



**Evaluation of the New York City
Department of Youth and Community Development
Out-of-School Time Programs for Youth Initiative:**

**Results of Efforts to Increase
Program Quality and Scale in Year 2**

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Executive Summary

The New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) launched the Out-of-School Time Programs for Youth (OST) initiative in September 2005. At the same time, it contracted with Policy Studies Associates (PSA) to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of OST. This report summarizes evaluation findings from the second year of the OST initiative, 2006-07.

In its 2005 Request for Proposals under the initiative, DYCD described its OST vision as follows: “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 designed the components of the OST program to reflect this vision. The largest program component, known as Option I, funded OST programs for youth in elementary, middle, and high schools in neighborhoods throughout New York City. Expectations for Option I programs varied by the grade level served, with programs for younger youth expected to provide more programming hours and hence more comprehensive services to youth attending programs on a more frequent basis, compared to programs serving older youth. 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 would serve youth at any grade level. Option III programs were to be operated in collaboration with the Department of Parks and Recreation and offered at Parks sites; these programs would also serve youth at any grade level.

Based on the first year of OST operation, evaluation findings identified avenues for improving the effectiveness of OST programming as the initiative matured and programs became more fully established in their schools and communities. Although programs successfully enrolled students in the first year, they struggled to maintain high youth participation rates, suggesting a need to establish program policies and activity offerings that encouraged regular participation. While programs in the first year consistently provided safe and structured environments for participants in the out-of-school hours, they experienced challenges in delivering innovative, content-based learning opportunities that engaged youth. Programs also experienced challenges in recruiting well-qualified staff members, pointing to a need to develop effective practices for staff recruitment and for development of staff skills.

In the second year, the evaluation examined recent evidence of programs’ efforts to improve program quality and scale. In particular, evaluators looked for evidence that programs had established structures to support high-quality staffing

and effective partnerships, were delivering rich program content through activities that also fostered positive interpersonal relationships, and were engaging youth in programming to develop their skills in both social and content-based areas. Evaluators also examined the extent to which programs increased the number of youth served and their level of program attendance.

Scope and Extent of OST Programming in Year 2

During the 2006-07 school year, evaluators examined data from a total of 536 OST programs that offered services throughout New York City and reached more than 69,000 participants, up from 51,000 participants in the preceding school year. Approximately two-thirds of these youth were enrolled in school-based OST programs and the remaining third in center-based programs. These programs served youth of all ages. More than 40,000 participants were served by OST programs located in zip codes identified as in high need of services for youth.

This increase in the scale of services reflected a considerable additional investment in OST programming throughout the city. According to data on funding levels presented in the initiative's online management information system, DYCD awarded more than \$66 million to OST programs in Year 2, a substantial increase over the \$44 million awarded in Year 1. The median second-year award was \$100,000, compared to \$73,000 in the first year, and grant awards ranged from \$3,100 to \$514,000.

Evaluators identified a representative sample of 15 OST programs from which to collect additional data. New York City Department of Education (DOE) data on participants in these 15 in-depth study sites confirmed that the OST initiative reached New York City students who could benefit from the support of high-quality programs. Across these programs, 85 percent of youth were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (compared to approximately 82 percent of youth citywide), 21 percent were classified as eligible for English Language Learner services (compared to 13 percent citywide), and 14 percent received special education or related services (equivalent to the 14 percent rate citywide).

In addition, OST participants' prior performance on the English Language Arts (ELA) and math tests (administered to all New York City students in grades 3-8) indicated that participants were at risk academically compared to students citywide. Forty-nine percent of OST participants scored at performance levels 3 or 4 on the ELA test, indicating that they were performing at or above grade level, compared to approximately 57 percent citywide. Fifty-four percent performed at this level in math, compared to 57 percent citywide.

In contrast, the data also suggested that OST participants were at least as engaged in school as were students citywide. The average school attendance rate

of elementary-grades participants in the year prior to OST participation was 92 percent, equivalent to the citywide rate. Middle-grades participants, however, had a higher school attendance rate than did their citywide counterparts (95 percent, compared to 90 percent), as did high school participants also (90 percent, compared to 81 percent).

Structural and Institutional Program Features

In the second year of the OST initiative, programs continued to develop policies, strengthen partnerships with schools and families, and build on their efforts in the first year to establish strong foundations for high-quality programming. In particular, OST programs and DYCD both worked to improve staff recruitment and training, addressing one of the primary challenges reported in Year 1.

Program focus. Program directors almost unanimously reported that providing a safe environment for youth was a major objective of their OST program (97 percent) and that they aimed to help youth develop socially (93 percent).

Highlighting a possible tension between social and academic goals, evaluators found a small but notable decline from Year 1 to Year 2 in the percent of program directors who identified academic improvement as a major objective of their program. In the second year, 80 percent of program directors reported that one of their major objectives was to help youth improve their academic performance, compared to 88 percent in the first year ($V=.11$). In contrast, more program directors reported in Year 2 that a challenge in providing high-quality programming was that the principals of the schools their participants attend would like the program to be more academically focused (47 percent, compared to 39 percent in the first year; $V=.10$). Despite this challenge, more than half of program directors (59 percent) believed the quality of their relationships with schools had improved in the second year.

Strategies for participant recruitment. Effectively recruiting students continued to pose a challenge to program directors. Forty-five percent reported youth dropping out because they lost interest as a challenge, and 43 percent identified youth not attending the OST program regularly enough to have enriching experiences as a challenge.

Overall, strategies for participant recruitment remained much the same in Years 1 and 2. As in their first year of operation, an overwhelming majority of Option I program directors (90 percent) reported that they offered open enrollment to all youth who were interested in attending the program. In addition, at least half of program directors reported that they targeted youth who were

recommended by school-day teachers or counselors (55 percent) and youth with siblings already attending the program (50 percent).

Program director and staff qualifications and responsibilities. In Year 2, DYCD required any elementary- or middle-grade OST program that served at least 100 youth to hire a full-time program director, reflecting the need for one person working full-time to coordinate the multi-faceted components of the OST program in each site. Survey findings confirm that OST programs generally complied with this expectation. In addition, program directors had strong educational qualifications. Eighty-six percent of program directors had completed a four-year college degree or higher, and 37 percent had a master's degree or higher. Seventeen percent of program directors reported that they were certified to teach.

Program directors reported that finding qualified staff was a lesser challenge in the second year of the OST initiative than in the first. In Year 2, only 16 percent of program directors reported that finding qualified staff to hire was a major challenge, compared to 48 percent in the first year of the initiative. In fact, 42 percent of program directors reported that finding qualified staff to hire was not a challenge at all, while in the first year all program directors reported that this was at least a minor challenge ($V = .54$). One reason for programs' improved capacity for staffing may be that most programs were able to retain at least half of their staff from the first year of the initiative (68 percent of directors reported that at least half of their staff worked in the program in the previous year).

OST programs employed staff members with varied qualifications and prior experiences to carry out roles in implementing program content and supervision. By hiring staff with a mix of experience levels, programs worked within their budgetary constraints. Although a large proportion of programs employed certified teachers and activity specialists to provide targeted programming on a more limited basis, in general, programs relied most heavily on non-certified and non-specialist staff.

Technical assistance through the OST initiative. In the second year of the OST initiative, DYCD made efforts to more closely align the focus of technical assistance workshops and consultations to program needs. In addition, DYCD improved its methods of tracking program referrals to technical assistance services to ensure that programs received relevant assistance. Perhaps reflecting these improvements in communications and targeting of technical assistance, during the second year of the OST initiative program directors reported higher levels of satisfaction with the technical assistance that DYCD provided than they did in Year 1.

Program staff members (other than directors) also took advantage of technical assistance opportunities offered in Year 2. Eighty percent of staff members surveyed reported attending a workshop, 56 percent participated in an

on-site consultation, and 42 percent attended an institute or conference. Only 9 percent of staff members reported that they did not participate in any technical assistance in Year 2. Program staff members were also generally satisfied with the technical assistance they received through DYCD. Forty-four percent felt the training served their purposes completely, while another 46 percent felt it was a good start.

Overall, when asked to compare the technical assistance they received during the first and second years of the initiative, 62 percent of program directors either agreed or strongly agreed that the professional development they received through the OST initiative was more useful in the second year. Fifty-five percent reported that the professional development their staff received was more useful. Program directors were also more satisfied with DYCD's approach to program monitoring in the second year: 64 percent either agreed or strongly agreed that DYCD's monitoring approach was more effective in the second year.

Implementation of Process and Content Features

Program activities. Achieving positive outcomes for participants requires that program activities be reasonably diverse and capable of promoting personal development. Reflecting program objectives, activities varied somewhat by grade level. In Year 2, elementary-grades programs most often offered homework help, visual arts and crafts, group academic instruction, organized reading activities, and learning games. Middle-grades programs offered a similar roster of activities, with an additional emphasis on organized team sports. High school programs were more specialized, and each targeted a smaller set of program activities. These activities tended to be more civic-oriented than in the elementary- and middle-grades programs and to be more focused on social development.

Content delivery strategies. Overall, youth participants expressed a strong degree of satisfaction in the extent to which participation in OST program activities exposed them to new experiences. However, through activity observations, the evaluation concluded that programs often struggled to design and implement activities that provided youth with the opportunity to actively engage in learning through hands-on activities, discussion, or meaningful choices and roles.

Fostering positive relationships. OST programs consistently developed positive relationships among youth and between youth and staff in Year 2 of the initiative. In surveys, participants overwhelmingly reported positive relationships with program staff members and with their peers. Observer ratings of activities confirmed that programs were developing participants' personal and social skills.

Participant Engagement in OST Services in Year 2

Program enrollment. In the second year, DYCD more strictly enforced standards for program enrollment and participation, with a policy of retaining funds for programs that did not achieve established targets. On average, Option I programs successfully scaled up to meet and exceed their targeted enrollment levels. Option I programs had a total target enrollment of approximately 50,000 youth, based on the contracts awarded by DYCD. In practice, programs actually served more than 70,000 students from September 2006 through June 2007. Elementary-grades and middle-grades programs were especially successful at meeting or exceeding their enrollment targets (90 percent and 79 percent of programs, respectively), while high school programs fell slightly short of their goal (57 percent of programs reached the target). Overall, 80 percent of Option I programs met or exceeded their enrollment targets.

Program participation. Across all grade levels, Option I programs successfully increased their participant-level attendance over Year 1 levels, although elementary-grades programs continued to struggle to achieve attendance goals. As noted earlier, elementary-grades offered more program service hours and expected more hours of youth attendance; high school programs offered the fewest hours with the fewest hours of attendance expected. On average, elementary-grade Option I participants attended an average of 359 hours during the year, compared to the 432 hours they were expected to attend. This represented an average of 83 percent of targeted hours, which is an increase from the 72 percent of targeted hours attended by elementary-grades participants in the first year. Overall, middle-grades participants nearly achieved their targeted number of hours of participation: on average, middle-grades participants attended 213 hours of the 216 hours expected at the middle-grades level.¹ This was a substantial increase over the 159 hours attended, on average, by middle-grades participants in Year 1. Finally, high school participants exceeded the targeted number of hours of participation, attending on average 105 hours in the second year of the initiative, 29 hours above their target of 76 hours and several hours higher than during the first year (97 hours).

Association between enrollment duration and participation. OST programs typically enroll participants on a first-come, first-serve basis. Returning participants are not necessarily guaranteed enrollment for a second year. However, evaluation data reveal especially high levels of program engagement by returning participants. On average, two-year participants attended their OST program more regularly than did participants who enrolled for the first time in Year 2. Two-year elementary-grades participants attended an average of 399 hours during the 2006-07 school year, compared to 359 hours for one-year participants ($d=.20$). Middle-grades participants enrolled for a second year

¹ DYCD expects middle-grades participants to attend 75 percent of the required 288 hours, which equals 216 hours. Similarly, high school participants are expected to attend 70 percent of the 108 required hours, which equals 76 hours.

attended 253 program hours in Year 2 (exceeding their target by 37 hours), compared to 213 hours for one-year participants ($d=.26$). Two-year high school participants also attended substantially more hours than did one-year participants (135 hours, compared to 105 hours; $d=.29$). (Neither these associations nor others presented in this report should be interpreted to imply causality, however.)

