a key milestone. Said one stakeholder: “We now have validated assessments, such as those developed by the National Institute for Out-of-School Time and the Weikart Center. Programs and systems are integrating these approaches and are becoming more data-driven.”

Tempering this view, another stakeholder asserted, “Funders have created huge anxiety on the part of the programs around becoming ‘evidence-based.’

Programs are told they must be evidence-based and data-driven so they focus on school success as the evidence. They don’t know how to do anything else.”

Major challenges arose related to developing and supporting a skilled workforce. Stakeholders said:

- “We expect the OST workforce to **excel at the most difficult forms of teaching** – such as project-based learning and inquiry-based approaches -- **without anywhere near the resources or training available even to K-12 teachers**, who also struggle to use these approaches well.”
- **“We need to learn more** about who is working in the field, their skills and knowledge base, and their professional goals.”
- “We need better strategies for ensuring that the people who work in the field and want to stay are supported – **a college track linked with opportunities in the field.**”



RESEARCH AND ASSESSMENT: Looking for Other Grantmakers to 'Pick Up the Torch' from W.T. Grant

Stakeholders noted a substantial increase in the quality and quantity of scholarship on OST and youth development, and hailed the New York-based W.T. Grant Foundation and its former Executive Director Robert Granger for the foundation's contributions to supporting rigorous research and evaluation of out-of-school time programs. As W.T. Grant shifts its priorities toward research to increase understanding of inequality in youth outcomes, concern arose that a funder is needed to "pick up the torch." Stakeholders also frequently voiced the need to more effectively disseminate research results and make them usable for practice, and to ensure that research is informed by and grounded in practice. Several lamented what they considered the short attention span of funders, with one noting, "We need support for longer-term evaluation – social-emotional learning and behavioral outcomes take much longer to show impact than we usually are prepared to wait." Research topics suggested by stakeholders included: the neuroscience of learning, measuring non-cognitive skill development, and understanding how learning transfers (or does not) among settings.

- "We are working on **professionalization, certification, credentialing, and creating core competencies**. We still need to scale these efforts."
- "We need to **focus on what skills are needed to be an effective youth program director** and make sure we are populating that pipeline like we do with principals."
- "We need more models of fellowships or other ways that leaders/practitioners have highly respected opportunities to drive knowledge and do action research."
- "**We have not taken enough advantage** of blended or virtual approaches to professional development, which should make sharing what we know easier."

“There are competing demands on the out-of-school space to provide academic help, STEM experiences, physical and health education, arts and music exposure, civic engagement and other content, especially as schools focus on the narrow strand of academics measured by standardized tests.”

PROGRAM DESIGN & CONTENT: STEM Could Uplift the Field, Common Core Presents Opportunities

A few stakeholders noted the competing demands on the out-of-school space to provide academic help, STEM experiences, physical and health education, arts and music exposure, civic engagement and other content, especially as schools focus on the narrow strand of academics measured by standardized tests. One person noted that work supported by the Noyce Foundation and others to integrate high quality STEM experiences into OST programs could uplift the field as a whole, but has not yet permeated as widely and deeply as it has the potential to do. “There are really promising high level partnerships, and we need to see how well it all translates to the individual programs and the experiences that children are having.” Many stakeholders believe that Common Core State Standards could be a potent opportunity for the OST field. Said one: “As schools slog through the curricula shifts to Common Core, their local high quality OST program is already doing the Habits of Mind and they can be amazing partners.”

SYSTEM-BUILDING AND DATA: Progress, but not Everywhere

Stakeholders also agreed the field has made significant progress in building systemic supports for programs, such as statewide quality standards and trainings on program assessment, assistance in collaborations with schools and school systems, professional development networks, data-sharing agreements, and partnerships that bring resources to individual programs.

For example, one respondent said, “We are a lot more mature about system building. Citywide intermediaries and statewide networks are huge advances in the field and places where key players convene.” However, several pointed out needs and gaps, particularly in rural and non-city areas. Access to and use of student data is one area cited as having a big gap between, as one stakeholder put it, “places that can invest in big data systems and places that cannot.”

POLICY AND ADVOCACY: How to Achieve 'Priority Status' for OST?

Stakeholders had strong praise for the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation's long-term commitment to supporting the Afterschool Alliance and the statewide afterschool networks (since Mott's initiative began in 2002, the number of states with afterschool networks has risen to 40). They also frequently mentioned the Wallace Foundation's commitment to citywide intermediaries and local OST system-building efforts. One stakeholder pointed out that the field is much better at involving organizations like the National League of Cities, the National Governor's Association, and others in creating stronger infrastructure, supportive policies, and new funding opportunities for OST.

Frustration surfaced however, at what many stakeholders perceived as a lack of significant and sustained progress in elevating OST to priority status for funding and favorable policies at local, state and federal levels. One person pointed out that "there is no such thing as policy regarding non-school and OST supports for older youth." Another person urged funders to "get more comfortable" supporting policy and advocacy. Another pointed out gaps in understanding how to influence electoral politics in partnership with

potent allies, and how to learn from fields that are perceived to have made more progress, such as early education.

EQUITY AND ACCESS: Still Elusive

Although the expansion of access to afterschool has improved with the growth of the 21st Century Community Learning Center program nationally and the scale-up of programs in California supported by the voter-approved Proposition 49, equity and access issues continue to bedevil the field. Stakeholders had no consensus on how to address these issues. One person asked: "The children and youth that come to OST are not always the most at risk. How do you attract, engage and sustain the kids that really need it?" Yet another suggested that economic disadvantage is not the only prism within which to judge how much a young person is at risk. He said, "I am not sure if advantaged vs. disadvantaged is the right distinction to make. What if we looked at kids who are well connected and have high interest vs. those that do not have these things? Then the usual cut between kids from lower income families and those from higher income might not make as much sense."

