



## **EVALUATION OF THE OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME INITIATIVE**

### **Report on the First Year**

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## Executive Summary

The New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) launched services under its Out-of-School Time (OST) Programs for Youth in September 2005, with the award of funds to support more than 500 programs across New York City. Together, DYCD and the city's nonprofit community, working closely with the New York City Department of Education (DOE), extended services to more than 51,000 youth across the city in the initiative's first year, making OST almost certainly the nation's largest after-school program effort. The OST initiative is designed to address a broad range of developmental objectives for youth and to serve the needs of New York City's families and communities.

This report of findings from the OST evaluation presents data on the first year of program implementation and early findings on participant engagement in OST programs and associated academic and social development outcomes. It describes a program effort that builds on DYCD's historic commitment to New York City's youth and on the work of nearly 200 community-based and other nonprofit organizations with lead roles in implementing the initiative. These findings are based on data collected from multiple sources, including the initiative's participation-tracking database (OST Online), surveys of participants, program directors, program staff, parents, and executive directors of provider organizations, and visits to a sample of 15 OST programs. The evaluation addresses the following core questions:

1. What are the characteristics of programs supported by the OST initiative?
2. Who participates in these programs, and what are their patterns of attendance?
3. What are participants' patterns of social and emotional growth? Do programs affect participants' educational performance and, if so, how?
4. Do programs meet the city's needs for assistance to working parents and for improvement in community-level capacities to serve youth during the out-of-school hours and, if so, how?

The OST evaluation is currently designed to collect and report on data spanning the initiative's first three years of operations. The evaluation's design recognizes that the initiative's first year was focused on launching a very large number of programs throughout the city. Evaluators looked for program providers in Year 1 to hire needed staff, recruit and retain an initial cohort of youth participants, provide safe environments, and deliver activities and services

that generally responded to student and parent interests. As reported here, OST programs achieved these objectives.

In the second and third years, evaluators' expectations will be somewhat higher. In particular, Year 2 data on OST programs should provide evidence that providers are achieving at least some of the quality objectives articulated in DYCD's 2004 Request for Proposals (RFP). Year 3 should generate preliminary evidence of positive early outcomes for participating youth.

This executive summary focuses on findings from programs funded through Option I of the OST initiative. The full report also describes program implementation and participant engagement in Option II and Option III OST programs.

## **Scope and Extent of OST Programming**

By the end of the 2005-06 school year, according to OST Online data, 528 programs were launched and producing data on youth participation, with 417 sites operating Option I programs, 100 operating Option II programs, and 11 operating Option III programs. Among all sites, 314 were based in New York City schools, and 214 were based in other locations (and are known as center-based programs). DYCD awarded over \$44 million to these 528 programs, with an average award of \$84,000 per program and a median award of \$73,000. Award amounts ranged from \$3,000 to \$340,000. Despite some delays in program start-up, the majority of these programs operated for at least nine months during the school year.

Across the board, Option I programs were successful in enrolling participants during the first year of the OST initiative. As described in programs' entries in OST Online, programs served 50,978 students from September 2005 through June 2006. Across all grade levels, Option I programs served more students than were specified in their contracts, with programs funded to serve 31,668 students and actually serving 40,818 students. Seventy-four percent of Option I programs met or exceeded their enrollment targets.

## **Demographic Characteristics of Participants**

The majority of participants enrolled in all OST programs were in the elementary grades (44 percent) or middle grades (32 percent), according to OST Online. Twenty-four percent of participants were in grades 9-12. OST programs served approximately equal numbers of boys and girls. Across all OST options, Hispanic/Latino participants were the largest group served (39 percent of participants in all OST programs).

## Structural and Institutional Features of OST Programs

In the first year of implementation of the OST initiative, programs worked to create program features that would allow them to deliver high-quality services to participants. These features included adoption of program policies and procedures, hiring of staff and development of staff capacity, allocation of program resources to maximize effectiveness, and establishment of strong partnerships with schools and other community institutions. Evidence of success in these areas met the evaluators' expectations for comprehensiveness in first-year start-up efforts.

Option I program directors almost unanimously reported in survey responses that providing a safe environment for youth was a major objective of their OST program (98 percent). They also overwhelmingly reported that they offered open enrollment to all youth who were interested in attending the program (91 percent). In addition, more than half (59 percent) of directors reported that they recruited youth who were recommended by school-day teachers.

***Program director and staff qualifications.*** OST program directors are typically responsible for the day-to-day management of the program, including supervising staff, developing program activities, recruiting participants, and developing relationships with schools and community organizations to facilitate the smooth implementation of the program. Overall, evaluation evidence suggests that OST programs hired a cadre of diverse and qualified program directors to launch the first year of programming under the DYCD initiative. More than half of Option I OST program directors reported in surveys that they had directed an out-of-school time program prior to the OST initiative (60 percent). In general, program directors were also well educated. Eighty-six percent of program directors had completed a four-year college degree or higher. On average, OST program directors reported high levels of satisfaction with their jobs and the level of support they received. Ninety-one percent of Option I program directors “agreed a lot” that they found the work at their program to be rewarding.

Most programs hired experienced professionals to help guide the programs, although many programs also relied on young staff members. Fifty-six percent of Option I program directors reported hiring a master teacher or educational specialist, 62 percent of directors reported employing staff members with teaching certificates, and 78 percent said that at least some staff with a college degree. More than three-quarters (78 percent) of Option I program directors reported having college students on staff, and less than half (45 percent) employed teen staff.

In surveys, all program directors acknowledged challenges in hiring program staff. Thirty-three percent of program directors reported that it was a major challenge to offer the competitive salaries necessary to hire qualified staff, and 25 percent reported that it was a major challenge to find volunteers with the

necessary time and expertise. The surveys permitted program directors to define “qualified staff” and “necessary time and expertise” in any way they chose.

***Professional development in OST programs.*** OST programs provided professional support to their staff members through program-level supervision and professional development as well as through support and opportunities to attend professional workshops offered through the OST initiative and the provider organization. (DYCD provided \$500,000 in technical assistance and professional development to programs through a contract with Partnership for After School Education.) Almost all Option I program directors reported holding meetings with their OST program staff at least once a month (98 percent). Thirty-nine percent of program directors reported holding meetings with their staff at least once a week. A majority (68 percent) of program directors also required at least some staff to submit lesson plans on a regular basis. More than half of program directors (57 percent) used a published or externally developed curriculum. Program directors received technical assistance most frequently in the use of OST Online (83 percent), and about half reported receiving technical assistance in program design and implementation and program management and administration (54 percent and 51 percent, respectively).

***Program policies.*** In the first year of the OST initiative, program directors worked to create program policies and procedures that ensured compliance with city and state regulations and that provided a foundation for a positive program environment. More than three-quarters of Option I program directors reported “to a great extent” that their program had policies in place to report suspicions of child abuse or neglect, ensure enough time for program activities, and deal with participant behavior. Among elementary-grades Option I program directors, 99 percent reported that policies were in place to report suspicions of child abuse or neglect.

## **Implementation of Process and Content Features**

The DYCD OST initiative encouraged programs to offer a variety of rich content-based activities to support multiple domains of youth development. Among Option I programs serving elementary-grades programs, almost all offered homework help to their elementary-grades participants (98 percent), according to surveys of program directors. In addition, 84 percent reported offering many visual arts and crafts activities. Many regularly offered free time for physical play and unstructured time for socializing (59 percent and 57 percent, respectively). Middle-grades programs offered a similar set of activities, although organized team sports and dance/movement activities were more common in the middle-grades programs (reported by 73 percent and 53 percent of program directors). Findings suggest that programs targeting high school youth were more specialized and tended to be more civic-oriented, reflecting the interests of high school youth.

## **Participant Engagement in OST Services**

The DYCD initiative established clear standards for program participation that varied based on program option and grade level served. Option I elementary-grades programs were expected to serve youth for a minimum of three hours a day, five days a week, for 36 weeks, with a participation target of 80 percent. Middle-grades programs were expected to offer programming for at least eight hours per week for 36 weeks, with a 75 percent participation target. Programs serving high school youth were expected to provide a minimum of three hours of programming per week for 36 weeks, with a 70 percent attendance target. Option I elementary- and middle-grades programs were also expected to provide OST service for 10 hours a day on 20 days per year when schools were closed.

Based on data from OST Online on programs that provided services for the full school-year and that also entered reliable participation data into the system, participants in Option I elementary-grades programs attended their OST program for an average of 311 hours during the year, compared to the expected average of 432 hours. Participants in middle-grades programs attended for an average of 154 hours, compared to the target of 216 hours. Option I high school participants surpassed their targeted attendance of 76 hours, attending for an average of 97 hours. Across all participants, a quarter of elementary- and middle-grades participants met the targeted number of hours (25 percent and 26 percent, respectively), while 39 percent of high school participants met attendance expectations. These calculations of attendance levels may, however, have been suppressed by program-level difficulties in entering activity and attendance data into OST Online.

## **Social Development Outcomes of Youth**

Out-of-school time programs can play an important role in helping youth to develop the social skills with both adults and peers that they need to mature into successful adults themselves. In addition, by providing engaging programming that exposes youth to opportunities that they would not otherwise experience, OST programs can increase their draw for participants and their capacity to contribute to youths' academic and social development.

Overall, about half of OST participants “strongly agreed” that their program had exposed them to new and interesting activities in Year 1, according to a large sample of OST participants. Across all grade levels, 53 percent of youth “agreed a lot” that the program gave them a chance to do “a lot of new things.” In addition, more than half “agreed a lot” that the program activities “really got them interested” (56 percent).

Evaluators examined social interactions in OST programs. The survey asked participants in elementary-grades programs a series of questions about their interactions with their peers, and youth reported positive peer interactions. Youth most frequently reported that they “had a good time playing with other kids in the program,” with 70 percent agreeing “a lot.” Participants also tended to “agree a lot” that they had “a lot of friends in the program” (69 percent) and that they “got to know other kids really well in the program” (64 percent). In general, participants also reported positive interactions with OST program staff members. Across all grade levels, 68 percent of participants “agreed a lot” that staff treated them with respect, and 67 percent reported that staff thought that they could learn new things, although only 44 percent of youth “agreed a lot” that staff always kept their promises.

Overall, Option I participants across all grade levels reported relatively high levels of attachment to their OST program. Across all Option I participants, 74 percent of youth “agreed a lot” that they felt safe in the OST program, and 60 percent “agreed a lot” that they felt like they “belonged” in the program and that the program was “a good place to hang out.”

## **Youth Content/Academic Skill Outcomes**

OST programs promote many types of skills and knowledge, depending on the organizational focus of their sponsoring organization and the skills of their staff. The evaluation asked youth to report on a series of measures of the academic benefits of participating in an OST project. In general, participants in elementary-grades programs were significantly more likely to report high levels of academic benefits compared to either middle-grades or high school participants. For example, the majority of elementary-grades participants (67 percent) “agreed a lot” that the program helped them finish their homework more often, significantly more than the 58 percent of middle-grades participants and 33 percent of high school participants. Elementary-grades youth were also significantly more likely to report that the program helped them feel better about their schoolwork, compared to middle-grades youth and high school youth (53 percent, compared to 35 percent and 31 percent respectively). A similar pattern emerged in participant reports of academic self-esteem, which decreased significantly between each grade cohort from elementary grades to middle grades to high school. Students reported significantly higher levels of academic self-esteem on the following measures compared to both middle-grades and high school participants; middle-grades participants had significantly more positive responses on these same items compared to the high school participants. For example, 81 percent of youth in elementary-grades programs agreed a lot that they tried hard in school, compared with 68 percent of youth in middle-grades programs and 51 percent of youth in high school.

## **Associations Between Program Features and Participant Experiences**

An objective of the evaluation is to determine whether specific program characteristics are statistically associated with participants' engagement in the OST program and their social development and educational outcomes. Evidence from Year 1 indicates that participants who attended programs with a strong academic focus reported more academic benefits from OST participation and higher academic self-esteem. (For this analysis, the evaluators created and employed a variable measuring program-level academic focus, based on program directors' survey responses regarding activities supporting literacy-skill development, cognitive development, and academic achievement.) In addition, higher levels of arts activities were also positively associated with self-reported academic benefits and academic self-esteem. Positive correlations were found for academic self-esteem and frequency of OST attendance, especially in school-based programs. In contrast, analyses found a negative association between participant reports of the quality of their interactions with OST program staff and the level of academic activities offered in the program. High levels of physical fitness activities were negatively associated with participant reports of (1) new and engaging experiences in the OST program and (2) positive interactions with program staff.

## **Systems Outcomes**

The evaluation collected data to assess the extent to which the OST initiative is increasing the capacity of provider organizations to deliver high-quality OST services, increasing the capacity of private nonprofit providers and public agencies to function as a coherent system, and meeting the needs of working parents.

***Effect on provider organizations.*** For the most part, the OST provider organizations funded in Year 1 operated with sizable budgets: 52 percent of executive directors reported that their annual organizational budget was more than \$3 million, and an additional 10 percent had an annual budget of more than \$2 million.

On average, organizations drew 59 percent of their OST budgets from DYCD funding. Twenty percent of organizations relied exclusively on DYCD funds for their out-of-school-time programming budget.

When asked how the OST contract had affected the organizations' operations, executive directors reported that participation in the DYCD OST initiative had had the most effect on staff opportunities for training and technical assistance: 74 percent responded that DYCD participation increased their opportunities to participate in training either "to a great extent" or "somewhat."

For the majority of providers, DYCD participation also increased their opportunities to partner with city agencies (62 percent), a public school (58 percent), and cultural organizations (55 percent).

***Increase in system capacity.*** The majority of provider organizations had extensive experience operating out-of-school time programs prior to the DYCD OST initiative, according to survey responses. Eighty-seven percent of executive directors surveyed said that their organization had previously operated an after-school or out-of-school time program. Seventy percent of provider organizations had operated programs since at least the 1997-98 school year, although almost half (44 percent) of program directors reported that the initiative brought out-of-school time programming to their location for the first time.

***Meeting the needs of working parents.*** A key goal of the OST initiative is to support the needs of working families. Indeed, the majority of parents who responded to the parent survey (conducted in 15 OST programs) indicated that they were working parents. More than three-quarters of responding parents (81 percent) reported that they worked at least 20 hours per week. About a third of parents (34 percent) responded that they were enrolled in school.

Overall, parents were satisfied with the quality of the OST program their child attended. Sixty-two percent of parents rated the overall quality of their programs as excellent. Parents were particularly satisfied with their OST program's ability to provide a safe space for students to participate in activities and interact with other youth. Sixty-seven percent of parents strongly agreed that their child was able to join activities that they would not otherwise experience, 67 percent felt their child was safer in the out-of-school hours as a result of the program, and 62 percent reported that their child made new friends.

In addition, about half of responding parents "strongly agreed" that their child benefited academically from participation in the OST program. Fifty-five percent "strongly agreed" that their child was getting the academic help he/she needed, 54 percent felt that their child talked to them more about what was going on in school, and 54 percent "strongly agreed" that their child was doing better in school overall as a result of participating in the after-school program.

Parents also expressed satisfaction in terms of how well the OST program met their own needs. Seventy-one percent of parents "strongly agreed" that the program hours fit their needs, 63 percent reported that they missed less work than before the program, and 61 percent reported that the program made it easier for them to keep their job.

## **Conclusions**

The evaluation's major findings for action in Year 2 focused on four areas. First, although OST programs successfully enrolled students in the initiative's first year, programs seem to have struggled to maintain high participation rates. Some of these apparent attendance issues may actually reflect program-level deficiencies in keeping activity-participation data current in OST Online. Second, all data sources available to the evaluation confirmed that programs consistently provided safe and structured environments for participants to spend out-of-school time, a noteworthy achievement in the initiative's start-up year. Third, OST programs experienced challenges in hiring program staff members who were well qualified to provide effective OST programming. Limited resources for staff compensation contributed to these challenges. Finally, evidence of differing participant reactions to school-based and center-based programs suggests that each program type has strengths relevant to the operations of programs that provide high-quality experiences for youth.



# 1. Overview of Program Development and Goals

This section of the report briefly describes the expectations and goals for the Out-of-School Time (OST) initiative, which is the subject of this evaluation.

## Development of the OST Initiative

The New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) launched services under its OST Programs for Youth in September 2005 with the award of funds to nearly 200 community-based and other nonprofit organizations for the support of more than 525 programs across New York City. Together, DYCD and the city's nonprofit community, working closely with the New York City Department of Education (DOE), extended services to approximately 51,000 youth across the city in the initiative's first year, making OST almost certainly the nation's largest after-school initiative.

Although DYCD has supported programs for youth over many years, it began planning for the OST initiative in 2003, when it consulted with city agencies, youth-serving nonprofit organizations, community leaders, and private funders to develop an OST Program Vision and Goals statement. After reviewing external reactions to an early concept paper on approaches to operationalizing its OST vision and goals, DYCD issued its request for proposals (RFP) for OST services in December 2004. The RFP solicited offers to address five service options, described below. Following competitive review of proposals using selection criteria published in the RFP, DYCD negotiated and awarded contracts under all five options by the end of summer 2005.

Option I was designed to fund OST programs for youth in elementary, middle, and high schools in each of the DOE's 10 geographically defined administrative subdivisions, known as regions. Option I also included 15 "priority middle schools" in which OST programs would operate in collaboration with state-approved Supplemental Educational Services providers. As illustrated in Exhibit 1, the program expectations for Option I varied by grade level served, with programs for younger students expected to provide more programming hours (and hence more comprehensive services) than programs serving older students.

Option II was designed to support OST programs that would use private match funds to subsidize at least 30 percent of their OST budgets. These programs were intended to serve students of any grade level for a minimum of four weeks and 160 hours per year, with a maximum DYCD award of \$600 per participant.

## Exhibit 1 Option I Program Parameters

Program Level	Minimum Time of Operation							Maximum Award per Participant
	School Year		Summer		School Closing Days		Total Hours	
	Weeks	Hours/week	Weeks	Hours/week	Days	Hours/day		
<b>Elementary grades</b>								
Year-round programs	36	15	8	50	20	10	1,140	\$2,800
School year programs	36	15	N/A	N/A	20	10	740	\$2,000
<b>Middle grades</b>								
Year-round programs	36	8	8	50	20	10	888	\$2,100
School year programs	36	8	N/A	N/A	20	10	488	\$1,300
<b>High school</b>								
School year programs	36	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	108	\$540

Option III programs were to be operated in collaboration with the Department of Parks and Recreation and would be offered at Parks sites. Each Option III program was expected to address one of three purposes: (1) Reach programs were to offer therapeutic recreation and educational programming for youth with disabilities; (2) Academic Support programs were to offer activities to assist participants to meet or exceed academic standards; and (3) Life Skills programs were to emphasis instruction to youth in how to manage their finances. All of these programs were expected to be in operation for 36 weeks during the school year. The Reach programs were required to offer a minimum of 10 hours of programming per week. The Academic Support and Life Skills programs were required to offer a minimum of six hours of programming per week for participants ages 6-13 and a minimum of four hours per week for participants ages 14-21. DYCD's maximum award was \$2,500 per participant for the Reach programs and \$540 per participant for the Academic Support and Life Skills programs.

Option IV solicited proposals to provide technical assistance to OST programs. Option V solicited proposals to evaluate the overall initiative.

The RFP stated that DYCD would give greater consideration to proposals for Option I and II programs that planned to serve youth in zip codes with a high need for OST services. DYCD identified these priority zip codes based on the following five criteria: the population of youth ages 6-15 years residing in the zip code, the youth poverty rate in the zip code, the percent of youth ages 16-19 in the zip code who are not in school (and not high school graduates or in the labor force), the number of ELL students in DOE schools in the zip code, and the number of single-parent families with children under 18 years of age in the zip code. Using these criteria, 25 high-need zip codes were identified for Option II programs. For purposes of Option I programs, DYCD extended the list to make sure that each of the 10 DOE regions had at least five targeted zip codes.

## **DYCD's Vision and Goals for the OST Initiative**

DYCD described its OST vision as follows in the RFP (page 9): “A quality OST system offers safe and developmentally appropriate environments for children and youth when they are not in school. OST programs support the academic, civic, creative, social, physical, and emotional development of young people and serve the needs of the city’s families and their communities. Government, service providers, and funders are partners in supporting an accountable and sustainable OST system.”

Accordingly, DYCD’s nine program goals reflect this vision (pages 9-10):

1. Provide a healthy, safe environment
2. Foster high expectations for participants
3. Foster consistent and positive relationships with adults and peers and a sense of community
4. Support the needs of working families
5. Support healthy behavior and physical well-being
6. Strengthen young people’s academic skills
7. Support the exploration of interests and the development of skills and creativity
8. Support youth leadership development
9. Promote community engagement and respect for diversity

Seen in the context of the national OST movement that has emerged and grown over the last ten years, these program goals cover an especially broad range of developmental objectives for youth participants. In particular, they are less narrowly academic than the goals articulated in many other OST and after-school program authorizations, such as the national 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Program. DYCD’s goals emphasize positive youth development in multiple domains within a context of safety and also support for the needs of working families.

## **2. Evaluation Design and Operations in the First Year**

This section describes the design of the evaluation, including the theory of change on which it is based, and the implementation of the evaluation in its first year.

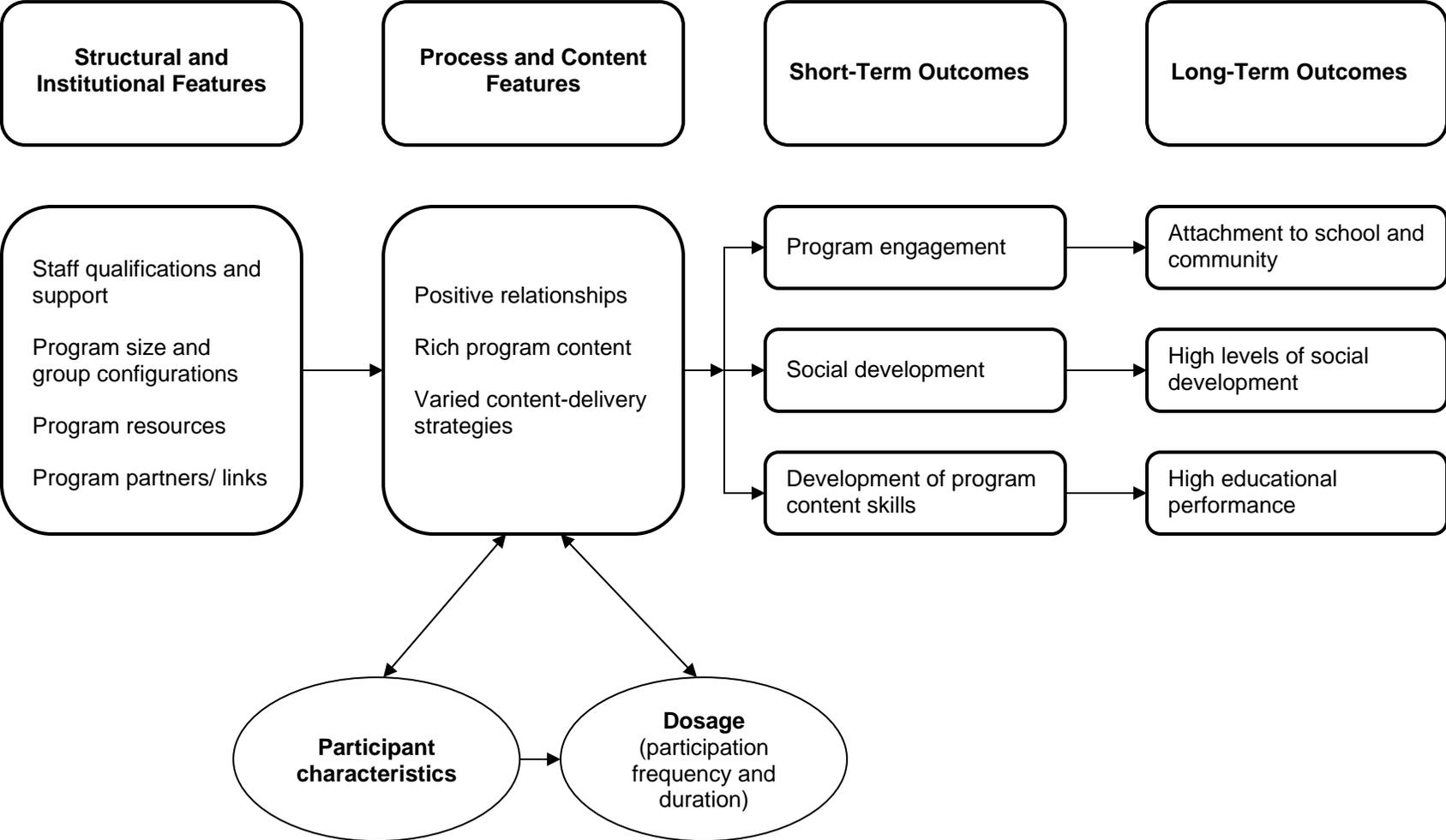
## Overview of Evaluation Design

A theory of change was developed to guide the evaluation, based on the OST initiative's goals and on discussions with DYCD staff. The change theory provided the basis for the evaluation questions and for the evaluation design. This change theory, illustrated in Exhibit 2, is based on the following propositions:

- To achieve positive life outcomes, children and youth require opportunities and supports in multiple developmental domains, including academic, social, psychological, and physical areas.
- High-quality after-school programs can stimulate positive experiences and outcomes for children and youth in these core developmental domains when children and youth participate regularly and for more than a year.
- After-school programs can promote positive development through many types of program content (e.g., arts, academics, culture, sports), so long as program staff promote high levels of youth engagement and positive relationships among youth and adults.
- Community-based organizations with a commitment to youth development can adopt policies and practices that equip them to deliver OST services capable of promoting positive development and exposing youth to the diverse resources of their own immediate communities and of the city itself.
- Certain structural and institutional features of programs, such as qualified staff and appropriate group sizes, also facilitate the implementation of high-quality programs.
- To achieve the goal of sustainable, universal OST program coverage for all youth who desire program access, the city and the provider community need to develop close partnerships that are characterized by a commitment to both OST quality and access.

The core task in designing the OST evaluation was to devise a framework that would capture information at baseline and over time that responded to the OST goals while also accounting for the broad diversity of OST programs and participants. Indeed, the sheer scale of the program posed the largest single challenge in crafting an appropriate evaluation design. The design that resulted from these deliberations employs systematic nesting of samples to permit generalization from the few to the many. Key features of the design are sketched below.

**Exhibit 2**  
**Theory of Change for the Evaluation of OST Programs**



- From all programs in Options I through III, the evaluation is collecting the following types of data annually for three years:

Data from **OST Online**, DYCD's program information system, which was designed specifically for use by DYCD's OST program and which OST programs use to record and maintain information describing the characteristics and OST involvement of all participants, plus other program information. OST Online was launched in Year 1 of the initiative; additional fields will be required, and modifications to the system will be made to better meet the needs of DYCD programs, and the evaluation, in future years.

**Survey of program directors**, which collects data on program goals and activities, program schedules, staff recruitment and qualifications, participant outreach and recruitment, participant needs and preferences, and linkages with participants' schools, communities, and families

**Survey of executive directors** of provider organizations, which collects data on how the OST program influences provider organizations in fulfilling their core missions, how OST programs link to other services delivered by provider organizations (if at all), and the cost and funding of specified elements of OST programs

- In addition to the data elements listed above, the evaluation is collecting data through annual **participant surveys** in a stratified random sample of 133 Option I programs. In these sites, evaluators are administering surveys to all participants in grades 3-12. This sample is structured to permit findings to be generalized to Option I programs as a whole and also to Option I programs at elementary, middle, and high school levels and to Option I programs that are either school-based or center-based.

Separate from the stratified random sample of Option I programs, the evaluation is also collecting participant survey data annually in the 15 Priority Middle Schools sites (as described on page 1 of this report).

- In a random sample of 15 sites selected from the sites in the participant-survey sample, known as the **in-depth sample**, the evaluation is conducting annual site visits. During the site visits, evaluators conduct individual and small-group interviews, structured observations of program activities, and surveys of staff and parents. In the second and third years of the evaluation, evaluators will obtain educational and demographic data on

students whose names and DOE identification numbers are available in OST Online.

With these data sources, the evaluation is addressing four primary research questions:

1. What are the characteristics of the programs supported by the OST initiative?
2. Who participates in these programs, and what are their patterns of attendance?
3. What are participants' patterns of social and emotional growth? Do programs affect participants' educational performance and, if so, how?
4. Do programs meet the city's needs for assistance to working parents and for improvement in community-level capacities to serve youth during the out-of-school hours and, if so, how?

The OST evaluation is currently designed to collect and report on data spanning the initiative's first three years of operations. The evaluation's design recognizes that the initiative's first year was focused on launching a very large number of programs throughout the city. Evaluators looked for program providers in Year 1 to hire needed staff, recruit and retain an initial cohort of youth participants, provide safe environments, and deliver activities and services that generally responded to student and parent interests. As reported here, OST programs achieved these objectives.

In the second and third years, evaluators' expectations will be somewhat higher. In particular, Year 2 data on OST programs should provide evidence that providers are achieving at least some of the quality objectives articulated in DYCD's 2004 Request for Proposals (RFP). Year 3 should generate preliminary evidence of positive early outcomes for participating youth.

## **Evaluation Operations in Program Year 2005-06**

Evaluation start-up occurred at the same time as OST programs began operations in late summer 2005. The evaluators developed and finalized the evaluation design, samples, and data-collection instruments in consultation with DYCD on a rolling basis starting at the beginning of the program year, with internal development and review timetables set to correspond to schedules for notifying sites about the evaluation and collecting data. In accordance with DOE rules, the evaluator sought and obtained DOE approval of the surveys and of the consent forms and practices to be used to protect the privacy of student data.

Working with the evaluator, DYCD staff contacted OST programs to obtain two types of necessary research consents in Year 1:

- **Parental research consents**, using a form developed by DYCD and approved by DOE

DYCD requires programs to enter each participant's parent/guardian research-consent status into the appropriate field in OST Online. Of 32,117 Option I participants in grades 3-12 with data in OST Online, as of May 8, 2006, the parents or guardians of 18,514 participants provided research consent, while parents or guardians of 904 participants denied consent. No consent data were recorded for 12,697 Option I participants in grades 3-12 (40 percent of total participants in these grades).

- **Principal research approvals**, using the form provided by DOE

DOE rules require that the principal of any host school approve in advance of any research activities to be conducted in that school and involving students or DOE employees. Accordingly, the evaluators, in collaboration with DYCD, sought research approval from principals of schools with OST programs that were either included in the Option I participant survey sample or were part of the Priority Middle Schools Program. Among the 85 school-based programs in the Option I participant survey sample, 78 principals (92 percent) granted research approval. Evaluators and DYCD were unable to secure consent from seven principals. Among the 15 Priority Middle Schools, 12 principals (80 percent) granted research approval, and three did not.

## **Year 1 Data Collection**

The findings in this report are based on data collected from the following sources during the first year of the OST initiative:

- **OST Online.** The evaluation analyzed patterns of enrollment and participation for programs and participants that had entered data into OST Online. This included 40,818 participants in 417 Option I programs, 9,139 participants in 100 Option II programs, and 1,021 participants who attended 11 Option III programs during the 2005-06 school year. Overall, 50,978 participants were enrolled in programs, according to OST Online.

- **Survey of executive directors of provider organizations.** The evaluation administered an online survey to all executive directors of organizations that received an OST contract, in Spring 2006. Findings in this report present data from 161 of 190 executive directors (approximately 85 percent response rate).
- **Survey of program directors.** In Spring 2006, the evaluation administered an online survey to directors of all OST programs, in Options I-III. Data represent the responses of 483 program directors from 543 programs,<sup>1</sup> for a response rate of approximately 89 percent. Surveys were completed by 393 Option I program directors, 80 Option II directors, and 10 Option III directors.
- **Survey of participants.** Paper surveys were administered to OST participants in grades 3-12 who attended the 133 randomly selected programs in the evaluation sample and who had parental consent to participate in the evaluation. Survey data presented in this report are based on data from a total of 3,614 participant surveys from 95 programs (71 percent of the sampled programs), including 1,811 surveys from 48 elementary-grades programs, 1,047 surveys from 23 middle-grades programs, and 756 surveys from 24 high school programs.

In addition, surveys were administered to consented participants in the Priority Middle School programs. Data in Appendix A of this report represent the responses of 562 students in 11 of 15 Priority Middle School programs.