As part of its efforts to provide comprehensive out-of-school time services to families throughout New York City, DYCD also funded certain OST programs to provide services to youth during the summer of 2006. Participation in OST summer programming was associated with higher rates of participation during the 2006-07 school year. Students in elementary-grades programs who participated in OST services in the summer of 2006 and the following school year attended, on average, 441 hours in Year 2 ($d=.40$). Middle-grades summer participants attended an average of 294 hours in Year 2, on average ($d=.52$). However, programming was not offered in all programs, and summer enrollment was not guaranteed to school-year participants.

Associations between program features and program participation. The evaluation found significant associations between certain staffing patterns and attendance rates in Option I OST programs. In particular, programs that hired at least some young staff members had higher program attendance rates than those without these young staff members. This was true for college student staff members (66 percent, compared to 57 percent; $d=.49$) as well as high-school age staff (67 percent, compared with 61 percent; $d=.35$). In addition, programs with school-day paraprofessionals or aides on staff had higher attendance rates than those without (69 percent, compared with 61 percent; $d=.41$). One explanation for this pattern might be that the presence of these younger staff members in addition to more experienced educators appealed to youth, who could identify and forge connections with staff closer to their age. Another possibility is that lower wages for less experienced staff allowed programs to increase the number of staff employed in the program and thus increase the amount of staff attention to each program participant.

Year 2 program attendance was also positively associated with programs' efforts to engage families, supporting a finding of the importance of family outreach. In particular, programs with a parent liaison on staff had a higher attendance rate than programs without a parent liaison (68 percent, compared to 62 percent; $d=.32$). The intensity of program communication with parents was positively correlated with attendance rates ($r=.29$). Although each form of communication with parents was positively associated with program attendance rates, certain types of parent outreach occurring at least a few times a month were associated with particularly strong attendance effects: holding individual meetings with parents ($d=.68$), sending materials home to parents ($d=.55$), and having conversations with parents over the phone ($d=.49$).

Based on program directors' reports of the intensity of certain types of activities in their program offerings, evaluators found evidence of positive associations between program attendance and a program's focus on academics, arts, and physical recreation:

- Programs that reported a higher relative intensity of academic activities tended to have higher attendance rates ($r=.26$).
- Analyses found a positive relationship between the degree to which a program focused on activities in the arts and the attendance rate ($r=.19$).
- Programs that engaged participants in physical activity more frequently tended to have higher attendance rates ($r=.19$).

In addition, for elementary-grades programs, there was a positive association between the intensity of activities focused on youth development (e.g., conflict resolution) and program attendance ($r=.19$). This relationship was not significant for middle-grades or high school OST programs. There were no notable associations between the intensity of career development or civic engagement activities and program attendance.

Social Development Outcomes of Youth

OST programs encourage positive youth development, in part by giving participants opportunities to interact in relaxed settings and fostering positive interactions among youth and between youth and adults. In the second year of the OST initiative, participants reported a strong sense of connection to their OST program as well as a moderate level of engagement in prosocial behaviors.

Program-level analyses revealed specific program features that were associated with positive social development outcomes among participants. In general, when program content included a strong focus on civic or social development programming, participants experienced measurable benefits in their sense of belonging and prosocial behaviors, such as helping or complimenting other youth.

- The extent to which a program focused on youth development (e.g., conflict resolution, peer discussion, socializing) was positively correlated with participants' reports of engaging in prosocial behaviors ($r_s=.38$).
- There was also a positive relationship between a program's level of civic programming (e.g., discussion of current events, service projects) and participants' sense of belonging ($r_s=.32$).

- A program's focus on career development activities (e.g., career exploration, field trips to businesses) was positively correlated with participants' reported sense of belonging ($r_s = .20$).

In addition, the extent to which programs provided opportunities for youth leadership was positively correlated with youth reports of their sense of belonging within the program and of engagement in prosocial behaviors. Participant-level analyses found a positive relationship between the number of leadership opportunities in which a youth participated in the OST program and their sense of belonging in their program, for both middle-grades participants ($r_s = .24$) and for high school participants ($r_s = .52$). For middle-grades students, there was a positive association between participation in leadership opportunities and reports of engagement in prosocial behavior ($r_s = .38$).

Across all grade levels, analyses found a positive relationship between participant reports of the quality of their interactions with peers and their reports of their sense of belonging in the program ($r_s = .61$). This association was significant and strong for elementary-grades ($r_s = .65$), middle-grades ($r_s = .56$) and high school ($r_s = .72$) programs. Among middle-grades participants, there was a significant positive relationship between reported interactions with peers and engagement in prosocial behaviors ($r_s = .23$).

The evaluation also revealed a positive correlation between a participant's reports of interactions with program staff members and their sense of belonging in the OST program ($r_s = .68$). This correlation was significant and strong at all grade levels, but particularly for high school youth ($r_s = .79$) and elementary-grades youth ($r_s = .71$). For middle-grades youth, reports of positive interactions with staff members were also positively correlated with reports of engagement in prosocial behaviors ($r_s = .22$).

Youth Academic Outcomes

OST programs contribute to improving academic outcomes for youth by offering activities geared towards building the skills and knowledge that can contribute to school success and also by reinforcing students' perceptions of themselves as individuals capable of academic success. In Year 2, participant survey responses indicated a moderately high level of self-reported academic benefits due to OST participation. Elementary-grades participants were more likely than their middle-grades and high school counterparts to report academic benefits as a result of OST programming ($r = .15$ for the difference between elementary and middle; $r = .14$ for the difference between elementary and high). Elementary-grades participants recorded an average score of 3.10 on a four-point scale, while middle school participants averaged a 2.84 and high school participants averaged a 2.86.

Participants in the second year recorded a relatively high mean on the academic motivation scale. Again, there were notable differences in the level of academic motivation based on grade level, with elementary-grades participants reporting the highest levels of academic motivation, with a mean of 3.48 on the four-point scale, followed by middle school participants (3.20; $r=.22$) and high school participants (3.11; $r=.29$).

Analyses revealed specific program components that were associated with positive academic outcomes among participants, including staffing patterns, participation in technical assistance, and program content or focus. Staffing patterns were especially well associated with student reports of academic outcomes. For example, participants in programs that hired some high-school staff reported greater academic benefits than participants in programs that did not ($r=.22$). Participants in programs with some high-school staff also reported higher levels of academic motivation ($r=.24$). As noted earlier, programs typically hired staff members with diverse qualifications, and high-school staff were supported by more experienced staff members. Among programs that employed high-school staff, 89 percent also employed college students, 73 percent hired activity specialists, and 65 percent employed certified teachers. In program observations, high-school staff were frequently observed serving as support staff and tutors: a possible explanation for the correlation between the presence of such staff and participants' reported academic benefits is that programs with high-school staff were able to provide more individual attention to youth, such as one-on-one or small group tutoring.

Academic motivation was somewhat higher in programs without a master teacher on staff ($r=.22$) and in programs without specialist staff ($r=.30$). This finding suggests that programs were more likely to engage professional support when they served populations who were struggling academically or most in need of additional support services. Similarly, participants in programs without specialist staff reported greater academic benefits ($r=.30$).

Program efforts to develop staff skills and to engage families were also positively associated with academic outcomes. In particular, evaluators found a positive relationship between a program director's self-reported level of participation in technical assistance and participants' academic motivation ($r_s=.36$). There was also a positive relationship between the frequency with which program directors communicated with parents and both academic benefits ($r_s=.24$) and academic motivation ($r_s=.27$).

Not surprisingly, evaluators also found a positive relationship between the extent to which a program focused on academics and participants' self-reported academic benefits ($r_s=.25$). In addition, participants in programs that used a published or externally developed curriculum reported higher levels of academic motivation than participants in programs that did not ($r=.42$).

Middle-grades participants who reported taking on more leadership roles in their OST programs tended to report greater academic benefits ($r_s=.29$) and academic motivation ($r_s=.21$).

Programs that fostered positive relationships among youth and between youth and staff also demonstrated positive academic outcomes. Across all grades, analyses found a positive relationship between participants' reports of their interactions with peers and academic benefits ($r_s=.54$). There was also a positive association between interactions with peers and academic motivation for elementary ($r_s=.56$) and middle-grades participants ($r_s=.38$).

Systems Outcomes

Opportunities for provider organizations. Overall, the majority of executive directors reported that the DYCD initiative had increased their organization's capacity to serve more youth and families either to a great extent (53 percent) or somewhat (27 percent). Executive directors' reports of the opportunities the DYCD initiative offered their organization reflected the same patterns as in the first year of the initiative. In Year 2, executive directors most frequently reported that the OST initiative had "to a great extent" or "somewhat" increased opportunities for training and technical assistance for their staff (75 percent).

More than half of directors also reported that the initiative had increased opportunities to partner with city agencies (64 percent), cultural organizations (61 percent), and a public school (60 percent). This finding of increased partnerships with public schools was greater in Year 2 than Year 1: 32 percent of executive directors reported that, compared to other out-of-school time programs, their DYCD OST programs established linkages with surrounding schools much more or somewhat more, while 25 percent reported this in Year 1 ($V=.19$).

As earlier noted, in the second year, DYCD began enforcing attendance and enrollment requirements by withholding a percent of funding from programs that did not meet participation targets. Perhaps related to this policy, executive directors' survey responses reflected increased focus on participation tracking. In Year 2, 39 percent of directors reported that their OST-funded programs tracked student program attendance more than their programs funded through other sources, compared to 17 percent who reported this experience in Year 1 ($V=.38$). While the DYCD policy may have contributed to increased participation rates—as reflected by higher enrollment numbers and higher rates of daily attendance—executive directors reported that it was a challenge to meet these standards. Fifty-one percent of executive directors reported that meeting DYCD's enrollment and attendance requirements was a challenge, significantly more than the 40 percent who reported this challenge in Year 1 ($V=.12$). In general, more than half of

executive directors (55 percent) reported that the administrative burden associated with the initiative presented a challenge for their organization.

Not surprisingly, evaluators found notable differences in the capacity of organizations with out-of-school time budgets greater than \$500,000 and organizations with smaller budgets devoted to out-of-school time programming. In particular, compared to organizations with smaller out-of-school time budgets, provider organizations with at least \$500,000 devoted to out-of-school time were more likely to provide their staff with employment benefits, paid professional development, and opportunities for promotion.

However, there was also evidence that the OST initiative is helping to increase the capacity of provider organizations with small OST budgets to offer high-quality programming. Executive directors were asked to compare their organization's DYCD-funded OST programs to other out-of-school time programs sponsored by the organization. Directors of organizations with small OST budgets were more likely to report notable differences between their DYCD-funded programs and their other programs. In particular, organizations with small OST budgets were more likely than providers with large OST budgets to report that their DYCD OST programs complied with city and state child care regulations somewhat more or much more (30 percent, compared to 8 percent; $V = .29$). Organizations with small OST budgets were also more likely to report that their DYCD OST programs adhered somewhat or much more to strict standards about hiring and screening qualified staff (32 percent, compared to 10 percent; $V = .28$).

Meeting the needs of working parents. Parent survey responses indicated that the OST initiative is filling a need for structured after-school opportunities in New York City. Seventy-three percent of parents reported that the OST program was the only structured program their child attends after school.

Overall, parents were satisfied with the quality of the OST program in Year 2. Sixty-one percent of parents rated the program as "excellent" and an additional 20 percent said it was "very good." However, the survey responses also demonstrated that parents felt that there was room for improvement in the quality of OST programming. Overall, slightly less than half (46 percent) of parents strongly agreed that the OST program helped their child academically, and this opinion differed significantly by grade level.

