Research | Purpose

Understand how Parents, Teachers, and OST Providers perceive the value of OST in social, emotional, and academic development, to help inform communications, programs, and policy.

Understanding Expectations
- What role do Parents, Teachers, and OST Providers see OST programs playing in social, emotional, and academic development compared with school and home? What are the connections across settings? What should they be?

Defining Success
- How do Parents say they choose an OST program? How do they define or assess quality? What does a successful program look like?

Unpacking COVID-19 Impact
- How do Parents, Teachers, and OST Providers feel COVID-19 has impacted the role of OST now and going forward, specifically for summer 2021?
Research | Approach

**Phase One: Partner Immersion & Landscape Analysis**

Interviews with field leaders to reveal information gaps, needs, and issues related to parent, OST provider and educator perceptions, expectations and communications. Identify contributing and distribution partners to inform and guide the research.

**Phase Two: Qualitative Listening**

Focus groups with K-8 parents, K-8 teachers, interviews with OST providers and parent-child dyads – mix of income, education level, race and other key demographics, with focus on low-income families.

**Phase Three: National Surveys**

National surveys among K-8 parents, K-8 teachers and OST providers.

**Phase Four: Final Check**

Follow up focus groups among K-8 parents, K-8 teachers, and interviews with district leaders to refine messaging, probe deeply on priorities and key concepts.
Acknowledgements

We're grateful to the following organizations and individuals who contributed to this research. Our Advisors helped identify gaps in research and set the vision for the project; Contributing Partners helped with overall survey design and content; and Distribution Partners provided ideas for dissemination of research findings.

Advisors | Dale Blyth, University of Minnesota; Jennifer McCombs, RAND Corporation; Tricia Maas, Committee for Children; Deborah Moroney, AIR; Karen Pittman, Forum for Youth Investment; Kim Robinson, David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality

Contributing Partners | Wendy Castillo/Hal Smith, National Urban League; Jodi Grant/Nikki Yamashiro, Afterschool Alliance; Karen Pittman, Forum for Youth Investment; Jose Rodriguez, UnidosUS; Gina Warner, National Afterschool Association; Helen Westmoreland, National PTA

Distribution Partners | Carrie Goux, GreatSchools; Laura Johnson, NSLA; Melissa Mellor, America’s Promise Alliance; Lorna Smith, Horizons National; Lindsay Sobel, Teach Plus; Sandy Goldberg/Janice Fuld, WNET

Research Partner | Edge Research

Funding Partner | The Wallace Foundation
Methodology

Conducted November-December 2020

Qualitative

- 3 K-8 Parent Focus Groups – mixed race, Black parents, Hispanic parents in Spanish
- 3 Parent-Child Dyads – children in grades 4-6
- 2 K-8 Teacher Focus Groups – teachers with and without OST program experience
- 6 OST Provider in-depth interviews – representing public schools, youth development organizations, and opportunity-centered providers
- Virtual sessions via a screen-sharing platform

Conducted February 9th-March 9th, 2021

Quantitative

- Large scale national survey (n=3,031) recruited through an online non-probability sample with quotas set to ensure demographically representative audiences, followed AAPOR best practices
- Parents and guardians of K-8 children in public/public charter schools, with oversamples of Black and Hispanic families (survey offered in English and Spanish), n=2,020
- Professionals working with K-8 children as teachers in public/public charter schools (n=631) and OST providers (n=380)

Significant subgroup differences are noted throughout

Blue/red numbers = statistically higher/lower

Key=

- Parents
- Teachers
- OST Providers
Summer 2021 offers a unique opportunity for Parents, Teachers & OST Providers to partner in supporting Parents’ top priority for their child: their social and emotional health.

Yet, Parent responses suggest that participation in high-quality OST opportunities is not equitably distributed.

Summer 2021 offers a unique opportunity for Parents, Teachers & OST Providers to partner in supporting Parents’ top priority for their child: their social and emotional health.

Takeaway: Districts are critical players in ensuring equitable access to high-quality OST programs. This is more important than ever, as they budget for new stimulus dollars and plan for this summer and the next school year.
OST Plays a Role for Two-thirds of Families Surveyed

65% of Parents have children in an OST program

Average 2 programs each

OST Definition: Programs that your child/children might participate in outside of school hours and/or the regular classroom schedule. These are programs that have a learning or skills component, with organized activities and/or learning opportunities, in addition to providing childcare, and may be offered before or after school or on weekends, online, or in person.