- **Survey of program staff.** Paper surveys were administered to staff members in the 15 randomly selected in-depth study programs in Spring 2006. Staff-survey data in this report represent findings from 114 staff members in 12 programs, including 71 elementary-grades programs, 28 middle-grades programs, and 15 high school programs. The number of surveys received per program ranged from 2 to 16.
- **Survey of parents.** Paper surveys were administered to parents of OST participants in the 15 Option I in-depth study programs in Spring 2006. Parent-survey data in this report represent the responses of a total of 283 parents in 12 programs. The number of parent surveys received from each program ranged from 3 to 78.

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<sup>1</sup> Readers may note that the 543 programs is more than the 528 programs with participation data in OST Online, as reported above. The 543 programs were identified from DYCD's master list of programs, a few of which had not entered data into OST Online by the end of the program year.

- **Site visit observation data.** Evaluators conducted two-day site visits to each of the 15 Option I in-depth study programs in Spring 2006. These visits included interviews with the program director, program staff, participants, and, in many cases, parents. Data in this report also include analyses of structured activity observations conducted during these visits.

In general, analyses in this report are presented separately for programs in OST Options I, II, and III. Program director and participant survey responses for Priority Middle School programs are analyzed separately in Appendix A. Within Option I, many analyses compare center-based and school-based programs as well as elementary-, middle-, and high school programs. Appropriate tests were conducted to determine whether the differences between program types were statistically significant, including Chi-Square and ANOVA tests with Bonferroni post-hoc tests to distinguish whether, for example, elementary-grades programs varied significantly from middle-grades programs and/or high school programs. The findings presented in this report focus on areas in which statistically significant differences were found between groups.

### **3. Scope and Extent of OST First-Year Programming**

In Fall 2005, DYCD issued contracts for 557 OST programs to conduct OST activities in the 2005-06 program year, including 430 Option I programs, 114 Option II programs, and 13 Option III programs. Evaluators used available data entered in OST Online to determine program enrollment in Year 1. In the first year of implementation, some programs struggled to access and enter data in OST Online. As a result, it is possible that some programs that were in operation are not included in the enrollment analyses because they did not enter any participation data in OST Online.

By the end of the school year, according to OST Online data, 528 programs were launched and had participation data available, with 417 sites operating Option I programs, 100 operating Option II programs, and 11 operating Option III programs. Among all sites, 314 were based in New York City schools, and 214 were based in other locations (and are known as center-based programs).

Across these 528 programs, as shown in Exhibit 3, DYCD awarded contracts that were intended to serve 15,462 youth in elementary-grades programs, 9,659 youth in middle-grades programs, 11,512 youth in high school programs, and 7,183 youth in programs serving multiple grade levels, for a total of 43,816 youth, according to DYCD's master list of programs. As described in programs' entries in OST Online, these programs actually served a total of 50,978 students from September 2005 through June 2006. Option I programs across all grade levels served more students than were specified in their contracts, with

programs funded to serve 31,668 students and actually serving 40,818 students. Programs supported under Options II and III were awarded funds to support enrollments of 10,673 and 1,475 students, respectively, and served fewer students overall than their award enrollments.

**Exhibit 3**  
**Targeted Enrollment and Actual Number of Students Served,**  
**by Option and Grade Level**

Grade Level	Option I		Option II		Option III		All Programs	
	Targeted Enrollment	Students Served						
<b>Elementary</b>	13,707	18,225	1,755	1,632	N/A	N/A	15,462	19,857
<b>Middle</b>	9,340	14,261	319	235	N/A	N/A	9,659	14,496
<b>High</b>	8,621	8,332	2,891	2,540	N/A	N/A	11,512	10,872
<b>Multiple</b>	N/A	N/A	5,708	4,732	1,475	1,021	7,183	5,753
<b>Total</b>	31,668	40,818	10,673	9,139	1,475	1,021	43,816	50,978

Many OST programs may have enrolled participants who were not directly funded by OST monies but received the same services and activities as participants who were OST-funded, because the programs were able to use their OST contracts to leverage additional funds. Across all options, 84 percent of students entered in OST Online were designated as OST-funded participants; this was true for 81 percent of Option I participants, 97 percent of Option II participants, and 93 percent of Option III participants.

Including all participants, 74 percent of Option I programs met or exceeded their enrollment targets. Forty-eight percent of Option II programs and 9 percent of Option III programs met or exceeded their enrollment targets. Across all options, 87 percent of elementary-grades programs met or exceeded their enrollment target, compared with 73 percent of middle-grades programs, 53 percent of high school programs, and 36 percent of programs serving multiple grade levels.

Although OST Online does not distinguish between enrollees who replace departed students and other new enrollees, evaluators were able to determine the percent of students who were enrolled for either only the fall months or only the spring months. In Option I programs, 10 percent of students attended in the fall only, and 22 percent attended in the spring only. Comparable figures were 9 percent and 21 percent for Option II programs and 10 percent and 49 percent for Option III programs. These numbers suggest that, while some mid-year enrollees were replacements for others, it is also likely that programs continued to maintain open enrollment to meet their targeted enrollment throughout the year.

DYCD awarded over \$44 million to the 528 programs, with an average award of \$84,000 per program and a median award of \$73,000. Award amounts ranged from \$3,000 to \$340,000. DYCD awarded these contracts to 187 provider organizations.<sup>2</sup> Many provider organizations received more than one award, as shown in Exhibit 4. Nine provider organizations received 10 or more contracts, with total OST funding per organization ranging from \$210,000 to \$2.3 million.

**Exhibit 4**  
**Provider Organizations with 10 or More OST Programs**

Provider	Number of Programs
Sports and Arts in Schools Foundation	28
The Children's Aid Society	25
Police Athletic League, Inc.	20
The After-School Corporation	14
Church Avenue Merchants Block Association, Inc.	12
New York Junior Tennis League	12
Madison Square Boys & Girls Club	10
Global Kids, Inc.	10
Big Brothers/Big Sisters of NYC	10

The RFP specified different numbers of hours that Option I elementary, middle, and high school programs would operate per week, as shown in Exhibit 1. The stated expectations in the RFP for school-year programs were 15 hours, 8 hours, and 3 hours, respectively, with a further expectation that all elementary and middle-grades programs would be open for 10 hours a day on 20 days during the school year when the schools were closed due to holidays and to winter, mid-winter, and spring recess periods. From September 2005 through June 2006, according to OST Online, the 528 OST programs were open for periods that ranged from 12 to 289 days. Delays in program start-up likely account for the reports of low numbers of days of operation, with some programs not beginning operation until April. The average program service period was 162 days, and the median was 188 days. As expected, programs serving younger students were open for more days on average than were programs serving older students. Elementary-grades programs were open for periods that ranged from 30 to 251 days, with an average of 193 days (median of 199 days), middle-grades programs were open between 19 and 251 days, with an average of 172 days (median of 186 days), and high school programs were open for 12 to 260 days, with an average of 131 days (median of 136 days). Programs serving multiple grade levels were

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<sup>2</sup> The earlier discussion of Year 1 data collection reports that executive director surveys were administered to directors of 190 provider organizations. These organizations were identified from DYCD's master list. Only 187 organizations had programs with program data in OST Online.

open between 13 and 289 days, with an average of 123 days (median of 129 days). OST Online data indicate that: 74 percent of programs across elementary- and middle-grade levels were open every month from September through June; 23 percent were open six to nine months; and 2 percent were open for five months or less during this time period.

OST programs were distributed across each of the five New York City boroughs, as shown in Exhibit 5. Brooklyn hosted the most Option I OST programs (153), while Manhattan had the most Option II programs (39). Each of the five boroughs hosted at least one of the 11 Option III programs. The majority (275) of Option I programs were school-based, whereas the majority of Option II programs were center-based (61). All Option III programs were center-based. Option I programs were fairly evenly distributed across the DOE regions, ranging from 37 programs in Regions 1, 4, and 10 to 48 programs in Region 6. By far, the largest number of Option II programs was in Region 9 with 33 programs. No Option III programs operated in Regions 5, 6, or 9, while there were three Option III programs each in Regions 8 and 10.

As described earlier, DYCD identified a series of target zip codes for Option I and II programs, in order to increase the availability of OST services in high-need areas. Overall, out of the 528 OST programs with data as of June 2006, 297 programs (56 percent) operated in OST target zip codes and served 28,116 students; 267 of these programs were funded under Option I, and 30 were funded under Option II.

Option I programs most frequently served elementary-grades students, with 170 programs serving 18,225 students. Most Option II programs served high school students or students across multiple grade levels, with 37 programs serving 2,540 high school students and 42 programs serving 4,732 students across multiple grade levels. All Option III programs served students across multiple grade levels. The 15 Priority Middle School Programs for which data were available provided OST services to 2,394 students.

**Exhibit 5**  
**Number of OST Programs and Participants, by Option**

	Option I		Option II		Option III		All Programs	
	Programs (n=417)	Participants (n=40,818)	Programs (n=100)	Participants (n=9,139)	Programs (n=11)	Participants (n=1,021)	Programs (n=528)	Participants (n=50,978)
<b>Borough</b>								
Brooklyn	153	13,307	21	2,521	3	243	177	16,071
Bronx	92	10,850	22	1,634	2	147	116	12,631
Manhattan	68	5,799	39	3,020	3	206	110	9,025
Queens	85	8,709	15	1,884	2	177	102	10,770
Staten Island	19	2,153	3	80	1	248	23	2,481
<b>Program Location</b>								
School	275	31,797	39	3,250	0	0	314	35,047
Center	142	9,021	61	5,889	11	1,021	214	15,931
<b>DOE Region</b>								
Region 1	37	4,420	7	640	1	117	45	5,177
Region 2	42	5,022	8	741	1	30	51	5,793
Region 3	43	4,313	7	826	1	170	51	5,309
Region 4	37	3,954	7	460	1	7	45	4,421
Region 5	42	3,723	8	1,282	0	0	50	5,005
Region 6	48	3,417	4	386	0	0	52	3,803
Region 7	47	5,069	5	476	1	248	53	5,793
Region 8	40	3,693	7	1,033	3	243	50	4,969
Region 9	44	4,449	33	2,568	0	0	77	7,017
Region 10	37	2,758	14	727	3	206	54	3,691
<b>School Level</b>								
Elementary	170	18,225	13	1,632	N/A	N/A	183	19,857
Middle	124	14,261	8	235	N/A	N/A	132	14,496
High	123	8,332	37	2,540	N/A	N/A	160	10,872
Multiple	N/A	N/A	42	4,732	11	1,021	53	5,753
<b>Target Zip Codes</b>	267	26,072	30	2,044	N/A	N/A	297	28,116
<b>Priority Middle School</b>	15	2,394	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	15	2,394

## 4. Demographic Characteristics of Participants

This section describes the demographic characteristics of participants, as reported in OST Online by 528 programs. Evaluators examined the grade level, gender, race/ethnicity, and public assistance status of participants. The completeness of these demographic data in OST Online varied considerably. For example, 48,876 of 50,978 participants (96 percent) across all options had a grade level entered in OST Online, but only 26,674 (55 percent) had race/ethnicity data.

### Grade Level of Participants

The majority of participants enrolled in Option I programs were in the elementary grades (44 percent) or middle grades (36 percent), as shown in Exhibit 6. Twenty percent of Option I participants were in grades 9-12. In contrast,

Option II and III programs were more likely to enroll older participants. In Option II, 41 percent of participating youth were in high school, with another 44 percent in the elementary grades and only 16 percent in the middle grades. In Option III, almost half of enrolled youth were in high school (41 percent), with 34 percent of participants in the elementary grades and about a quarter in the middle grades.

**Exhibit 6**  
**Demographic Characteristics of Participants,**  
**by Option (in percents)**

	Option I	Option II	Option III	All Programs
<b>Total Number of Enrolled Participants</b>	<i>N=40,818</i>	<i>n=9,139</i>	<i>n=1,021</i>	<i>n=50,978</i>
<b>Grade Span</b>	<i>n=39,033</i>	<i>n=8,822</i>	<i>n=1,021</i>	<i>n=48,876</i>
K-5	44	44	34	44
6-8	36	16	26	32
9-12	20	41	41	24
<b>Gender</b>	<i>n=30,714</i>	<i>n=5,587</i>	<i>n=675</i>	<i>n=36,976</i>
Male	50	49	56	50
Female	50	51	44	50
<b>Race/ethnicity</b>	<i>n=22,417</i>	<i>n=3,655</i>	<i>n=602</i>	<i>n=26,674</i>
American Indian	1	0	0	1
Asian	10	11	5	10
African American	36	33	16	35
Hispanic/Latino	39	42	49	39
Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0
White (non-Hispanic)	9	9	25	9
Other	5	6	5	5

Center-based programs were more likely to enroll older participants than were school-based programs, as shown in Exhibit 7. In center-based programs, almost half of enrolled youth were in high school, with another 18 percent in the middle grades and 35 percent in the elementary grades. In contrast, school-based programs enrolled half of their enrolled youth in the elementary grades (48 percent), 39 percent in the middle grades, and 14 percent in high school.

**Exhibit 7**  
**Demographic Characteristics of Participants,**  
**by Program Location (in percents)**

	Center-based	School-based	All Programs
<b>Total Number of Enrolled Participants</b>	<i>n=15,931</i>	<i>n=35,047</i>	<i>n=50,978</i>
<b>Grade Span</b>	<i>n=15,159</i>	<i>n=33,717</i>	<i>n=48,876</i>
K-5	35	48	44
6-8	18	39	32
9-12	47	14	24
<b>Gender</b>	<i>n=11,108</i>	<i>n=25,868</i>	<i>n=36,976</i>
Male	50	50	50
Female	50	50	50
<b>Race/ethnicity</b>	<i>n=8,163</i>	<i>n=18,511</i>	<i>n=26,674</i>
American Indian	0	1	1
Asian	3	13	10
African American	40	33	35
Hispanic/Latino	38	40	39
Pacific Islander	0	0	0
White (non-Hispanic)	13	8	9
Other	5	6	5

**Gender of Participants**

OST programs in Options I and II served approximately equal numbers of boys and girls, as seen in Exhibit 6. Fifty percent of youth in Option I programs were male, as were 49 percent of youth in Option II. However, Option III programs enrolled substantially more boys than girls (56 percent, compared with 44 percent).

Within Option I, programs serving elementary-grades students enrolled more girls than boys (52 percent compared to 48 percent), as shown in Exhibit 8. In contrast, programs serving middle-grades and high school participants enrolled slightly higher proportions of boys (53 percent and 51 percent of participants, respectively).

**Exhibit 8**  
**Demographic Characteristics of Option I Participants,**  
**by Grade Level (in percents)**

	Option 1			
	Elementary	Middle	High	All
<b>Total Number of Enrolled Participants</b>	<i>n</i> =18,225	<i>n</i> =14,261	<i>n</i> =8,332	<i>n</i> =40,818
<b>Gender</b>	<i>n</i> =14,451	<i>n</i> =10,586	<i>n</i> =5,677	<i>n</i> =30,714
Male	48	53	51	50
Female	52	47	49	50
<b>Race/ethnicity</b>	<i>n</i> =10,538	<i>n</i> =7,913	<i>n</i> =3,966	<i>n</i> =22,417
American Indian	1	1	1	1
Asian	12	8	10	10
African American	32	38	43	36
Hispanic/Latino	43	39	27	39
Pacific Islander	0	0	1	0
White (non-Hispanic)	8	9	13	9
Other	5	6	7	5

Center- and school-based OST programs served roughly equal numbers of boys and girls, as seen in Exhibit 7, as did Priority Middle School programs, as seen in Exhibit 9.

**Exhibit 9**  
**Demographic Characteristics of Priority Middle School Participants**  
**(in percents)**

	Priority Middle Schools
<b>Total Number of Enrolled Participants</b>	<i>n</i> =2,394
<b>Gender</b>	<i>n</i> =1,631
Male	51
Female	50
<b>Race/ethnicity</b>	<i>n</i> =1,220
American Indian	1
Asian	6
African American	45
Hispanic/Latino	38
Pacific Islander	1
White (non-Hispanic)	2
Other	8

## **Race/ethnicity of Participants**

OST programs in Year 1 served large numbers of participants from minority groups. Across all OST options, Hispanic/Latino participants were the largest group served (39 percent of participants in Option I programs, 42 percent in Option II, and 49 percent in Option III), as seen in Exhibit 6.

In Options I and II, African-American youth were the second largest group served (36 percent and 33 percent, respectively). In Option III, however, only 16 percent of enrolled participants were African-American. Instead, the second largest demographic group served among Option III programs was white, non-Hispanic youth (25 percent of participants). In contrast, white youth made up only 9 percent of the participant population in both Options I and II.

Among Option I programs, programs targeting high school youth enrolled a higher percent of African-American participants than did elementary- and middle-grades programs (43 percent, compared to 32 percent and 38 percent, respectively), as shown in Exhibit 8. High school programs also had a lower proportion of Hispanic/Latino participants than did programs serving younger students (27 percent, compared to 43 percent in elementary programs and 39 percent in middle-grades programs). High school programs served a slightly higher percent of white students (13 percent, compared to 8 and 9 percent, respectively).

Center-based programs enrolled a higher percent of African-American participants than did school-based programs (40 percent, compared to 33 percent), as shown in Exhibit 7. Center-based programs enrolled a slightly lower proportion of Hispanic/Latino participants than did school-based programs (38 percent, compared to 40 percent). Center-based programs also served a lower percent of Asian students (3 percent, compared to 13 percent) and a higher percent of white students (13 percent, compared to 8 percent).

Among Priority Middle School programs, African-American youth were the largest group served, followed by Hispanic/Latino youth (45 percent and 38 percent, respectively), as shown in Exhibit 9.

## **5. Structural and Institutional Features of Option I Programs**

In the first year of implementation of the OST initiative, programs strived to establish the program components and policies that would enable them to deliver high-quality services to participants. See Appendix B for technical details about the evaluation's analyses of program features.

## Program Objectives

Reflecting the goals of the OST initiative, Option I program directors reported a broad spectrum of objectives. Option I program directors almost unanimously reported that providing a safe environment for youth was a major objective of their OST program (98 percent). In addition, more than three-quarters of Option I program directors identified the following as major objectives of their program:

- Help youth develop socially (95 percent)
- Provide youth with positive adult guidance and/or mentors (91 percent)
- Promote respect for diversity among youth (88 percent)
- Help youth improve their academic performance (88 percent)
- Help provide health/well-being/life skills development (83 percent)
- Provide hands-on academic enrichment activities (81 percent)
- Provide opportunities for cultural enrichment (81 percent)
- Provide recreational opportunities (80 percent)

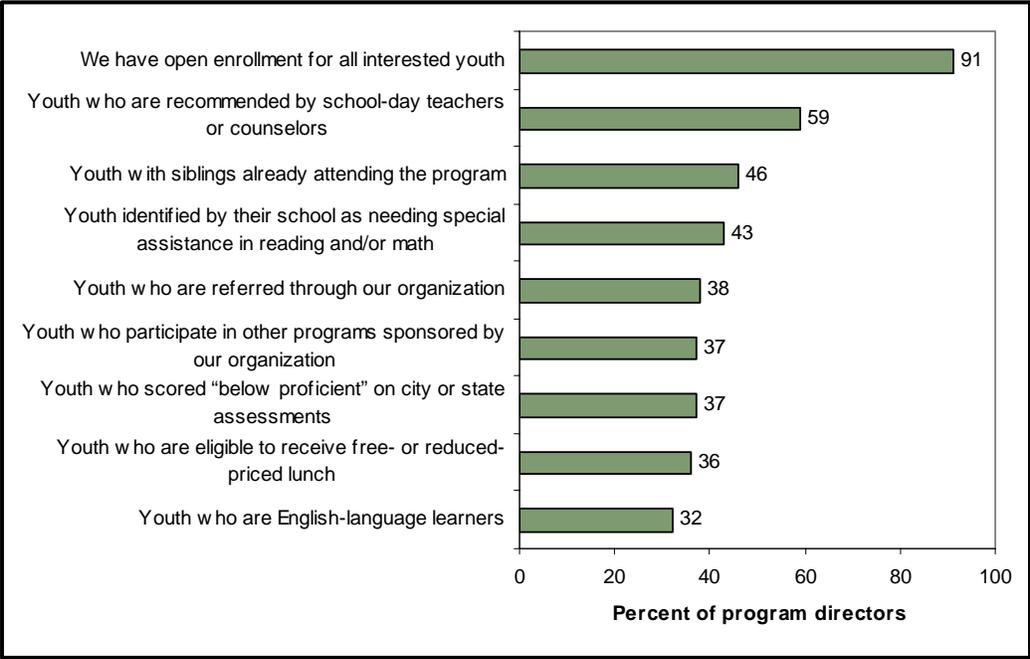
Interviews with program directors revealed more subtly intertwined goals than suggested by these distinct objectives. Program directors spoke of creating safe environments in which youth of all ages could develop academic, social, and life skills that would foster a love of learning. For example, one elementary-grades program director said that “we encourage a love of learning by participating in engaging activities that are different from school but support day-school learning.” A high school program director noted that she developed activities targeted toward at-risk participants that would “inspire students’ attachment to school, commitment to one another, and expand their skills.” Another director commented, “We want the kids to have fun. We don’t want them to think it’s a learning experience. In the school day, it is books, books, books. We don’t want them to feel like they have to do [activities] the ‘right’ way. We want them to enjoy it and have fun so they will continue to come.”

## Strategies for Participant Recruitment

OST Option I program directors overwhelmingly reported in surveys that they offered open enrollment to all youth who were interested in attending the program (91 percent), as shown in Exhibit 10. In addition, more than half (59 percent) of Option I directors reported that they recruited youth who were recommended by school-day teachers. Programs targeting younger students differed significantly from programs serving older participants in the ways in which they targeted participants. Notably, elementary-grades programs were significantly more likely than high school programs to seek out youth who scored “below proficient” on assessments (43 percent, compared to 27 percent), according to program directors’ survey responses. Both elementary- and middle-

grades programs were significantly more likely than high school programs to recruit youth who were identified by their school as needing special assistance in reading and/or math (48 percent and 50 percent, compared to 30 percent). Similarly, high school programs were significantly less likely to target youth who received free- or reduced- price lunch than were elementary- or middle-grades programs (21 percent, compared to 45 percent and 40 percent, respectively), or to target youth with siblings attending the program (25 percent, compared to 59 percent and 49 percent). Elementary-grades programs were also more likely to target youth who were English-language learners than were high school programs (43 percent, compared to 19 percent).

**Exhibit 10**  
**Types of Youth Targeted by Option I Programs for OST Services,**  
**According to Program Directors (n=390)**



Program directors of school-based programs reported recruitment approaches that were significantly different than those used by directors of center-based programs. As might be expected, school-based programs were significantly more likely to seek to serve youth recommended by school-day teachers or counselors than were center-based programs (63 percent, compared to 49 percent). School-based programs were also more likely to seek to serve youth identified by their school as needing special assistance in reading and/or math (46 percent, compared to 36 percent). Reflecting their location and structures, center-based programs were more likely than school-based programs to serve youth who

participated in other programs sponsored by the organization (45 percent, compared to 34 percent).

## **Program Director Qualifications and Supports**

The role of the program director was key to the operations of first-year OST programs. OST program directors were typically responsible for the day-to-day management of the program, including supervising staff, developing program activities, recruiting participants, and developing relationships with schools or community organizations to facilitate the smooth implementation of the program. Overall, evaluation evidence suggests that OST programs hired a cadre of diverse and qualified program directors to launch the first year of programming under the DYCD initiative.

***Program director background and qualifications.*** More than half of Option I OST program directors reported that they had experience as a director of an out-of-school time program prior to the OST initiative (60 percent). In addition, more than half reported experience as an educational or youth-service professional such as a camp counselor/leader (56 percent), as a recreation, youth, or child care worker (55 percent), and as a staff member in an OST program (54 percent). Program director experience did not vary by the grade level served by the program. However, significantly more program directors in center-based programs than in school-based programs reported having experience as a program director in an out-of-school time program (69 percent, compared to 55 percent) and as a program staff member (62 percent, compared to 51 percent).

In general, program directors also had high levels of education, as shown in Exhibit 11. Eighty-six percent of program directors had completed a four-year college degree or higher. Forty-four percent had a master's degree or higher. Only 19 percent of program directors reported that they were certified to teach.

Overall, program directors reflected participants demographically. Forty-three percent of directors described themselves as African-American, 26 percent as white, and 22 percent as Hispanic/Latino. Sixty-six percent of program directors were female.

**Exhibit 11**  
**Characteristics of Option I Program Directors**

	<b>Percent of Program Directors</b>
<b>Highest Education Level Completed</b> ( <i>n</i> =389)	
Less than high school	>1
High school or GED	1
Some college, other classes/training not related to a degree	8
Completed two-year college degree	5
Completed four-year college degree	26
Some graduate work	16
Master's degree or higher	44
<b>Teacher Certification</b> ( <i>n</i> =387)	
Certified	19
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b> ( <i>n</i> =380)	
Black (Not Hispanic)	43
Hispanic/Latino	22
Asian or Pacific Islander	5
Native American or Alaskan Native	0
White (Not Hispanic)	26
Other	5
<b>Gender</b> ( <i>n</i> =390)	
Male	34
Female	66

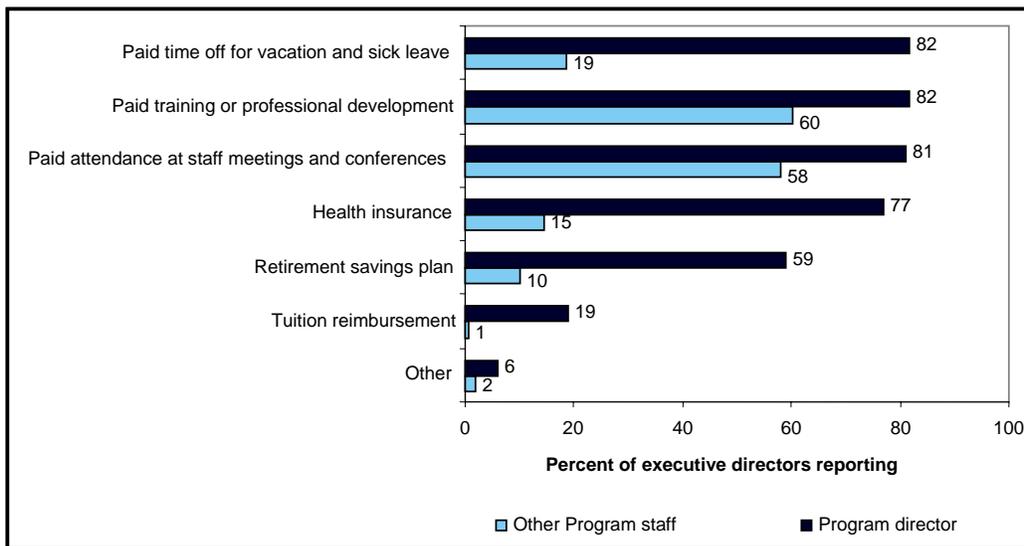
***Supports for program directors.*** The salaries reported by Option I program directors varied widely, ranging from below \$30,000 to \$55,000 or above per year. As illustrated in Exhibit 12, a total of 23 percent of directors reported making less than \$35,000 per year, and 24 percent made more than \$50,000 per year. Nine percent of program directors reported that they earned an hourly wage; these wages ranged from a low of \$14 per hour to a high of \$39.83 per hour, with an average hourly wage of \$22.82 per hour paid to those directors whose pay was computed on an hourly basis.

**Exhibit 12**  
**Self-Reported Salaries of Option I Program Directors (n=370)**

Salary	Percent of Program Directors
Below \$30,000	17
Between \$30,000 and \$34,999	6
Between \$35,000 and \$39,999	10
Between \$40,000 and \$44,999	24
Between \$45,000 and \$49,999	10
Between \$50,000 and \$54,999	11
\$55,000 or above	13
Hourly wage	9

Executive directors of provider organizations reported offering a variety of benefits to their program directors, as shown in Exhibit 13, which contrasted with the more limited benefits available to part-time OST staff (discussed in a later section). Most providers offered their program directors paid time off for vacation and illness, as well as paid training and professional development opportunities (82 percent each). Program directors were also paid to attend staff meetings and conferences in 81 percent of programs. More than three-quarters of providers (77 percent) offered their program directors health insurance, while more than half offered a retirement savings plan (59 percent.)

**Exhibit 13**  
**Benefits Offered to Program Directors and Other Program Staff as Reported by Executive Directors (n=159)**



**Program director job satisfaction.** Program directors reported high levels of satisfaction with their jobs and the level of support they received. As shown in Exhibit 14, 91 percent of Option I program directors “agreed a lot” that they found the work rewarding at their program, 88 percent reported that they enjoyed working at their program, and 77 percent of program directors reported that they got the support and feedback they needed from their supervisor. Job satisfaction among program directors did not vary by the grade level served by the program or by whether the program was center-based or school-based.

**Exhibit 14**  
**Self-Reported Job Satisfaction of Option I Program Directors (n=384)**



**Program Staff Qualifications and Supports**

**Program staffing patterns.** The number of paid program staff employed by OST programs varied, with nearly half of Option I program directors reporting that they had 10 or fewer paid staff members (45 percent). Another 44 percent of program directors reported having between 11 and 25 paid staff members. Programs were fairly evenly split on whether they relied on volunteers to supplement paid staffing: 49 percent of program directors reported no volunteer staff members, and 47 percent reported having between one and ten volunteers on staff.

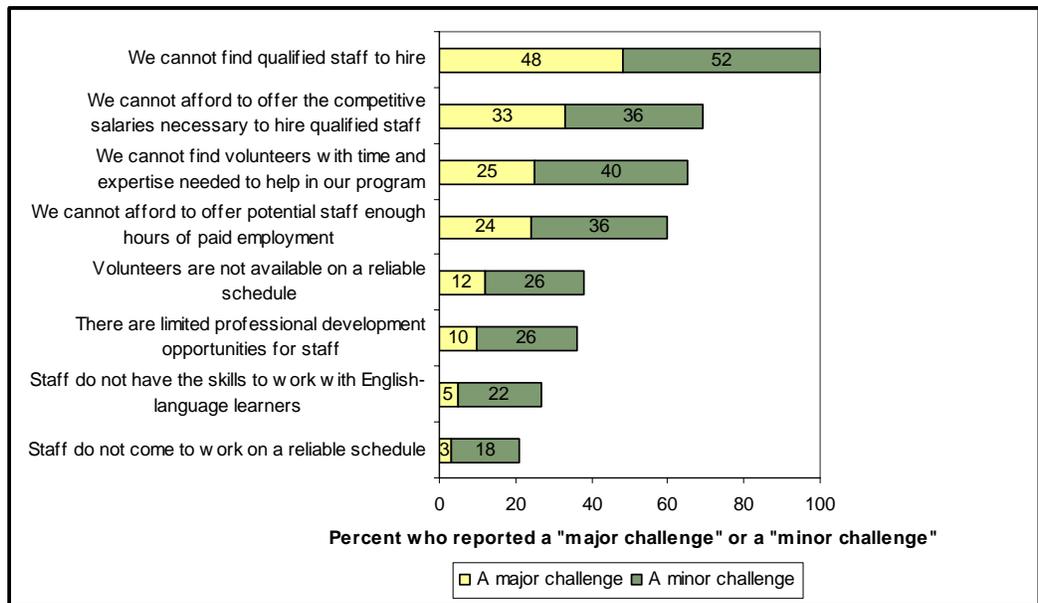
Most programs hired experienced professionals to help guide the programs, although many programs also employed young staff members. Fifty-six percent of program directors reported hiring a master teacher or educational

specialist; 62 percent of Option I program directors reported employing staff members with teaching certificates. More than three-quarters (78 percent) of Option I program directors reported having college students on staff, and the same percent of directors reported that at least some staff had a college degree. Nearly half (45 percent) employed teen staff.

Program directors acknowledged facing challenges in hiring program staff, as shown in Exhibit 15. All program directors reported that they were challenged to find qualified staff to hire, with nearly half (48 percent) reporting this as a major challenge. Sixty-eight percent of program directors reported at least some challenges in offering the competitive salaries necessary to hire qualified staff, and 65 percent reported challenges finding volunteers with the available time and necessary expertise to work in the program. In addition, 60 percent of Option I program directors said that it was a challenge to pay potential staff for enough hours to attract them. All of these issues were considered to be a “major challenge” by at least a quarter of program directors. (The surveys allowed program directors to define “qualified staff” and “necessary time and expertise” in any way they chose.)