Parents of elementary- and middle-grades OST participants also reported that the availability of the OST program improved their own opportunities. Eighty-four percent of parents reported that they work outside the home, including 64 percent who work 35 hours or more per week. Sixty-five percent of parents strongly agreed that the program hours fit their needs, and more than half strongly agreed that the OST program met their needs by making it easier for them to keep their job, work more hours, or attend school.

Conclusions

In Year 2, OST programs increased both their enrollment and participation rates. Programs scaled up enrollment to serve more than 69,000 youth throughout New York City. Rates of individual youth participation also increased substantially compared to Year 1, indicating that programs were successfully recruiting and retaining participants. In addition, programs reported that they improved the quality and capacity of their program staff by hiring staff members with varied experiences and qualifications and by staff participation in internal and external professional development opportunities. Programs offered both academic and non-academic activities to youth but had to balance competing priorities from schools, which typically sought a focus on academic programming after school. Based on principles established in youth development research, evaluators found a need for more youth opportunities for active, hands-on learning.

In Year 2, the evaluation identified a core set of program quality features that were associated with high levels of program participation and with positive social and academic outcomes. The evaluation will continue to track these features and their associations with participant benefits in future years, in order to understand the settings and conditions that are associated with positive youth outcomes. At this point, the most important such features appear to be the following:

- Youth have opportunities to interact with their peers.
- Youth interact with and develop positive relationships with staff.
- Youth are exposed to new and engaging experiences.
- Youth have the opportunity to participate in both summer and school-year programming.
- Programs offer a variety of both academic enrichment and non-academic activities, including arts, recreation, and civic engagement.
- Programs staffing patterns include younger staff members supported by more experienced staff.
- Program directors and staff participate regularly in professional development.
- Programs communicate with schools regularly about student learning objectives.

- Programs reach out to engage families through a parent liaison and/or special events for parents.

In Year 3, the evaluation will continue to collect data from OST programs to explore the associations among these program-quality features, youth participation patterns, and youth outcomes.

As the programs become increasingly well established in their schools and communities and as they scale up youth enrollment and participation, future evaluation reports will employ multivariate analysis approaches and develop a program quality index that rates programs on a combination of these quality features.

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Overview of the Second-Year Evaluation Report

The New York City Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), with the enthusiastic support of Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, launched the Out-of-School Time Programs for Youth (OST) initiative in September 2005. At the same time, it contracted with Policy Studies Associates (PSA) to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of OST. This report summarizes evaluation findings from the second year of the OST initiative. It addresses the following four research questions, and focuses especially on the extent to which OST programs established features of program quality and scale that are expected to contribute to positive outcomes for the New York City youth:

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?

DYCD designed the OST initiative to deliver high quality OST services under three program options. Option I was designed to fund OST programs for youth in elementary, middle, and high schools in neighborhoods throughout New York City. Program expectations for Option I varied by grade level served, with programs for younger youth expected to provide more programming hours (and hence more comprehensive services) to youth attending programs on a more frequent basis, compared to OST programs serving older youth. 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 youth of any grade level. Option III programs were to be operated in collaboration with the Department of Parks and Recreation and would be offered at Parks sites; these programs would also serve youth of any grade level.

DYCD described its OST vision as follows in its 2005 RFP: "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:

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

Summary of First-Year Evaluation Findings

Recognizing that in Year 1 the initiative was focused on launching a large number of programs throughout New York City, in the first year the evaluation examined the extent to which programs laid the groundwork for successful implementation. The report of findings from the first year (Russell, Reisner, Pearson, Afolabi, Miller & Mielke, 2006) concluded that the DYCD OST initiative succeeded in launching a broad scope of out-of-school time programming opportunities in New York City in its first year of implementation. Working closely with the city’s nonprofit community and the New York City Department of Education (DOE), the initiative served approximately 51,000 youth across the city in Year 1. Programs worked to adopt effective program policies and procedures, hire staff and develop staff capacity, offer a variety of content-based activities, and establish strong partnerships with schools and other community institutions.

Findings from the first-year evaluation report also identified avenues for improving the effectiveness of OST programming. Although programs successfully enrolled students in the first year, they struggled to maintain high participation rates, suggesting a need to establish program policies and create activity offerings that encouraged regular participation. Similarly, while in the first year programs consistently provided safe and structured environments for

participants in the out-of-school hours, a challenge for future years of the initiative was to provide creative content-based learning opportunities that engaged youth. Finally, in Year 1, hiring well-qualified staff members was a challenge for OST programs, pointing to a need to develop more effective practices to recruit staff and to build their skills.

In the second year, the evaluation examined evidence that programs were achieving objectives of both high quality and large scale. Several common features of high-quality programs have emerged from recent research on out-of-school time programming, including the merits of appropriate structures for supervision that foster positive youth-adult relationships, programming with opportunities for youth autonomy and choice, and good relationships among schools, families, and out-of-school time programs (Little, 2007). Evaluators looked for evidence that programs established structures to support high-quality staffing patterns and effective partnerships, delivered rich program content through activities that also fostered positive relationships, successfully engaged students in programming, and developed youth skills in both social and content domains.

Data Collection and Analysis in Year 2

Findings in this report are based on data collected from the following sources during the second year of the OST initiative:

- **DYCD Online.** The evaluation analyzed patterns of enrollment and participation among programs that had entered data into DYCD Online, the agency’s participant tracking system. This source yielded a total of 69,309 OST participants enrolled in 529 programs during the 2006-07 school year, including 57,257 participants in 425 Option I programs, 10,775 participants in 92 Option II programs, and 1,277 participants in 12 Option III programs. DYCD Online data also included 13,160 participants from 176 programs that operated during the summer of 2006.
- **DOE data.** The evaluation received demographic, school enrollment and attendance, and educational performance data for 3,074 of the 3,421 participants with parental research consent who attended one of the evaluation’s 15 in-depth Option I programs during either the first or second year of the initiative. The overall match rate of consented OST participants to DOE student records was 90 percent, varying by program from 70 percent to 99 percent. As expected, the match rate was higher for school-based programs than center-based programs (91 percent, compared to 77 percent).

- **Survey of executive directors of provider organizations.** In spring 2007, evaluators administered an online survey to all executive directors of organizations that received an OST contract. Findings in this report present data from 148 of 191 executive directors (77 percent response rate).
- **Survey of program directors.** In spring 2007, evaluators administered an online survey to directors of all OST programs. Data represent the responses of 470 out of 547 program directors, for a response rate of 86 percent. Surveys were completed by 385 of 432 Option I program directors, 77 of 103 Option II directors, and 8 of 12 Option III directors.
- **Survey of participants.** Paper surveys were administered to OST participants in grades 3-12 who attended 123 randomly selected programs in the evaluation sample from which the evaluation received the appropriate principal and parental consents to participate in the evaluation. Survey data presented in this report are based on data from 4,499 participant surveys from 101 programs from which any surveys were received (82 percent program response rate), including 2,638 surveys from 48 elementary-grades programs, 1,426 surveys from 24 middle-grades programs, and 1,238 surveys from 29 high school programs.²
- **Survey of program staff.** Paper surveys were administered to staff members in the 15 randomly selected in-depth study programs in spring 2007. Staff survey data in this report represent findings from 191 staff members in the 13 responding programs, representing an overall response rate of 80 percent of surveyed staff.
- **Survey of parents.** Paper surveys were administered to parents of OST participants in the 15 Option I in-depth study programs in spring 2007. Parent-survey data in this report represent the responses of a total of 500 parents in 12 elementary- and middle-grades programs. Based on the total number of enrolled participants in these programs, this represents an approximate response rate of 43 percent across the 12 programs. No surveys were received from parents of high school participants.
- **Site visit interview and observation data.** Evaluators conducted two-day site visits to each of the 15 Option I in-depth study

² A program response rate is reported here rather than a participant response rate. The evaluation did not have exact information on the number of consented participants in grades 3-12 in sampled programs at the time of survey administration. A very rough estimate of the participant response rate is around 60 to 65 percent.

programs in spring 2007. 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.

Analysis Approach

The core of this report is based on analyses of OST programs funded under Option I, the initiative's largest service option. Unless otherwise noted, analyses of programming in Option II and III programs are presented in an appendix at the end of this report. This organization was selected to highlight findings regarding the largest sector within the OST program and to simplify the presentation of findings. All findings presented in the report are statistically significant at the $p < 0.05$ level. In addition, for each comparative or associative measure reported, the evaluation computed an effect size to measure the magnitude or strength of the finding.

The statistical tests and measures of effect size used in analysis varied based on the properties of the data analyzed. For analyses of continuous variables, the evaluation generally selected an independent samples t-test and computed a Cohen's d measure of effect. For categorical data, the evaluation conducted chi-square analyses and reported either a Cramer's V effect (for nominal data) or a gamma (γ) statistic (for ordinal data). Analyses of association between continuous variables typically relied on a Pearson's correlation (r). For analyses of participant survey scales and observational data, data typically were not normally distributed. In those cases, the evaluation employed nonparametric tests, including the Mann-Whitney U test as an alternative to the independent samples t-test, a Kruskal-Wallis test as an alternative to the ANOVA, and a Spearman correlation as the nonparametric alternative to the Pearson's correlation. The effect sizes for the Mann-Whitney U test and the Kruskal-Wallis test are both reported as r ; for the Spearman correlation, r_s serves as the effect size measure.

Conventions for educational research suggest that effect size values between 0.10 and 0.20 indicate a "small but meaningful" association, between 0.21 and 0.50 an "important" association, and 0.51 or higher an "impressive" association (Cohen, 1988; Lipsey, 1990). This report focuses on findings with an effect size of at least 0.10; comparisons or associations below this threshold were considered too weak to warrant reporting. In general, however, while the associations discussed in this report describe notable relationships between program structures and youth outcomes, they should not in any instance be interpreted as implying causation.

Report Organization

This report begins by describing implementation of the OST initiative in Year 2, focusing especially on features that reveal changes in program quality compared to Year 1. This discussion of implementation addresses the scope of the OST initiative and evidence of structural and institutional features and process and content features that may contribute to high-quality programming and positive youth outcomes. The report then discusses evidence of emerging youth outcomes as measured by engagement in the program and measures of social and academic development, looking for associations between features of program implementation and positive youth outcomes. Finally, the report describes early evidence of the ways in which the OST initiative is influencing the system of youth services in New York City, in particular the extent to which it contributes to the capacity of provider organizations and meets the needs of the city's families.

Scope and Extent of OST Programming in Year 2

Data from DYCD Online, the initiative's program participation and enrollment tracking database, indicate that OST programs successfully scaled-up program services in the second year of the initiative to serve more youth throughout New York City.

As in Year 1, DYCD funded OST programs under three service options: Option I programs served youth in elementary, middle, and high schools in each of the DOE's former 10 administrative regions. Option II was designed to support OST programs that used private match funds to subsidize at least 30 percent of their OST budgets. Option III programs were operated in collaboration with the Department of Parks and Recreation at Parks sites. The following analyses present enrollment figures for the three OST service options. Analyses of program implementation, quality, and student outcomes in the remainder of the report focus on Option I programs; Appendix A at the end of this report summarizes program implementation in Option II and III programs.

Extent of Services

During the 2006-07 school year, a total of 536 OST programs offered services throughout New York City and reached more than 69,000 participants, compared to an estimated 51,000 participants served in the 2005-06 school year.³ This increase in the reach of services reflected a considerable additional

³ In Year 1, the OST evaluation reported that 528 programs served about 51,000 youth. However, in the first year of implementation, some programs struggled to access and enter data in the online data system, which may have lowered the reported enrollment counts. Problems with data entry were resolved in Year 2, but by any measure substantially more youth were served in Year 2 of the initiative.

investment in OST programming throughout the city: DYCD awarded more than \$66 million to these programs, a substantial increase over the \$44 million awarded in Year 1. The median second year award was \$100,000, compared to \$73,000 in the first year, and grant awards ranged from \$3,100 to \$514,000.