Primary or only program

- Sports/Arts/Interest-Based, 49%
- School/Academic, 18%
- Youth Development, 17%
- Opportunity Centered, 16%

Most popular within each category

- 59% Religious
- 43% Scouting
- 37% At school
- 59% Sports
OST Parents Report a Higher Socioeconomic Status Regardless of Race or Ethnicity

OST Families Have Higher Incomes

- Under $37K (non-OST 37%)
- $37-99K (non-OST 47%)
- $100K+ (non-OST 14%)

OST Parents Are More Educated

- High school or less (non-OST 30%)
- Some college (non-OST 41%)
- College + (non-OST 29%)

$100K +
Black 17% (vs. 7%) | Hispanic 22% (vs. 9%) | White 46% (vs. 18%)

College +
Black 34% (vs. 20%) | Hispanic 48% (vs. 27%) | White 62% (vs. 30%)
QUESTION: Regardless of whether your child participates/your experience, how do you refer to these types of programs? Please select the descriptor that you think BEST describes these programs.

- Extracurricular: 23%
- Afterschool: 12%
- Youth Development: 10%
- Recreation: 9%
- Enrichment: 8%
- Out-of-school time: 5%
- Summer Learning: 5%

Less common:
- Outdoor education: 4%
- Camp: 4%
- Extended Day: 3%
- Mentorship: 2%
- Aftercare: 2%
- Intramurals: 1%

22% of non-OST parents are not sure compared to 4% OST
Value Proposition of OST | Meeting the Needs of My Child
## Top tier messages/reasons for Parents to enroll their child in an OST program (out of 18)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% say “Very motivating to enroll in OST program”</th>
<th>Top reasons for enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>74% Expose children to <strong>new experiences, ideas, and perspectives</strong> beyond their everyday home and school lives</td>
<td><strong>Expose</strong> children to <strong>new experiences, ideas, and perspectives</strong> beyond their everyday home and school lives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71% Allow children to find their <strong>passion, purpose, and voice</strong></td>
<td><strong>Allow</strong> children to find their <strong>passion, purpose, and voice</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70% Celebrate success in areas children love, so they gain the <strong>confidence</strong> they need to excel</td>
<td><strong>Celebrate</strong> success in areas children love, so they gain the <strong>confidence</strong> they need to excel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70% Allow children to <strong>interact</strong> with other children of <strong>diverse races, ages, backgrounds, and cultures</strong></td>
<td><strong>Allow</strong> children to <strong>interact</strong> with other children of <strong>diverse races, ages, backgrounds, and cultures</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70% Allow children to <strong>express and be themselves</strong>, not just fit in</td>
<td><strong>Allow</strong> children to <strong>express and be themselves</strong>, not just fit in</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Most motivating messages & language

**Children…**
- Find | Explore | Experience | Dream

**Programs…**
- Expose | Encourage | Celebrate

## Least motivating messages & language

- **“Help children catch up academically”** (except among Black Parents, 72%)
- **“Help children develop relationships with caring adults and mentors outside their own family and their teachers”**

**Children…**
- Learn | Catch up | Develop

**Programs…**
- Provide | Equip | Help
OST’s Unique Offering | A Child-Centered Experience

Quality Drivers for Parents

Child-centric Interests/Skills: most important
- #1: Your child seems happy: 83%
- Your child is gaining confidence: 79%
- Your child is developing SEL skills: 77%
- Your child is exposed to new experiences: 75%
- Your child is pursuing interests/passions: 73%

Environment: most important
- Program is fun: 76%
- Physical safety of environment: 73%
- Nurturing/welcoming environment: 72%

Parents rated 35 items in 6 categories on how important each was in determining the quality of their child’s primary afterschool program. As a follow-up, Edge conducted a regression analysis, to determine how much each category impacts perceptions of quality.
Distinct Yet Reinforcing Roles

