



D.C. POLICY CENTER

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New report from the D.C. Policy Center finds that many children and youth participate in out-of-school time programs in the District, but there are gaps and mismatches between needs and capacity

The report reviews capacity and need for afterschool and summer programs and identifies program gaps across the city.

Washington, D.C., October 24, 2017 – Today, the **D.C. Policy Center** is releasing a new report on the current landscape of out-of-school time (OST) programs in the District of Columbia.

The report, “**Needs Assessment of Out-of-School Time Programs in the District of Columbia**,” examines the extent to which out-of-school time programs—offered after school and during the summer—are meeting the needs of children and youth attending D.C. public and public charter schools.

This report, which received support from the **District of Columbia Deputy Mayor for Education**, will fulfill the Office of Out of School Time Grants and Youth Outcomes Establishment Act of 2016 requirement to conduct a citywide OST needs assessment.

“Ensuring kids throughout the District are exploring their passions and interests and growing academically outside of the typical school day is a citywide priority,” said **Deputy Mayor for Education Jennifer Niles**. “As we launch a new office dedicated to supporting thousands of young people, this study is the first step in identifying our students and communities who need out-of-school time opportunities the most.

United Way of the National Capital Area (United Way NCA) commissioned the report and was instrumental in helping the D.C. Policy Center collect data on current OST program capacity.

“We are pleased to have partnered with the D.C. Policy Center to ascertain the current levels of afterschool and summer programming which will better help the system to identify where the opportunities are to fill unmet needs,” said **Timothy Johnson, Vice President of Community Impact at United Way NCA**. “Education is a hallmark of the work of United Way NCA and we are excited

at both the release of this report and the launch of the new Office of Out of School Time Grants and Youth Outcomes.”

The report also received support from the District of Columbia Deputy Mayor for Education to fulfill the Office of Out of School Time Grants and Youth Outcomes Establishment Act of 2016 requirement to conduct a citywide OST needs assessment.

“We are delighted to be able to provide sound and objective data analysis to support the city’s policy discussion on out-of-school time programs,” said **Yesim Sayin Taylor, Executive Director of the D.C. Policy Center**. “OST programs are widely used in the city, and there are many opportunities to better serve D.C. families’ needs” The report was co-authored by Taylor and Kathryn Zickuhr, the D.C. Policy Center’s Deputy Director of Policy.

There will be a discussion of the report at the [launch](#) of the DC Office of Out-of-School Time Grants and Youth Outcomes on October 24, 2017, from 9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the University of the District of Columbia Community College (UDC-CC) Bertie Backus campus.

Main findings

As of 2016, over 83,000 children and youth attend public schools in the District of Columbia. However, only an estimated 33,400 children and youth attend afterschool programming in D.C. that is either fully or partially subsidized by public sources or foundations, and just 15,000 participate in regular subsidized summer programming (including participants in the Mayor Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Program).

As a starting point for policy discussions, the researchers estimated program capacity gaps under four different policy options: universal coverage, full coverage of young people in households with incomes at 130 percent of the poverty line, full coverage of those designated as “at risk” for academic failure, and full coverage of those in households with incomes below the poverty line.

The results range from large gaps (if the District subsidizes programs for all students in public and public charter schools) to capacity surpluses, but in all cases, the District would still face the challenge of ensuring all covered students are able to participate. If the District chooses to subsidize all public and public charter school students, it would need funding for an additional 37,600 afterschool slots for children in pre-K through grade 8, and 12,400 additional afterschool slots for those in grades 9-12. The gaps for summer programs would be even greater, with an additional 61,600 slots for children through grade 8 and 6,300 for those in grades 9-12.

Even under narrower targets, several gaps remain, especially for elementary and middle-school students. For instance, under the narrowest target—providing subsidized OST programming capacity equal to the number of children and youth in households below the poverty line—the city as a whole has sufficient OST capacity, but not in the right locations; while many wards in the city would have sufficient or excess capacity, gaps would still remain in Wards 7 and 8, where the need for OST programs is the greatest.

The report includes observations collected from District youth and families through focus groups and questionnaires. Participating parents and caregivers said that lack of timely information, transportation costs, and logistics of managing multiple children or finding programs that are extended through the work day. High school-age youth also expressed a need for more hands-on

programs connected with their personal and career interest, including more STEM, arts-focused, and pre-professional programs.

The report's recommendations for the Commission on Out of School Time Grants and Youth Outcomes address many of the challenges related to collecting more data and information on OST programs in D.C., including the need to measure and improve the quality and effectiveness of OST programs.

About the report

"Needs Assessment of Out-of-School Time Programs in the District of Columbia" was authored by Yesim Sayin Taylor and Kathryn Zickuhr of the D.C. Policy Center. The authors worked with District of Columbia Public Schools, public charter schools, community based organizations, and District government agencies to collect information on the availability and types of afterschool and summer programs available to local families, and compared this data to four potential measures of need for out-of-school time programming. In addition, the research team collected qualitative data from D.C. youth and families around their experiences with afterschool and summer programs through in-person focus groups and online questionnaires.

About the D.C. Policy Center

Established in 2016, the D.C. Policy Center is a non-partisan, independent think tank focused on providing objective, targeted, and high-quality data analyses to support a productive policy debate in the District of Columbia.

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