DYCD Online enrollment and participation data were available for 529 of these programs, including 425 Option I programs serving more than 57,000 youth (83 percent of all OST participants), 92 Option II programs serving over 10,000 youth (16 percent of all OST participants), and 12 Option III programs serving approximately 1,200 youth (2 percent of all OST participants). (Percents do not add to 100 due to rounding.) Approximately two-thirds of these youth were enrolled in school-based OST programs, and the remaining third in center-based programs. As shown in Exhibit 1, these programs served youth located throughout New York City and of all ages. In addition, nearly 300 programs in zip codes identified as in high need of services for youth served more than 40,000 participants.

Exhibit 1
Number of OST Programs and Participants, by Option

Program Characteristics	Option I		Option II		Option III		All Programs	
	Programs (n=425)	Participants (n=57,257)	Programs (n=92)	Participants (n=10,775)	Programs (n=12)	Participants (n=1,277)	Programs (n=529)	Participants (n=69,309)
Borough								
Brooklyn	155	18,669 (33)	20	2,629 (24)	4	366 (29)	179	21,664 (31)
Bronx	90	14,114 (25)	22	2,134 (20)	2	136 (11)	114	16,384 (24)
Manhattan	75	9,465 (17)	31	3,465 (32)	4	247 (19)	110	13,177 (19)
Queens	86	12,187 (21)	16	2,449 (23)	1	163 (13)	103	14,799 (21)
Staten Island	19	2,822 (5)	3	98 (1)	1	365 (29)	23	3,285 (5)
Program Location								
School	277	43,115 (75)	27	3,275 (30)	N/A	N/A	304	46,390 (67)
Center	148	14,142 (25)	65	7,500 (70)	12	1,277 (100)	225	22,919 (33)
School Level								
Elementary	180	26,803 (47)	25	3,247 (30)	1	365 (29)	206	30,415 (44)
Middle	123	17,357 (30)	12	1,220 (11)	2	117 (9)	137	18,694 (27)
High	122	13,097 (23)	36	3,276 (30)	1	25 (2)	159	16,398 (24)
Multiple	N/A	N/A	19	3,032 (28)	8	770 (60)	27	3,802 (5)
Target Zip Codes	246	34,827 (61)	43	4,410 (41)	9	1,043 (82)	298	40,280 (58)

Figures in parenthesis indicate the percent of participants with each characteristic within each category. Percents do not necessarily add to 100 due to rounding.

Demographic and Educational Characteristics of Participants

The demographic characteristics of OST participants in the second year of the initiative were similar to those of Year 1 students, indicating that programs continued to reach out to a broad range of youth in need of services, even as they rapidly scaled up the scope of their programming. As shown in Exhibit 2, across options OST programs served approximately equal numbers of boys and girls, the majority of whom were African-American or Hispanic/Latino. Overall, nearly half of enrolled OST participants were in grades K-5, as shown in Exhibit 3. In Option I programs, about a third of students were in grades 6-8 and the remainder in grades 9-12; this pattern was reversed in Option II and III programs, which served somewhat more high school-aged youth. As in Year 1, center-based programs were more likely to enroll older participants: 46 percent of participants in center-based programs were in grades 9-12, compared to 15 percent of participants in school-based programs.

Exhibit 2
Demographic Characteristics of Participants, by Option (in percents)

Total Number of Enrolled Participants	Option I	Option II	Option III	All Programs
	<i>n=57,257</i>	<i>n=10,775</i>	<i>n=1,277</i>	<i>n=69,309</i>
Grade Span	<i>n=55,702</i>	<i>n=9,114</i>	<i>n=971</i>	<i>n=65,787</i>
K-5	47	45	45	46
6-8	31	17	24	29
9-12	23	38	31	25
Gender	<i>n=57,256</i>	<i>n=10,775</i>	<i>n=1,277</i>	<i>n=69,308</i>
Male	49	49	63	49
Female	51	51	37	51
Race/ethnicity	<i>n=57,254</i>	<i>n=10,775</i>	<i>n=1,277</i>	<i>n=69,306</i>
American Indian	1	0	0	1
Asian	9	8	4	9
African American	39	31	27	37
Hispanic/Latino	37	37	35	37
Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0
White (non-Hispanic)	7	12	15	8
Other	7	12	19	8

Exhibit 3
Grade Distribution of Participants, by Location (in percents)

Grade Span	Center-based	School-based	All Programs
	<i>n=20,612</i>	<i>n=45,175</i>	<i>n=65,787</i>
K-5	37	51	46
6-8	18	34	29
9-12	46	15	25

In the second year of the initiative, the evaluation obtained data on the educational characteristics of participants in the 15 in-depth OST programs in the evaluation sample. In general, these data confirmed that the OST initiative reached New York City students who could benefit from the support of high-quality programs. Across the 15 programs, 85 percent of youth were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (compared to approximately 82 percent citywide), 21 percent were classified as eligible for English Language Learner (ELL) services (compared to 13 percent citywide), and 14 percent received special education or related services (equivalent to the 14 percent rate citywide).

In addition, according to information in the 2006 student database on youth in the in-depth sample, OST participants' performance prior to the start of the OST initiative on the English Language Arts (ELA) and math tests (administered to all New York City students in grades 3-8) indicated that participants were at risk academically compared to students citywide. Forty-nine percent of OST participants were in performance levels 3 or 4 on the ELA test, indicating that they were performing at or above grade level, compared to approximately 57 percent citywide. Fifty-four percent performed at this level in math, compared to 57 percent citywide. Despite this overall lower achievement, the data also suggested that on average OST participants attended school as much or more than students citywide, especially for older youth. The average school attendance rate for elementary-grades participants in their year prior to OST participation was 92 percent, equivalent to the citywide rate. Middle-grades participants, however, had a higher school attendance rate than their citywide counterparts (95 percent, compared to 90 percent), as did high school participants (90 percent, compared to 81 percent). Future years of the evaluation will examine whether OST participation is associated with improved achievement or school attendance.

Structural and Institutional Program Features

In the second year of the OST initiative, programs continued to develop program policies, strengthen partnerships with schools and families, and build on their efforts in the first year of the initiative to establish a strong foundation for

high-quality programming. In particular, OST programs and DYCD worked to improve their approach to staff recruitment and training, addressing one of the primary challenges reported in Year 1.

Program Policies and Objectives

Program objectives. In the second year of the OST initiative, Option I program directors reported a broad spectrum of objectives that generally reflected those reported in the first year. As in Year 1, program directors almost unanimously reported that providing a safe environment for youth was a major objective of their OST program (97 percent). In addition, more than three-quarters of Option I program directors continued to identify the following as major objectives of their programs:

- Help youth develop socially (93 percent)
- Provide youth with positive adult guidance and/or mentors (90 percent)
- Promote respect for diversity among youth (90 percent)
- Provide recreational activities (84 percent)
- Provide health/well-being/life skills development (82 percent)
- Help youth improve their academic performance (80 percent)
- Provide hands-on academic enrichment activities (80 percent)
- Provide opportunities for cultural enrichment (78 percent)
- Provide leadership opportunities for youth (78 percent)

Compared to the first year of programming, there was a small but notable decline in the percent of program directors who identified academic improvement as a major objective of their program. In the second year, 80 percent of program directors reported that one of their major objectives was to help youth improve their academic performance, compared to 88 percent in the first year ($V=.11$). In interviews, program directors described their struggles to balance academic development and social development:

My main goal is to provide a safe and healthy environment for these children and to provide them with homework assistance. That goal is to reinforce what the school is doing during the school day because of the need in the community with low reading levels.

Our school is a high-performing school, and it's important to the principal and the teachers and the parents to be on track. It's also important to us to expose the kids to something they might not be exposed to. This is supposed to be "out of school" time, not in school again.

My boss is pushing me to drill and to test so we prove to the principals why we're here and how we're here to assist them. When you see the test

scores and GPAs, you can't help but say the same thing. The kids need the assistance.

Program partnerships with schools. Reflecting this uncertainty over the extent to which programming should focus on academics, program directors reported less communication with school-day principals, teachers, and other key staff during the second year of the initiative. In Year 2, program directors most frequently communicated with schools about the needs and progress of individual students: over half of directors (57 percent) reported that they did so at least once a month. Consistent with directors' reports of a lesser focus on academics in the second year of programming, there were small but notable decreases in the percentage of program directors who reported communicating with schools at least once a month on the following topics:

- Planning OST program content with schools (37 percent in Year 2, compared to 53 percent in Year 1; $V=.16$).
- Homework assignments (45 percent, compared to 56 percent; $V=.11$).
- Curriculum concepts currently being taught in school (35 percent, compared to 45 percent; $V=.10$).

Program staff members also reported infrequent communication with school-day staff. Program staff most frequently interacted with school staff by talking about the needs or progress of individual students (36 percent) or homework assignments (36 percent). Program staff also interacted with the school by attending a school event (35 percent). A quarter of staff reported discussing issues related to classroom space with school staff (26 percent).

Compared to the first year, more program directors reported that a challenge to providing high-quality programming was that the schools their participants attend would like the program to be more academically focused (47 percent, compared to 39 percent, $V=.10$). Despite this challenge, more than half of Year 2 program directors (59 percent) believed the quality of their relationships with schools had improved in the second year. Forty-eight percent of program directors either agreed or strongly agreed that the principal at the feeder or host school provided more support to the program, and even more (53 percent) believed the teachers at the feeder or host school were more supportive of the OST program.

Program partnerships with other organizations. Almost half of program directors (48 percent) either agreed or strongly agreed that there were stronger links between the surrounding community and the program during the second year of the initiative, and 43 percent reported that their level of partnership with the community was about the same as in the first year. In addition, 42 percent of

directors reported that their program partnered with more organizations in the community in the second year; 45 percent partnered with about the same number of organizations.

Nearly three-quarters of program directors (71 percent) reported that outside organizations, in addition to the provider, offered special programs, activities, or services for youth at their program in the second year of the initiative. Additionally, more than half of program directors reported that outside organizations donated materials or supplies (57 percent), provided funding through grants or contracts (56 percent), referred students to the OST program (56 percent), or provided special programs, activities, or services for parents or families (54 percent). There were no notable differences in the level of support received from outside organizations compared to Year 1.

Strategies for participant recruitment. Overall, strategies for participant recruitment remained much the same from Year 1 to Year 2. As in their first year of operation, an overwhelming majority of Option I program directors (90 percent) reported that they offered open enrollment to all youth who were interested in attending the program. In addition, at least half of program directors reported that they targeted youth who were recommended by school-day teachers or counselors (55 percent) and youth with siblings already attending the program (50 percent).

Effectively retaining students continued to pose a challenge to program directors. Forty-five percent reported youth dropping out because they lost interest as a challenge, and 43 percent identified some youth not attending the OST program regularly enough to have enriching experiences as a challenge.

Program director survey responses indicated that school-based programs were more likely to specifically recruit low-income youth than were center-based programs (41 percent, compared to 27 percent; $V=.14$). In contrast, center-based programs were more likely to recruit youth who participated in other programs sponsored by the provider organization (44 percent, compared to 31 percent; $V=.12$). Programs serving younger students were most likely to recruit youth with siblings already attending the program (57 percent of elementary-grades programs and 54 percent of middle-grades programs, compared to 35 percent of high school programs; $V=.19$).

There were also significant differences in the extent to which programs recruited participants for academic reasons. Directors of elementary- and middle-grade programs were more likely than directors of high school programs to report recruiting youth in need of academic assistance. Specifically, directors of elementary- and middle-grades programs were more likely to report recruiting:

- Youth who need special assistance in reading and/or math (40 percent of elementary- and 43 percent of middle-grades programs, compared to 22 percent of high school programs; $V = .18$)
- English-language learners (39 percent of elementary- and middle-grades programs, compared to 22 percent of high school programs; $V = .17$)
- Youth who scored “below proficient” on city and state assessments (33 percent of elementary-grades and 36 percent of middle-grades programs, compared to 20 percent for high school programs; $V = .14$)

Middle-grades programs were also most likely to recruit youth who were recommended by school-day teachers or counselors. Sixty-four percent of middle-grades programs targeted these youth, compared to 55 percent of elementary-grades programs and 47 percent of high school programs ($V = .13$).