In interviews, program directors described strategies they used to recruit and hire the best possible staff in a challenging environment. For example, one program director asked teen staff candidates to submit their report cards and to write an essay, in order to test their ability to provide support for middle-grades participants. “I want to see how they can help the kids...They have to be good in literacy and math.” Another described a preference for recruiting college students studying education. “If I go for an education major, they are not here just for the job; they are here because that is what they want to do. Part of the salary is their own learning; it is not just to benefit us, but to benefit them because that is what they are learning.” In one instance, a program develops future staff members through the program itself, hiring former participants who have a strong connection to the program. “We want [our high school kids] to be our group leaders in the future...Let’s get kids from the community, train them, and this will be their part-time job while they’re in college. There’s method to our madness!”

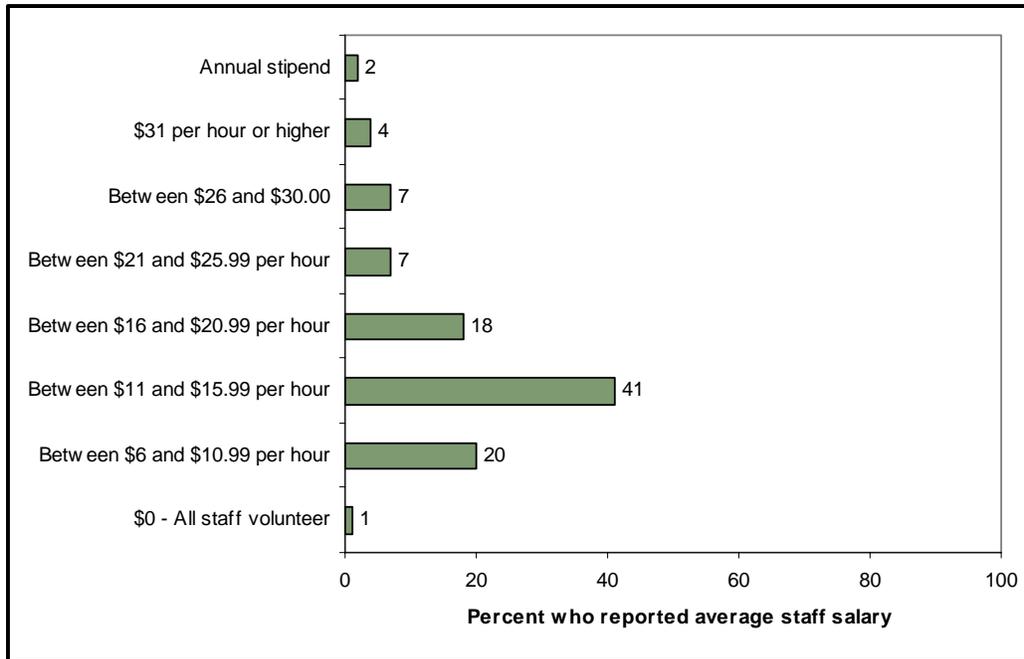
**Exhibit 15**  
**Staff Recruitment Challenges**  
**Reported by Option I Program Directors (n=392)**



***Supports for program staff.*** Staff salaries reflect both the prior experience of staff members, and the constraints directors describe in being able to offer a high wage. As shown in Exhibit 16, program directors most frequently reported an average staff wage of \$11 to \$15.99 per hour (41 percent of programs); 20 percent of programs reported a lower average staff wage of \$6 to \$10.99 per hour.

Part-time OST program staff receive few fringe benefits as part of their employment. The main benefits as reported by executive directors of provider organizations were paid training or professional development and paid attendance at staff meetings and conferences (60 percent and 58 percent, respectively). Only 19 percent offered paid time off, 15 percent offered health insurance, and 10 percent offered a retirement savings plan, as illustrated above in Exhibit 13.

**Exhibit 16**  
**Average Salaries of Option I Program Staff, According to**  
**Program Directors (n=393)**



**Technical Assistance and Supervision**

Through the OST initiative, DYCD contracted with the Partnership for Afterschool Education (PASE) to provide professional development and technical assistance opportunities for program providers in 2005-06. According to the OST RFP, technical assistance and professional development delivered by DYCD or its contractors were of two types: (1) mandatory training that all OST direct service providers were required to attend regarding the purposes and operations of OST Online, and (2) supplemental workshops and trainings that all OST direct service providers could attend on a voluntary basis.

In addition, OST programs provided professional support to their staff members in a variety of ways, including program-level supervision and support and opportunities to attend technical assistance workshops offered through the OST initiative as well as through the provider organization.

Almost all Option I program directors reported holding meetings with their OST program staff at least once a month (98 percent). Thirty-nine percent of program directors reported holding meetings with their staff at least once a week. Two-thirds of program directors (68 percent) also required at least some staff to submit lesson plans for review on a regular basis. More than half of

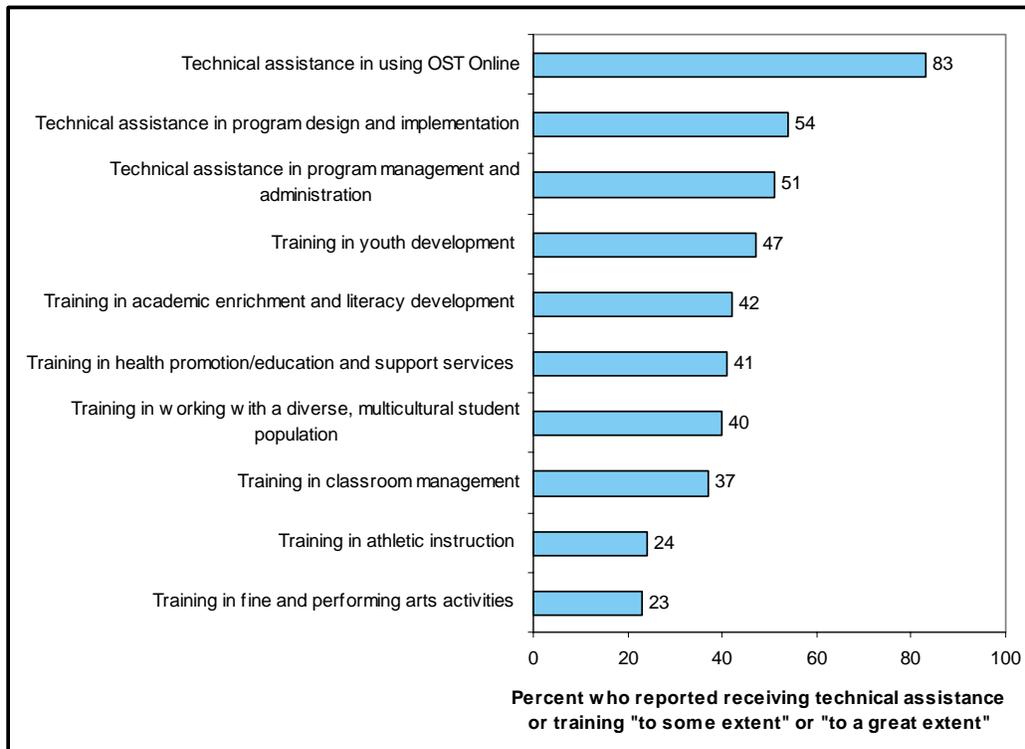
program directors (57 percent) used a published or externally developed curriculum to guide their activities.

In interviews, program directors described ways in which their program and provider organization provided training and support to staff. For example, one program “put out a survey agency-wide to see what kind of training the after-school staff might want. We ask them strengths and weaknesses; we ask them what they need to do a better job.” Another program director described its strategy for training staff to advance the academic goals of the OST program. “In math, we try to teach [staff] how they teach math in school...so we retrain [our group leaders] to focus not always on [getting the] right answer but on the process of how to get there. The skill developers are trained...math specialists who are New York state certified teachers. They take the curriculum and work with group leaders to implement it.”

In addition, staff discussed the frequency and content of program staff meetings. For example, in one program, staff reported that they attended mandatory staff meetings once every two weeks after program hours. “In every single meeting, we would go through what is going on in class, certain kids, and their behavior and progress, and we share information and ideas,” said one staff member.

Program directors reported that they used some of the training opportunities available through the OST initiative for themselves and their staff. The majority of Option I program directors reported receiving technical assistance in using OST Online (83 percent), and about half reported receiving technical assistance in program design and implementation and in program management and administration (54 percent and 51 percent, respectively), as shown in Exhibit 17. In interviews, program directors typically described sending a few staff to training workshops offered through the DYCD OST initiative and asking those staff to share the information learned with their colleagues. “When someone goes to a good [workshop], we have them train everyone else.”

**Exhibit 17**  
**Participation in Technical Assistance and Training,**  
**as Reported by Option I Program Directors (n=361)**



Option I program directors reported moderate levels of satisfaction with the training and technical assistance received through the OST initiative. Twenty-six percent reported that the training and technical assistance served their purposes completely, and another 64 percent reported that it was a good start. Thirty-nine percent of program directors reported that implementing the ideas and strategies presented in training and technical assistance had improved their project, and 43 percent were in the process of implementing the strategies.

Of the program directors who reported that their program did not implement the ideas and strategies presented in training and technical assistance, the most common obstacle preventing them from implementing the techniques learned was that they needed further training (reported by 50 percent of program directors).

More than half of program directors reported that additional training on the following topics would benefit their staff:

- Youth development (75 percent)
- Academic enrichment and literacy development (59 percent)
- Classroom management (57 percent)

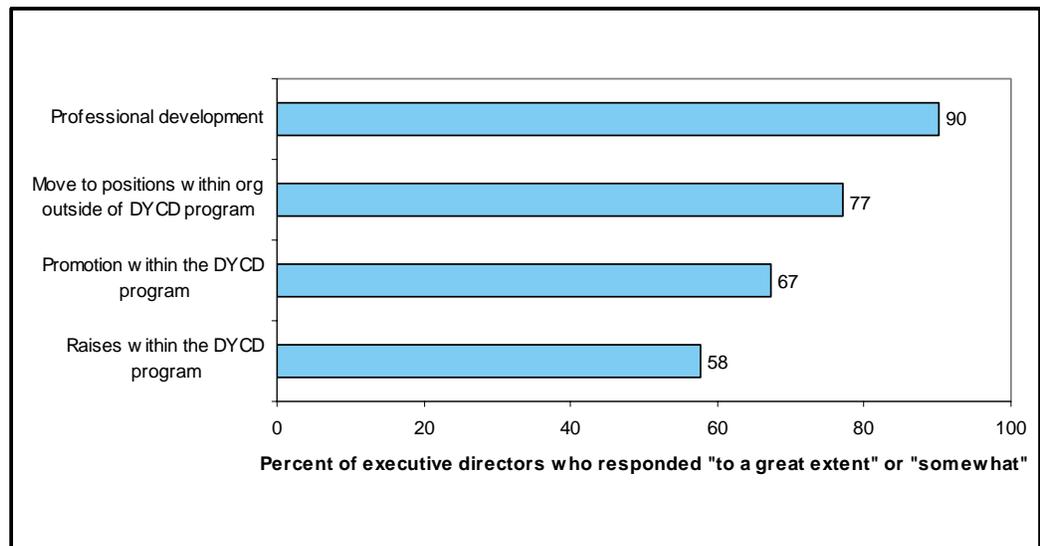
- Fine and performing arts (51 percent)

Program directors most frequently reported that the training topics they personally found most useful were: staff supervision (54 percent), program design (52 percent), and program management (51 percent).

### Opportunities for Career Advancement

Executive directors of provider organizations reported offering opportunities for staff working in OST programs to advance their careers. Such opportunities can provide incentives for staff to remain employed by the provider, and contribute to improving the quality of OST programming and staff. More than three-quarters of executive directors reported offering professional development opportunities as a way for program staff to advance their careers, as well as opportunities to move to other positions within the organization (90 and 77 percent, respectively). Somewhat fewer executive directors reported opportunities for promotions or raises within the DYCD OST program (67 and 58 percent, respectively).

**Exhibit 18**  
**Opportunities for Career Advancement for OST Staff,**  
**as Reported by Executive Directors (n=158)**



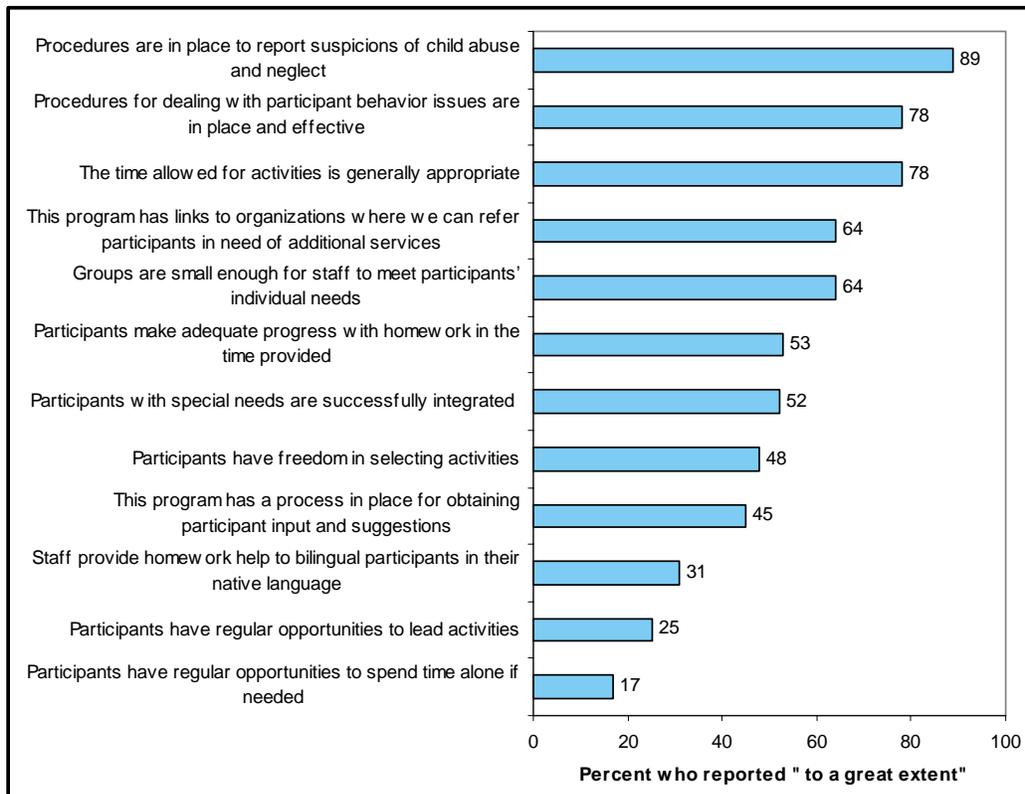
### Program Structures and Partnerships

In the first year of the OST initiative, program directors worked to create program policies and procedures that ensured compliance with city and state

requirements and that provided the foundation for positive program environments in which participants could thrive.

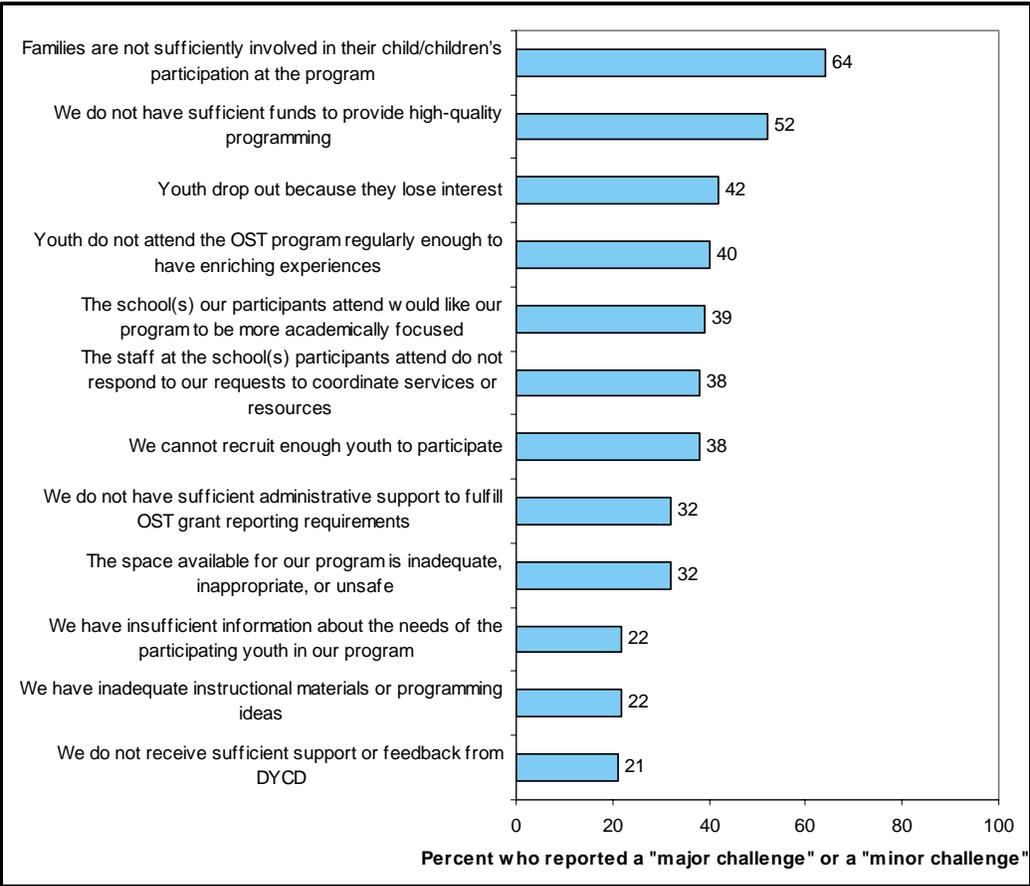
**Program policies.** More than three-quarters of Option I program directors reported “to a great extent” that their program had policies in place for the following purposes: for reporting suspicions of child abuse and neglect, for dealing with participant behavior, and for making sure that the time allowed for activities was generally appropriate (89, 78, and 78 percents respectively), as shown in Exhibit 19. Because of their importance, policies for reporting suspicions of child abuse or neglect were a particular priority of DYCD. In addition to the 89 percent of program directors who reported that such procedures were in place “to a great extent,” another 8 percent said that such procedures were in place “to some extent.” Ninety-two percent of elementary-grades program directors, 97 percent of middle-grades directors, and 77 percent of high school directors reported that these policies were in place “to a great extent” or “to some extent.” A total of 99 percent of elementary-grades Option I program directors reported that such policies were in place “to a great extent” or “to some extent.”

**Exhibit 19**  
**Existence of Program Policies,**  
**as Reported by Option I Program Directors (n=392)**



Program directors were consistent in their reports of challenges to implementing high-quality programming. The challenges that they indicated most often were that families were not sufficiently involved in their children’s participation in the program and that programs did not have sufficient funds to provide high-quality programming (64 percent and 52 percent, respectively), as shown in Exhibit 20. Program directors also noted low participation rates as a challenge: 42 percent said that youth drop out because they lose interest, and 40 percent said that youth do not attend OST programming regularly enough to have enriching experiences.

**Exhibit 20**  
**Challenges to Implementing High-Quality Programming,**  
**According to Option I Program Directors (n=392)**

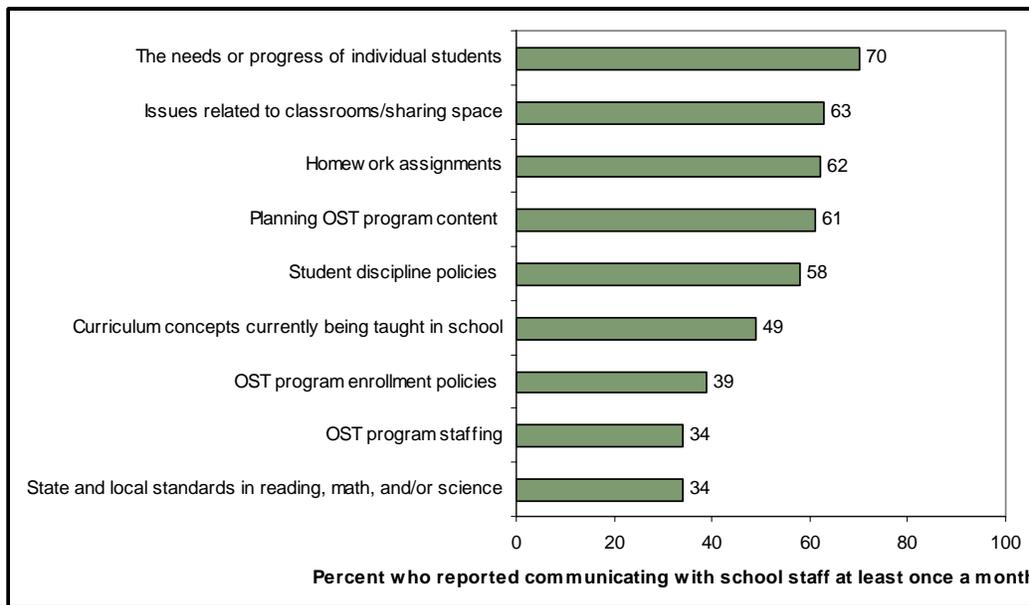


**Program partnerships with schools.** In general, Option I program directors reported inconsistent communication with school-day principals, teachers, and other key staff. As expected, center-based program directors reported significantly less communication with school staff than did directors of

school-based programs. Among school-based programs, more than half of program directors reported communicating with school staff at least once a month on the following topics, as shown in Exhibit 21:

- The needs or progress of individual students (70 percent)
- Issues related to classrooms/sharing space (63 percent)
- Homework assignments (62 percent)
- Planning OST program content (61 percent)
- Student discipline policies (58 percent)

**Exhibit 21**  
**Communication with School Staff, as Reported**  
**by Directors of Option I School-Based Programs (n=270)**



Program line staff reported minimal interactions with school-day staff. Among the staff who responded to our survey from the 15 programs in the in-depth study sample, fewer than a third reported that they communicated with school staff on a monthly basis about any of the topics we asked about. Among those engaging in such communication, the most frequent topic of monthly conversations with school-day staff was about homework assignments (reported by 32 percent of staff).

Some schools and programs implemented formal structures for communication. For example, in one school, all organizations providing after-school services met two times a month with the principal. The meeting provided each organization with an opportunity to discuss issues related to the use of space and the coordination of their various after-school activities. “We give updates

and talk about issues that have come up.” In another program the kindergarten, first-, and second-grade teachers gave program staff a log of homework for each week, “so we know exactly what they have to do each week” and can use the program time effectively. In many other programs, staff communicated informally through conversations with teachers about student behavior and academic progress.

***Program partnerships with other organizations.*** Three-quarters of program directors (75 percent) reported that outside organizations, in addition to the provider, offered special programs, activities, or services for youth at their program. More than half of programs reported that outside organizations donated materials or supplies (58 percent), provided funding through grants or contracts (57 percent), referred students to the OST program (56 percent), and provided special programs, activities, or services to families (56 percent).

## **6. Implementation of Process and Content Features in Option I Programs**

As suggested by the theory of change for the evaluation of OST programs (Exhibit 2), the implementation of activities that include rich program content, varied content delivery strategies, and efforts to foster positive relationships is essential to the success of out-of-school time programs in achieving positive short- and long-term outcomes in participants.

### **Program Content**

The DYCD OST initiative encouraged programs to offer a variety of rich content-based activities designed to support participants’ academic and social development, consistent with the developmental needs of the youth served.

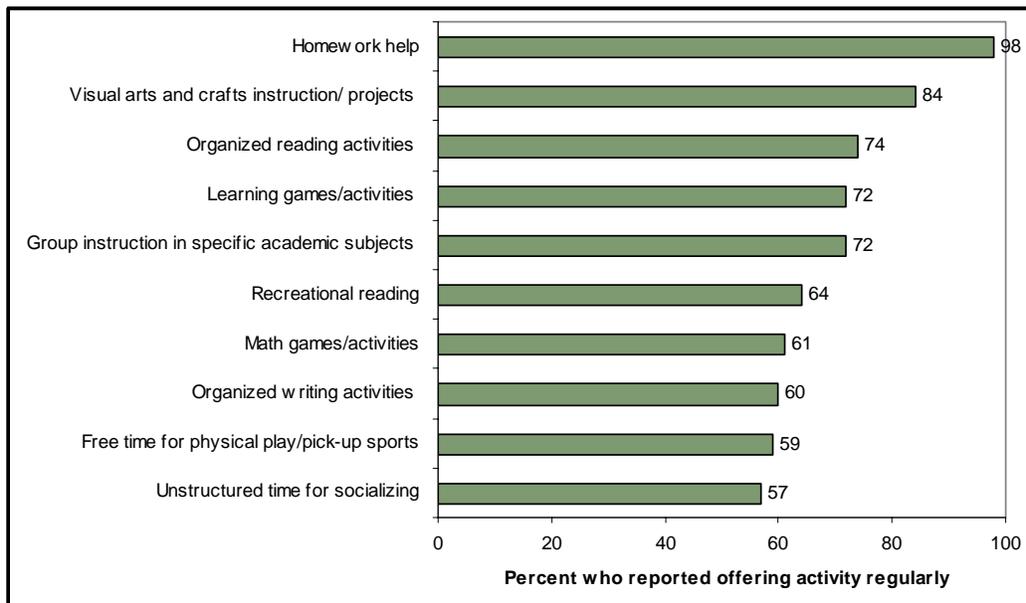
The DYCD RFP required all Option I elementary-grades programs to provide opportunities and support for participants to complete their homework; in addition, all elementary- and middle-grades programs were encouraged to provide other academic enrichment activities that augmented school-day instruction. Elementary-grades programs were also asked to offer participants a balanced mix of activities that included recreation and physical activity. Middle-grades programs were required to include activities that addressed the transition from elementary to middle school, including opportunities for positive identity formation, leadership development, and learning related to health and sexuality. In contrast, high school programs were not required to have an academic focus but were required to offer project-based programming that focused on topics such as careers, job training and placement, preparation for post-secondary education, and life skills/transition to independent living. Programs in Options II and III that served multiple grade levels were required to provide activities that promoted

positive relationships and high expectations and that supported the exploration of interests and development of skills and creativity.

**Elementary-grades program activities.** The program director survey asked directors to identify activities that were ever offered in their program, offered to most participants, and offered at various levels of frequency. For analyses of Year 1 program implementation, evaluators focused on the activities that program directors reported offering with the most regularity: activities that were offered to most or all participants throughout the year for at least one hour per week.

Exhibit 22 presents the 10 activities that program directors most frequently reported offering for at least an hour per week. Nearly all program directors consistently offered homework help to their elementary-grades participants (98 percent). In addition, 84 percent reported offering visual arts and crafts activities. More than half of programs also regularly offered free time for physical play and unstructured time for socializing (59 percent and 57 percent, respectively). Other activities reported to be regularly offered by at least half of elementary-grades program directors included dance/movement activities (57 percent) and organized team sports (50 percent).

**Exhibit 22**  
**Ten Most Common Elementary-Grades Program Activities,**  
**as Reported by Option I Program Directors (n=145)**

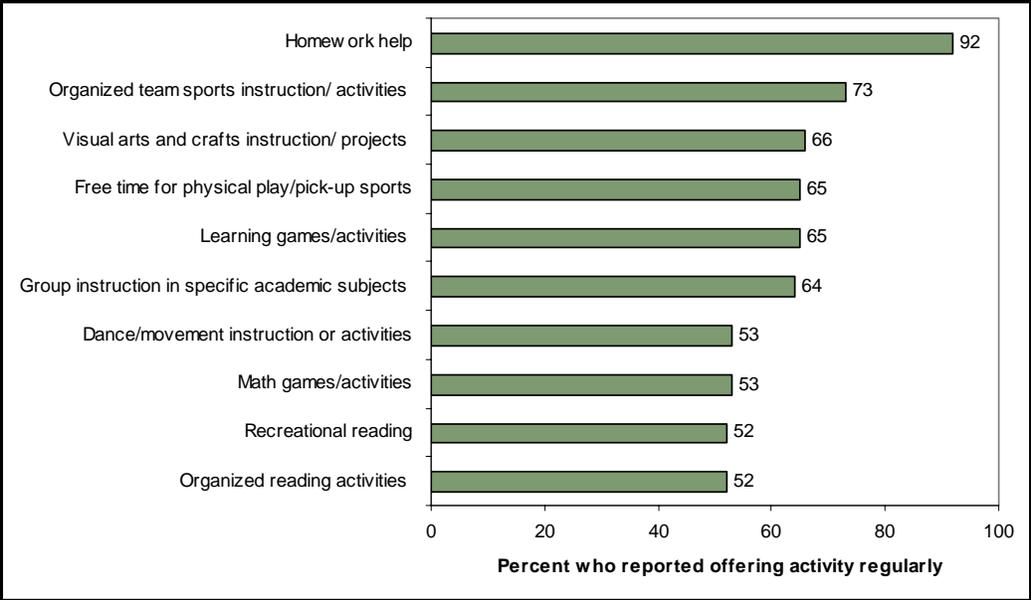


In interviews, elementary-grades program directors typically highlighted program activities that supported DYCD OST initiative goals. For example an

elementary-grades program director emphasized the program’s goal to strengthen participants’ academic skills. “For academics we’re interested in mastery. We use Voyager, and we have [certified teachers] on our staff whose role is to work with our group leaders in implementing our curriculum...we have a math coach who is on staff so the kids get literacy and math three times a week for 45 minutes at a time, and they also get 45 minutes of homework help [everyday except Friday]...”

**Middle-grades program activities.** Exhibit 23 displays the 10 activities most frequently offered to middle-grades participants at least an hour a week, and shows a similar list to that of elementary-grades programs. In comparison, organized team sports were more common in the middle-grades programs (reported by 73 percent of program directors). In addition, slightly more than half (51 percent) of middle-grades program directors reported regularly offering unstructured time for socializing.

**Exhibit 23**  
**Ten Most Common Middle-Grades Program Activities,**  
**as Reported by Option I Program Directors (n=117)**

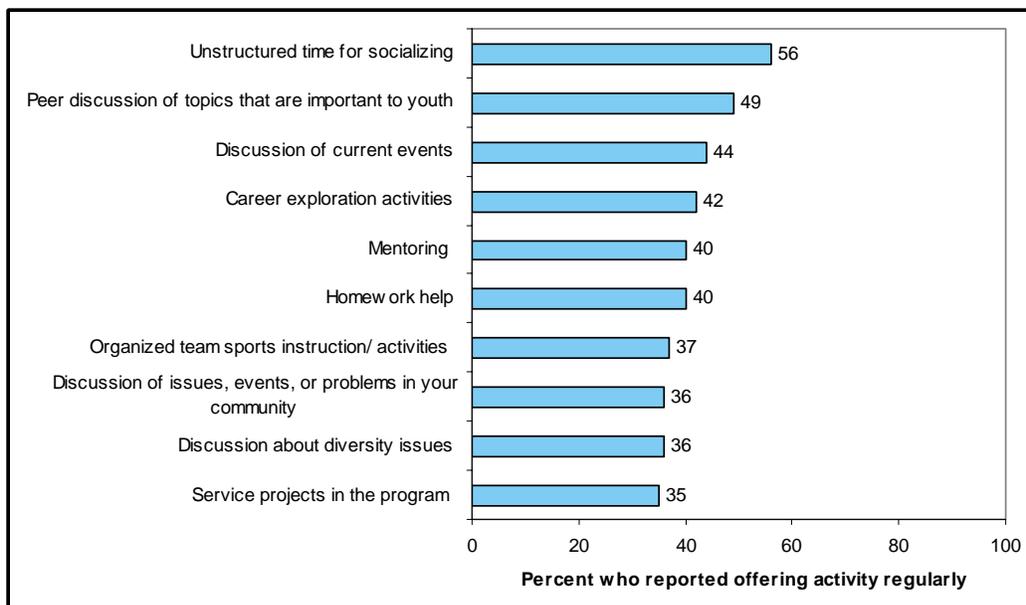


**High school program activities.** High school program directors reported the widest range of consistently offered program activities. In fact, as shown in Exhibit 24, only one activity—unstructured time for socializing—was reported by more than half of the program directors as being regularly offered to all participants (reported by 56 percent), suggesting that high school OST programs were more specialized and that each targeted a smaller set of program activities. These activities tended to be more civic-oriented than in the elementary- and

middle-grades programs. For example, while 40 percent of directors reported regularly providing homework help to most of their high school youth, 49 percent had frequent peer discussions of topics important to youth, and 44 percent reported frequent discussions of current events.