"We need support for longer-term evaluation – social-emotional learning and behavioral outcomes take much longer to show impact than we usually are prepared to wait."

ADVICE FOR FUNDERS FROM THOUGHT LEADERS

Funders should take a stronger lead in moving K-12 education reform toward a broader view of young people's learning and development.

- “In the K-12 world, lots of people are now realizing that education reform is over-emphasizing test scores. We need to broaden the conversation about what schooling is about and bridge siloes among school and out-of-school.”
- “Accountability for educational outcomes is based on a very narrow set of knowledge/skills. Many principals have a much broader view of learning but they cannot implement their vision. Funders have to find ways to wrestle with these systemic issues.”
- “There is increasing interest in social-emotional learning measures, non-cognitive skill development, youth agency or character traits (whatever you call it!) We should take advantage of that.”



- “The reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act could put less emphasis on test scores....does anyone have the courage to advocate for that?”
- “With expanded learning time, foundations could prioritize schools that have community partners for funding. Adding these partners to the mix will make the school day more exciting and a better place for kids to learn.”
- “Funders can give incentives to schools to help fund out-of-school time programs through grant priorities and requirements.”

Funders should support systemic efforts to help programs become high-quality and evidence-based.

- “Many funders do not understand the cost of quality and why it is important.”
- “Funders should convene high-performing systems, programs and partnerships to

look at lessons learned, share evidence, and effective practice. They can help deliver the message that “evidence based” is not something to be afraid of. The demand is there from the program side for this to happen but many of the funders are saying ‘it’s important but it’s not what we do.’”

- “Funders should stop investing in each program creating its own evaluation or quality assessment measures. Instead, funders should support the dissemination of tools we have in common so we can grow the evidence base and grow the field.”

Funders should invest in research and scaling models that yield results.

- “Areas of focus include quality improvement, aligning the school day and other learning opportunities, and supporting the move from separate programs to systems.”
- “Build more knowledge about efforts around ‘the whole child’ and multiple ways of learning”

Funders should support local, regional and national advocacy agendas and invest in legislative and electoral efforts.

- “Build organizational capacity for advocacy.”
- “Look for partners with expertise in electoral politics and players in other sectors that intersect with OST and may have more ‘muscle’ to leverage change.”
- “Devote attention and resources to filling the policy and finance gap for older youth.”

Funders should prioritize development of the workforce and leadership.

- “Identify and scale best practices around training, coaching and assessment.”
- “Increase access to good, innovative professional development (explore best uses of technology) and also pre-service programs. Professional development should be cohesive and lead to significant skills improvement for staff.”

- “Develop certificates, credentials, alternative degrees, and residencies such as those available for teachers.”

Funders should pay attention to:

- **Common Core:** “Invest in the development of concrete tools and curricula that focus on how OST programs develop common Habits of Mind. What does this really look like? The field needs curricula, materials, videos, and professional development.”
- **Organizational capacity** — “Even some of the good organizations are hand-to-mouth. Sustained funding helps programs build capacity. Streamlined and universalized reporting saves administrative costs.”
- **Apprenticeships** — “Apprenticeships can offer skill building and connections to career and technical education for older youth.”
- **Thought leaders** — “Leaders in the field need support to develop ideas and write and communicate them.”
- **City and state level experiments** — “Short term experiments can prototype solutions to the field’s big issues.”



FUTURE DIRECTION FOR GRANTMAKERS FOR EDUCATION'S OST FUNDER NETWORK

The network completed its strategic planning process at the end of 2013. For the next three years, the network will continue to engage members in a variety of knowledge-building and networking opportunities. Based on feedback from our data gathering process, we will launch a series of programs focused on quality in fall 2014.

We look forward to continuing our work with the many committed leaders who understand that high-quality out-of-school time experiences help young people develop the skills and capacities needed to carry them through adolescence and into productive adulthood.

For more information about joining Grantmakers for Education's OST Funder Network, please contact ostnetwork@edfunders.org.

FOOTNOTES

¹ Afterschool Alliance, America After 3 Survey, 2009.

<http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/AA3PM.cfm>

² Stevens, P. “The William T. Grant Foundation: Contributions to the After-School Field 2003-2011.

www.wtgrantfdn.org/File%20Library/Publications/Pam-Stevens-Report.docx

³ We use the phrase ‘out-of-school time’ to refer to all kinds of programs that happen outside of the classroom – before and after school, in the evenings, weekends, and summer; in school buildings or community settings; run by schools or community organizations, serving children and youth K-12.

⁴ See NIOST’s Afterschool Program Assessment System: http://forumfyi.org/files/ost_7.31.pdf and

the Weikart Center’s Program Quality Assessment: <http://cypq.org/>

⁵ ‘Habits of Mind’ refers to the ‘capacities of a literate individual’, as identified in the introduction to the Common Core State Standards in ELA: <http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/introduction/students-who-are-college-and-career-ready-in-reading-writing-speaking-listening-language/> and the Standards for Mathematical Practice: <http://www.corestandards.org/Math/Practice/>. For more information, see the Forum for Youth Investment’s July 2012 brief: The Common Core Standards: What Do They Mean For Out-of-School Time? http://forumfyi.org/files/ost_7.31.pdf