As in the first year of the initiative, school-based programs were more likely to recruit youth in need of academic assistance than were center-based programs. Forty percent of school-based programs recruited youth identified by their school as needing special assistance in reading and/or math, compared to 27 percent of center-based programs ($V = .12$). School-based programs were also more likely to target youth who scored “below proficient” on city and state assessments (34 percent, compared to 22 percent of center-based programs; $V = .12$).

Program directors of high school programs relied primarily on open enrollment (94 percent) and word of mouth efforts to recruit participants: 47 percent asked school-day teachers to recommend youth and 37 percent recruited students who already participated in other programs sponsored by the provider organization. In site visits, directors of high school programs reported being challenged to develop creative and personal recruitment methods:

I would try to set up a presentation, but that didn't work. Then [we met up with youth in] the lunch rooms, [...] and we got most of our kids through that one-on-one recruitment.

The teen parties have been a great way of recruiting teenagers. Also, we have more of a website presence. More people are emailing us, and we try to do more high school visits. And we tried to spread out our recruitment and flyers and notices.

While recruitment strategies remained largely the same from the first year to the second year of the OST initiative, program directors reported overall that in Year 2 their efforts at recruitment reached a wider and more receptive audience. Seventy-four percent of program directors either agreed or strongly agreed that

their program served more youth during the second year of the OST initiative, and 71 percent believed there was a greater interest in and demand for the out-of-school time programming they offered.

Establishing effective program policies. Program directors' assessment of their program policies were tempered during the second year of the initiative—perhaps because program directors became more self-critical and self-reflective as they gained experience, or because they became aware if some policies they created were not effective in practice. In the second year of the initiative, fewer program directors strongly agreed that:

- They had policies in place for reporting suspicions of child abuse and neglect (69 percent in the second year, compared to 89 percent in the first year, $V = .30$). Seventy-four percent of elementary-grades program directors strongly agreed with this statement in the second year; the remaining directors “agreed.”
- They had effective policies in place for dealing with participant behavior (51 percent, compared to 78 percent, $V = .30$).
- They had policies in place for making sure that the time allowed for activities was generally appropriate (53 percent, compared to 78 percent, $V = .27$).
- Participants made adequate progress with homework in the time provided (32 percent, compared to 53 percent, $V = .27$).
- Participants with special needs were successfully integrated, as defined by the program director (27 percent, compared to 48 percent, $V = .26$).
- Their program had links to other organizations where they could refer participants in need of additional services (50 percent, compared to 64 percent, $V = .23$).
- Staff provided homework help to bilingual participants in their native language (27 percent, compared to 31 percent, $V = .23$).
- Groups were small enough to meet participants' needs (52 percent, compared to 64 percent, $V = .18$).
- They had a process in place for obtaining participant input and suggestions (38 percent, compared to 45 percent, $V = .18$).
- Participants had regular opportunities to lead activities (20 percent, compared to 25 percent, $V = .18$).

However, directors also noted improvements in specific areas during the second year of the initiative. Even as directors evaluated their programs' policies more critically, summary observations of program implementation revealed a positive view of the second year. Seventy-five percent of program directors either agreed or strongly agreed that their program offered activities that were more appropriate and attractive to the youth served in Year 2. Additionally, 80 percent of program directors reported that their program did a better job of fostering positive relationships between youth and staff.

In the second year, the two challenges program directors most commonly cited remained the same as in Year 1. Sixty-seven percent of program directors reported that families were not sufficiently involved in their child or children's participation in the program, and 53 percent reported that they did not have sufficient funds to provide high-quality programming.

Program Staffing Practices

Program director qualifications. Survey data from the first year of the initiative indicated that OST programs hired a cadre of diverse and qualified program directors to launch OST programming, and these qualities remained constant in the second year. Sixty-five percent of Year 2 program directors also directed their program in Year 1. In addition, more than half of OST Option I program directors reported that they had experience as a director of an out-of-school time program before they started their current position (59 percent). Besides previous experience as a program director, more than half reported experience as an education or youth-service professional such as a camp counselor or leader (59 percent), as a recreation, youth, or child care worker (59 percent), or as a staff member in an OST program (55 percent).

Year 2 program directors had high levels of education. Eighty-six percent of program directors had completed a four-year college degree or higher, and 37 percent had a master's degree or higher. Seventeen percent of program directors reported that they were certified to teach.

Program directors were predominantly female (65 percent) and racially diverse. Forty-two percent described themselves as African-American, 25 percent as white, and 21 percent as Hispanic/Latino. One program director described how her background enabled her to identify with participants and guide them through the challenges they are facing:

I'm from the same neighborhood and I understand what [families and kids] are going through. I dropped out of school at eleventh grade, but now I hold a college degree. I know the struggle I went through to do that, and I can tell them, you have to go back to school. It's a strength you

gain. You are coming from the bottom. [...] That's what pushed me to go back to school.

Supports for program directors. In Year 2, DYCD required any elementary- or middle-grades OST program that served at least 100 youth to hire a full-time program director, reflecting the need for one person, working full-time, to coordinate the multi-faceted components of the OST program in each site. Survey findings confirm that OST programs generally complied with this expectation. Two-thirds (67 percent) of all program directors reported working at least 35 hours per week, and an additional 13 percent worked between 20 and 34 hours per week. As expected, program directors were more likely to be in that role full-time in programs serving younger students, and in programs with larger enrollments: among elementary- and middle-grades programs, 82 percent of directors with at least 100 participants were full-time, compared to 56 percent of directors of smaller programs.

There were no significant changes in the range of program director salaries in the second year of the initiative. As in the initiative's first year, salaries of Option I program directors varied widely, ranging from below \$30,000 to \$50,000 and above per year. Twenty percent of program directors reported making less than \$35,000 per year, and 23 percent made more than \$50,000 per year. Eight percent of program directors reported that they earned an hourly wage; these wages ranged from a low of \$10 per hour to a high of \$40 per hour, with an average hourly wage of \$22.33 per hour paid to those directors whose pay was computed on an hourly basis.

**Promising Practice:
Hiring Qualified Staff**

A provider organization that experienced a considerable amount of staff turnover from Year 1 to Year 2 instituted a new provider-wide hiring process. The organization centrally advertised for all open staff positions, checked all references before candidates came for interviews, and assigned candidates to program sites near their home or school. Candidates were interviewed by the main agency office before they interviewed at the programs. The human resources department screened to verify candidates' prior experience working with youth and sensitivity to community traditions. They looked for evidence that candidates were willing to learn from and develop skills in implementing the provider organization's OST model. This systematic screening has increased the probability that staff remain working in the program, according to the program director.

Executive directors did not report any changes in the benefits offered to program directors between the first and second years of the OST initiative. In the second year of the initiative, more than three-quarters of providers offered their program directors paid time off for vacation and sick leave (86 percent), paid attendance at staff meetings and conferences (85 percent), paid training or professional development (84 percent), and health insurance (80 percent).

Program director job satisfaction. In Year 2, program directors continued to report overall high levels of satisfaction with their position in the OST program, although they were slightly less likely to "agree a lot" (instead simply "agreeing") with certain statements of satisfaction. In

particular, 82 percent of Year 2 directors “agreed a lot” that they enjoy working in their OST program, compared to 88 percent in Year 1 ($V=.13$), 84 percent found the work rewarding (compared to 91 percent; $V=.13$), and 68 percent agreed a lot that they got the feedback and support they needed from their supervisor (compared to 77 percent; $V=.14$).

Given the overwhelming level of satisfaction program directors expressed during the first year, it is perhaps not surprising that they tempered their responses over time. However, there were no significant differences between the levels of satisfaction of program directors who were new in Year 2 and program directors who worked in both years of the OST initiative.

Staffing challenges. Program directors reported that finding qualified staff was much less of a challenge in the second year of the OST initiative than in the first: in Year 2, only 16 percent of program directors reported that finding qualified staff to hire was a major challenge, compared to 48 percent in the first year of the initiative. In fact, 42 percent of program directors reported that finding qualified staff to hire was not a challenge at all, while in the first year all program directors reported that this was at least a minor challenge ($V=.54$).

One reason for programs’ improved capacity for staffing may be that most programs were able to retain at least half of their staff from the first year of the initiative (68 percent of directors reported that at least half of their staff worked in the program in the previous year). Only 7 percent of programs had no returning staff for the second year of the initiative. One program director described reducing staff turnover by: “giving [the staff] a sense of buy-in. [...] We have meetings where staff [are] given an opportunity to talk about challenges and what’s working.” In comparison to Year 1, staff survey responses in the second year indicate that a similar percent plan to return to their job in the third year (65 percent). The most common reason listed by staff for not returning was graduation from high school or college (47 percent). Other common reasons cited were needing more hours or a full-time job (33 percent) and low pay (30 percent).

Nonetheless, directors continued to report some challenges in staffing related to wages and hours. Thirty-three percent reported that offering competitive salaries was a major challenge in Year 2, 26 percent reported that they could not offer staff members enough hours of work, and 26 percent faced a major challenge recruiting volunteers for the program.

*Program staffing patterns.*⁴ In Year 2, the majority of OST program staff members (not including program directors) were female (71 percent) and either black (38 percent) or Hispanic (36 percent), generally reflecting the ethnic backgrounds of participants.

OST programs employed staff members with varied qualifications and backgrounds to fulfill roles in implementing program content and supervision. By hiring staff with a mix of experience levels, programs worked within their budgetary constraints. Although a large proportion of programs did employ certified teachers and activity specialists to provide targeted programming on a more limited basis, in general, programs relied most heavily on non-certified and non-specialist staff.

College students and non-certified, non-specialist adults constituted the bulk of staff members reported by program directors. In particular, 50 percent of programs employed college students for more than 15 hours per week, and 43 percent of programs employed non-certified and non-specialist adults for more than 15 hours per week.

In addition, just over half of OST programs (51 percent) had high school students on staff, and 26 percent employed high school staff for more than 15 hours per week. Twenty-four percent of programs were staffed solely by college and high school students. Program directors reported recruiting high school and college students who themselves performed well in school to serve as program assistants and tutors:

Tutors help with homework. They have to have an average of at least 80, and there are some college students who are also tutors. If you are a strong mathematician, then you will [teach] math.

Less-experienced staff members were typically supported by other staff members with more education or content-based expertise. Sixty-seven percent of programs employed specialists such as professional artists, coaches, or dancers. However, their roles were limited: only 14 percent of programs employed specialists for more than 15 hours per week. The same was true for certified teachers. While 59 percent of programs had certified teachers on staff, in only 13 percent of programs did these teachers work more than 15 hours per week. Thirteen percent of programs did not employ certified teachers or specialists. Instead, program directors reported relying on certified teachers or content experts in an advisory and training capacity. One program director said of the academic

⁴ The discussion of program staffing patterns relies on data collected through the program director survey and program staff survey. Although the DYCD Online information system permits programs to enter staff names, which can generate a count of staff members, these data were not consistently entered by programs in Year 2. In addition, DYCD Online does not currently collect information about each staff member's educational qualifications or role in the program.

specialist in the program, who helped design the curriculum and supported activity leaders as they worked with students:

If I find myself at a dead end, I ask [the academic specialist], “How can I teach them this?” She was a teacher and tutor in the beginning of the year, and now she is helping the staff.

School-based programs employed higher percentages of certified teachers and school-day paraprofessionals or aides than did center-based programs. Sixty-nine percent of school-based programs employed certified teachers, compared to 41 percent of center-based programs. Fifty-one percent of school-based programs employed school-day paraprofessionals, compared to 25 percent of center-based programs.