One high school program director emphasized the program’s efforts to develop these communication and expression skills among participants. “I think at [the high school] level they’re venturing into a stage of independence, and we want to enhance that freedom of expression and develop an environment that they belong to instead of us dictating. When you [dictate to students] you lose them to the street. We learned that we should listen more to what they want...it’s youth development and leadership, it engages them and gives them input into what they want.”

**Exhibit 24**  
**Ten Most Common High School Program Activities,**  
**as Reported by Option I Program Directors (n=115)**



### Content Delivery Strategies

**Staff instructional strategies.** Although OST programs strived to implement a broad range of activities during the first year of the initiative, they sometimes struggled in implementing the quality features associated with positive student outcomes in OST programming. High-quality OST programs typically promote mastery through activities and strategies that provide their participants with both structured and unstructured learning opportunities and that promote participant autonomy, choice, and leadership (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking,

1999). Through program observations, evaluators recorded and assessed the extent to which staff instructional strategies fostered mastery, as measured by the following indicators (see Appendix C for reliability data on the evaluation's observation-based scales):

- Youth contribute opinions, ideas, and/or concerns to discussions
- Staff encourage youth to share ideas, opinions, and concerns
- Staff communicate goals, purposes, and expectations
- Staff verbally recognize youth's efforts and accomplishments
- Staff ask youth to expand on their answers and ideas
- Staff challenge youth to move beyond their current level of competency
- Staff employ varied teaching strategies

In visits to programs in the in-depth study sample, observers rated each of these items on a scale of one to seven, and items were averaged in analysis to compute a scale measuring mastery/skill-building instruction. Across all activities observed, the average scale score was 3.06 out of 7. In years 2 and 3 of the evaluation, observation ratings will be compared against the scale scores reported here to gauge changes in program quality. In Year 1, notable differences were evident in the extent to which staff delivered mastery-oriented instruction across activity types and across grade levels served.

- Homework help and tutoring activities scored significantly lower on the mastery scale compared to all other activity types (average score of 2.68, compared to 3.26).
- In contrast, academic enrichment activities were rated significantly higher than were other activity types (3.62, compared to 2.87).
- Activities in which certified teachers or activity specialists were present were rated significantly higher than other activities (3.72, compared to 2.92) in terms of the extent to which instruction focused on skill-building and mastery.
- Activities that were intentionally designed to promote skill-building were, as might be expected, rated significantly higher than were activities designed to allow students to practice existing skills or complete homework (4.07, compared to 3.32 and 2.55, respectively). These activities included, for example, targeted vocabulary-building sessions with ELL students in a middle-grades program and a dance class in a high school program where students learned the choreography of a new dance.

- Activities in high school programs were rated significantly higher than were activities in elementary- or middle-grades programs (4.24, compared with 2.90 and 2.73, respectively).

***Quality of activity content and structure.*** In activity observations, evaluators also rated the quality of the activity content and structure on a scale of one to seven, as measured by the following items:

- Activity is well organized
- Activity challenges students intellectually, creatively, developmentally, and/or physically
- Activity involves the practice/progression of skills
- Activity requires analytic thinking

Because of the nature of homework help activities, in which programs had little control over the content and skills targeted by the homework, these were excluded from analysis. Among the remaining activities observed, the average rating on the activity content and structure scale was 4.26 out of 7, but with significant differences noted in the quality of activity content:

- Arts activities scored significantly higher on the activity content and structure scale than did other activities (4.88, compared to 4.00).
- Not surprisingly, intentionally open and unstructured activities were rated significantly lower in terms of the quality of activity content and structure than were other activities (2.98, compared to 4.46).
- Activities in which certified teachers or specialists were present scored significantly higher on the activity content and structure scale (4.93, compared to 4.13) than were other activities.

## **Positive Relationships**

High-quality OST programs seek to foster the development of positive staff-youth relationships as well as positive peer relationships among youth. Through activity observations, evaluators rated the extent to which activities displayed positive relationships based on the following indicators, each rated on a scale of one to seven. Evaluators then combined these items into scales with an average score of 5.31 out of 7, suggesting generally positive relationships across all activities observed.

- Youth are friendly and relaxed with one another
- Youth respect one another

- Youth show positive affect to staff
- Youth are on-task
- Youth listen actively and attentively to peers and staff
- Staff use positive behavior management techniques
- Staff are equitable and inclusive
- Staff show positive affect toward youth
- Staff attentively listen to and/or observe youth

There were few significant differences in the extent to which evaluators observed a positive atmosphere in the activities. Most notably, homework and tutoring activities were associated with a significantly lower atmosphere rating, compared to other activity types (4.97, compared to 5.49).

## **7. Program Implementation in Option II and Option III OST Programs**

In addition to the Option I programs described above, in Year 1 of the OST initiative, DYCD also launched Option II and Option III OST programs. Option II programs were designed to build on public-private partnerships and were required to receive at least 30 percent of their funding from private sources such as corporations, foundations, and individuals. Option III programs were operated through the Department of Parks and Recreation and were to be offered at Parks sites. Because of the different structures and expectations of Option II and Option III programs, evaluators analyzed the program director survey data separately and report here on program implementation in Year 1 for Options II and III.

### **Participant Recruitment**

Option II and III programs sought to serve students aged 6 to 21 across all grade levels in all ten DOE regions. One set of Option III programs specifically sought to serve students with disabilities and provided academic support so that students could meet or exceed academic standards.

Sixty-five percent of Option II program directors reported that they offered open enrollment for all interested youth. Forty-three percent of Option II programs also reported that they sought to serve youth who were recommended by school-day teachers or counselors.

All 10 responding Option III program directors reported that they allowed open enrollment for all interested youth. Five of 10 Option III programs reported trying to serve youth who scored below proficient on their city or state assessments, and five of 10 programs reported trying to serve youth identified by

their school as needing special assistance in reading and/or math, reflecting the intent for Option III programs to include an academic support component.

## **Objectives of Option II and III Programs**

Option II program directors overwhelmingly reported that the major objective of their program was to provide a safe environment for youth (96 percent). Three-quarters or more of Option II program directors also reported that a major objective of their program was to:

- Help youth develop socially (95 percent)
- Provide youth with positive adult guidance and/or mentors (91 percent)
- Provide health, well-being, and life skills (80 percent)
- Promote respect for diversity among youth (76 percent)
- Provide leadership opportunities for youth (75 percent)

Option III programs also reported having a wide array of objectives. All 10 Option III programs reported that providing a safe environment for youth was a major objective. Seven or more Option III program directors also reported that a major objective of their program was to:

- Provide youth with positive adult guidance and/or mentors (8 programs)
- Promote respect for diversity among youth (7 programs)
- Help youth improve their academic performance (7 programs)
- Help youth develop socially (7 programs)

## **Activities Offered in Option II and Option III Programs**

Because Options II and III offered flexibility in scheduling OST programming, the evaluation analyzed the activities that program directors reported offering to all or most youth in every month in which the program was open, with no restriction on the frequency of youth participation. Option II program directors most frequently reported offering discussion-based activities, as shown in Exhibit 25. More than half of Option II program directors reported offering the following discussion activities to the majority of participants on an ongoing basis:

- Peer discussion of topics that are important to youth
- Discussion of diversity issues
- Mentoring
- Discussion of issues, events, or problems in the community
- Discussion of current events

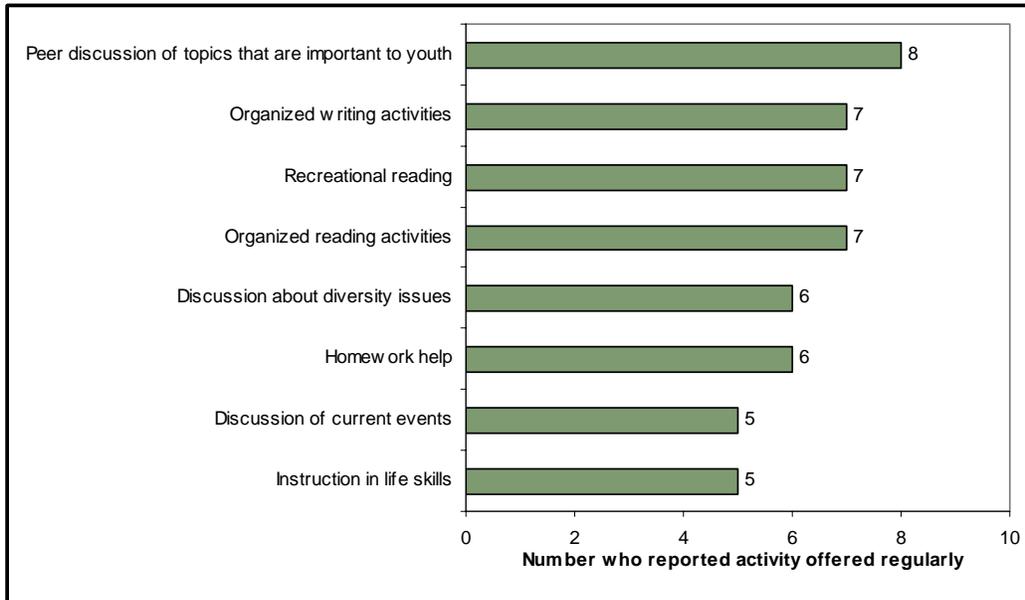
**Exhibit 25**  
**Option II Program Activities, as Reported by Program Directors**  
*(n=79)*



Option III program director reports of activity offerings demonstrate a focus on academic enrichment activities, as shown in Exhibit 26. At least seven of the 10 responding program directors reported regularly offering the following activities:

- Peer discussion of topics important to youth
- Organized writing activities
- Organized reading activities
- Recreational reading

**Exhibit 26**  
**Option III Program Activities, as Reported by Program Directors**  
*(n=10)*



**Program Director Qualifications and Supports**

Option II program directors typically had prior experience as camp counselors/leaders or as youth workers (69 percent and 62 percent, respectively). Eighty-six percent of Option II program directors reported that they had completed at least a four-year college degree, and 51 percent had completed a master’s degree or higher. In addition, 22 percent of Option II program directors were certified to teach. Fifty-nine percent of Option II program directors reported being white, 20 percent were African-American, and 16 percent Hispanic/Latino. The majority of Option II program directors (76 percent) were female.

Six of 10 Option III program directors reported prior experience as a camp counselor/leader, and six had experience as an administrator in a social services organization. Reflecting the partnership with the Department of Parks and Recreation, five Option III program directors reported prior experience as an administrator at a child/youth center or at a park or recreation center and as a recreation, youth, or child care worker. Six of ten Option III program directors had completed a four-year college degree or higher, and the remaining four completed some college or other classes/training not related to a degree. Only one Option III program director reported being certified to teach. Four of ten Option III program directors were Hispanic/Latino, three were African-American, and three were White. Half of the ten Option III program directors were female.

## **Program Staff Qualifications and Supports**

Option II OST programs employed relatively few staff members. Nearly three-quarters reported having between one and ten paid staff members (73 percent). Nearly half (47 percent) of Option II programs had between one and 10 volunteer staff members; more than a third (38 percent) had no volunteers. Similar to Option I programs, Option II programs relied on a combination of experienced professionals and young staff members. Eighty-nine percent of Option II programs had staff with college degrees or higher, and 32 percent of Option II programs employed some staff with teaching certificates. About a quarter of Option II programs (26 percent) employed teen staff members. More than half (53 percent) of Option II programs reported that the average hourly wage for staff members was less than \$16 per hour. Most Option II programs (64 percent) did not have a master teacher or education specialist; 20 percent of Option II programs had one such staff member in a paid part-time position, and 15 percent had one in a paid full-time position.

All Option II programs indicated that finding qualified staff to hire was a challenge. Most Option II programs also reported that they were challenged to offer the competitive salaries necessary to hire qualified staff (70 percent), that they could not find volunteers with the time and expertise needed to help in the program (64 percent), and they could not afford to offer potential staff enough hours of paid employment (58 percent).

Eight of 10 Option III programs reported having between one and ten paid staff members. Nine Option III programs reported having no volunteer staff members. Eight Option III programs reported employing some staff with a college degree, seven programs reported having teen staff, and six programs reported having staff with teaching certificates. Staff wages in Option III programs were relatively high. Average hourly wages for staff were widely distributed, with the highest number of programs (four) reporting average hourly wages of \$26 to \$30.99 per hour. Nonetheless, all 10 Option III programs reported that finding qualified staff to hire was a challenge.

## **Technical Assistance and Supervision**

All Option II program directors reported holding staff meetings at least once a month, and 41 percent reported holding staff meetings at least once a week. Sixty-eight percent of Option II program directors reported that they require at least some staff to submit activity or lesson plans on a regular basis. A little less than half of Option II programs (46 percent) reported using published or externally developed curriculum to guide their activities. Eighty-two percent of program directors reported that they and their staff received technical assistance using OST Online “to some extent” or “to a great extent.” This was the only type of training for which more than half of Option II program directors reported that

they and their staff received technical assistance or training. Seventy-one percent of Option II program directors reported that the type of training that would be most helpful to their staff was in the area of youth development. Fifty-six percent of Option II program directors reported that the type of training that would be most helpful to them was in the area of staff supervision.

All 10 Option III program directors reported holding at least monthly meetings with their OST program staff, with seven program directors holding them at least once a week. Eight of 10 Option III program directors reported that they did not ask staff to submit activity or lesson plans. Six Option III program directors reported requiring all or most staff to submit activity or lesson plans on a regular basis. All 10 Option III program directors reported receiving technical assistance in using OST Online, and five Option III program directors reported receiving technical assistance in program design and implementation. Six Option III program directors indicated that the training topic that would be most useful to their staff was academic enrichment and literacy development, six reported that it was youth development and five reported that it was training in OST Online.

## **8. Participant Engagement in OST Services**

Program attendance is an essential indicator of program engagement with its target population and of effectiveness. Evidence from prior evaluations makes clear that regular program attendance is strongly associated with the development of the types of positive youth outcomes sought through the OST initiative (Huang, Gibbons, Kim, Lee, & Baker, 2000; Reisner, White, Russell, & Birmingham, 2004). DYCD monitors program attendance using OST Online and, in particular, using the system's template for program reporting of individual youth participation in specific activities to which the youth has been assigned.

The DYCD initiative established clear standards for program participation that vary based on program option and grade level served. For contractual purposes, DYCD monitored program-level participation rates according to the following standards:

- The average daily attendance for an Option I elementary-grades program was expected to be 80 percent of the program's target enrollment. These programs were expected to serve youth for a minimum of three hours a day, five days a week, for 36 weeks, plus 20 days of OST services 10 hours per day during school vacations, for a total of 740 hours.
- Option I middle-grades programs were required to offer programming for at least eight hours per week for 36 weeks, or 488 hours of service per contracted participant, including 20 days of OST services 10 hours per day during school vacations. These

programs were expected to provide 75 percent of the expected number of hours of service during the contract year, based on their contracted enrollment number.

- Option I high school programs were expected to provide a minimum of 108 hours of service per year per participant. These programs were expected to provide 70 percent of the expected number of hours of service during the contract year, based on their contracted enrollment number.
- Option II programs were expected to provide a minimum of 160 hours of service per year per participant. These programs were expected to provide 70 percent of the expected number of hours of service during the contract year, based on their contracted enrollment number.

The evaluation examined program attendance through questions posed in the participant survey and through analysis of participation data in OST Online.

## **Participation in OST Programs**

Analyses of data collected through OST Online permitted evaluators to quantify program attendance patterns. From the OST Online record of participants' attendance in their assigned activities, it is possible to determine each participant's number of days or hours of program attendance during the program year. For analyses of Year 1 participation patterns, evaluators focused on programs that provided services for the full school year and that also entered reliable activity participation data into OST Online.<sup>3</sup> Analyses presented here are based on data entered by 411 OST programs during the period September 2005 through June 2006.

Experience in the first year of OST operations indicated that tracking and entering daily attendance *by activity* for each youth was labor-intensive and hence could have resulted in inaccuracies. For example, after-school programs do not always operate according to schedule, due to unexpected events and opportunities and due also to staff absences. Programs know to expect this and adjust their daily activities accordingly, but OST Online assumes a consistent schedule of activities as planned at the beginning of the program year or semester. Therefore, a code of "not present" for a participant on a given day does not distinguish between a participant absence and an activity cancellation. Because of problems

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<sup>3</sup> For analysis purposes, the evaluation excluded programs that operated for less than nine months and programs with participation data-entry errors in 40 percent or more of the student records within that program. Individual students from the remaining programs who attended their OST program for four days or fewer and those with participation data-entry errors were also excluded from analysis.

such as these in the recording of activity data, evaluators focused on the numbers and percents of youth present in the program on a given day and not on activity-specific attendance.

Based on the standards for program participation of OST programming established by DYCD, the evaluators calculated the minimum number of hours each Option I participant was expected to receive during Year 1, as shown in Exhibit 27.<sup>4</sup> In the elementary- and middle-grades, participants did not attend as many hours, on average, as they were expected to attend. Participants in elementary-grade programs attended their OST program for an average of 311 hours (72 percent) during the program year and were expected to attend for an average of 432 hours. Participants in middle-grades programs also fell short of their targeted attendance, by attending for an average of 130 hours (60 percent) in Priority Middle School programs and an average of 154 hours (74 percent) in other middle-grades programs, compared to the target of 216 hours. Option I high school participants exceeded the targeted number of hours. High school participants attended for an average of 97 hours (128 percent), compared to the targeted attendance of 76 hours. On an individual level, a quarter of elementary- and middle-grades participants met the targeted number of hours (25 percent and 26 percent, respectively), while 39 percent of high school participants did so.

**Exhibit 27**  
**OST Participants' Actual and Targeted Mean Attendance**  
**(in hours)**

Hours of Attendance	Option I			
	Elementary <i>n=14,771</i>	Priority Middle <i>n=1,959</i>	Other Middle <i>n=9,166</i>	High <i>n=5,411</i>
Targeted hours	432	216	216	76
Actual hours	311	130	159	97

Exhibit reads: Youth in elementary-grades Option I programs were expected to attend their OST program for an average of 432 hours and actually attended for an average of 311 hours during the measurement period.

<sup>4</sup> At the elementary level, programs are expected to offer programming for a minimum of three hours a day, five days a week, for 36 weeks, plus 10 hours a day over 20 vacation days for a total of 740 hours. For purposes of computing the expected number of hours of participation, evaluators used the daily service-availability guidelines but excluded the OST service hours expected on school-closing days, which produced a total of 540 hours. Adapting DYCD's program-level rate of participation requirement, the evaluation set the expected number of hours for an elementary-grade participant at 80 percent of this level, or 432 hours. Using similar calculations, the expected number of program hours for middle-grades and high school participants were set at 216 and 76 hours, respectively. All students were measured against these standards regardless of how long they were enrolled in the program. The evaluation did not have enough information on youths' individual enrollment periods to adjust the standard for students who were not enrolled for the full program period.

OST Online captures the specific activities and schedule to which an individual participant was assigned. Each OST participant may therefore have a unique standard of expected program attendance. For example, while most elementary-grades participants may be assigned to one or more daily program activities five days per week, a high school participant might be expected to attend an activity on only one day a week. For each day, program staff record in OST Online whether the youth attends each activity to which he or she is assigned. Evaluators received reports of problems and delays in entering program-level data into OST Online but could not estimate the extent of these problems.

Levels of participation can also be expressed as an attendance rate, which reflects mean attendance levels of enrolled youth, as shown in Exhibit 28. Youth attending elementary-grades programs in Option I attended the program on 62 percent of the days that they were assigned to an activity. Attendance rates were lower among programs serving older youth. Youth attending middle-grades programs in Option I attended their program on 46 percent of the days they were assigned to an activity (45 percent for youth in Priority Middle School programs), compared with 40 percent for Option I high school participants. Youth enrolled in Option II programs attended their programs on 52 percent of the days they were assigned to an activity. In Option III programs, youth attended 42 percent of their assigned days.

**Exhibit 28**  
**Average Attendance Rates in Assigned Activities (in percents)**

	Option I				Option II	Option III
	Elementary <i>n</i> =14,771	Priority Middle <i>n</i> =1,959	Other Middle <i>n</i> =9,166	High <i>n</i> =5,411	All <i>n</i> =5,567	All <i>n</i> =663
Percent of Assigned Program Days Actually Attended	62	45	46	40	52	42

Exhibit reads: Youth enrolled in elementary-grades Option I programs attended 62 percent of the days they were assigned to an activity.

As would be expected from the preceding data, elementary-grades participants were less likely to report in the participant survey that they were unsupervised during the after-school hours than were middle-grades or high school participants. Eighty-five percent of participants in elementary-grades programs said that they never went to a place after school where adults were not present, compared to 77 percent of middle-grades participants and 56 percent of high school participants responding in the same way. These findings are important in light of research demonstrating the very poor youth outcomes

associated with an absence of after-school supervision (Mahoney & Stattin, 2000; Vandell, Pierce, Brown, Lee, Bolt, Dadisman, Pechman, & Reisner, 2006).

Youth, particularly high school students, also reported attending non-OST programs or after-school activities on occasion. Sixty percent of youth who participated in high school OST programs also reported participating in a different after-school activity at least once a week, compared to 38 percent of elementary-grades youth and 37 percent of middle-grades participants. OST participants also reported spending after-school time in a home, supervised by an adult, at least once a week (61 percent of elementary participants, 70 percent of middle-grades participants, and 75 percent of high school participants). In addition, 57 percent of high school participants and 21 percent of middle-grades participants reported going to an after-school job at least one afternoon a week.

### **Attendance of Participants in Target Zip Codes**

As seen in Exhibit 29, youth enrolled in programs in target zip codes attended their program at the same rates or higher as youth attending programs in non-target zip codes, indicating the needs in these neighborhoods for OST services and their receptivity to the programs. Youth in middle-grades and high school programs in the two types of communities attended programs at similar rates. In programs serving the elementary-grades and multiple grade levels, youth in programs located in the target zip codes attended their programs at higher rates than their non-target zip code counterparts. Elementary-grades youth in target zip codes attended their programs on 63 percent of the days they were assigned, compared to 62 percent for students in non-target zip codes. In programs serving multiple grade levels, youth in target zip codes attended their programs on 62 percent of the days they were assigned, compared to 46 percent for students in non-target zip codes.

**Exhibit 29**  
**Assigned Program Days Attended,**  
**by Grade Level and Target Zip Code (in percents)**

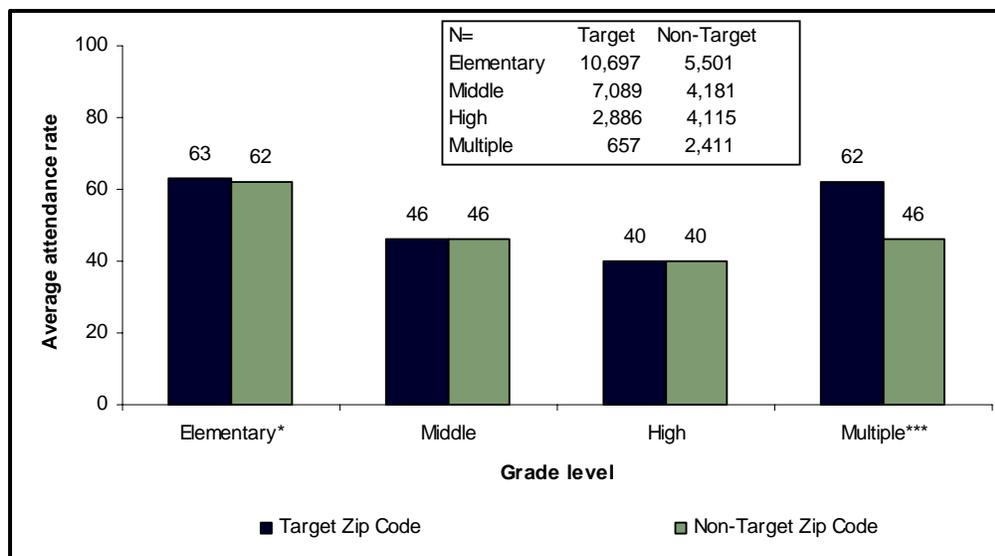


Exhibit reads: Students enrolled in elementary-grades programs in target zip codes attended their program on 63 percent of the days they were assigned to an activity.

\* p<.05, \*\*p<.01, \*\*\*p<.001

**Attendance in Center-Based and School-Based Programs**

In general, youth enrolled in center-based programs attended at slightly higher rates than youth in school-based programs, as shown in Exhibit 30. This was true at elementary-grades, middle-grades, and high school levels, where attendance rates of 63 percent and 62 percent were computed at the elementary level, 49 percent and 46 percent at the middle-grades level, and 41 percent and 39 percent at the high school level, for center-based and school-based programs respectively. At programs serving multiple grade levels, youth at school-based programs attended their programs at a higher rate than students at center-based programs, at 59 percent and 47 percent, respectively.

**Exhibit 30**  
**Assigned Program Days Attended,**  
**by Grade Level and Program Location (in percents)**

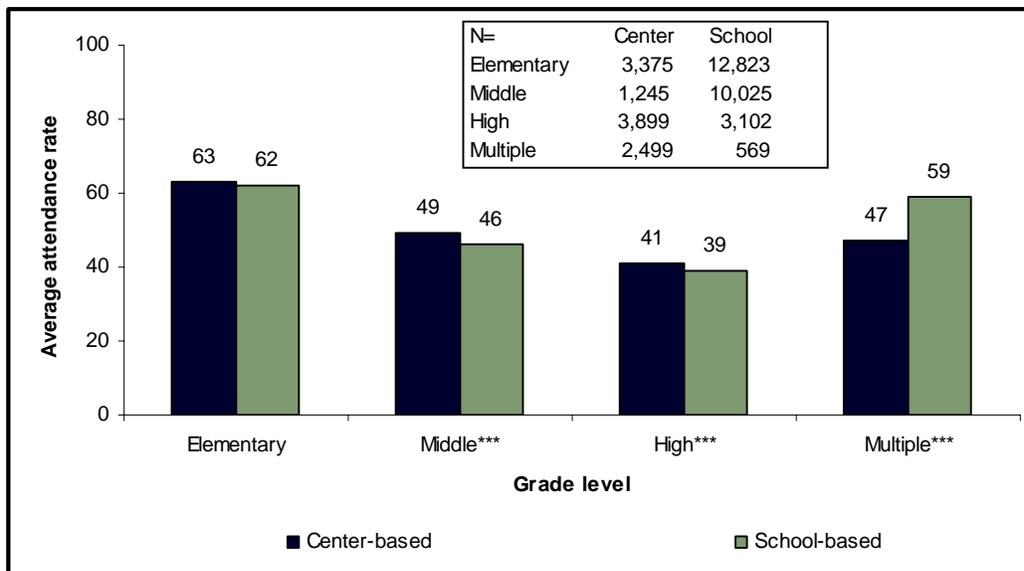


Exhibit reads: Students enrolled in elementary-grades center-based programs attended their program on 63 percent of the days they were assigned to an activity.

\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01, \*\*\*p<.001

## 9. Social Development Outcomes of Youth

Out-of-school time programs play an important role in helping youth to develop the social skills with both adults and peers that they need in order to mature into successful adults themselves. With the current high-stakes demands of the school day, students may have few opportunities to form and sustain friendly, collaborative relationships with other peers or adults. Compared to the school day, OST opportunities place much higher priority on the role of relationships, and they typically encourage many forms of positive adult and peer friendships and collaboration. The evaluation measured social development through participant-survey items addressing interactions with peers and adults and also through items measuring the development of leadership skills. As noted earlier, the participant surveys were administered to youth in grades 3-12 in a random sample of OST programs. See Appendix D for technical details regarding the evaluation’s analyses of participant experiences.

### Exposure to New Experiences

By providing engaging programming that exposes youth to opportunities that they would not otherwise have, OST programs can increase their draw for

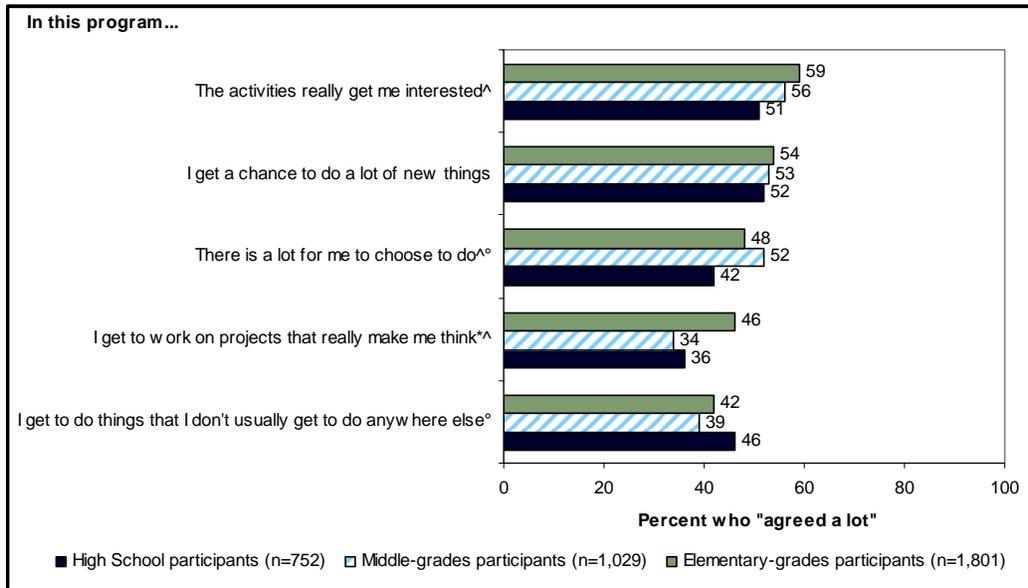
participants and their capacity to contribute to youths' academic and social development. In interviews, participants cited exposure to new experiences and new activities as primary reasons why the program engaged them. For example, one participant enjoyed attending the program "because you get to learn a lot of new things in after school. [You learn] how to do something [and] to know how to do it." Another participant described an activity in which the youth learned about the earthquake that occurred in Pakistan and planned a fundraiser to help the victims. "We raised enough money to send over there, so they could get tents and food."

Overall, about half of OST participants strongly agreed that their program had exposed them to new and interesting activities in Year 1. Across all grade levels, 53 percent of youth agreed a lot that the program gave them a chance to do a lot of new things. In addition, more than half reported that the program activities really got them interested (56 percent).

Participant reports of engaging in new experiences through the OST program varied significantly by grade level, as shown in Exhibit 31. Elementary-grades youth were most likely to report that the OST program activities engaged them in the program. Significantly more also agreed that they worked on projects that really made them think than did participants in either middle-grades or high school programs (46 percent, compared with 34 percent and 36 percent, respectively). In addition, elementary-grades students were significantly more likely to report that the activities really got them interested than were high school participants (59 percent, compared with 51 percent).

However, as seen in Exhibit 31, participants in high school programs were significantly more likely than their peers in middle-grades programs to agree a lot that they were able to do things that they usually don't get to do anywhere else (46 percent, compared with 39 percent). High school students reported this exposure to new experiences despite more limited OST activity choices than the younger students, with only 42 percent reporting that there was a lot for them to choose to do in the program, compared to 48 percent of elementary-grades participants and 52 percent of middle-grades participants.

### Exhibit 31 Participant Reports of Exposure to New Experiences, by Grade Level



- \* Elementary-grades programs differ significantly (p < .05) from middle-grades programs.
- o Middle-grades programs differ significantly (p < .05) from high school programs.
- ^ Elementary-grades programs differ significantly (p < .05) from high school programs.

Youth in center-based programs reported significantly different levels of exposure to new experiences through the OST program activities than did youth attending school-based programs. For example, significantly more school-based youth agreed a lot that there was a lot for them to choose to do at the OST program than did youth in center-based programs (51 percent, compared to 40 percent). Similarly, 59 percent of participants in school-based programs reported that the activities in the program really got them interested, compared to 49 percent of participants in center-based programs. However, youth in center-based programs were more likely to report that in the OST program they got to work on projects that really made them think, compared to youth in school-based programs (43 percent, compared to 40 percent).