Based on *Parent* survey responses

**Home**
- Respect, Kindness, Patience, Learning from mistakes, Self-control, Empathy, Compassion

**School**
- Basic reading, writing, math, etc., Problem-solving, Critical thinking, Focus

**OST**
- Teamwork, Confidence, *Leadership, Perseverance*

**Home + School**
- Communication, Listening, Being organized

**OST + Home**
- Self-esteem, Independence

**School + OST**
- Social skills, Creativity

**All 3**
- Responsible decision-making, Self-motivation

Subgroup Data

**Important for OST to Develop:**
- *Leadership more important to 6-8 vs. K-5 Parents*
- Communication skills are also in the top-tier for Black and Hispanic Parents
Parent Mindsets | COVID Context
COVID Backdrop: A Year Like No Other

Parent and Student Perspective

“Hard,” “messy,” “challenging”

Parents are feeling whiplash with instructional mode and school, and seeing academic gaps firsthand

Many feel their children are “regressing” academically, socially, and emotionally

“My kid used to be a superstar. Now with this homeschooling … he cannot catch up; he doesn’t want to do anything. He acts like he doesn’t know anything.” (Black Parent)

Teacher/OST Provider Perspective

Exhaustion, frustration, resilience

More than any other year, parent engagement is crucial to the student experience

Some parents rose to the occasion, but need was overwhelming and evolving

Worried about learning loss, chronic absenteeism, social-emotional health

“It’s hard. We are open during the school day, getting kids connected online, coordinating. We are trying to connect with teachers and maintain a sense of normalcy.” (OST Provider)
Social Connections Top the List of Parent Concerns

What are you MOST worried about right now?

- **Missing out on social connections and friendships**: 40%
- **Having too much screen time**: 32%
- **Falling behind academically**: 26%
- **Losing their motivation/interest to learn**: 21%
- **Their emotional wellbeing**: 20%
- **Not learning enough in school/limited instruction**: 20%
- **Isolation, anxiety, and/or depression**: 17%
- **Not getting enough exercise**: 17%
- **Not spending enough time outdoors**: 16%
- **Not enough routine or structure to their day**: 12%
- **Not having enough happiness and fun in their life**: 11%
- **Access to the tech they need to do their schoolwork**: 6%

### Teachers: Top 3
- **#1 Falling behind academically**: 39%
- **Missing social connections**: 30%
- **Emotional wellbeing**: 26%

### OST Providers: Top 3
- **#1 Emotional wellbeing**: 26%
- **Falling behind academically**: 22%
- **Access to basic necessities**: 20%

LEARNING HEROES: FINDING PASSION, PURPOSE & VOICE
OST Parents Report Higher Grades

25% all A’s
(non-OST 16%)

OST Parents More Likely to Say Above Grade Level

Above grade level:  
Math 42% (vs. 33%)  
Reading 47% (vs. 39%)

OST Parents More Confident about Student Performance

Extremely confident…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>OST</th>
<th>Non</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child is prepared for next year</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child is prepared for college</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand their child’s academic performance</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### OST Parents Report Their Children Doing Better Academically | By Subgroup

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subgroup Distinctions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are more pronounced differences between White, Hispanic, middle and high-income OST vs. Non-OST Parents on grades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are more pronounced differences between White, Hispanic, and high-income OST vs. Non-OST Parents on Math assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are more pronounced differences between Black and Hispanic OST vs. Non-OST Parents on Reading assessments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### All A's

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subgroup</th>
<th>All A's</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Income</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Income</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Income</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Above Grade Level in Math

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subgroup</th>
<th>Above Grade Level in Math</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Income</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Income</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Income</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Above Grade Level in Reading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subgroup</th>
<th>Above Grade Level in Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Income</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid Income</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Income</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OST Parents Say They Are More Confident About Fall than Non-OST Parents

Confident about children being prepared for Fall 2021: 67% Parents in OST, 47% Parents Not in OST

Subgroup Distinctions

- High-quality OST correlates with confidence among Parents, Teachers & OST Providers alike. Those who rate their program as “excellent” are more likely to be extremely confident (Parents 52%, Teachers 47%, OST Providers 43%)
- Dosage also impacts confidence – those whose children attend programs 5 or more days a week are most confident (46%)