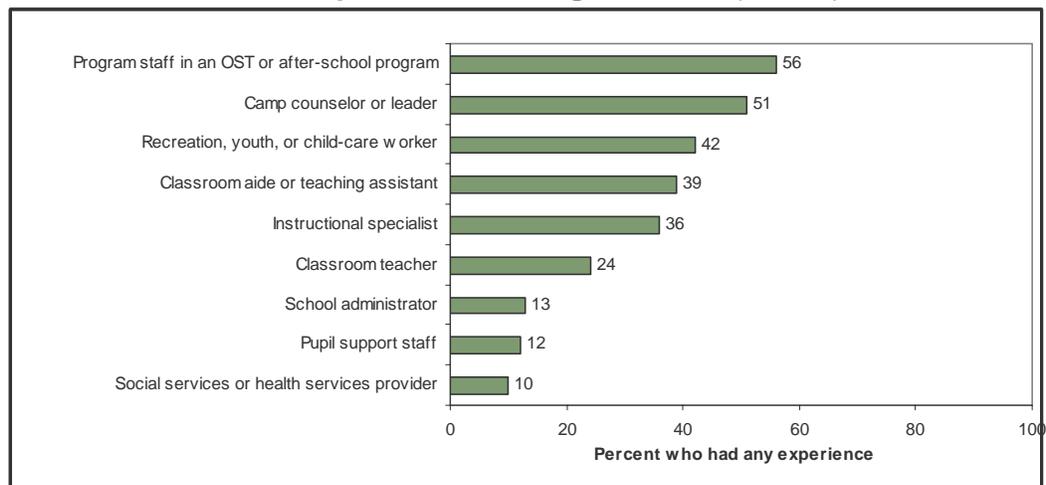
Analyses also found some differences in staffing according to the grade levels served in the program. While an overwhelming majority of elementary- and middle-grades programs employed college students (93 and 84 percent, respectively), only about half of high school programs did so (51 percent). In addition, middle-grades programs were most likely to employ specialist staff (80 percent), followed by elementary-grade programs (64 percent) and high school programs (56 percent).

Reflecting these staffing patterns, most program staff members were young, with little formal education. More than half of the staff members in Year 2 were 21 years old or younger (18 percent were under 18, and 35 percent were between 18 and 21). Twenty-two percent of staff were ages 22 to 30, and 25 percent were over 30. More than half of staff were current students, with 28 percent in high school and 28 percent in college. Reflecting these patterns, only 18 percent of program staff reported having completed a four-year college degree.

As illustrated in Exhibit 4, the majority of staff had at least some prior experience working in an OST program (56 percent). Staff commonly had prior experience with youth in roles such as camp counselor or child-care worker. Prior experience as instructional specialists, classroom teachers, or school administrators was less common, possibly because many staff were young and were currently students themselves.

Supports for program staff. As in the first year of the OST initiative, most staff received hourly wages commensurate to their level of expertise and experience. Eighty-three percent of certified teachers who responded to the staff survey earned at least \$21 per hour. Almost all school-day paraprofessionals (91 percent) or aides earned less than \$21 per hour. Eighty-five percent of college students earned \$15.99 per hour or less, and 84 percent of high school staff earned \$6 to 10.99 per hour.

Exhibit 4
Work Experience of Program Staff (n=191)



As in the first year of the initiative, executive directors reported that program staff received few benefits aside from training. More than half of provider organizations offered program staff paid training or professional development (66 percent) as well as paid attendance at staff meetings and conferences (62 percent). About a third of providers offered staff paid vacation or health insurance (38 percent and 32 percent, respectively). Twenty-five percent offered a retirement savings plan, and 12 percent offered tuition reimbursement.

Professional Development in OST Programs

Technical assistance through OST. According to DYCD staff, in the second year of the OST initiative, DYCD made efforts to more closely align the focus of technical assistance workshops to program needs. In addition, DYCD improved its methods of tracking program referrals to the technical assistance services provided by the Partnership for After-School Education (PASE) to ensure that programs received relevant assistance.

Perhaps reflecting these improvements in communications and targeting of technical assistance, during the second year program directors reported higher levels of satisfaction with the technical assistance DYCD provided than they did in Year 1. Program directors were more likely to report that the training or professional development programs in which they or their staff had participated served their purposes completely (30 percent, compared to 26 percent during the first year) or were a good start (68 percent, compared to 64 percent in the first year) ($V = .13$).

In addition, program directors also reported somewhat fewer obstacles to implementing the ideas and strategies presented in training. In particular,

program directors were less likely to report that the need for further training was an obstacle to implementation (40 percent in Year 2, compared to 50 percent in Year 1; $V=.10$). Because program directors perceived fewer obstacles to implementation, it is not surprising that more program directors in the second year than in the first year reported that they had implemented ideas and strategies from training (46 percent, compared to 39 percent; $V=.15$).

Program directors also found the training and professional development that DYCD offered to be more applicable to their programs during the second year. In the second year, only 15 percent of program directors reported that an obstacle to implementation was that the topics and strategies addressed did not seem likely to be useful in their particular site, compared to 27 percent in the first year ($V=.14$).

Program staff members other than the director also took advantage of technical assistance opportunities offered in Year 2. Eighty percent of staff members surveyed reported attending a workshop, 56 percent participated in an on-site consultation, and 42 percent attended an institute or conference. Only 9 percent of staff members reported that they did not participate in any technical assistance in Year 2. Program staff members were also generally satisfied with the technical assistance they received through DYCD. Forty-four percent felt the training served their purposes completely, while 46 percent felt it was a good start. Only 10 percent of staff felt that the training and technical assistance was insufficient or unsuited to their needs.

Program directors offered varied perspectives on staff training opportunities. One program director required staff to participate in staff development during their first six months on the job:

Most of the staff have already completed 30 hours of training. I didn't hesitate about requiring that, and I disciplined staff who didn't get it. I terminated maybe two people because they didn't have the training. I think that helped [emphasize the importance of training] a great deal.

However, another program director described difficulty in scheduling trainings for her staff: “with the college students it's tricky because they go to school during the day. I try to schedule [trainings] during spring break. It's hard.”

Overall, when asked to compare the technical assistance they received during the first and second years of the initiative, 62 percent of program directors either agreed or strongly agreed that the professional development they received through the OST initiative was more useful the second year. Fifty-five percent reported that the professional development their staff received was more useful. Program directors were also more satisfied with DYCD's approach to program monitoring in the second year: 64 percent either agreed or strongly agreed that

DYCD's monitoring approach was more effective in the second year. (Evaluators did not have independent information on changes in DYCD monitoring in Year 2.)

Internal professional development. Program directors reported increases in the frequency of staff meetings during the second year of the OST initiative. The proportion of directors who reported holding staff meetings at least once a week remained steady at 38 percent, but the number of directors who reported holding staff meetings two or three times a month increased substantially, from 6 percent to 33 percent ($V=.44$).

One program director made staff development her goal in Year 2, reporting that "I'm trying to keep their vitality throughout the whole year." She embedded one-hour weekly staff meetings in program hours, and developed trainings to teach staff about involving new students, constructing learning games, and managing groups constructively. In addition:

We [...] purchased the TASC professional development package which includes being able to go to all peer conferences and access training for all staff. And, finally, the site coordinators are all involved with experienced coaches.

Program directors frequently noted that staff members learned from one another during staff meetings, sharing ideas learned during formal training opportunities or on-the-job experiences:

We ask people who go to the weekend workshops to prepare briefings to share with the other staff what they talked about and learned. We raise all kinds of issues that concern the staff, like internal communication, parental issues, student issues, scheduling, and information about upcoming programs and events.

When we talk at our meetings, the staff learn from one another what the possibilities are for [relating effectively with] kids. For the most part, the discipline spills over from one staff member to another. As a staff member, you don't want to be the one that no kids like ... they motivate each other.

Program directors also continue to improve staff skills by implementing published curricula and requiring lesson plans. Sixty-nine percent of program directors reported that they required at least some staff to submit lesson plans on a regular basis. Over half of OST program directors (58 percent) reported that they used a published or externally developed curriculum to guide their activities.

Process and Content Features of OST Programs

Implementing activities in which participants can experience diverse program offerings that promote personal development is essential to achieving positive outcomes among participants. A recent report on program quality in Beacons centers in Philadelphia confirmed that high-quality program environments provide engaging activities that provide unique and interesting opportunities for youth while fostering positive relationships among youth and between youth and adults (Grossman, Campbell, & Raley, 2007). In the second year, DYCD's OST initiative worked to expand and improve after-school opportunities and the evaluation assessed the quality of these opportunities through both survey and observation data.

The descriptions of activity offerings and intensities presented here rely on data collected from the program director survey in Year 2. Although DYCD Online also captures information about program activities, definitions of the activity categories in DYCD Online were not provided to programs. As a result, survey data are believed to be more reliable for consistently describing activity implementation across all OST programs. Technical details about the survey scales and observation scales presented in this section of the report are included Appendix B and Appendix C, respectively. In addition, an analysis of the alignment between activity content as reported on program director surveys and through DYCD Online is presented in Appendix D.

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 the following analyses of Year 2 program implementation, evaluators focused on the specific 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.⁵ In general, the percent of program directors who reported that they regularly offered any given activity was somewhat lower in Year 2 compared to Year 1, perhaps reflecting more focused and accurate survey responses in the second year. However, the order of the most common activities remained largely the same in both years.

Reflecting the different objectives of programs, the activities offered most commonly tended to vary somewhat by grade level. In Year 2, elementary-grades programs most often offered homework help, visual arts and crafts, group

⁵ Analyses of associations between areas of program focus and youth outcomes, presented later in this report, combined these specific activities into six content-area activity indices: academic, arts, physical, career development, civic, and youth development.

academic instruction, organized reading activities, and learning games, as shown in Exhibit 5.

Exhibit 5
Most Common Elementary-Grades Program Activities,
as Reported by Program Directors (n=164)

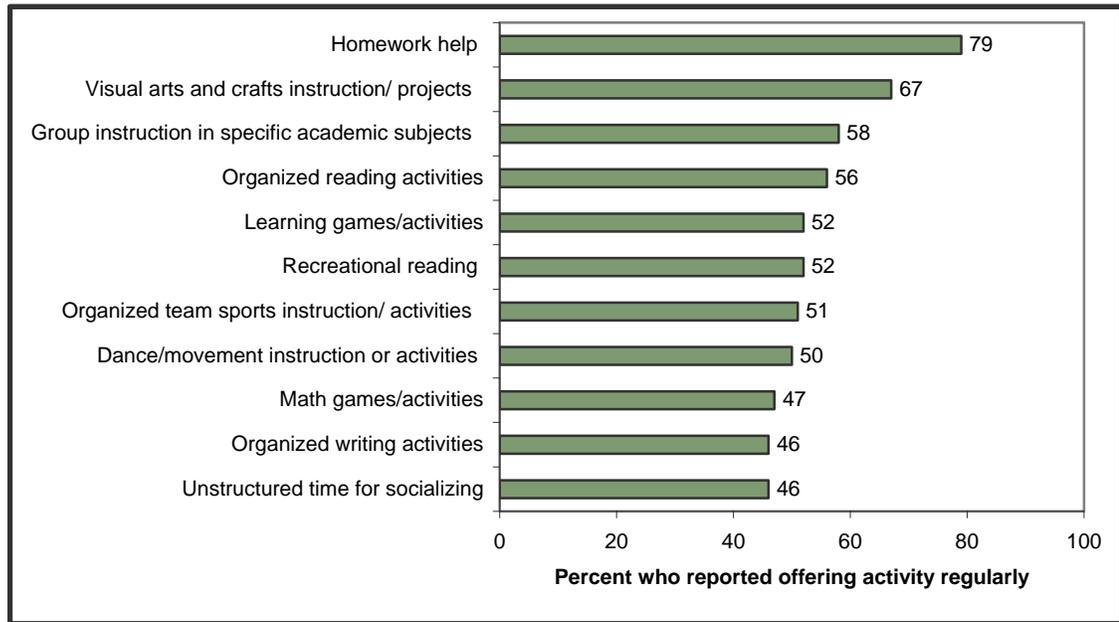


Exhibit 6 displays the activities most frequently offered to middle-grades participants at least an hour a week, and shows similar offerings to those of elementary-grades programs. One difference was that organized team sports were more common in the middle-grades programs (reported by 62 percent of program directors). Another difference was that 38 percent of middle-grades program directors reported regularly offering opportunities for peer discussion of topics that are important to youth.