### Relationships with Peers

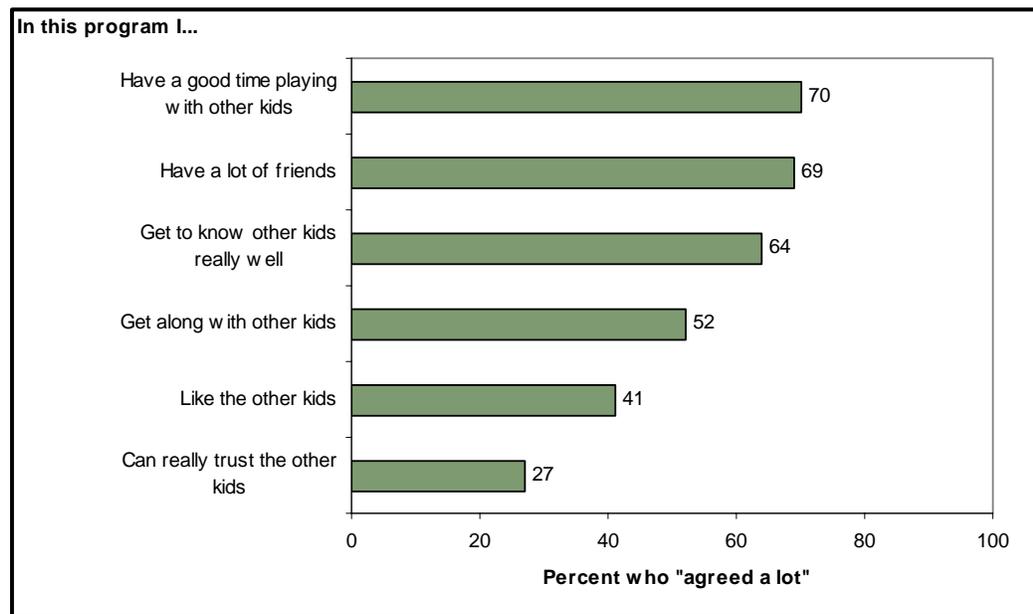
DYCD and evaluators took a serious interest in the social interactions in OST programs because of the large body of research suggesting the importance of positive social relationships in fostering the development of other positive personal traits (e.g., Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Pierce, Hamm, & Vandell, 1999).

**Peer interactions.** The participant survey asked youth in elementary-grades programs a series of questions about their interactions with their peers, as shown in Exhibit 32. Youth most frequently reported that they had a good time

playing with other kids in the program, with 70 percent “agreeing a lot.” Participants also tended to report that they had a lot of friends in the program (69 percent) and that they got to know other kids really well in the program (64 percent). These survey data reflected participant comments during site visits. For example, participants reported that:

- “I have made new friends at the program.”
- “I have lots of friends in the program. I am usually quiet in school; it is different here in after school.”
- “It’s fun to be able to play with all the kids and go to the gym.”
- They just enjoy “being with the other kids.”

**Exhibit 32**  
**Elementary-Grade Participant Reports of Interactions with Peers** (*n*=1,799)



For the most part, elementary-grades youth in center-based programs reported similar levels of positive interactions with peers as did youth in school-based programs, with one exception: youth at school-based programs were significantly more likely to report that they had a lot of friends in the OST program, compared to youth in center-based programs (70 percent, compared to 65 percent).

**Prosocial behaviors.** The OST initiative sought to foster positive relationships among youth. As such, many programs incorporated conflict-resolution curricula to train and encourage youth to solve problems appropriately.

The survey asked middle-grades and high school participants questions about their prosocial behavior over the past 30 days. The overwhelming majority of participants (87 percent) reported cooperating with others in completing a task and giving someone a compliment at least once in the past 30 days. Eighty-five percent of youth reported that they helped other students solve a problem. In addition, more than half of participants reported that they had done the following at least once in the past 30 days:

- Told other students how they felt when they did something they liked (75 percent)
- Told other students how they felt when someone upset them (71 percent)
- Helped someone stay out of a fight (63 percent)
- Protected someone from a bully (57 percent)

Responses varied significantly by grade level served but not by program location. Eighty percent of youth in high school programs reported that they told other students how they felt when they did something they liked at least once in the last month, compared to 71 percent of youth in middle-grades programs. Seventy-six percent of high school participants reported that they told other students how they felt when they upset them, compared to 67 percent of middle-grades participants. Fifty-nine percent of middle-grades youth reported that at least one time in the last 30 days they protected someone from a bully, compared to 53 percent of high school youth.

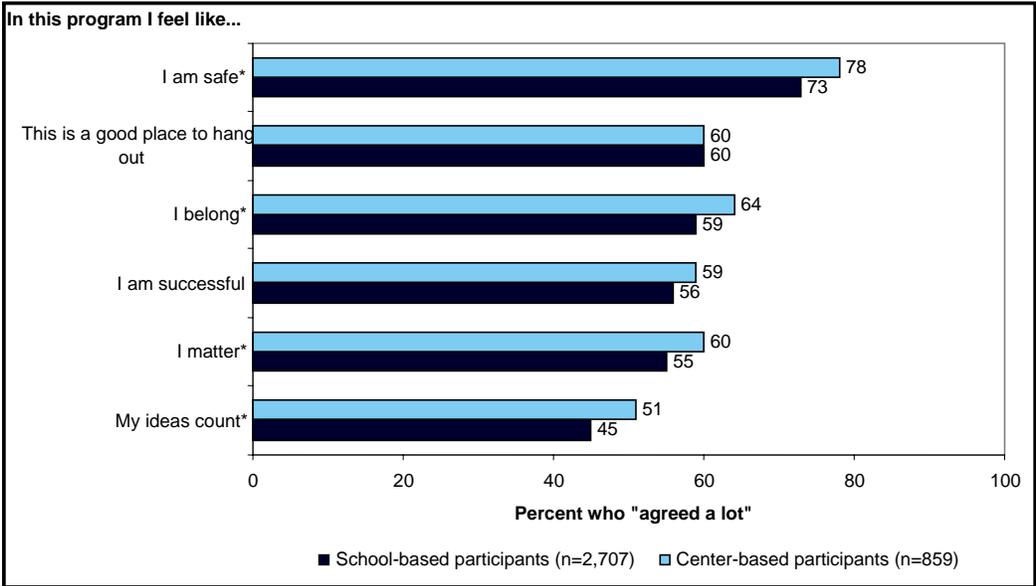
***Sense of belonging.*** Overall, participants across all grade levels reported relatively high levels of attachment to their OST program. Across all participants, 74 percent of youth “agreed a lot” that they felt safe in the OST program, and 60 percent felt like they belonged in the program and that the program was a good place to hang out.

Youth varied in their responses to certain items measuring their sense of belonging in the program. Middle-grades participants were significantly less likely to feel like their ideas counted in the program than were high school participants (44 percent, compared with 50 percent). These middle-grades students were also less likely than their elementary-grades peers to report feeling safe in the OST program (71 percent, compared with 76 percent).

Participants in center-based programs were significantly more likely to report that they felt a strong attachment to their OST program, as illustrated in Exhibit 33. For example, 78 percent of youth in center-based programs reported that they felt safe in the program, compared to 73 percent of youth in school-based programs. Sixty-four percent of youth in center-based programs reported

that they felt like they belonged, compared to 59 percent of youth in school-based programs. Similarly, youth in center-based programs were more likely to feel like they matter in the program, compared to youth in school-based programs (60 percent, compared to 55 percent). Finally, 51 percent of participants in center-based programs felt like their ideas counted in the program, compared to 45 percent of participants in school-based programs.

**Exhibit 33**  
**Participant Reports of Sense of Belonging, by Program Location**



\* p < .05

These differences were accentuated for the high school participants. In particular, high school youth in center-based programs were significantly more likely to feel connected to the program than were high school participants in school-based programs. Most notably, 67 percent of high school participants in center-based programs felt like they mattered in the program, compared to only 51 percent of school-based participants. Similarly, 79 percent of center-based high school participants felt safe in the program, compared with 70 percent of school-based youth. Significantly more high school youth in center-based programs also reported feeling like they belonged (65 percent, compared to 56 percent in school-based programs). Less than half (47 percent) of school-based high school participants felt like their ideas counted, compared to 54 percent of center-based participants.

## Relationships with Adults

In general, participants reported positive interactions with OST program staff members. Across all grade levels, 68 percent of participants “agreed a lot” that staff treated them with respect, and 67 percent reported that staff thought that they could learn new things, although only 44 percent of youth felt that staff always keep their promises.

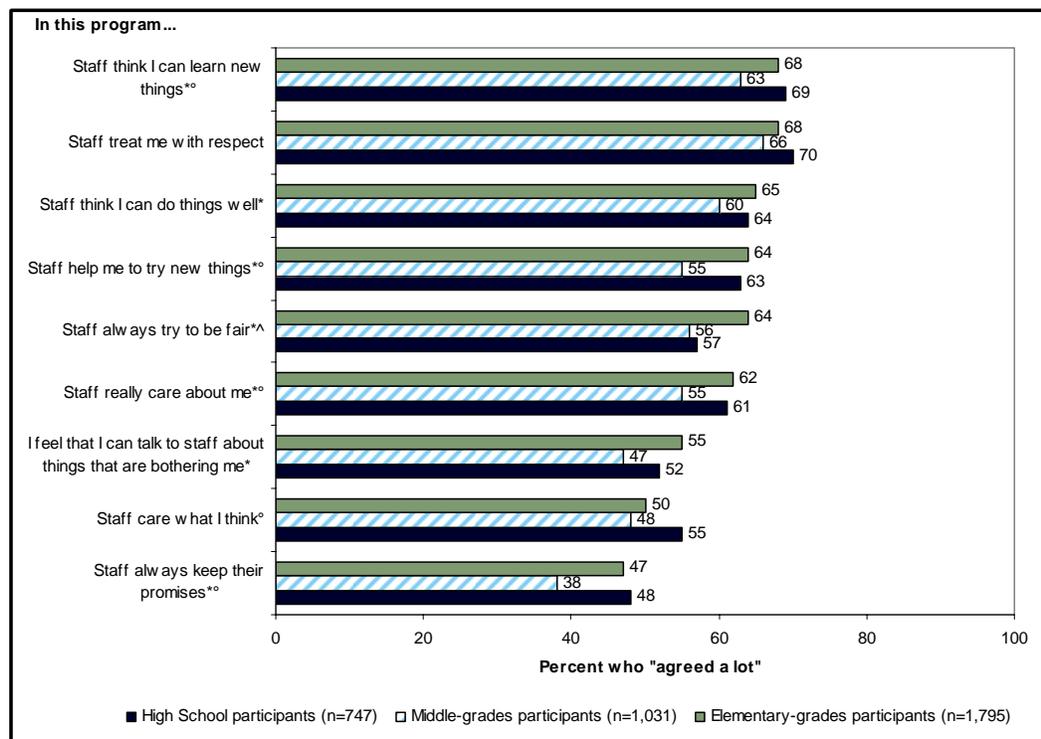
In interviews, youth spoke of positive interactions with staff and felt comfortable discussing their problems with staff members. “I could go to almost every counselor, but not every counselor would know how to solve all the problems right then and there, so I would go to them all and get their ideas,” said one participant. Another noted, “I talk to [the program director] most of the time about things going on; about school and not school things.” In fact, providing participants with a place where there were adults “they could trust” was a goal for many programs.

Participant reactions to questions about OST program staff varied by grade level, as seen in Exhibit 34. Overall, middle-grades participants were significantly less likely to report positive feelings toward staff members than were participants in either elementary-grades or high school programs:

- Thirty-eight percent of middle-grades participants agreed a lot that staff always kept their promises, compared to 47 percent of elementary-grades participants and 48 percent of high school participants.
- Forty-seven percent of middle-grades youth felt that they could talk to staff about things that were bothering them, compared to 55 percent of elementary-grades youth. (High school youth did not differ significantly in their responses from either group.)
- Forty-eight percent of middle-grades youth reported that staff cared what they thought, compared to 55 percent of high school youth. (Elementary-grades participants did not vary significantly in their responses.)
- Fifty-five percent of middle-grades youth agreed a lot that program staff helped them to try new things, compared to 64 percent of elementary-grades youth and 63 percent of high school participants.
- Fifty-five percent of middle-grades youth agreed a lot that staff really cared about them, significantly less than the 62 percent of elementary-grades youth and 61 percent of high school youth.

- Sixty-three percent of middle-grades youth agreed a lot that staff thought they could learn new things, compared to higher percents among youth in elementary and high school programs (68 percent and 69 percent, respectively).
- Sixty-five percent of participants in elementary-grades programs agreed a lot that staff thought that they could do things well, compared to 60 percent of participants in middle-grades programs.

**Exhibit 34**  
**Participant Reports of Interactions with Staff, by Grade Level**



\* Elementary-grades programs differ significantly ( $p < .05$ ) from middle-grades programs.  
 ° Middle-grades programs differ significantly ( $p < .05$ ) from high school programs.  
 ^ Elementary-grades programs differ significantly ( $p < .05$ ) from high school programs.

In addition, elementary-grades students were significantly more likely to report that staff always tried to be fair than were either middle-grades or high school participants (64 percent, compared to 56 percent and 57 percent, respectively).

Participants in center-based programs were more likely to report certain types of positive interactions with staff. For instance, 73 percent of youth in center-based programs reported that staff treated them with respect, compared to 66 percent of youth in school-based programs. Sixty-six percent of participants in

center-based programs felt that staff really cared about them, compared to 58 percent of participants in school-based programs. Participants in center-based programs were more likely to report that staff really cared what they thought, compared to participants in school-based programs (55 percent, compared to 49 percent). Sixty-eight percent of youth in center-based programs reported that staff thought they could do things well, compared with 62 percent of youth in school-based programs. Finally, 70 percent of participants in center-based programs agreed a lot that staff thought they could learn new things, compared to 66 percent of participants in school-based programs.

These differences by program location were especially notable for high school participants. In general, high school youth in school-based programs were significantly less likely to report that they had positive interactions with program staff. For example, 65 percent of school-based participants believed that program staff treated them with respect, compared to 74 percent of center-based participants. Fifty-five percent of school-based youth felt that staff really cared about them, compared to 68 percent of center-based youth. Sixty percent of school-based youth reported that staff thought they could do things well, compared to 68 percent of center-based youth. Similarly, half of school-based participants (50 percent) said that staff cared what they thought, compared to 62 percent of center-based participants. School-based participants were also less likely to believe that staff always kept their promises with only 44 percent agreeing a lot. In comparison, 52 percent of center-based high school participants agreed.

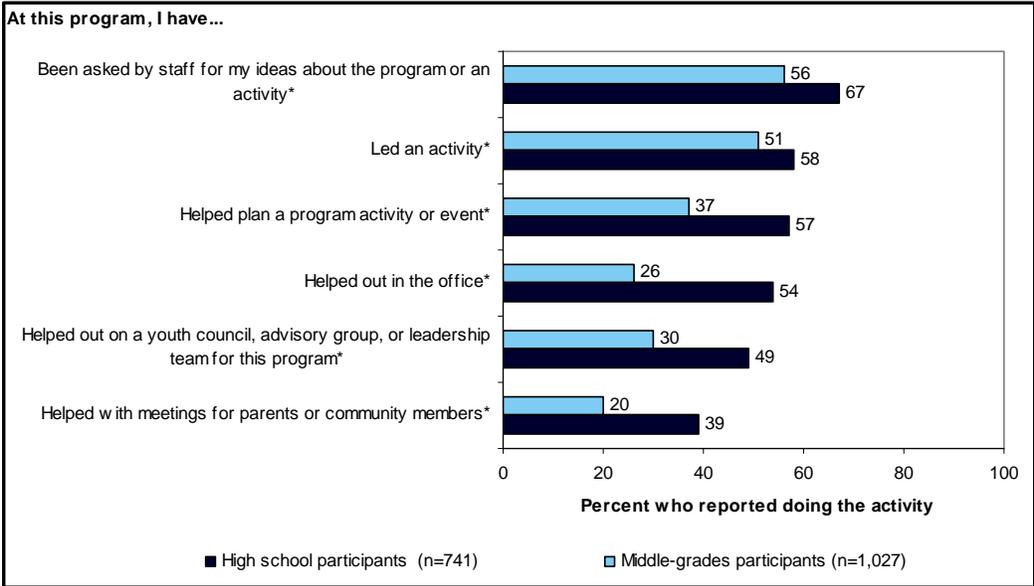
## **Healthy Living Skills**

***Engaging in healthy lifestyles.*** Overall, more than half (53 percent) of all OST participants reported that they engaged in physical activities three hours a week or more. Twenty-nine percent reported that they exercised five hours or more a week, and 24 percent reported that they exercised three to five hours per week. An additional 25 percent of youth reported that they exercised one to three hours a week. Middle-grades participants were somewhat more likely to report exercising on a regular basis, with 57 percent exercising three hours per week or more, compared to 56 percent of high school participants and 50 percent of elementary-grades participants. Responses did not vary by program location.

***Opportunities for youth leadership.*** In a set of questions asked of middle-grades and high school youth, participants in high school programs were more likely to report that they played leadership roles in the OST program than were participants in programs serving the middle grades, as seen in Exhibit 35. In particular, 67 percent of high school youth reported that they had been asked by staff for their ideas about the program or an activity, compared to 56 percent of middle-grades youth. Fifty-eight percent of high school participants reported that they had led an activity in the program, compared to 51 percent of middle-grades

participants. Similarly, high school participants were more likely to report that they had helped plan a program activity or event than were middle-grades participants (57 percent, compared to 37 percent). More than half (54 percent) of high school participants reported that they had helped out in the office, compared to 26 percent of middle-grades participants. Forty-nine percent of high school youth reported that they helped out on a youth council, advisory group, or leadership team for the program, compared to 30 percent of middle-grades youth. Thirty-nine percent of high school participants reported that they helped with meetings for parents or community members, compared to 20 percent of middle-grades participants.

**Exhibit 35**  
**Participant Reports of Opportunities for Youth Leadership,**  
**by Grade Level**



\* p < .05

## 10. Youth Outcomes in Content Areas and Academic Skills

OST programs promote many types of skills and knowledge, depending on the organizational focus of their sponsoring organization and the skills of their staff. According to the youth-development literature, it is important for youth to have opportunities to immerse themselves in positive, challenging skill-building activities, whatever the activity focus may be. These efforts teach important life lessons about the value of hard work in attaining an important goal, the value of collaboration, and the personal satisfaction that comes from mastery of valuable skills. In its first year, the evaluation measured the development of program-

content skills through participant-survey items that address skill development in the OST program. The evaluation will examine and report on educational outcome data on samples of OST participants in Years 2 and 3 of the initiative to assess student outcomes in academic skills. These data will be obtained from the central student files of the DOE.

## **Academic Benefits of the OST Program**

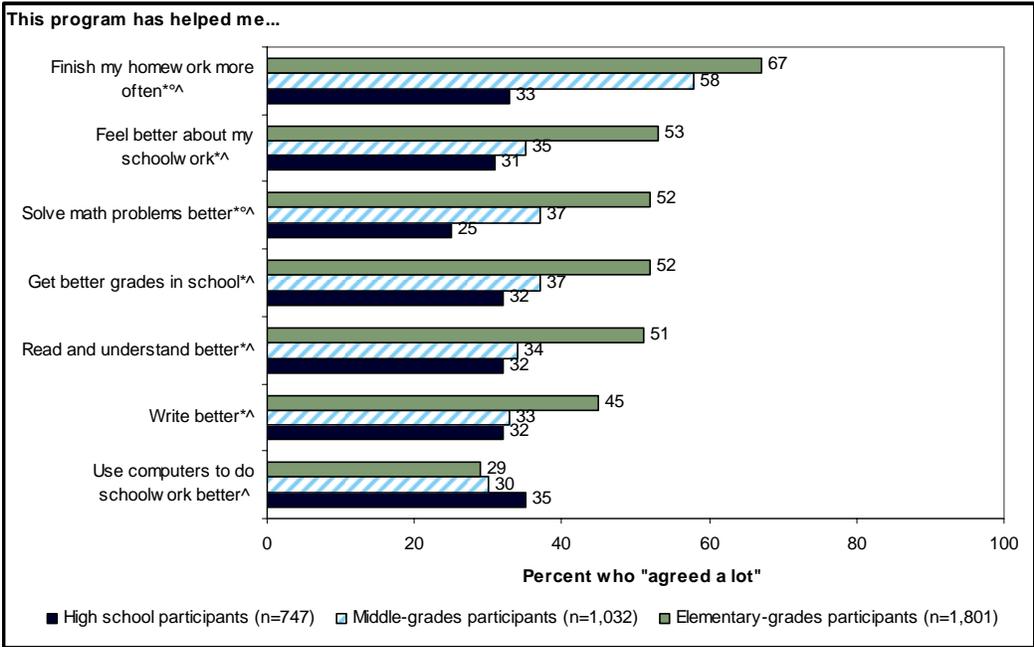
In interviews, youth described how the interactive learning environment and personal attention of the OST programs contributed to their academic improvements. For example, one participant described, “At first I was still a good student, but I failed my tests. Then I started getting up to it here [in the program]. My teachers [in the program] make sure I understand. [You have to] be brave enough to tell your teachers that you don’t understand. I get more attention here.” Another participant said, “We learn how to multiply fractions, and do a number of word problems. It’s just fun because we go to the board and show our answers, and its fun because we get to correct [our answers] together, so someone can know how to do the problem the next time.”

Evaluators asked youth to report on a series of items measuring the academic benefits of participating in an OST project. In general, participants in elementary-grades programs were significantly more likely to report high levels of academic benefits, compared to either middle-grades or high school participants, as shown in Exhibit 36. The majority of elementary-grades participants (67 percent) agreed a lot that the program helped them finish their homework more often, significantly more than the 58 percent of middle-grades participants and 33 percent of high school participants. Elementary-grades youth were also significantly more likely to report that the program helped them feel better about their schoolwork, compared to middle-grades youth and high school youth (53 percent, compared to 35 percent and 31 percent respectively). Similarly, 52 percent of elementary-grades youth reported that the program helped them solve math problems better and get better grades in school. Only 37 percent of middle-grades youth agreed with each item. Twenty-five percent of high school youth reported that the program helped them solve math programs better, and 32 percent agreed that the program helped them get better grades in school. In addition, more than half of elementary-grades participants (51 percent) felt that the program helped them read and understand better, compared to only a third of middle-grades and high school participants (34 percent and 32 percent). Forty-five percent of elementary-grades youth reported that the program helped them write better, compared to 33 percent of middle-grades youth and 32 percent of high school youth.

One exception to this pattern is that high school participants were significantly more likely than elementary-grades participants to report that attending the program helped them learn to use computers to do schoolwork better

(35 percent, compared to 29 percent). Middle-grades youth did not differ significantly from either the older or younger participants on this item.

**Exhibit 36**  
**Participant Reports of Academic Benefits, by Grade Level**



\* Elementary-grades programs differ significantly ( $p < .05$ ) from middle-grades programs.  
 ° Middle-grades programs differ significantly ( $p < .05$ ) from high school programs.  
 ^ Elementary-grades programs differ significantly ( $p < .05$ ) from high school programs.

With two exceptions, findings of academic benefits did not vary significantly by program location. First, school-based participants were more likely to report that the program helped them solve math problems better, compared to center-based participants (44 percent, compared to 36 percent). Second, 60 percent of school-based participants reported that the program helped them finish their homework more often, compared to 48 percent of center-based participants.

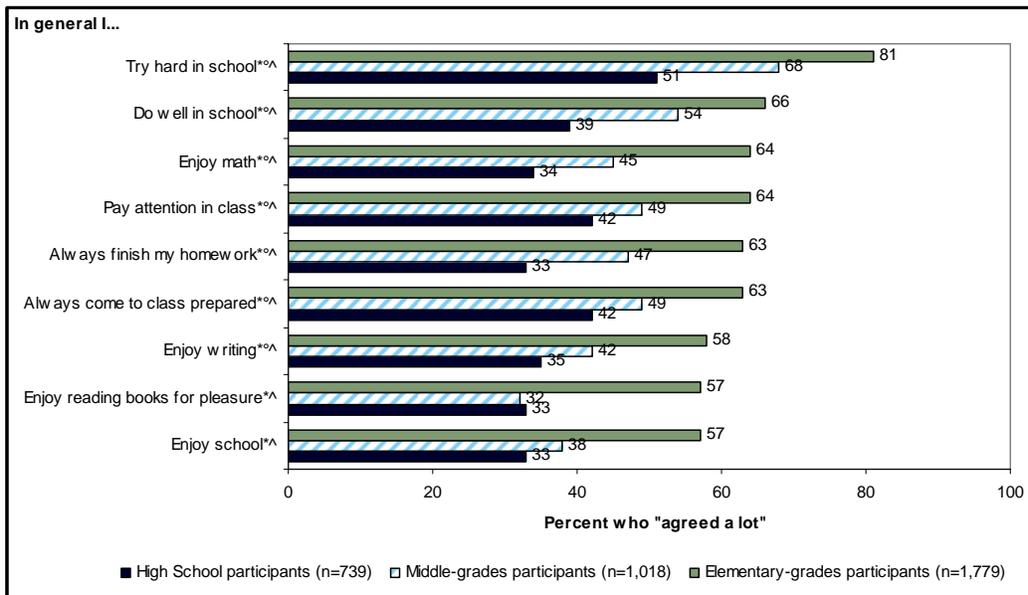
**Academic Self-Esteem and Aspirations**

Overall, evaluators found notable differences in the academic self-esteem of OST participants by grade level, with academic self-esteem decreasing significantly between each grade cohort, as shown in Exhibit 37. This pattern was also seen in the TASC evaluation (Reisner et al., 2004). Elementary-grades students reported significantly higher levels of academic self-esteem on the following measures, compared to both middle-grades and high school

participants; in addition, middle-grades participants had significantly more positive responses on these same items, compared to the high school participants:

- Eighty-one percent of youth in elementary-grades programs reported that they tried hard in school, compared with 68 percent of youth in middle-grades programs and 51 percent of youth in high school.
- Sixty-six percent of participants in elementary-grades programs reported that they did well in school, compared to 54 percent of participants in middle-grades programs and 39 percent of high school participants.

**Exhibit 37**  
**Participant Reports of Academic Self-esteem, by Grade Level**



\* Elementary-grades programs differ significantly ( $p < .05$ ) from middle-grades programs.  
<sup>o</sup> Middle-grades programs differ significantly ( $p < .05$ ) from high school programs.  
<sup>^</sup> Elementary-grades programs differ significantly ( $p < .05$ ) from high school programs.

- In addition, 64 percent of elementary-grades youth agreed a lot that they enjoyed math, compared with 45 percent of middle-grades youth and 34 percent of high school youth.
- Sixty-four percent of participants in elementary-grades programs reported that they paid attention in class, compared to 49 percent of participants in middle-grades programs and 42 percent of high school participants.

- Elementary-grades participants were more likely to report that they always finished their homework, compared to middle-grades participants and high school participants (63 percent, 47 percent, and 33 percent, respectively).
- Similarly, 63 percent of youth in elementary-grades programs said that they always come to class prepared, compared to 49 percent of youth in middle-grades programs and 42 percent of high school youth.
- Finally, 58 percent of participants in elementary-grades programs reported that they enjoy writing, compared with 42 percent of participants in middle-grades programs and 35 percent of high school participants.

In addition, elementary-grades students were significantly more likely to report academic motivation in the following areas than their older peers. There were no significant differences on these items between middle-grades and high school students.

- Fifty-seven percent of elementary-grades students reported that they enjoy school, compared to 38 percent of middle-grades students and 33 percent of high school students.
- Elementary-grades youth were more likely to report that they enjoyed reading books for pleasure, compared to middle-grades youth, and high school youth (57 percent, compared to 32 percent and 33 percent).

Participants in school-based programs reported higher levels of academic self-esteem, compared to participants in center-based programs. Evaluators speculate that these differences reflect the personal characteristics of youth who chose school-based and center-based programs, with students who enjoy school being especially likely to enroll in school-based programs. For example, 74 percent of youth in school-based programs said that they tried hard in school, compared with 63 percent of youth in center-based programs. Participants in school-based programs were more likely to report that they paid attention in class, compared to participants in center-based programs (56 percent, compared to 51 percent). Similarly, 56 percent of participants in school-based programs reported that they always came to class prepared, compared to 49 percent of participants in center-based programs. Forty-eight percent of youth in school-based programs enjoyed school, compared to 41 percent of youth in center-based programs. School-based participants were more likely to report that they enjoyed reading books for pleasure, compared to center-based participants (46 percent, compared to 42 percent). In addition, 54 percent of school-based participants reported that they enjoyed math, compared with 46 percent of center-based participants. More

than half (54 percent) of school-based participants said that they always finished their homework, compared to 47 percent of center-based participants. Finally, school-based participants were somewhat more likely to agree a lot that they do well in school, compared to center-based participants (58 percent, compared to 52 percent).

Differences in academic self-esteem were especially notable for high school participants in school-based programs, compared to those in center-based programs. In general, high school participants in school-based programs were more likely to report high levels of academic self-esteem than were their peers in center-based programs. For example, 57 percent of high school youth in school-based programs reported that they tried hard in school, in comparison with 45 percent of youth in center-based programs. Thirty-six percent of school-based participants reported that they try to enjoy school, compared to 29 percent of center-based participants. Finally, high school youth in school-based programs were also more likely to report that they enjoyed reading books for pleasure, compared to high school youth in center-based programs (37 percent, compared to 29 percent).

## **Educational Aspirations**

The survey asked middle-grades and high school youth to report how sure they were that they would finish high school and how much further they would like to go in school. Seventy-six percent of all participants reported that they were very sure that they would finish high school. Forty-four percent of all responding youth reported that they would like to finish college. Participants in middle-grades programs were more likely to report that they would like to finish college, compared to high school participants (47 percent, compared to 41 percent). Participants in center-based programs were more likely to report that they were very sure they would finish high school, compared to participants in school-based programs (81 percent, compared to 74 percent). Similarly, 44 percent of center-based participants reported that they would like to get more education after college, compared to 36 percent of school-based participants.

## **Development of Other Competencies**

In addition to questions about academic competencies, the survey also asked youth about development of other cognitively related skills. Across all grade levels, 61 percent of participants agreed a lot that they could play a musical instrument, sing, dance, draw, paint, or could do some other type of art really well. Sixty percent of participants said that they were good at using a computer. More than half (54 percent) reported that they had the skills to be a leader.

These responses varied by grade level, with younger students significantly more likely to report strong skills than older participants. In particular, elementary-grades participants were significantly more likely to report that they were good at using a computer than either middle-grades or high school participants (64 percent, compared to 59 percent and 48 percent). Fifty-eight percent of elementary-grades youth reported that they had the skills to be a leader, followed by 54 percent of middle-grades youth and 45 percent of high school youth. When asked whether or not they could play a musical instrument, sing, dance, draw, paint, or could do some other type of art really well, 68 percent of elementary-grades youth agreed a lot, compared to 59 percent of middle-grades youth and 46 percent of high school youth. Evaluators speculate that these differences reflect the greater knowledge and sophistication of older youth, who are more likely to have learned how much there is to know.

School-based participants were significantly more likely to report that they were good at using a computer, compared to center-based participants (61 percent, compared to 56 percent). In addition, 62 percent of school-based youth reported that they could play a musical instrument, sing, dance, draw, paint, or could do some other type of art really well, compared to 56 percent of center-based youth.

Among middle-grades and high school participants, 48 percent of respondents said that they knew about different careers. Thirty-eight percent reported that they were comfortable speaking in front of a group. Thirty-seven percent reported that they had a strong attachment to their neighborhood. Thirty-four percent felt that they could make a difference in their neighborhood. These results differed by grade level. When asked whether they knew about different careers, 51 percent of middle-grades youth agreed a lot, compared to 44 percent high school youth, again perhaps reflecting the greater awareness of older youth of how much they had yet to learn. Middle-grades youth were also more likely to report that they had a strong attachment to their neighborhood (43 percent, compared to 29 percent). Thirty-seven percent of middle-grades youth felt that they could make a difference in their neighborhood, compared to 30 percent of high school youth.

## **11. Associations between Program Features and Participant Experiences**

Over the three years of the evaluation, evaluators will seek to determine whether specific program characteristics influence participants' engagement in the OST program and participants' social development and academic outcomes. The design of the evaluation does not permit evaluators to identify causal influences, but it does permit the calculation of statistically relevant associations between program features and participant reports in important areas of youth experience. Exploring these early associations between program features and participant

experiences can help the OST initiative identify elements of program implementation that should be emphasized or monitored with special care. These associations can also help sponsoring organizations and program directors to make decisions about program characteristics that may shape after-school effectiveness.