“I’ve noticed that kids with out-of-school activities are the ones who get their work done, because they've figured out a strategy to keep it in check. If they have something they are successful at, their level of confidence as a person impacts how they approach learning in a classroom.” (Teacher)
OST Parents Report Higher Confidence Across Race, Ethnicity, and Income

Extremely Confident that Child is Prepared for Next Year

- Black Parents: 21% OST, 41% Non-OST
- Hispanic Parents: 21% OST, 30% Non-OST
- White Parents: 16% OST, 31% Non-OST
- Low income: 16% OST, 31% Non-OST
- Middle income: 16% OST, 29% Non-OST
- High income: 15% OST, 37% Non-OST
Yet Teachers Differ in Readiness Perceptions

Confident about children being prepared for Fall 2021:
- 60% Parents | 36% Teachers

Not confident about children being prepared for Fall 2021:
- 12% Parents | 34% Teachers

Key:
- Blue Bars: Parents
- Yellow Bars: Teachers

Confidence Levels:
- Extremely confident
- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not too confident
- Not confident at all
- Not sure
Summer 2021| Kids Need to Have Fun!

from Teacher & OST Providers:

They need to work on socialization that may have been compromised during this pandemic. They also need to do a little practice each day on reading and math to keep and hone those skills. (Teacher, <50% BIPOC or FRP)

Stay connected to people throughout the summer. Try to do activities that will continue learning but are fun. (OST Provider, 50%+ BIPOC)

from Parent verbatims:

She should continue to read but for her own leisure and enjoyment, to keep her mind engaged with stories that aren’t in front of screens.... I feel like my kid just needs to be a kid. This last year has been such a mess that, if it's safe to do so, I want her to just hang out with her friends and have fun and be silly. (Hispanic Parent, Middle Income)
### Top Priorities for Students this Summer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>OST Providers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Addressing their social, emotional, mental health needs</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical activity outdoors</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passion and purpose</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To play, have fun</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic support for learning loss</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Subgroup Distinctions

- **Addressing social & emotional health** is #1 priority for Parents this summer – even more so for non-OST families (61%), virtual learners (58%), Black (61%), and Hispanic (59%) Parents.

- Academic support/catch-up is lower on the list overall for Parents but is a higher priority for Black (53%) and lower income (43%) Families.

-18 pts. lower than SEL
-15 pts lower than SEL
+1 pts: on par with SEL
Parents Prioritize Many of the Skills OST Develops

### Top 5 Skills Parents, Teachers, and OST Leaders Need to Partner on This Summer (out of 24 skills)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>OST Providers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>#1: Social Skills</strong></td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>38% 26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>24% 18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>19% 22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-motivation</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>20% 22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem Solving</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>30% 17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Subgroup Distinctions

- Across parent demographics and professional settings, there is **alignment on a top tier of skills**. Parents, Teachers, and Providers say they need to partner to develop this Summer.
- Hispanic, low-income, and Parents with a high school degree or less also place **Respect** in the top 5; while upper SES Parents put **Creativity** in the top 5. Among Parents, **social skills is 15 points higher than working on basic reading, writing, and math**.
## Opportunities to Support Families This Summer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Go-To Sources</th>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>OST Providers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School/district</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YMCA</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boys &amp; Girls Clubs of America</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-H</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15% say none of the resources tested
18% not sure
Summer Plans Are Still Forming

Parent Plans for their Child for Summer

- Specialty camp or program, e.g. arts, sports, drama, robotics, religious: 29%
- Recreational summer camp focused on outdoors, crafts, etc.: 27%
- Voluntary summer program that provides variety of learning and enrichment: 16%
- Playgroup or pod parents have organized: 16%
- Tutoring, alone or in a group: 14%

Subgroup Distinctions

- **Non-OST families** (29%) are more likely than OST families (8%) to say they are “not sure” about this summer.
- **Black parents** are more likely than Hispanic or White parents to say their children will participate in voluntary summer learning (25%) or tutoring (19%).
- **High-income parents** (HH 100K+) are more likely to say their children will participate in a specialty camp (36%), tutoring (17%), scouting (13%), or summer school (11%).
- **Elementary school parents** (18%) more likely than Middle school parents (11%) to be planning a playgroup or pod.
Contact

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