As in Year 1, high school program directors reported the widest range of consistently offered program activities. As shown in Exhibit 7, no activity was reported by the majority of program directors as being regularly offered to all participants, 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 and to be more focused on social development. For example, 38 percent of directors reported regularly providing unstructured time for socializing, 33 percent offered frequent peer discussions of topics important to youth, 28 percent reported frequent discussions of current events, and 27 percent reported discussion of issues, events, or problems in their community. About a third (32 percent) of high school programs regularly offered homework help activities.

Exhibit 6
Most Common Middle-Grades Program Activities,
as Reported by Program Directors (n=111)

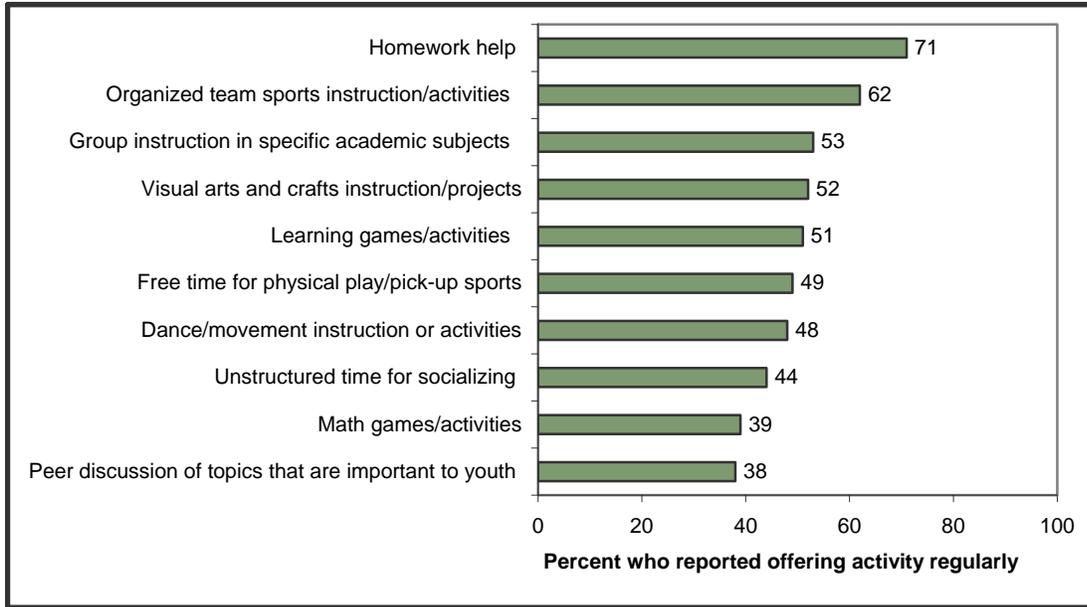
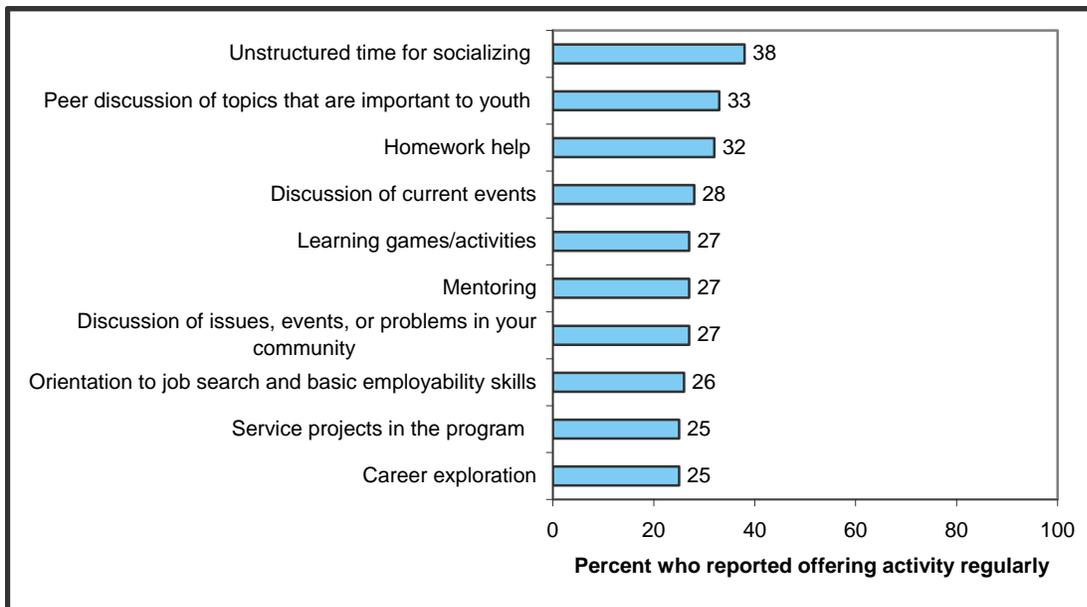


Exhibit 7
Most Common High School Program Activities,
as Reported by Program Directors (n=110)



Content Delivery Strategies

Sequenced activities. Using data collected through activity observations in the 15 in-depth programs, the evaluation created four program-quality scales aligned with the SAFE (Sequenced, Active, Focused, and Explicit) features of effective programs identified by Durlak and Weissberg (2007). Technical details about these observational scales are presented in Appendix C. Durlak and Weissberg note that sequenced activities allow youth to master new skills by practicing and connecting smaller learning goals. For the “sequenced” scale, the evaluation rated the degree to which OST activities built on skills and content to achieve goals. This scale was constructed on a scale of one (not evident) to seven (highly evident) using the following items (Cronbach’s $\alpha=0.92$):

- Activity involves the practice or a progression of skills
- Staff challenge youth to move beyond their current level of competency
- Activity requires analytic thinking
- Staff employ varied teaching strategies
- Activity challenges students intellectually, creatively, developmentally, and/or physically
- Staff assist youth without taking control
- Staff verbally recognize youth efforts and accomplishments

On average, observers rated observed activities 3.38 out of 7 on the “sequenced” scale. Ratings varied by grade level, program location, and activity type. For example, elementary-grades activities were rated considerably higher on the “sequenced” scale than non-elementary activities (3.79, compared to 3.00; $r=.48$). Academic enrichment activities were rated an average of 4.10 out of 7 on the “sequenced” scale, compared to 3.17 for other activities ($r=.23$). Similarly, art activities averaged 3.72 on the “sequenced” scale, while other activities averaged 3.13 ($r=.17$). This suggests that academic enrichment activities and activities like dance and drama involved the progression of skills and built on other activities to achieve goals.

Promising Practice: An Example of Sequenced and Active Programming

In one elementary-grades program, a group of kindergarten students were observed practicing their coin-counting skills. They gathered around a pile of coins on a table to engage in a series of hands-on activities answering the instructor’s questions. The instructor asked a sequence of questions for the students to solve, starting with basic questions like, “How much is this?” and increased the challenge level of the questions progressively: “I want Joshua to show me how to make seven cents.” The questions increased in difficulty as students answered correctly, and the staff responded to the engaged students with encouragement and praise.

Active programming. Under the SAFE model, successful activities encourage youth to engage actively in learning to practice and expand their knowledge and skills. In observations, evaluators examined the extent to which OST activities provided participants with the opportunity to

actively apply skills and gain hands-on practice, using the following items, aligned with the active learning feature of the SAFE model (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.75$):

- Staff plan for and ask youth to work together
- Youth are collaborative
- Youth take leadership responsibilities and roles
- Youth have opportunities to make meaningful choices
- Youth assist one another
- Youth contribute opinions, ideas and concerns to discussions
- Staff encourage youth to share their ideas, opinions, and concerns
- Staff ask youth to expand upon their answers and ideas

In general, observers rated activities low on the active programming scale (1.95 out of 7), indicating that activities tended to offer students few opportunities to contribute ideas, take leadership responsibilities, or collaborate with each other. There were, however, differences by grade level and activity type. Activities in high school OST programs were rated higher than activities in other programs on this scale (2.49, compared to 1.88; $r=.23$). Academic enrichment activities were also rated higher than other activity types (2.44, compared with 1.85; $r=.24$). This suggests that these activities tended to provide students with opportunities to work together and contribute their own ideas. In contrast, homework and tutoring activities were rated lower than other activities on the active programming scale (1.60, compared with 2.13; $r=-.23$). These activities often typically involved less collaboration among youth and provided few opportunities for contributing opinions and engaging in leadership roles. No data were available to link opportunities for active learning to youth participation patterns.

Exposure to new experiences. In interviews, program directors said that they wanted to broaden the range of activities their OST programs offered by adding step teams, dance programs, drama programs, and arts or music. For example, one program director said, “My goal right now is to get some type of exposure to activities they’re not used to...I want to focus on their interests. I saw for myself when I accepted this position how bored the children were...[We want] to decrease their boredom.” Another program added a student-run magazine to their programming. A third program conducted surveys of participants that revealed that they wanted to learn how to write songs, so the program director added a music producer to the staff. “There are so many kids writing poems, [I thought], lets turn it into songs...It links to their talent,” she explained.

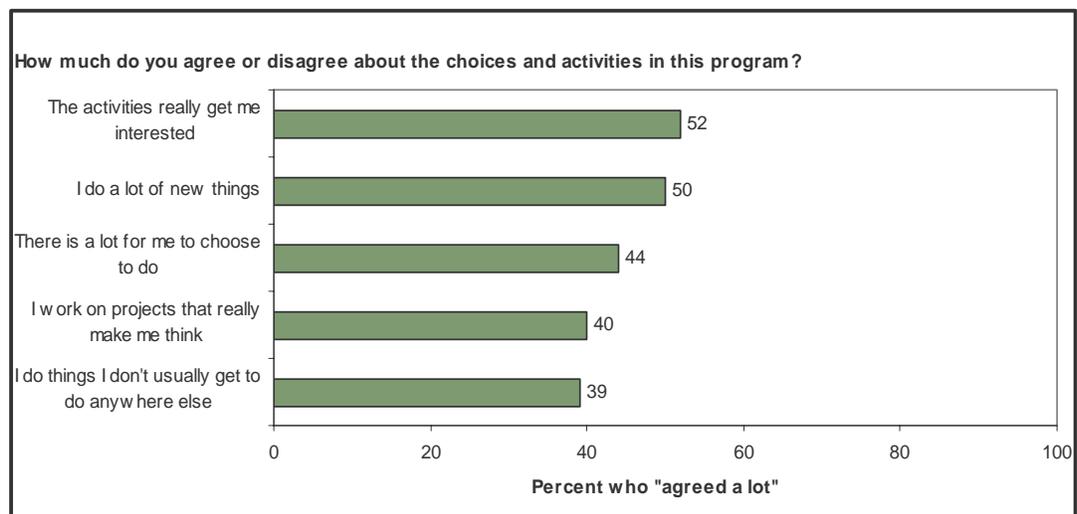
To measure the extent to which participants reported that they were able to pursue new and engaging activities during OST programming, the evaluation created a scale measuring exposure to new experiences. Technical details about the range and reliability of all participant survey scales are included in Appendix B. The scale, equivalent to that used in the first year of the evaluation, was designed to range from one to four, with four indicating that on average, participants strongly agreed with the following statements (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.77$):

In this program...

- I get a chance to do a lot of new things
- I get to do things that I usually don't 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

In the second year of the initiative, participants reported an overall high degree of satisfaction with the extent to which their OST program exposed them to new experiences (average score of 3.17 out of 4). There were no notable differences compared to Year 1 or based on program location or grade level served. Exhibit 8 summarizes the percent of participants who “strongly agreed” with each of the items included in the scale.

Exhibit 8
Participant Reports of Exposure to New Experiences (n=5,250)



Leadership opportunities for youth. The majority of program directors (78 percent) indicated on surveys that a major goal of their OST program was to provide leadership opportunities for youth. However, interview data suggest that implementing youth-led programming was a challenge for programs. For example, one high school program director said, “[This year] participants have no choice in this program, no input into the community project. There wasn’t really enough time for them to design it. I would love to see that change but it would require that the project last more than four sessions.”