To measure these associations, evaluators developed survey scales that combine participant responses to a series of items related to the same outcome into a single measure. These scales were computed to range from one to four, with four indicating that on average participants strongly agreed with the series of statements related to that scale. The evaluation also created variables measuring program-level content focus, based on program directors' survey responses regarding the frequency and availability of activities related to various content areas. See Appendix E for technical details regarding correlation coefficients and significance levels for each of the associations examined.

## **Associations with Academic Outcomes**

In Year 1 of the evaluation, findings of associations between student outcomes and program characteristics were concentrated in student reports of academic self-esteem and academic benefits of the program. Across all Option I programs:

- On average, participants who attended programs with a strong focus on academic activities reported more academic benefits of the OST program (correlation of .37). Also, academic self-esteem was positively correlated with the amount of academic activities offered by the program (correlation of .25).
- The degree to which programs offered arts activities was positively associated with participant reports of academic benefits (correlation of .23) and academic self-esteem (correlation of .23).

Evaluators also found a positive association between average participant reports of academic self-esteem and OST program participation rates, as measured by the percent of days participants attended the activities to which they were assigned (correlation of .38). This association was particularly strong for school-based programs (correlation of .48). This finding may imply a self-selection factor in OST program participation, with students who have a stronger feeling of self-efficacy in school attending the program more regularly, or it could suggest that OST program participation contributes to improved academic self-esteem. This pattern and others will be explored in future years of the OST evaluation.

## **Associations with Social Development Outcomes**

In contrast to the academic outcomes finding, there was a negative association between participants' reports of the quality of their interactions with OST program staff members and the degree to which the program offered academic activities (correlation of  $-.23$ ).

In Year 1 of the OST initiative, there is also some evidence that participants in programs that focus on providing a high intensity of physical fitness activities (including structured and unstructured sports practice or games) reported lower levels of satisfaction with the ways in which participation exposed them to new and engaging experiences in the program and less positive interactions with OST staff members (correlations of  $-.25$  and  $-.32$ , respectively). Later years of the evaluation will explore whether physical fitness activities in these programs may be crowding out other types of experiences for youth.

## **12. Systems Outcomes**

The OST initiative aims to strengthen the city's capacity to serve youth and meet the needs of working families. To address these goals, the evaluation collected data to assess the extent to which the initiative is (1) increasing the capacity of provider organizations to deliver high-quality OST services, (2) increasing the capacity of private nonprofit providers and public agencies to function as a coherent system focused on improving OST opportunities for children and youth, and (3) meeting the needs of working parents.

### **Impact of OST Initiative on Provider Organizations**

In Year 1, OST contracts were awarded to nearly 200 provider organizations in New York City that varied considerably in their scope and experience in providing out-of-school time services for youth. Executive directors most frequently described their organizations as youth-serving organizations (33 percent) or as social service organizations (24 percent).

Overall, provider organizations emphasized social development objectives for their OST programming. More than three-quarters of executive directors identified the following as major objectives for their programs:

- Provide a safe environment for participants (91 percent)
- Help participants develop socially (90 percent)
- Provide participants with positive adult guidance and/or mentors (83 percent)

In addition, 74 percent of executive directors identified helping participants improve their academic performance as a major objective.

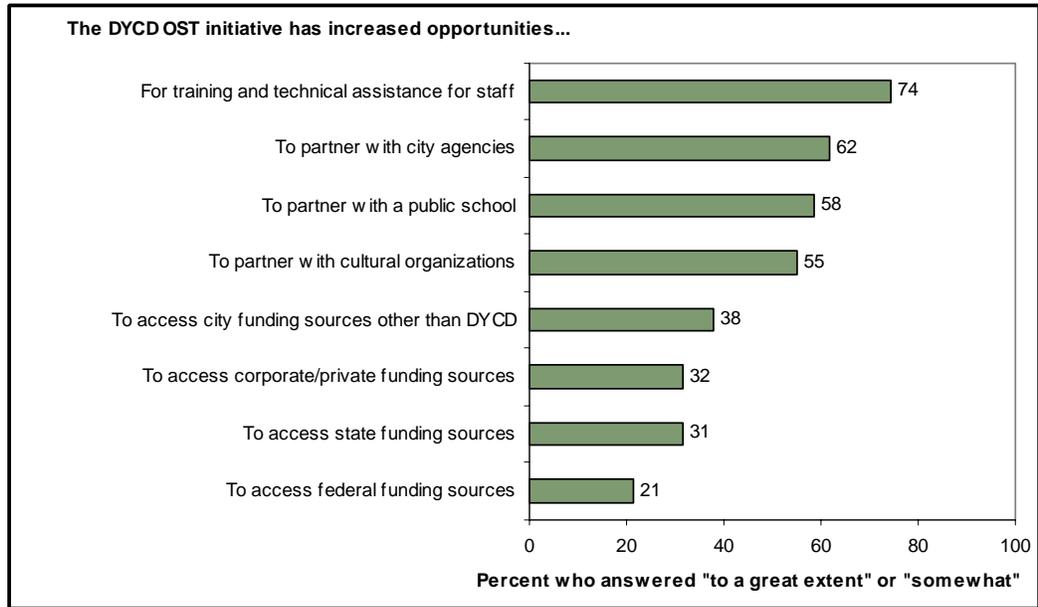
***Out-of-school time budgets.*** For the most part, the OST provider organizations were well established with sizable budgets: 52 percent of executive directors reported that their annual organizational budget was more than \$3 million, an additional 10 percent had an annual budget of more than \$2 million, and 12 percent had an annual budget of less than \$500,000. Provider organizations also reported large budgets for their out-of-school time programming. During 2005-06, the total out-of-school time budget for 50 percent of organizations was more than \$500,000, including the DYCD OST grant(s). It was more than \$1 million in 34 percent of organizations. Only 15 percent of organizations had a total out-of-school time budget of less than \$100,000 during the 2005-06 year.

DYCD OST funding played a major role in the out-of-school time budgets of provider organizations. On average, organizations drew 59 percent of their OST budgets from DYCD funding. Twenty percent of organizations relied exclusively on DYCD funds for their out-of-school time programming budget. Forty-eight percent of executive directors reporting drawing at least half of their out-of-school time budgets from DYCD funds. Provider organizations supplemented OST initiative funds primarily with general organizational funds (on average, 16 percent of out-of-school time budgets were drawn from general organizational funds). Organizations relied less on other city or state sources, which on average comprised 6 percent each of organizations' out-of-school time budgets.

The DYCD OST initiative also played a major role in the staff hired by provider organizations. Executive directors reported that their organizations on average employed 292 staff members. On average, staff members working in OST programs represented 30 percent of the organizations' total employees. The median number of employees per organization was 123.

***Opportunities available to provider organizations.*** Evaluators also asked executive directors about the extent to which the OST initiative had increased the opportunities available to their organization. Overall, as shown in Exhibit 38, executive directors reported that participation in the DYCD OST initiative had the most effect on their opportunities for training and technical assistance to staff: 74 percent responded that DYCD participation increased their organizations' opportunities to participate in training either "to a great extent" or "somewhat." For the majority of providers, DYCD participation also increased their opportunities to partner with city agencies (62 percent), to partner with a public school (58 percent), or to partner with cultural organizations (55 percent). More than one-third of executive directors reported that DYCD participation had increased their opportunities to access city funding sources other than DYCD (38 percent).

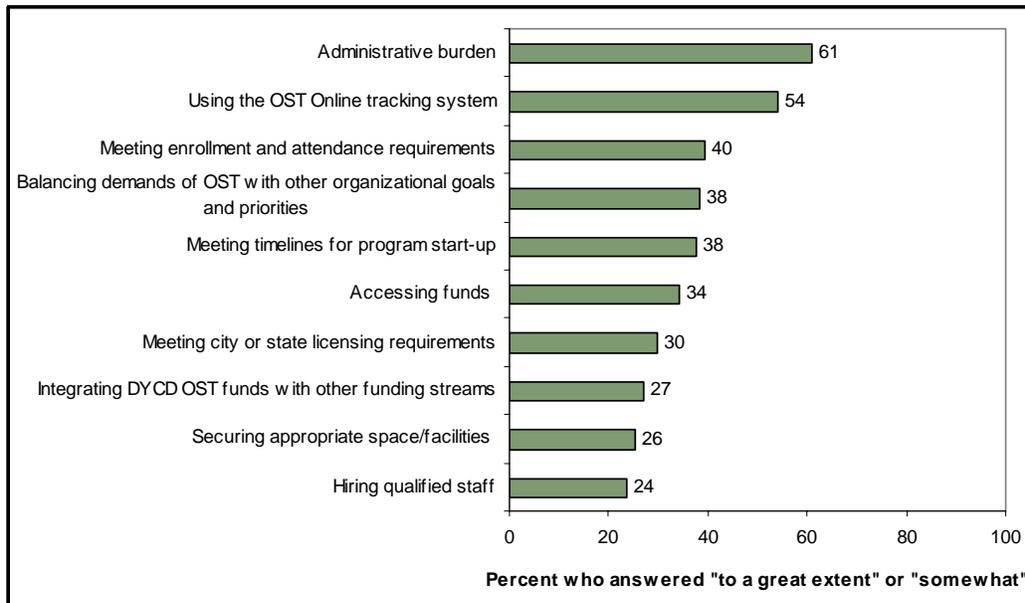
**Exhibit 38**  
**Increased Opportunities Available to Provider Organizations**  
**Due to OST Initiative (n=159)**



***Challenges of the OST initiative.*** According to executive directors surveyed, the greatest challenge of participating in the OST initiative for provider organizations was the administrative burden: 61 percent reported this to be a challenge, as shown in Exhibit 39. In addition, more than a third of executive directors identified the following challenges in the first year of the OST initiative:

- Using the OST Online data tracking system (54 percent)
- Meeting enrollment and attendance requirements (40 percent)
- Balancing demands of OST with other organizational goals and priorities (38 percent)
- Meeting timelines for program start-up (38 percent)
- Accessing funds (34 percent)

**Exhibit 39**  
**Challenges of the OST Initiative to Provider Organizations (n=159)**



**Impact of OST Initiative on Youth Services in New York City**

***Shift from ACS funding.*** The implementation of the OST initiative marked a change in child-care programs for school-age youth in New York City. As of September 2006, the Administration for Children’s Services (ACS) no longer contracted for child-care programs for school-age youth. Former ACS providers were encouraged to apply for funding through the OST initiative and to transition to the DYCD OST system. Option I OST programs were required to give enrollment priority to youth who were former participants in an ACS pre-school program or a school-age child-care program for youth under age 13.

Twenty percent of executive directors surveyed reported that at least one of the programs their organization operated in 2004-05 was supported by ACS funds. Eighty-four percent of this subset of providers said that in the first year of the initiative, their DYCD OST program gave priority enrollment to former ACS participants.

***Effect of OST on scope of programming in NYC.*** The majority of provider organizations had extensive experience operating out-of-school time programs prior to the DYCD OST initiative. Eighty-seven percent of executive directors surveyed said that their organization had previously operated an after-school or out-of-school time program. Seventy percent of provider organizations had operated programs since at least the 1997-98 school year.

In addition, 73 percent of organizations continued to host at least one additional out-of-school time program that did not receive funding through the OST initiative in the 2005-06 school year; 53 percent operated a non-OST school-based program, and 42 percent operated a non-OST center-based program.

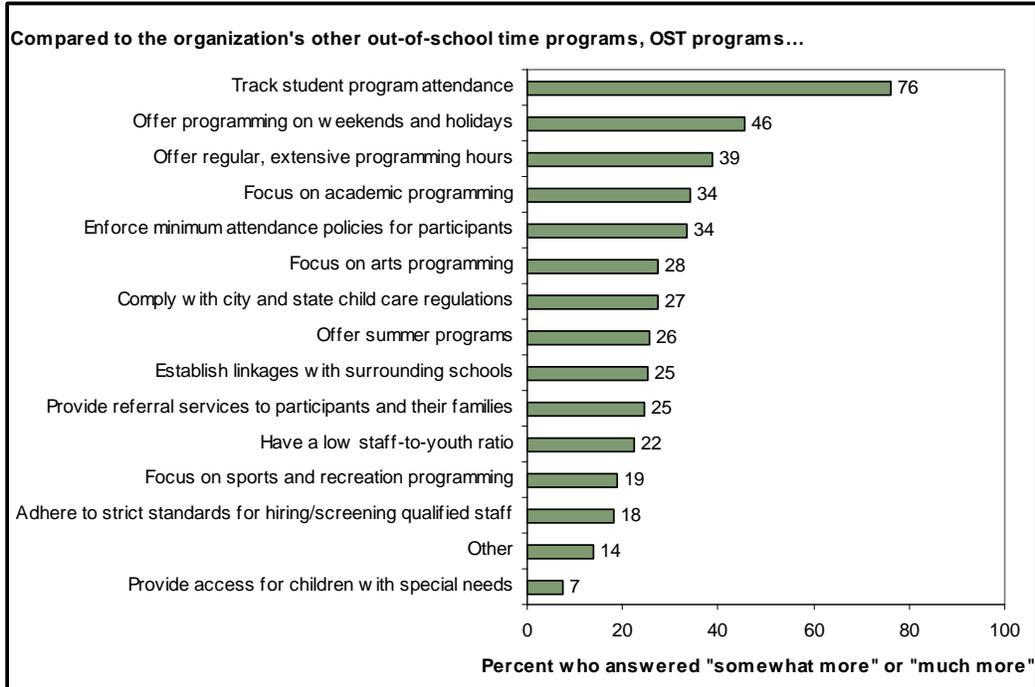
Even so, the DYCD OST initiative permitted provider organizations to begin OST services in many new locations. Although 20 percent of Option I program directors reported that their program had been in operation for more than 10 years before the OST initiative, nearly half (44 percent) reported that the initiative brought out-of-school time programming to their location for the first time. School-based programs were less likely to have offered out-of-school time programming prior to the DYCD OST grant than were center-based programs (51 percent, compared to 28 percent). Center-based programs were more likely than school-based programs to have offered out-of-school time programming for more than 10 years (43 percent, compared to 10 percent).

Seventy-seven percent of Option II programs directors reported that their programs existed prior to the DYCD OST grant. More than half (55 percent) had been in operation for six or more years. In contrast, nine of ten Option III program directors reported that out-of-school time programming was not offered prior to the DYCD OST grant.

***Effect of DYCD OST initiative on quality of out-of-school time services.***

Executive directors of provider organizations were asked about the ways that their OST-funded programs differed from other out-of-school time programs that the organization sponsored. As illustrated in Exhibit 40, 76 percent of executive directors reported that DYCD OST program staff tracked program attendance more than in their organization's other out-of-school time programs. In addition, almost half (46 percent) of the executive directors reported that DYCD OST programs offered programming on weekends and holidays more than their other out-of-school time programs.

**Exhibit 40**  
**Differences in OST Programming across DYCD**  
**and Other Sources of Support (n=139)**



About one-third (34 percent) of executive directors reported that their organization's DYCD OST programs offered academic programming more than their other out-of-school time programs. Thirty-four percent also reported that OST programs enforced minimum attendance policies for participants more than their other programs.

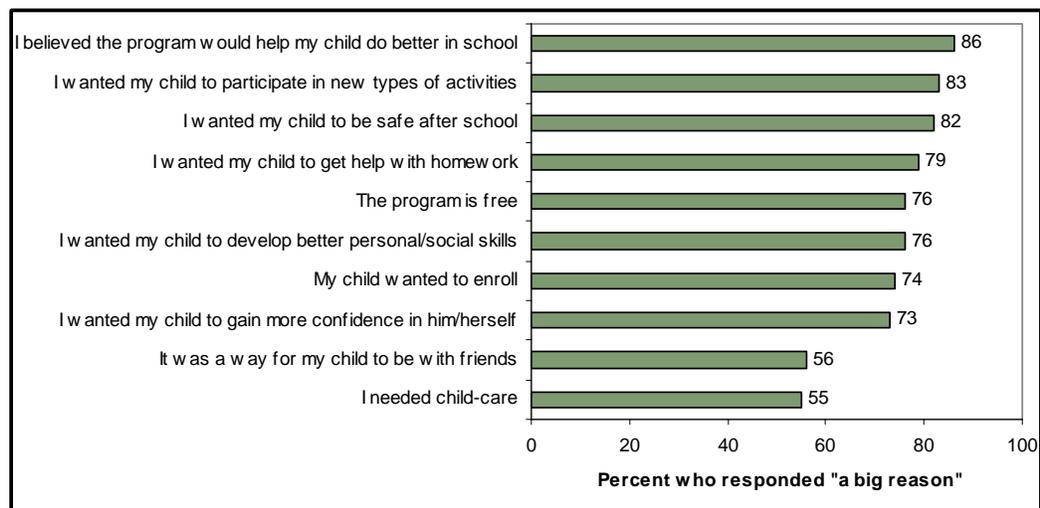
**Meeting the Needs of Working Parents**

A key goal of the OST initiative is to support the needs of working families. Indeed, the majority of parents who responded to the survey indicated that they were employed. More than three-quarters of responding parents (81 percent) reported that they worked at least 20 hours per week, and more than half (57 percent) worked more than 35 hours per week. In addition, about a third of parents (34 percent) responded that they were enrolled in school.

***Reasons for enrolling their child.*** As illustrated in Exhibit 41, parents reported a host of reasons for enrolling their child in the OST program. The most frequently reported reasons included:

- I believed the program would help my child do better in school (86 percent)
- I wanted my child to participate in new types of activities (83 percent)
- I wanted my child to be safe after school (82 percent)
- I wanted my child to get help with homework (79 percent)

**Exhibit 41**  
**Reasons for Enrolling Child, According to Parents (n=276)**



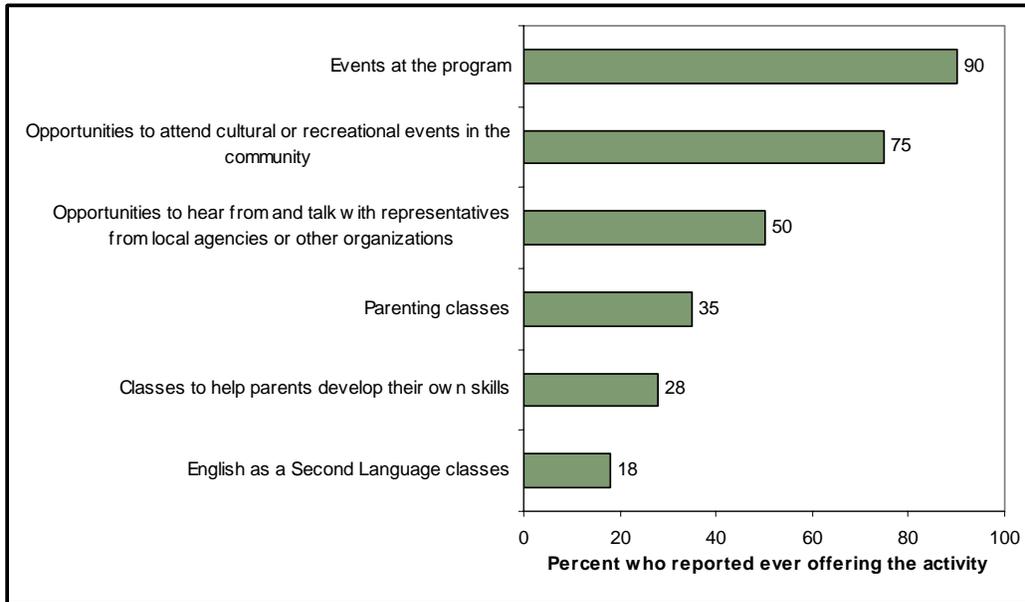
In total, nearly three-quarters of parents reported that the OST academic activities were most important to them: 43 percent of parents indicated that homework help was the most important activity offered, and 28 percent selected academic enrichment as the most important activity.

**Outreach to parents.** Programs reached out to parents to varying degrees. Across all Option I programs, about one third (35 percent) reported having a parent liaison or parent outreach coordinator, including 14 percent with a volunteer coordinator, 14 percent with a paid part-time liaison, and 7 percent with a paid full-time parent liaison or outreach coordinator. Program directors reported most frequently communicating with parents through phone conversations and meetings with one or more parents (55 and 46 percents, respectively, reported engaging in these types of outreach at least weekly).

OST programs also offered activities to engage parents, inform them about services available, or increase parents' skills, as shown in Exhibit 42. Program

directors most frequently reported offering parents opportunities to attend events at the program and to attend cultural or recreational events in the community (90 percent and 75 percent, respectively).

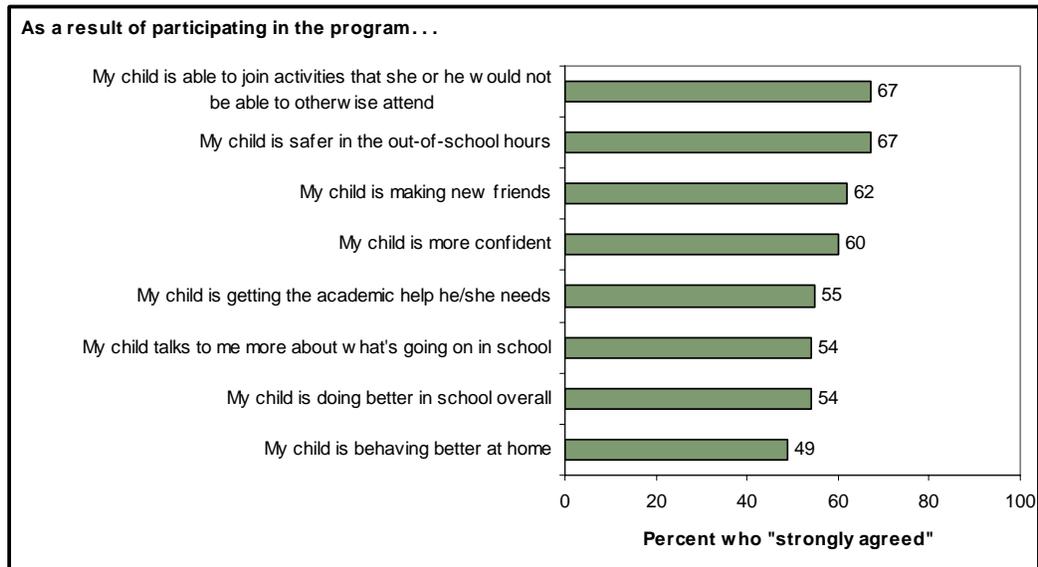
**Exhibit 42**  
**Activities Offered for Parents,**  
**According to Option I Program Directors (n=390)**



**Parent satisfaction.** Overall, parents were satisfied with the quality of the OST program their child attended, according to the small number of parents surveyed in the evaluation. Sixty-two percent of parents rated the overall quality of their programs as excellent.

As illustrated in Exhibit 43, parents were very satisfied with their OST program's ability to provide a safe space for students to participate in activities and interact with other youth. Sixty-seven percent of parents strongly agreed that their child was able to join activities that they would not have attended otherwise, 67 percent felt their child was safer in the out-of-school hours as a result of the program, and 62 percent reported that their child made new friends.

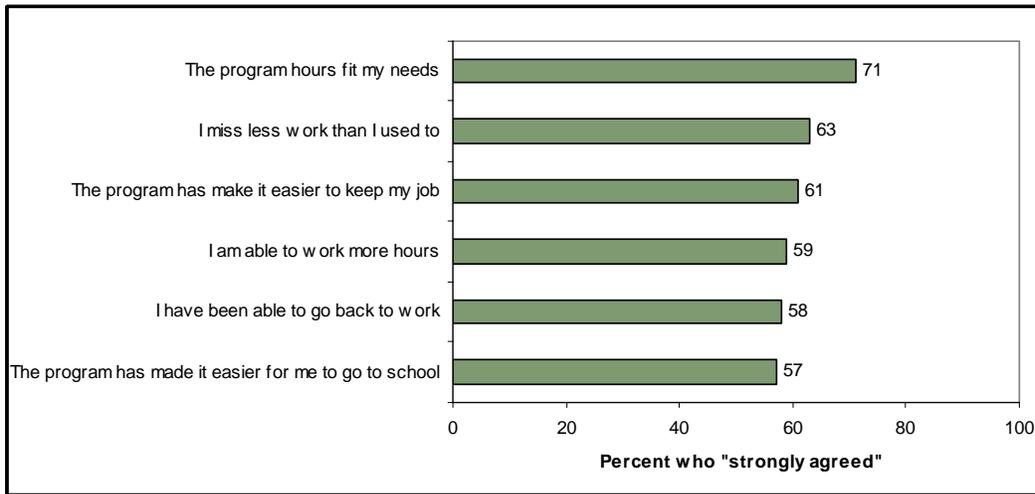
**Exhibit 43**  
**Parent Reports of Program Benefits (n=281)**



In addition, about half of responding parents strongly agreed that their child benefited academically from participation in the OST program. Fifty-five percent strongly agreed that their child was getting the academic help he/she needed, 54 percent felt that their child talked to them more about what was going in school, and 54 percent strongly agreed that their child was doing better in school overall as a result of participating in the after-school program.

As illustrated in Exhibit 44, parents also expressed satisfaction in how well the OST program met their own needs. Seventy-one percent of parents strongly agreed that the program hours fit their needs, 63 percent reported that they missed less work than they used to, and 61 percent reported that the program made it easier for them to keep their job.

**Exhibit 44**  
**Parent Reports of How Program Met their Needs (n=265)**



### 13. Conclusions

These evaluation findings indicate that overall the DYCD OST initiative was successful in launching a broad scope of out-of-school time programming opportunities in New York City in its first year. These emerging findings also suggest avenues for improving the effectiveness of OST programming as the initiative matures over the next few years.

**Programs successfully enrolled students but struggled to maintain high youth participation rates.** Participants must be exposed to high-quality programming on a regular basis to benefit in measurable ways from participation. Although OST programs enrolled an impressive 50,000-plus participants in more than 500 programs throughout New York City in the initiative's start-up year, student-level attendance rates were modest: in elementary- and middle-grades programs, only a quarter of participants received the minimum threshold of hours of programming sought by DYCD, as did about a third of high school participants, according to data available to the evaluation. This finding suggests a need to establish program policies and create activity offerings that encourage youth to attend OST programs on a frequent basis in order to maximize the benefits of participation. In addition, the evaluators note that some of the apparent attendance issues may actually reflect program-level deficiencies in keeping activity-participation data current in OST Online.

**Programs consistently provided safe and structured environments for participants in the out-of-school hours.** Particularly in OST programs serving elementary- and middle-grades youth, in the first year of the initiative program

directors focused on providing a safe environment for youth and on providing academic support, primarily through recreation and homework help. As a result, participants were more likely to report feeling connected and comfortable in their OST programs than they were to report that the program exposed them to new opportunities. As program operations and staffing patterns become well established, the challenge will be to provide creative learning opportunities that engage youth and retain them in the OST program. Programs targeting high school students were most effective at providing interactive activities that appealed to youth, perhaps reflected in the finding that high school youth on average attended their OST program for more hours than expected by the initiative.

**Hiring program staff members who were well qualified to provide high-quality OST programming was a challenge for OST programs in Year 1.** Program directors all reported that they were challenged to find qualified staff to hire. Limited resources available to pay staff also emerged as a major challenge. Indeed, staff salaries typically averaged only \$6 to \$11 per hour. This finding suggests that OST programs will need to develop effective staffing patterns and structures to improve the skills of their young staff members through professional development opportunities and by mentoring from more experienced program staff members.

**Varying program structures used by center- and school-based programs may be contributing to varying outcomes.** Findings from Year 1 of the evaluation indicate that participants in center-based programs felt a particularly strong sense of connection with their OST program and reported more positive interactions with staff members, likely precursors to other social development outcomes. Participants in school-based programs tended to report stronger academic benefits from the program. Identifying key features of each type of program will help all programs improve both the social and academic supports provided to OST participants.

Over the next two years, the evaluation of the OST initiative will continue to collect data from OST programs to explore these emerging patterns. Future reports will examine changes in program implementation and participants' social and academic outcomes as the programs become more fully established in their schools and communities.

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## **Appendix A**

### **Priority Middle School OST Programs**

In Year 1 of the OST initiative, DYCD funded 15 programs that were intended to target students in high-need middle schools and to operate in collaboration with state-approved Supplemental Educational Services providers. The evaluation collected program director and participant survey data from these Priority Middle School programs. Program experiences are highlighted below.

***Program implementation.*** According to the program director survey responses, Priority Middle School programs most regularly offered homework help (14 of 15 programs), organized team sports instruction/activities (13 programs), group instruction in specific academic subjects (12 programs), and recreational reading (11 programs).

Reflecting their location in high-need middle schools, 11 Priority Middle School OST program directors reported that they specifically sought to serve youth identified by their school as needing special assistance in reading and/or math, and 11 served youth who were recommended by school-day teachers or counselors. Eleven of the program directors also reported that they allowed open enrollment for all interested youth. The program directors communicated relatively frequently with school-day staff. At least monthly: 14 of 15 reported that they discuss student discipline policies with school staff; 13 discussed the needs or progress of individual students; and 12 reported that they discussed homework assignments and planning of OST content with school staff.

***Participant experiences.*** Participants generally reported strong attachment to their program. More than half “agreed a lot” with the following statements about the OST program:

- I am safe (63 percent)
- This is a good place to hang out (62 percent)
- Staff treat me with respect (62 percent)
- Staff think I can learn new things (59 percent)
- I belong (56 percent)
- The activities really get me interested (52 percent)

Priority Middle School program participants also reported relatively high levels of academic motivation. More than half “agreed a lot” with the following statements:

- I try hard in school (76 percent)
- I am sure I will graduate from high school (74 percent)
- I do well in school (56 percent)
- I always try to come to class prepared (56 percent)

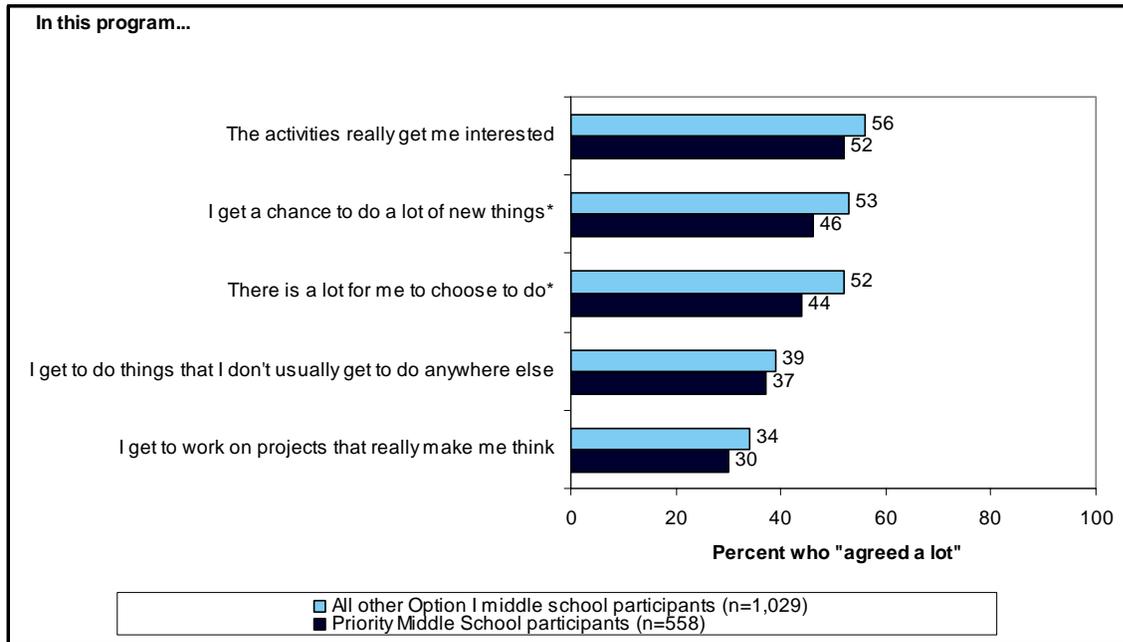
However, they reported only moderate levels of academic benefits from participating in the OST program. Most notably, 47 percent “agreed a lot” that the program helped them finish their homework more often.

### **Comparison of Priority Middle School Programs and Other Option I Middle School Programs**

Participant experiences varied somewhat between the Priority Middle School Programs and other OST Option I middle-grades programs. As displayed in the exhibits below, participants reported statistically significant differences in the following areas:

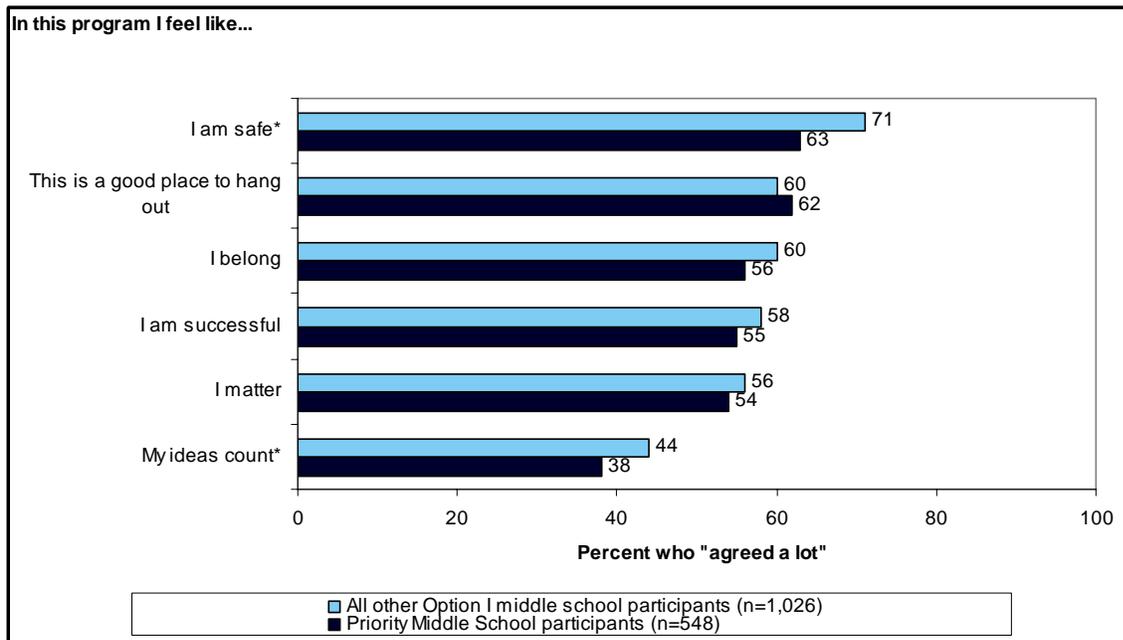
- Priority Middle School participants were less likely to report that the OST program gave them a chance to do a lot of new things or that there was a lot to choose to do than were other middle-grades participants (53 percent compared to 46 percent, and 52 percent compared to 44 percent, respectively)
- Priority Middle School participants were significantly less likely than other middle-grades participants to report feeling safe in the program (71 percent, compared with 63 percent) or to feel that their ideas count in the program (44 percent, compared to 38 percent)
- Compared with other middle-grades participants, Priority Middle School participants were less likely to report positive interactions with staff. In particular, fewer Priority Middle School participants agreed a lot that staff think they can do things well (60 percent, compared to 55 percent), that staff always try to be fair (56 percent, compared to 51 percent), and that staff really care about them (55 percent, compared to 48 percent)

## Exhibit A1 Middle-Grades Participant Reports of Exposure to New Experiences



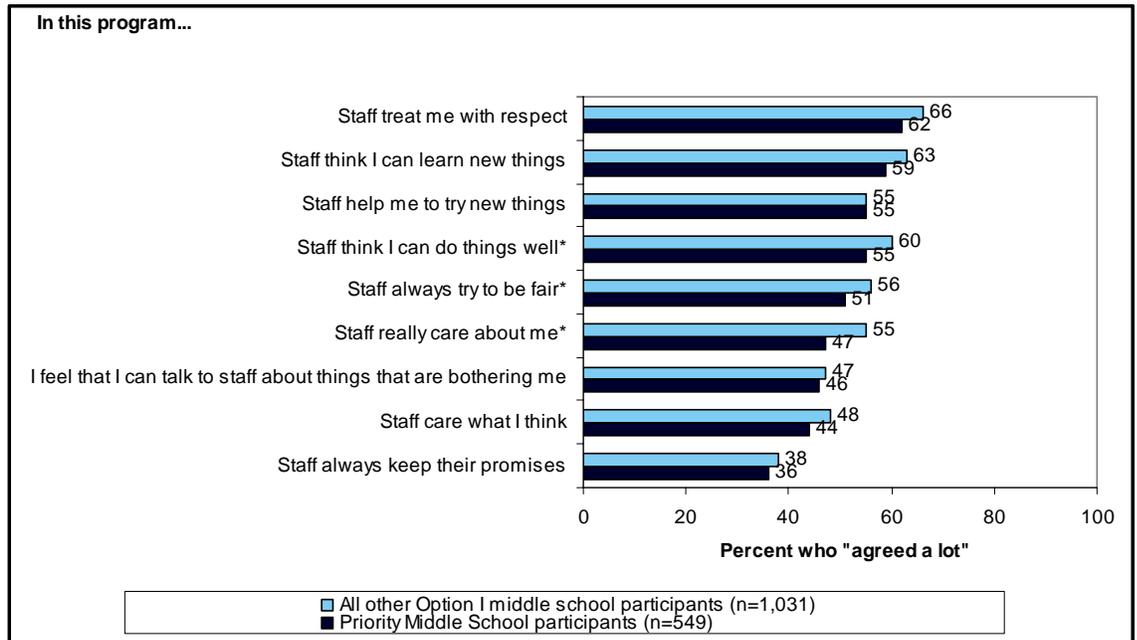
\* p < .05

## Exhibit A2 Middle-Grades Participant Reports of Sense of Belonging



\* p < .05

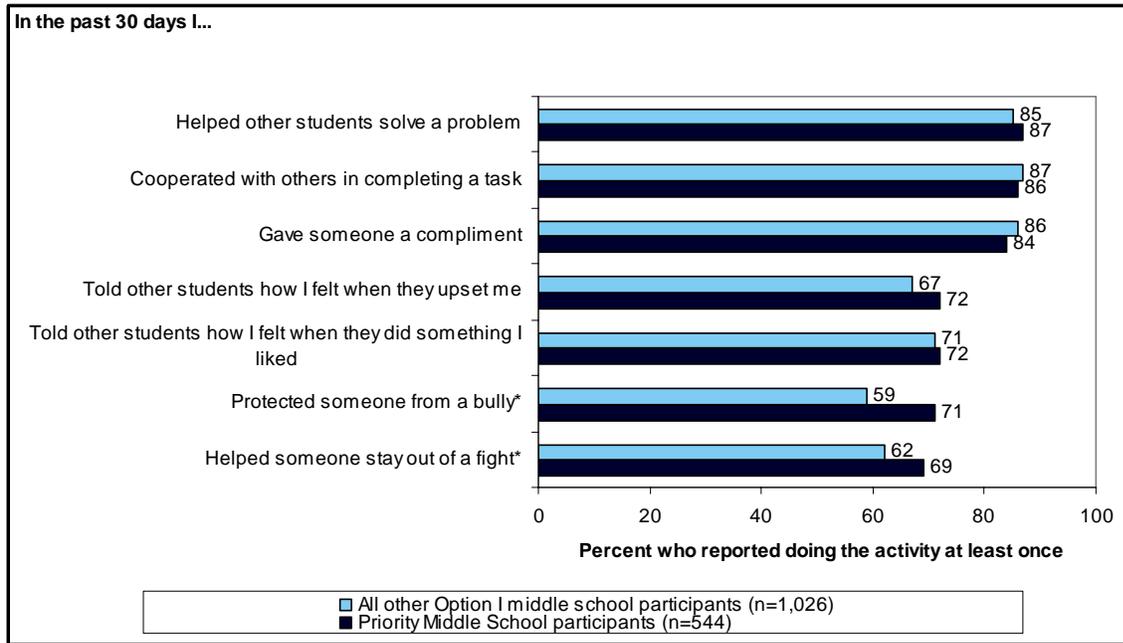
### Exhibit A3 Middle-Grades Participant Reports of Interactions with Staff



\* p < .05

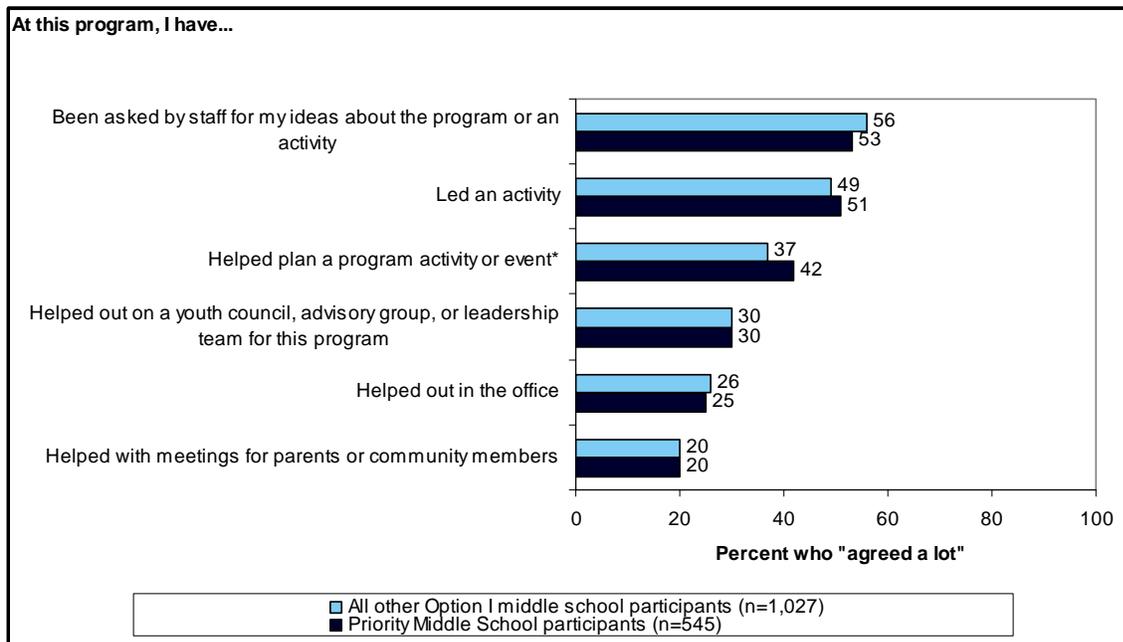
However, participants in Priority Middle Schools were significantly more likely to report protecting another student from a bully than were other middle-grades participants (71 percent, compared with 59 percent). Priority Middle School participants were also significantly more likely to report having helped plan a program activity or event than were other middle-grades participants (42 percent, compared with 37 percent)

### Exhibit A4 Prosocial Behaviors among Middle-Grades Participants



\* p < .05

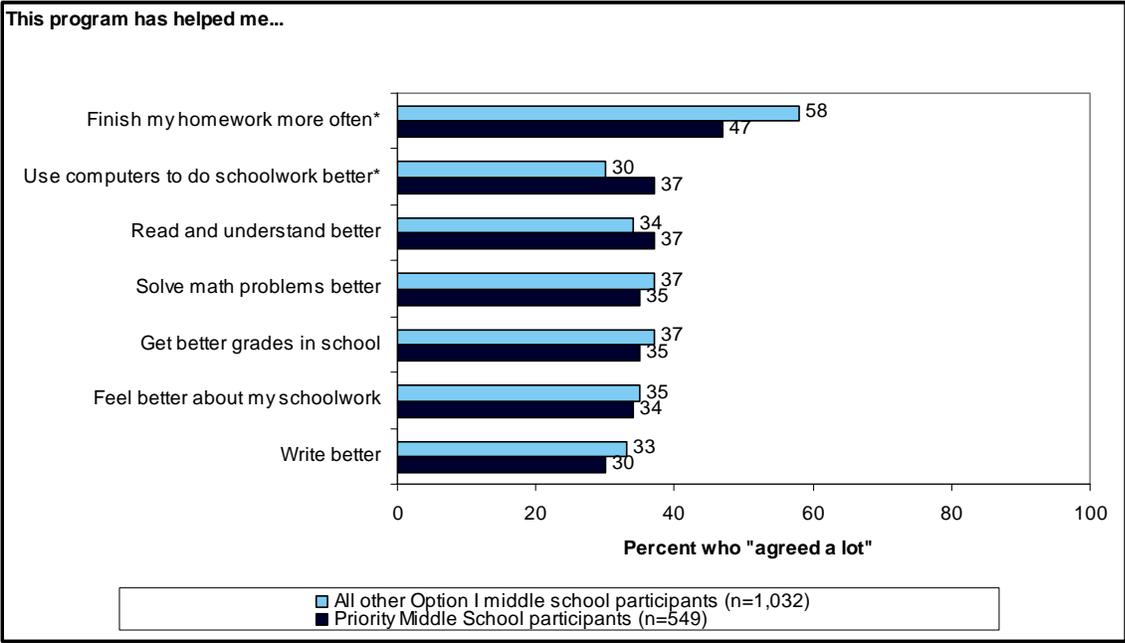
### Exhibit A5 Middle-Grades Participant Reports of Opportunities for Youth Leadership



\* p < .05

Differences in participant reports of academic benefits were mixed. Priority Middle School participants were less likely than other middle-grades participants to agree a lot that the program helped them finish their homework more often (47 percent compared to 58 percent), but more likely to report that the program helped them to use computers to do schoolwork better (37 percent, compared to 30 percent).

**Exhibit A6  
Middle-Grades Participant Reports of Academic Benefits**



\* p < .05

There were no significant differences in terms of reports of academic self-esteem or educational aspirations between Priority Middle School participants and other middle-grades participants.

## Appendix B

### Scales Used in Program Observation Analyses

In Year 1 of the evaluation of the OST initiative, evaluators conducted between 10 and 12 activity observations in each of 15 in-depth study sites. Evaluators used PSA’s OST Observation Instrument to conduct these structured 15 minute observations. In total, observation data represent 238 independent observations and 40 activity co-observations with an inter-rater reliability of 0.83.

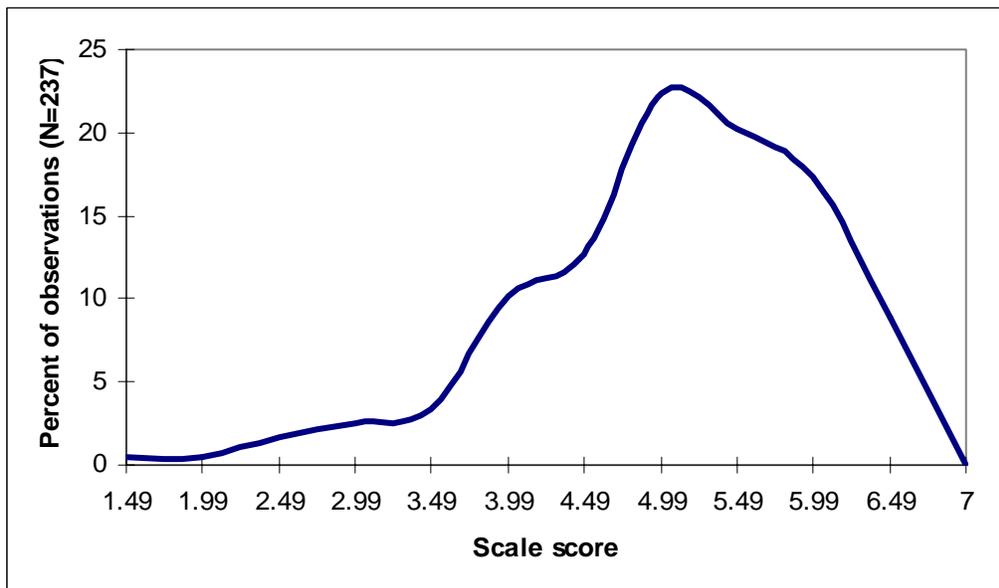
#### Relationships

The Relationships scale combines ratings from the following indicators:

- Youth are friendly and relaxed with one another
- Youth respect one another
- Youth show positive affect to staff
- Youth are on-task
- Youth listen actively and attentively to peers and staff
- Staff use positive behavior management techniques
- Staff show positive affect toward youth
- Staff attentively listen to and/or observe youth
- All or most youth take leadership responsibility/roles

#### *Descriptive Statistics:*

Alpha	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Maximum
0.88	5.31	0.96	1.78	4.78	6.00	7.00



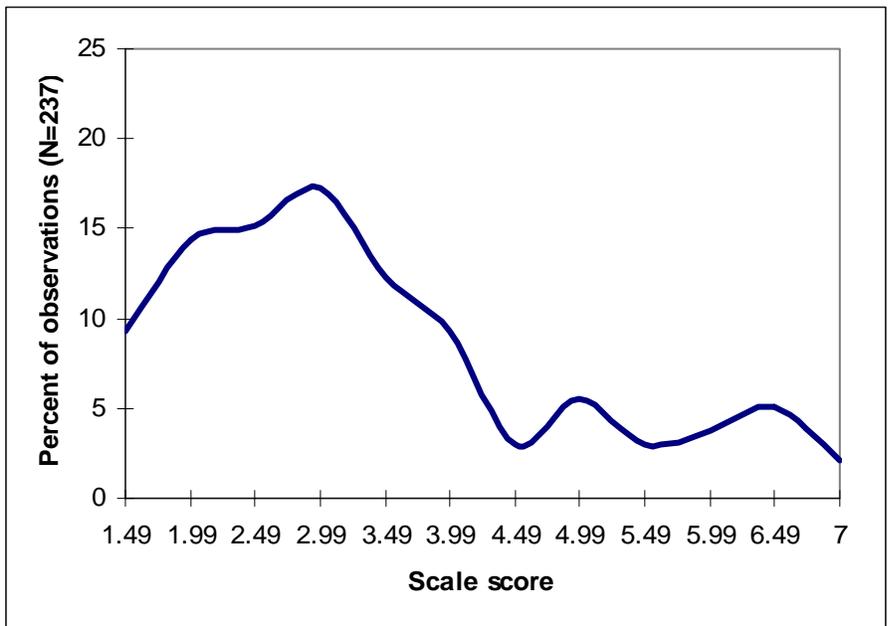
**Instructional Strategies**

The Instructional Strategies scale combines ratings from the following indicators:

- Youth contribute opinions, ideas and/or concerns to discussions
- Staff encourage youth to share their ideas, opinions and concerns
- Staff communicate goals, purposes, expectations
- Staff verbally recognize youth’s efforts and accomplishments
- Staff assist youth without taking control
- Staff ask youth to expand upon their answers and ideas
- Staff challenge youth to move beyond their current level of competency
- Staff employ two or more teaching strategies

*Descriptive Statistics:*

Alpha	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Maximum
0.87	3.06	1.46	1.00	2.00	3.75	6.63



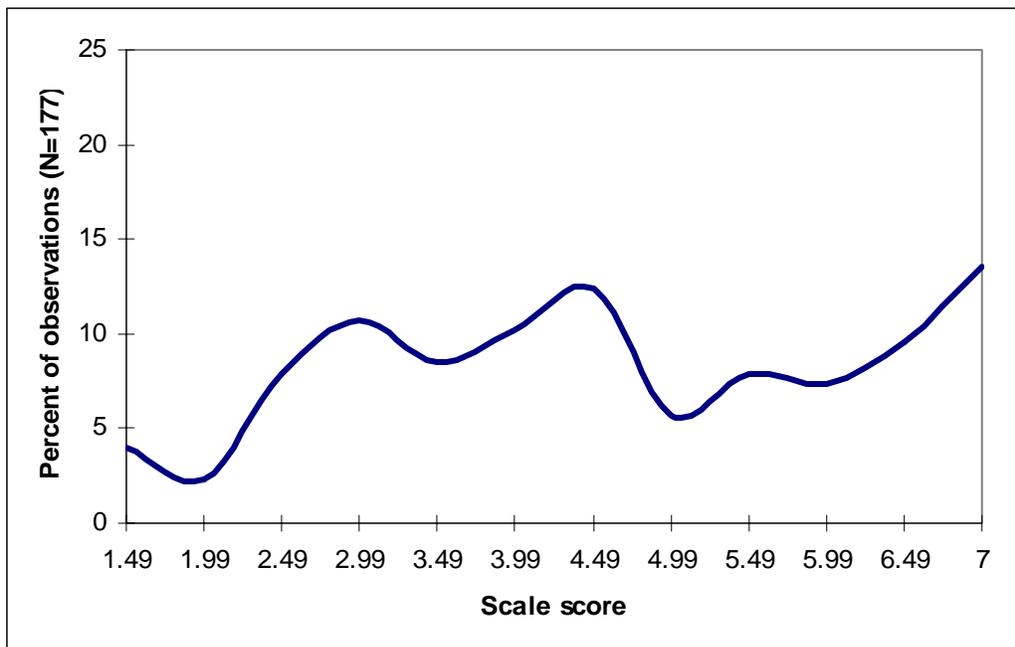
## Activity Content and Structure

The Activity Content and Structure scale combines ratings from the following indicators:

- The activity is well organized
- The activity involves the practice/a progression of skills
- The activity challenges students intellectually, creatively, and/or physically
- The activity requires analytic thinking

### *Descriptive Statistics:*

Alpha	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Maximum
0.84	4.26	1.67	1.00	2.88	5.75	7.00





# Appendix C

## Details of Data Used in Analyses of Program Features

**Exhibit C1**  
**Types of Youth Targeted by Option I Programs for OST Services,**  
**According to Program Directors, by Grade Level**

	Percent of Program Directors			Bonferroni Test	
	Elementary-grades Program Directors (n=155)	Middle-grades Program Directors (n=121)	High School Program Directors (n=117)	Comparison	Sig.
We have open enrollment for all interested youth	92	89	92	Elementary-Middle	1.00
				Middle-High	1.00
				Elementary-High	1.00
Youth who are recommended by school-day teachers or counselors	62	62	51	Elementary-Middle	1.00
				Middle-High	0.28
				Elementary-High	0.23
Youth with siblings already attending the program	59	49	25	Elementary-Middle	0.26
				Middle-High	0.00*
				Elementary-High	0.00*
Youth identified by their school as needing special assistance in reading and/or math	48	50	30	Elementary-Middle	1.00
				Middle-High	0.06*
				Elementary-High	0.09*
Youth who receive free- or reduced-price lunch	45	40	21	Elementary-Middle	1.00
				Middle-High	0.05*
				Elementary-High	0.00*
Youth who scored "below proficient" on city or state assessments	43	41	27	Elementary-Middle	1.00
				Middle-High	0.03*
				Elementary-High	0.11
Youth who are English-language learners	43	31	19	Elementary-Middle	0.93
				Middle-High	0.14
				Elementary-High	0.00*
Youth who are referred through our organization	40	40	34	Elementary-Middle	1.00
				Middle-High	1.00
				Elementary-High	1.00
Youth who participate in other programs sponsored by our organizations	38	37	37	Elementary-Middle	1.00
				Middle-High	1.00
				Elementary-High	1.00

\* p < .05

Exhibit reads: Ninety-two percent of elementary-grades program directors reported that their programs have open enrollment for all interested youth, compared to 89 percent of middle-grades program directors and 92 percent of high school program directors. There were no significant differences by grade level.

**Exhibit C2**  
**Types of Youth Targeted by Option I Programs for OST Services,**  
**According to Program Directors, by Program Location**

Percent of Program Directors				
	School-based Programs (n=272)	Center-based Programs (n=121)	Chi-Square	p
We have open enrollment for all interested youth	90	93	1.13	0.29
Youth who are recommended by school-day teachers or counselors	63	49	7.24	0.01
Youth identified by their school as needing special assistance in reading and/or math*	46	36	3.98	0.05
Youth with siblings already attending the program*	45	47	0.17	0.68
Youth who scored "below proficient" on city or state assessments	39	33	1.41	0.24
Youth who receive free- or reduced-price lunch	37	34	0.30	0.58
Youth who are referred through our organization	36	44	2.35	0.07
Youth who participate in other programs sponsored by our organizations*	34	45	3.90	0.05
Youth who are English-language learners	34	21	1.68	0.20

\* p <0.05

Exhibit reads: Ninety percent of directors of school-based programs reported that their program had open enrollment for all interested youth, compared to 93 percent of directors of center-based programs. This difference was not statistically significant.

**Exhibit C3**  
**Option I Program Director Prior Experience, by Program Location**

Percent of Program Directors				
	School-based Programs (n=250)	Center-based Programs (n=116)	Chi-Square	p
Camp counselor/leader	56	58	0.20	0.66
Program director in an OST program*	55	69	6.23	0.01
Recreation, youth, or child-care worker	53	60	1.55	0.21
Staff member in an OST program*	51	62	4.15	0.04
Instructional specialist	42	42	0.00	0.99
Administrator at a child/youth center or at a park or recreation center	41	52	3.82	0.05
Classroom teacher	40	45	0.59	0.44
Administrator in a social services organization	39	48	2.15	0.14
Pupil support staff	26	29	0.21	0.65
Social services or health services provider	25	30	0.93	0.34
Classroom aide/teaching assistant	24	27	0.42	0.52
School administrator	14	16	0.44	0.51

\* p <0.05

Exhibit reads: Fifty-six percent of directors of school-based programs reported having prior experience as a camp counselor/leader, compared to 58 percent of directors of center-based programs. This difference was not statistically significant.

**Exhibit C4**  
**Communication with School Staff, as Reported by Directors of Option I Programs, by Program Location**

Percent of Program Directors Reporting Communication at Least Once a Month				
	School-based Programs (n=270)	Center-based Programs (n=117)	Chi-Square	p
The needs or progress of individual students*	70	52	11.74	0.00
Issues related to classrooms/sharing space*	63	33	28.33	0.00
Homework assignments*	62	41	15.27	0.00
Planning OST program content*	61	35	22.28	0.00
Student discipline policies*	58	34	19.86	0.00
Curriculum concepts currently being taught in school*	49	35	6.16	0.01
OST program enrollment policies*	39	25	6.71	0.01
OST program staffing	34	25	3.26	0.07
State and local standards in reading, math, and/or science*	34	23	4.88	0.03

\* p <0.05

Exhibit reads: Seventy percent of directors of school-based programs reported communicating with school staff at least once a month about the needs or progress of individual students, compared to 52 percent of directors of center-based programs. This difference was statistically significant.

**Exhibit C5**  
**Staff Instructional Strategies, by Activity Type**

Mean Score on Staff Instructional Strategies Scale (out of 7 points)				
Activity Type	This Activity	All Other Activities	Mean Difference	p
Academic enrichment (n=59)	3.62	2.87	0.74*	0.00
Arts (n=53)	3.61	2.90	0.71*	0.00
Homework help/tutoring (n=81)	2.68	3.26	-0.58*	0.00
Sports (n=20)	2.46	3.11	-0.65*	0.01
Open, unstructured time (n=24)	2.21	3.16	-0.95*	0.00

\* p <0.05

Exhibit reads: On average, academic enrichment activities were rated 3.62 out of 7 points on the Staff Instructional Strategies scale, compared to an average rating of 2.87 for other activities observed. This difference of 0.74 points was statistically significant.

**Exhibit C6**  
**Quality of Activity Content and Structure, by Activity Type**

Mean Score on Activity Content and Structure Scale (out of 7 points)				
Activity Type	This Activity	All Other Activities	Mean Difference	p
Arts (n=53)	4.88	4.00	0.88*	0.00
Academic Enrichment (n=59)	4.56	4.11	0.44	0.10
Sports (n=20)	4.03	4.29	-0.27	0.37
Open, unstructured time (n=24)	2.98	4.46	-1.49*	0.00

\* p <0.05

Homework activities are not included in this exhibit because observers did not rate them on the content and structure items.

Exhibit reads: On average, arts activities were rated 4.88 points out of 7 on the Activity Content and Structure Scale, compared to an average activity rating of 4.00 for other activities observed. This difference of 0.88 points was statistically significant.

**Exhibit C7**  
**Quality of Staff and Student Relationships, by Activity Type**

Mean Score on Relationships Scale (out of 7 points)				
Activity Type	This Activity	All Other Activities	Mean Difference	p
Sports (n=20)	5.59	5.28	0.31	0.17
Arts (n=53)	5.49	5.26	0.24	0.11
Academic Enrichment (n=59)	5.44	5.27	0.17	0.24
Open, unstructured time (n=24)	5.35	5.31	0.04	0.83
Homework Help/Tutoring (n=81)	4.97	5.49	-0.52*	0.00

\* p <0.05

Exhibit reads: On average, sports activities were rated 5.59 points out of 7 on the Relationships scale, compared to an average activity rating of 5.28 for other activities observed. This difference of 0.31 points was not statistically significant.



## Appendix D Details of Data Used in Analyses of Program Features

### Exhibit D1 Participant Reports of Exposure to New Experiences, by Grade Level

In this program...	Percent of Participants Who "Agreed a Lot"			Bonferroni Test	
	Elementary-grades Participants (n=1,801)	Middle-grades Participants (n=1,029)	High School Participants (n=752)	Comparison	Sig.
The activities really get me interested	59	56	51	Elementary-Middle	0.34
				Middle-High	0.10
				Elementary-High	0.00*
I get a chance to do a lot of new things	54	53	52	Elementary-Middle	1.00
				Middle-High	1.00
				Elementary-High	1.00
There is a lot for me to choose to do	48	52	42	Elementary-Middle	0.12
				Middle-High	0.00*
				Elementary-High	0.01*
I get to work on projects that really make me think	46	34	36	Elementary-Middle	0.00*
				Middle-High	1.00
				Elementary-High	0.00*
I get to do things that I don't usually get to do anywhere else	42	39	46	Elementary-Middle	0.71
				Middle-High	0.03*
				Elementary-High	0.20

\* p < .05

Exhibit reads: Fifty-nine percent of elementary-grades participants "agreed a lot" that their OST program activities really got them interested, compared to 56 percent of middle-grades participants and 51 percent of high school participants. Elementary-grades participants differed significantly from high school participants.

### Exhibit D2 Participant Reports of Exposure to New Experiences, by Program Location

In this program...	Percent of Participants Who "Agreed a Lot"			
	School-based Programs (n=2,721)	Center-based Programs (n=860)	Chi-Square	p
The activities really get me interested*	59	49	23.54	0.00
I get a chance to do a lot of new things	53	54	0.11	0.75
There is a lot for me to choose to do*	51	40	32.26	0.00
I get to do things that I don't usually get to do anywhere else	42	42	0.02	0.91
I get to work on projects that really make me think*	40	43	4.02	0.05

\* p < .05

Exhibit reads: Fifty-nine percent of participants in school-based programs "agreed a lot" that their OST program activities really got them interested, compared to 49 percent of participants in center-based programs. The Chi-Square statistic was 23.54 with a p-value of 0.00. This difference was statistically significant.

**Exhibit D3**  
**Elementary-grades Participant Reports of Interactions with Peers,**  
**by Program Location**

Percent of Participants Who "Agreed a Lot"				
In this program I...	School-based Programs (n=1,376)	Center-based Programs (n=426)	Chi-Square	p
Have a good time playing with other kids*	71	67	3.16	0.08
Have a lot of friends	70	65	3.80	0.05
Get to know other kids really well	63	67	2.56	0.12
Get along with other kids	51	53	0.34	0.57
Like the other kids	40	43	1.33	0.25
Can really trust the other kids	26	29	1.11	0.32

\* p < .05

Exhibit reads: Among elementary-grades participants, 71 percent in school-based programs "agreed a lot" that they have a good time playing with other kids in the program, compared to 67 percent of participants in center-based programs. This difference was statistically significant.

**Exhibit D4**  
**Participant Reports of Prosocial Behaviors, by Grade Level**

Percent of Participants Who Reported Doing the Activity at Least Once				
In past 30 days I...	High School Participants (n=747)	Middle-grades Participants (n=1,026)	Chi-Square	p
Cooperated with others in completing a task	87	87	0.70	0.87
Gave someone a compliment	87	86	1.36	0.72
Helped other students solve a problem	85	85	4.91	0.18
Told other students how I felt when they did something I liked*	80	71	19.98	0.00
Told other students how I felt when they upset me*	76	67	28.63	0.00
Helped someone stay out of a fight	64	62	5.87	0.12
Protected someone from a bully*	53	59	18.47	0.00

\* p < .05

Exhibit reads: Eighty-seven percent of high school participants reported that in the past 30 days they cooperated with others in completing a task, compared to 87 percent of middle-grades participants. This relationship was not statistically significant.

**Exhibit D5**  
**Participant Reports of Sense of Belonging, by Program Location**

Percent of Participants Who “Agreed a Lot”				
In this program I feel like...	School-based Programs (n=2,707)	Center-based Programs (n=859)	Chi-Square	p
I am safe*	73	78	9.30	0.00
This is a good place to hang out	60	60	0.08	0.78
I belong*	59	64	7.61	0.01
I am successful	56	59	2.49	0.12
I matter*	55	60	7.64	0.01
My ideas count*	45	51	10.40	0.00

\* p < .05

Exhibit reads: Seventy-three percent of participants in school-based programs “agreed a lot” that they felt safe in the program, compared to 78 percent of participants in center-based programs. This difference was statistically different.

**Exhibit D6**  
**Participant Reports of Sense of Belonging, by Grade Level**

Percent of Participants Who “Agreed a Lot”				Bonferroni Test	
In this program I feel like...	Elementary-grades participants (n=1,793)	Middle-grades participants (n=1,026)	High School participants (n=747)	Comparison	Sig.
I am safe	76	71	74	Elementary-Middle	0.00*
				Middle-High	0.29
				Elementary-High	0.77
I belong	60	60	60	Elementary-Middle	1.00
				Middle-High	1.00
				Elementary-High	1.00
This is a good place to hang out	59	60	61	Elementary-Middle	1.00
				Middle-High	1.00
				Elementary-High	0.78
I am successful	57	58	57	Elementary-Middle	1.00
				Middle-High	1.00
				Elementary-High	1.00
I matter	55	56	58	Elementary-Middle	1.00
				Middle-High	0.80
				Elementary-High	0.54
My ideas count	46	44	50	Elementary-Middle	0.53
				Middle-High	0.02*
				Elementary-High	0.19

\* p < .05

Exhibit reads: Seventy-six percent of elementary-grades participants “agreed a lot” that they felt safe in the program, compared to 71 percent of middle-grades participants and 74 percent of high school participants. Elementary-grades participants differed significantly from middle-grades participants.

**Exhibit D7**  
**Participant Reports of Interactions with Staff, by Program Location**

Percent of Participants Who “Agreed a Lot”				
In this program...	School-based Programs (n=2,712)	Center-based Programs (n=861)	Chi-Square	p
Staff treat me with respect*	66	73	11.59	0.00
Staff think I can learn new things*	66	70	4.34	0.02
Staff think I can do things well*	62	68	10.22	0.00
Staff help me to try new things	61	62	0.23	0.66
Staff always try to be fair	60	60	0.02	0.90
Staff really care about me*	58	66	15.82	0.00
I feel that I can talk to staff about things that are bothering me	51	53	1.06	0.16
Staff care what I think*	49	55	8.42	0.00
Staff always keep their promises*	44	47	3.66	0.03

\* p < .05

Exhibit reads: Sixty-six percent of participants in school-based programs “agreed a lot” that staff treated them with respect in the program, compared to 73 percent of participants in center-based programs. This difference was statistically significant.

**Exhibit D8**  
**Participant Reports of Interactions with Staff, by Grade Level**

In this program...	Percent of Participants Who "Agreed a Lot"			Bonferroni Test	
	Elementary-grades Participants (n=1,795)	Middle-grades Participants (n=1,031)	High School Participants (n=747)	Comparison	Sig.
Staff treat me with respect	68	66	70	Elementary-Middle	0.51
				Middle-High	0.32
				Elementary-High	1.00
Staff think I can learn new things	68	63	69	Elementary-Middle	0.01*
				Middle-High	0.02*
				Elementary-High	1.00
Staff think I can do things well	65	60	64	Elementary-Middle	0.03*
				Middle-High	0.35
				Elementary-High	1.00
Staff always try to be fair	64	56	57	Elementary-Middle	0.00*
				Middle-High	1.00
				Elementary-High	0.00*
Staff help me to try new things	64	55	63	Elementary-Middle	0.00*
				Middle-High	0.00*
				Elementary-High	1.00
Staff really care about me	62	55	61	Elementary-Middle	0.00*
				Middle-High	0.02*
				Elementary-High	1.00
I feel that I can talk to staff about things that are bothering me	55	47	52	Elementary-Middle	0.00*
				Middle-High	0.12
				Elementary-High	0.27
Staff care what I think	50	48	55	Elementary-Middle	0.68
				Middle-High	0.00*
				Elementary-High	0.06
Staff always keep their promises	47	38	48	Elementary-Middle	0.00*
				Middle-High	0.00*
				Elementary-High	1.00

\* p < .05

Exhibit reads: Sixty-eight percent of elementary-grades participants "agreed a lot" that staff treat them with respect, compared to 66 percent of middle-grades participants and 70 percent of high school participants. There were no significant differences by grade level.

**Exhibit D9**  
**High School Participant Reports of Interactions with Staff, by Program Location**

Percent of Participants Who “Agreed a Lot”				
In this program...	School-based Programs (n=390)	Center-based Programs (n=358)	Chi-Square	p
Staff think I can learn new things	68	70	0.26	0.63
Staff treat me with respect*	65	74	6.45	0.01
Staff help me to try new things	63	65	0.33	0.59
Staff think I can do things well*	59	68	6.69	0.01
Staff really care about me*	55	68	12.58	0.00
Staff always try to be fair	54	59	2.02	0.16
Staff care what I think*	50	62	10.95	0.00
I feel that I can talk to staff about things that are bothering me	49	54	2.03	0.16
Staff always keep their promises*	44	52	5.12	0.03

\* p < .05

Exhibit reads: Among high school participants, 68 percent of youth in school-based programs “agreed a lot” that staff thought they could learn new things, compared to 70 percent of youth in center-based programs. This difference was not statistically significant.

**Exhibit D10**  
**Participant Reports of Opportunities for Youth Leadership, by Grade Level**

Percent of Participants Who Reported Doing the Activity				
At this program, I have...	High School Participants (n=741)	Middle-grades Participants (n=1,027)	Chi-Square	p
Led an activity*	58	51	8.55	0.00
Helped out in the office*	54	26	148.66	0.00
Helped out on a youth council, advisory group, or leadership team for this program*	49	30	64.77	0.00
Helped plan a program activity or event*	57	37	65.30	0.00
Helped with meetings for parents or community members*	39	20	75.95	0.00
Been asked by staff for my ideas about the program or an activity*	67	56	22.20	0.00

\* p < .05

Exhibit reads: Fifty-eight percent of high school participants reported leading an activity in the program, compared to 51 percent of middle-grades participants. This difference was statistically significant.

**Exhibit D11**  
**Participant Reports of Academic Benefits, by Grade Level**

This program has helped me...	Percent of Participants Who "Agreed a Lot"			Bonferroni Test	
	Elementary-grades Participants (n=1,801)	Middle-grades Participants (n=1,032)	High school Participants (n=747)	Comparison	Sig.
Finish my homework more often	67	58	33	Elementary-Middle	0.00*
				Middle-High	0.00*
				Elementary-High	0.00*
Feel better about my schoolwork	53	35	31	Elementary-Middle	0.00*
				Middle-High	0.17
				Elementary-High	0.00*
Get better grades in school	52	37	32	Elementary-Middle	0.00*
				Middle-High	0.11
				Elementary-High	0.00*
Solve math problems better	52	37	25	Elementary-Middle	0.00*
				Middle-High	0.00*
				Elementary-High	0.00*
Read and understand better	51	34	32	Elementary-Middle	0.00*
				Middle-High	1.00
				Elementary-High	0.00*
Write better	45	33	32	Elementary-Middle	0.00*
				Middle-High	1.00
				Elementary-High	0.00*
Use computers to do schoolwork better	29	30	35	Elementary-Middle	1.00
				Middle-High	0.13
				Elementary-High	0.01*

\* p < .05

Exhibit reads: Sixty-seven percent of elementary-grades participants "agreed a lot" that the program has helped them finish their homework more often, compared to 58 percent of middle-grades participants and 33 percent of high school participants. These differences were statistically significant between all grade levels.

**Exhibit D12**  
**Participant Reports of Academic Benefits, by Program Location**

Percent of Participants Who “Agreed a Lot”				
This program has helped me...	School-based Programs (n=2,721)	Center-based Programs (n=859)	Chi-Square	p
Finish my homework more often*	60	48	39.76	0.00
Feel better about my schoolwork	44	42	1.45	0.12
Get better grades in school	44	42	1.92	0.17
Solve math problems better*	44	36	15.69	0.00
Read and understand better	43	40	1.61	0.22
Write better	38	40	0.48	0.49
Use computers to do schoolwork better	30	33	2.28	0.13

\*  $p < .05$

Exhibit reads: Sixty percent of participants in school-based programs “agreed a lot” that their OST program has helped them finish their homework more often, compared to 48 percent of participants in center-based programs. This difference was statistically significant.

**Exhibit D13**  
**Participant Reports of Academic Self-esteem, by Grade Level**

In general I...	Percent of Participants Who "Agreed a Lot"			Bonferroni Test	
	Elementary-grades participants (n=1,779)	Middle-grades participants (n=1,018)	High School participants (n=739)	Comparison	Sig.
Try hard in school	81	68	51	Elementary-Middle	0.00*
				Middle-High	0.00*
				Elementary-High	0.00*
Do well in school	66	54	39	Elementary-Middle	0.00*
				Middle-High	0.00*
				Elementary-High	0.00*
Pay attention in class	64	49	42	Elementary-Middle	0.00*
				Middle-High	0.01*
				Elementary-High	0.00*
Enjoy math	64	45	34	Elementary-Middle	0.00*
				Middle-High	0.00*
				Elementary-High	0.00*
Always come to class prepared	63	49	42	Elementary-Middle	0.00*
				Middle-High	0.02*
				Elementary-High	0.00*
Always finish my homework	63	47	33	Elementary-Middle	0.00*
				Middle-High	0.00*
				Elementary-High	0.00*
Enjoy writing	58	42	35	Elementary-Middle	0.00*
				Middle-High	0.01*
				Elementary-High	0.00*
Enjoy school	57	38	33	Elementary-Middle	0.00*
				Middle-High	0.10
				Elementary-High	0.00*
Enjoy reading books for pleasure	57	32	33	Elementary-Middle	0.00*
				Middle-High	1.00
				Elementary-High	0.00*

\* p < .05

Exhibit reads: Eighty-one percent of elementary-grades participants "agreed a lot" that they tried hard in school, compared to 68 percent of middle-grades participants and 51 percent of high school participants. These differences were statistically significant between all grade levels.

**Exhibit D14**  
**Participant Reports of Academic Self-esteem, by Program Location**

Percent of Participants Who "Agreed a Lot"				
In general I...	School-based Programs (n=2,686)	Center-based Programs (n=849)	Chi-Square	p
Try hard in school*	74	63	31.90	0.00
Do well in school*	58	52	9.14	0.00
Pay attention in class*	56	51	6.76	0.01
Enjoy math*	54	46	16.56	0.00
Always come to class prepared*	56	49	12.22	0.00
Always finish my homework*	54	47	11.71	0.00
Enjoy writing	49	48	0.15	0.72
Enjoy school*	48	41	14.14	0.00
Enjoy reading books for pleasure*	46	42	4.27	0.04

\* p < .05

Exhibit reads: Seventy-four percent of participants in school-based programs "agreed a lot" that they tried hard in school, compared to 63 percent of participants in center-based programs. This difference was statistically significant.

**Exhibit D15**  
**High School Participant Reports of Academic Self-esteem, by Program Location**

Percent of Participants Who “Agreed a Lot”				
In general I...	School-based Programs (n=388)	Center-based Programs (n=351)	Chi-Square	p
Try hard in school*	57	45	10.99	0.00
Pay attention in class*	45	39	3.45	0.07
Always come to class prepared	44	39	2.23	0.16
Do well in school	41	36	2.49	0.13
Enjoy writing	37	33	1.41	0.25
Enjoy reading books for pleasure*	37	29	5.36	0.02
Enjoy math	36	30	2.95	0.10
Enjoy school*	36	29	4.34	0.04
Always finish my homework	35	30	1.66	0.21

\* p < .05

Exhibit reads: Among high school participants, 57 percent of youth in school-based programs “agreed a lot” that they tried hard in school, compared to 45 percent of youth in center-based programs. This difference was statistically significant.

**Exhibit D16**  
**Participant Reports of Skill Development, by Grade Level**

Percent of Participants Who “Agreed a Lot”				Bonferroni Test	
This program has helped me...	Elementary-grades Participants (n=1,772)	Middle-grades Participants (n=1,009)	High School Participants (n=735)	Comparison	Sig.
Am good at using a computer	64	59	48	Elementary-Middle	0.04*
				Middle-High	0.00*
				Elementary-High	0.00*
Have the skills to be a leader	58	54	45	Elementary-Middle	0.09
				Middle-High	0.00*
				Elementary-High	0.00*
Can play a musical instrument, sing, dance, draw, paint, or do some other type of art really well	68	59	46	Elementary-Middle	0.00*
				Middle-High	0.00*
				Elementary-High	0.00*

\* p < .05

Exhibit reads: Sixty-four percent of elementary-grades participants “agreed a lot” that they were good at using a computer, compared to 59 percent of middle-grades participants and 48 percent of high school participants. These differences were statistically significant between all grade levels.

**Exhibit D17**  
**Participant Reports of Skill Development, by Program Location**

Percent of Participants Who "Agreed a Lot"				
In general I...	School-based Programs (n=2,676)	Center-based Programs (n=842)	Chi-Square	p
Am good at using a computer*	61	56	5.71	0.02
Have the skills to be a leader	55	52	3.31	0.72
Can play a musical instrument, sing, dance, draw, paint, or do some other type of art really well*	62	56	12.95	0.00

\*  $p < .05$

Exhibit reads: Sixty-one percent of participants in school-based programs "agreed a lot" that they were good at using a computer, compared to 56 percent of participants in center-based programs. This difference was statistically significant.

# Appendix E

## Details of Associations Between Participant Experiences and Program Features

### Participant Survey Scales

#### *Academic Benefits of the Program*

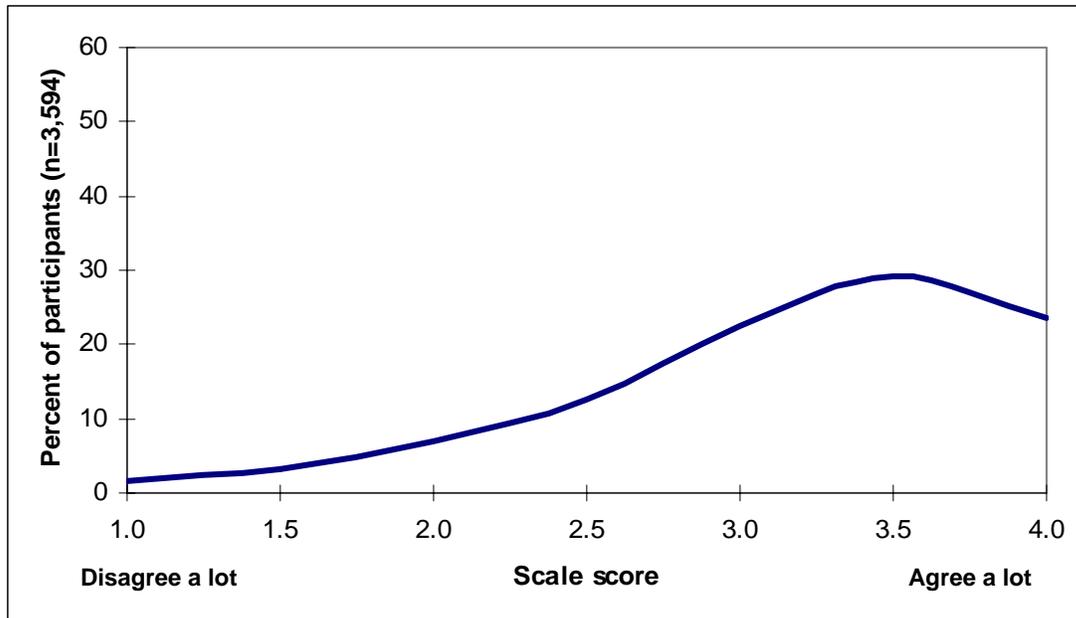
The Academic Benefits of the Program scale was computed to range from one to four, with four indicating that on average participants strongly agreed with the following statements:

This program has helped me...

- Get better grades in school
- Feel better about my schoolwork
- Read and understand better
- Solve math problems better
- Finish my homework more often
- Write better
- Use computers to do schoolwork better

#### *Descriptive Statistics:*

Alpha	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Maximum
0.84	3.02	0.72	1	2.67	3.50	4



## *Academic Self-Esteem*

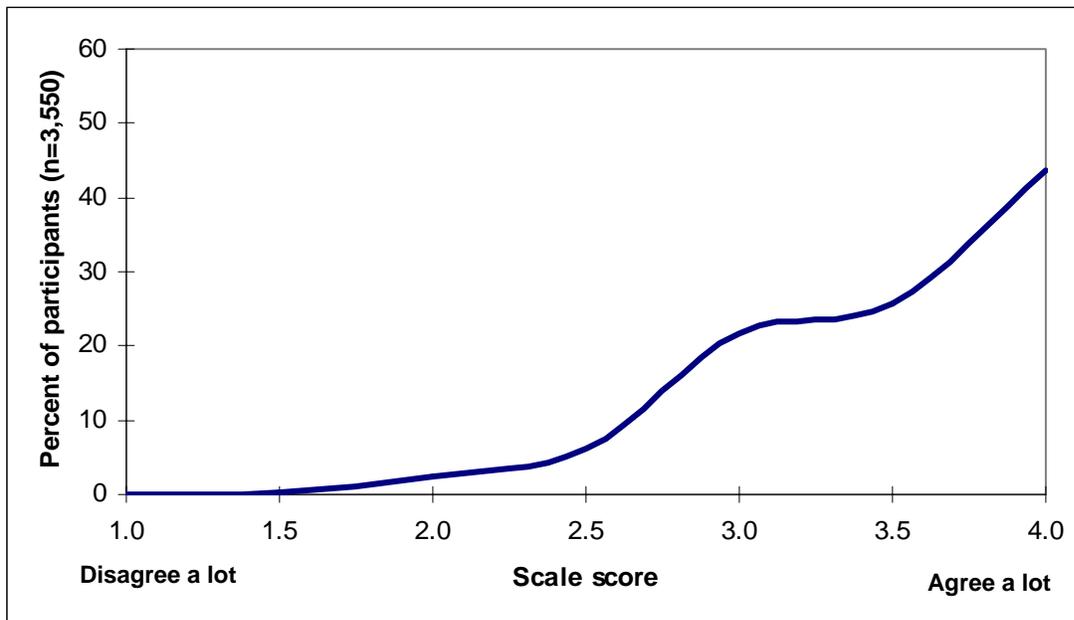
The Academic Self-Esteem scale was computed to range from one to four, with four indicating that on average participants strongly agreed with the following statements:

In general I...

- Try hard in school
- Pay attention in class
- Always come to class prepared
- Enjoy school
- Enjoy reading books for pleasure
- Enjoy math
- Enjoy writing
- Always finish my homework
- Do well in school

### *Descriptive Statistics:*

Alpha	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Maximum
0.82	3.32	0.55	1	3.00	3.78	4



### *Interactions with Staff*

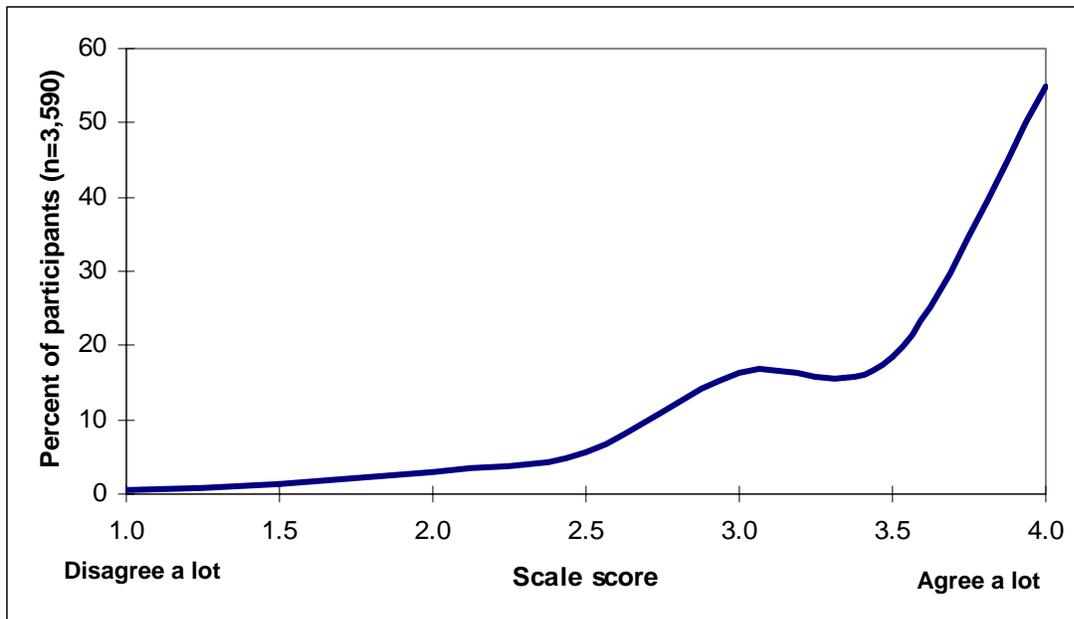
The Interactions with Staff scale was computed to range from one to four, with four indicating that on average participants strongly agreed with the following statements:

In this program...

- Staff treat me with respect
- I feel that I can talk to staff about things that are bothering me
- Staff really care about me
- Staff always keep their promises
- Staff care what I think
- Staff always try to be fair
- Staff think I can do things well
- Staff help me to try new things
- Staff think I can learn new things

### *Descriptive Statistics:*

Alpha	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Maximum
0.91	3.38	0.65	1	3.00	3.89	4



### *Exposure to New Experiences*

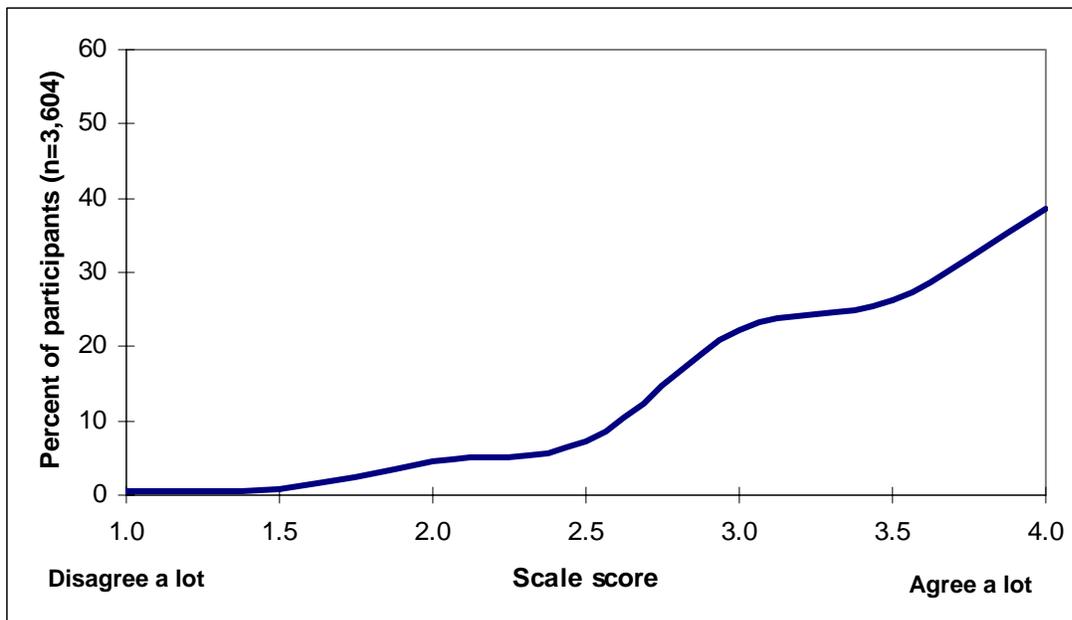
The Exposure to New Experiences scale was computed to range from one to four, with four indicating that on average participants strongly agreed with the following statements:

In this program...

- I get a chance to do a lot of new things
- I get to do things that I don't usually get to do anywhere else
- I get to work on projects that really make me think
- There is a lot for me to choose to do
- The activities really get me interested

#### *Descriptive Statistics:*

Alpha	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Maximum
0.71	3.23	0.61	1	3.00	3.60	4



## *Sense of Belonging*

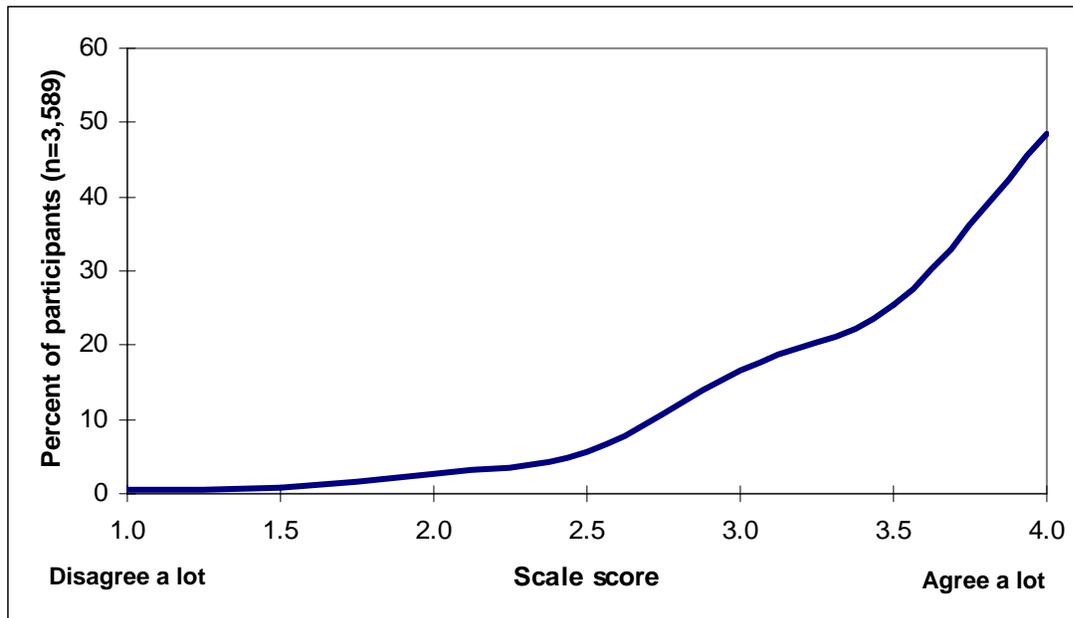
The Sense of Belonging scale was computed to range from one to four, with four indicating that on average participants strongly agreed with the following statements:

In this program I feel like...

- I belong
- My ideas count
- I am successful
- This is a good place to hang out
- I matter
- I am safe

### *Descriptive Statistics:*

Alpha	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Maximum
0.81	3.41	0.59	1	3.00	3.83	4



### *Interactions with Peers*

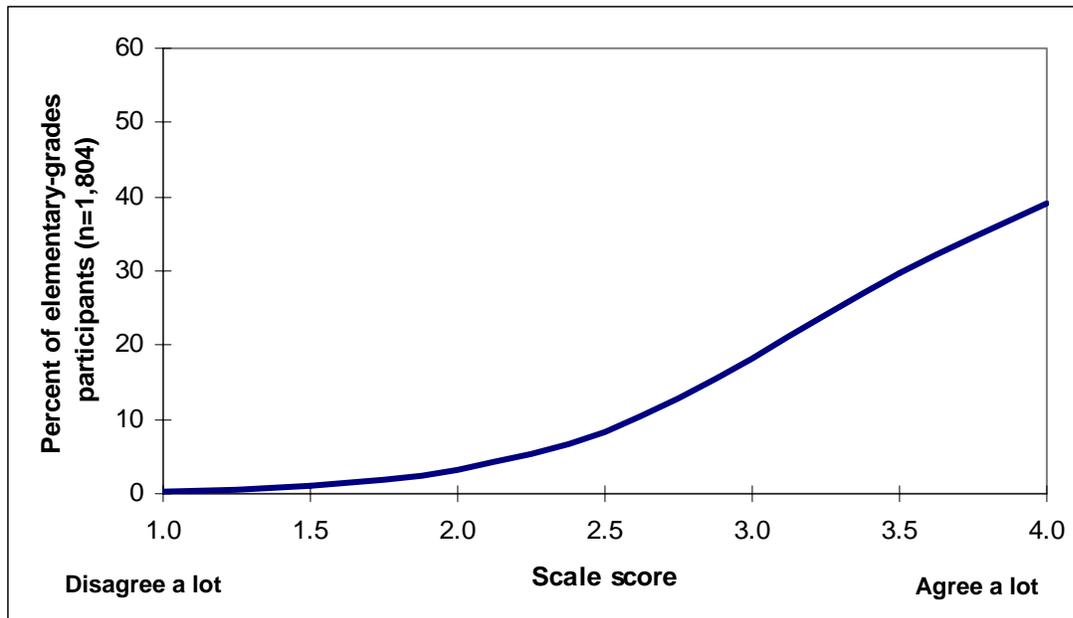
The Interactions with Peers scale was computed to range from one to four, with four indicating that on average elementary-grades participants strongly agreed with the following statements:

In this program I...

- Get to know other kids really well
- Can really trust the other kids
- Have a lot of friends
- Like the other kids
- Have a good time playing with other kids
- Get along with other kids

### *Descriptive Statistics:*

Alpha	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Maximum
0.79	3.30	0.60	1	3.00	3.83	4



**Exhibit E1**  
**Correlations between Program Focus on**  
**Academic Activities in Programs and Participant Experiences**

Participant Survey Scale	Pearson Correlation	p	n
Academic Benefits*	0.37	0.00	89
Academic Self-esteem*	0.25	0.02	89
Interactions with Peers <sup>1</sup>	0.10	0.52	44
Exposure to New Experiences	-0.07	0.52	89
Sense of Belonging	-0.16	0.13	89
Interactions with Staff*	-0.23	0.03	89

\* p < .05

<sup>1</sup>This scale reflects elementary-grades participants only.

Exhibit reads: The extent to which youth reported academic benefits of the program was positively associated with the intensity of academic activities in a program. The Pearson Correlation was 0.37 with a p-value of 0.00. This correlation was statistically significant.

**Exhibit E2**  
**Correlations between Program Focus on**  
**Arts Activities in Programs and Participant Experiences**

Participant Survey Scale	Pearson Correlation	p	n
Academic Benefits*	0.23	0.03	89
Academic Self-esteem*	0.23	0.03	89
Interactions with Peers <sup>1</sup>	0.20	0.20	44
Exposure to New Experiences	0.10	0.37	89
Sense of Belonging	-0.01	0.92	89
Interactions with Staff	-0.10	0.34	89

\* p < .05

<sup>1</sup>This scale reflects elementary-grades participants only.

Exhibit reads: The extent to which youth reported academic benefits of the program was positively associated with the intensity of arts activities in the program. The Pearson Correlation was 0.23 with a p-value of 0.03. This difference was statistically significant.

**Exhibit E3**  
**Correlations between Program Focus on**  
**Physical Activities in Programs and Participant Experiences**

Participant Survey Scale	Pearson Correlation	p	n
Interactions with Peers <sup>1</sup>	0.06	0.71	44
Academic Benefits	-0.02	0.84	89
Academic Self-esteem	-0.05	0.63	89
Sense of Belonging	-0.19	0.07	89
Exposure to New Experiences*	-0.25	0.02	89
Interactions with Staff*	-0.32	0.00	89

\* p < .05

<sup>1</sup>This scale reflects elementary-grades participants only.

Exhibit reads: The extent to which elementary-grades participants reported having positive interactions with their peers was positively associated with the intensity of physical activities in the program. The Pearson Correlation was 0.06 with a p-value of 0.71. This correlation was not statistically significant.

**Exhibit E4**  
**Correlations between Participation Rates and Participant Experiences**

Participant Survey Scale	Pearson Correlation	p	n
Academic Self-esteem*	0.38	0.00	87
Academic Benefits	0.17	0.13	87
Interactions with Peers <sup>1</sup>	0.09	0.58	43
Exposure to New Experiences	-0.02	0.85	87
Interactions with Staff	-0.08	0.48	87
Sense of Belonging	-0.10	0.37	87

\* p < 05

<sup>1</sup>This scale reflects elementary-grades participants only.

Exhibit reads: The extent to which participants reported positive academic self-esteem was positively associated with higher participation rates in the program. The Pearson Correlation was 0.38 with a p-value of 0.00. This correlation was statistically significant.