To examine the extent to which middle-grades and high school participants reported that they were engaged in providing leadership within their OST programs by taking on responsibility for program planning, implementation, or management, the evaluation created a youth leadership index. The index was

designed to range from zero to six, with zero representing no leadership roles and six representing the maximum number of leadership roles. As in Year 1, in Year 2 middle and high school participants reported whether they had:

- Led an activity, such as sports, homework, or a club
- Helped out in the office (e.g., answered the phone, entered data in the computer, passed out information about the program)
- Helped out on a youth council, advisory group, or leadership team for the program
- Helped plan a program activity or event
- Helped with meetings for parents or community members
- Been asked by staff for ideas about the program or an activity

**Promising Practice:
Integrating Youth Leadership**

A middle-grades program director said that the program's goal was to "take youth development to a new level," by involving youth as leaders in an agency-wide youth council. The program was committed to "building youth interest where they could be advocates for change." She made youth leadership a theme of program activities, and said that the program staff "always keep in mind [that youth] voices are what matter.... That's the core of our work." The program's leadership activities benefited many participants. One of the staff members described a child who began the program as "shy and quiet; very much in the background." Through her role as a leader in the youth council, she "started to explore her voice. She was put in a position where she had to say, 'Wow, I have a voice!'" Another student was part of a group of 10 youth selected to represent their school at City Hall in a program about middle school initiatives. At this meeting, "he was really outspoken about the 37 ½ minutes [of additional school-day instruction.]"

Overall, participants reported taking on an average of 2.36 leadership roles in the second year of OST programming, similar to reports in Year 1. Participants were mostly likely to report that they had been asked by staff for ideas about the program or an activity (55 percent), led an activity (51 percent), or had helped plan a program activity or event (41 percent). There were no notable differences in the number of leadership roles reported by high school and middle-grades youth, or in the number of roles reported by participants in center-based and school-based programs.

Fostering Positive Relationships

Focused programming. Durlak and Weissberg define the "focused" quality feature of the SAFE model as the extent to which program content contributes to developing personal or social skills. Aligned with this "focused" feature, the evaluation created an observation-based scale that measured the extent to which observed activities developed personal and social skills and fostered positive relationships among youth and with staff. The "focused" programming scale consists of the following items related to interactions among youth and between youth and staff (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.75$):

- Youth show positive affect to staff
- Youth are friendly and relaxed with one another
- Youth respect one another
- Staff show positive affect toward youth
- Staff engage personally with youth
- Staff guide for positive peer interactions
- Staff use positive behavior management techniques
- Staff are equitable and inclusive

Observers rated all activities an average of 4.28 out of 7, indicating that activities typically succeeded in addressing personal skills, with little variability among activities. With one exception, no statistically significant differences were found by activity type, program location, or grade level. However, activities led by professional staff such as a certified teacher or specialist averaged 4.43 points, while activities without a certified teacher or specialist averaged 4.18 points ($r=.20$).

***Promising Practice:
Promoting Youth Relationships
through an Engaging Activity***

A professional song producer assisted middle-grades students in creating their own songs and putting them to music. Three girls wrote harmonizing a *capella* parts together, while a boy interwove a rap counterpoint tune into the girls' song. The group focused intensively on planning the words, tunes, and rhythms while also synchronizing their individual parts. With little need to manage the students, the leader instead provided encouragement and praise, affirming their created tunes with "Yeah...sounds good to me!" The students knew what they were doing, what they wanted to accomplish, and how to do so. Their works in progress reflected originality, sophistication, and the voices and each contributor's content of interest.

Relationships with staff. Ninety percent of Option I program directors said that providing youth with positive adult guidance and/or mentors was a major program goal. In interviews, program directors often spoke about the importance of developing positive relationships with adults and about the impact these relationships had on youth.

Through helping [the assistant director] we've seen changes in students' character...now they've become leaders, helpers, and volunteers...It's really wonderful to see that change.

[It's important] knowing that somebody cares about you...Or maybe they don't have that at home. So we put ourselves in their shoes. We have been through what [participants] are going through, so we're able to help them with conflicts and learn how to talk to people.

Using participant survey data, the evaluation created a "interactions with staff" scale that measured the extent to which participants reported positive relationships with the staff in their OST programs. The scale was computed to range from one to four, with four indicating that on average participants strongly agreed with the following statements (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.91$):

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

As in the first year of the initiative, participants reported overwhelmingly positive relationships with staff, averaging a score of 3.34 out of 4 on the scale. There was no notable change in the overall score.

High school participants reported significantly more positive interactions with staff than did middle-grades participants (score of 3.46, compared to 3.26; $r=.14$). There were no notable differences between the interactions reported by staff of elementary-grades students and either middle-grades or high school participants.

These patterns were also evident for individual survey items. For example, 74 percent of high school participants strongly agreed that staff treated them with respect, compared with 64 percent of elementary-grades participants and 57 percent of middle-grades participants ($\gamma=.11$). Similarly, 55 percent of high school participants strongly agreed that staff cared about what they thought, compared with 47 percent of elementary-grades participants and 44 percent of middle-grades participants ($\gamma=.11$).

Relationships with peers. The overwhelming majority of program directors reported that one of their major program objectives was to help youth develop socially (93 percent). Responses from program directors and other program staff confirmed this as a goal:

We promote unity [among participants] after-school, always. Sometimes I even mandate kids work together.

Promising Practice: Team-building Activity

In an activity led by service corps volunteers, elementary-grades youth engaged in a series of fast-paced energizers and trivia games. Volunteers started with chants and clapping to energize students who responded enthusiastically with "Fired up!" and "Ready to Go!" Next, one student selected a "Word of the Week" and with the help of an instructor was encouraged to read the definition forcefully. Another student then read a "Fact of the Week" (i.e., each state has two senators) and the group responded with the call-back "Ohhh, that's right." Students and staff members then competed to see who could hula-hoop the longest while the rest of the group cheered. Overall, the highly charged atmosphere engaged students while reinforcing positive behavior, and provided a quick energy release before students focused on the content of the day's activity, which was a mock debate.

We emphasize helping each other...and being kind and not taking each other for granted. They see these behaviors in action and that really helps them get along and have better behavior...

The participant survey asked youth a series of questions about their interactions with their peers, which the evaluation used to create a scale examining the extent to which participants reported positive relationships with their peers in OST programs. The scale was designed to range from one to four, with four indicating that on average participants strongly agreed with the following statements (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.83$):

In this program I...

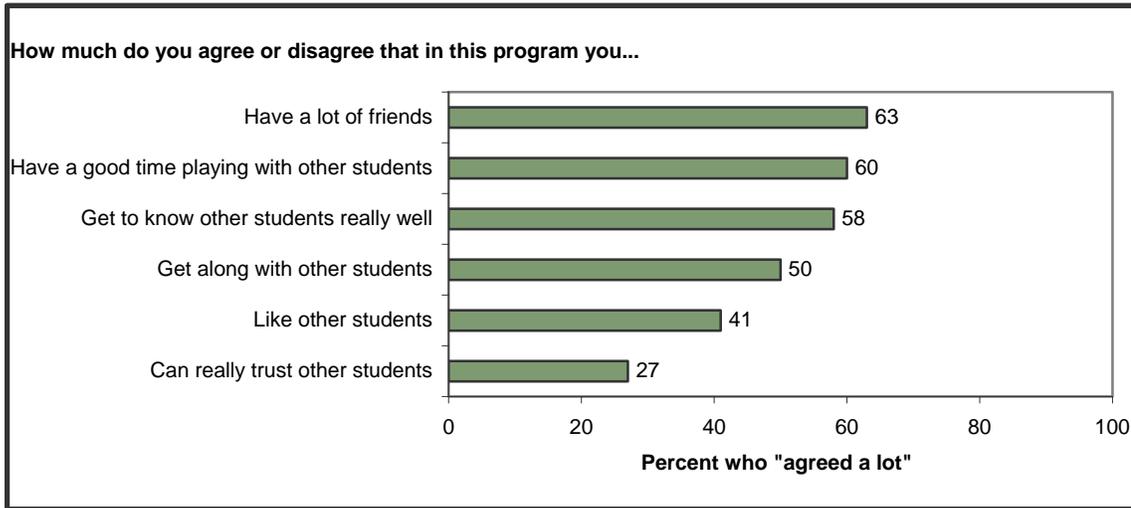
- Get to know other students really well
- Can really trust the other students
- Have a lot of friends
- Like the other students
- Have a good time playing with other students
- Get along with other students

Across all grade levels, participants offered an overwhelmingly positive assessment of their social interactions, recording an overall mean of 3.27 on the 4-point scale. There were no statistically significant differences between the first and second years in participants' assessment of their relationships with their peers. There were also no notable differences in overall scale score by location or grade level served. Exhibit 9 describes the percent of participants responding positively to the individual items within the scale.

Explicit activities. According to the SAFE model of OST programming, high-quality programs should feature specific and clear learning goals. Evaluators assessed whether activities explicitly targeted such goals, using the following items (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.91$):

- Activity is well organized
- Youth are on task
- Staff communicate goals, purposes, and expectations
- Youth listen actively and attentively to peers and staff
- Staff attentively listen to and/or observes youth

Exhibit 9
Participant Reports of Interactions with Peers (n=5,302)



Among the four SAFE scales discussed (sequenced, active, focused, and explicit), observers rated activities highest on the “explicit” scale (4.96 out of 7), indicating that OST staff members tended to design well-organized activities with clear goals and attention to communication. Academic enrichment activities scored higher than other activity types on the “explicit” scale (5.49, compared to 4.85; $r = .18$). This finding suggests that academic enrichment activities were more likely to be organized and structured with clear goals and expectations. Conversely, open and unstructured activities were rated notably lower than other activity types (4.16, compared to 5.05; $r = .19$). In addition, middle-grades activities were rated lower than non-middle school activities (4.58, compared to 5.28; $r = -.17$).

**Promising Practice:
 Building Mastery**

In a rehearsal for the program’s performance of *CATS!*, the program director gathered the young performers around him to discuss the choreography and staging. Excited and attentive, the students patiently waited their turn for guidance and instruction. As he moved from group to group to model their dance steps, the director solicited the students’ opinion: “Does this work for you? How should this go?” The students were responsive to the warm and encouraging director who demonstrated clearly each unique role and how it fit with the other roles. Having watched a video of the Broadway performance of *CATS!* together, both the directors and students were well-prepared to understand the slinky, cat-like moves and how to follow the rhythm of the music.

Participant Engagement in OST Services in Year 2

The OST evaluation measures program engagement in ways that are consistent with the following four measures of OST program engagement (Chaput, Little, & Weiss, 2004):

- **Enrollment:** Whether youth spend any time in an OST program
- **Intensity:** The amount of time that youth spend in a program during a given period
- **Breadth:** The variety of OST activities in which youth participate
- **Duration:** A youth's attendance history across program years

The first-year evaluation report described program engagement in terms of enrollment and intensity of participation, and concluded that in their start-up year OST programs successfully enrolled students but struggled to maintain high youth participation rates (Russell et al., 2006). In 2005-06 (Year 1), OST programs enrolled an impressive 50,000-plus participants in more than 500 programs throughout New York City. Findings about the intensity of participation were more modest, however: in elementary- and middle-grades programs, a quarter of participants received the minimum threshold of hours of programming sought by DYCD, as did about a third of high school participants. The following analyses of youth enrollment and participation in the second year of the OST initiative examine whether the intensity of youth participation in OST programming increased as programs became more established in their schools and communities, a pattern found in prior studies (e.g., Reisner, White, Russell, & Birmingham, 2004).

OST Enrollment in Year 2

In the second year of the OST initiative, DYCD more strictly enforced standards for program enrollment and participation, through a policy of withholding a portion of funds from programs that did not achieve set targets. DYCD monitored program-level participation rates according to the following standards, which varied based on program option and grade level served:

- 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.

To help OST program providers meet these standards of program participation, DYCD permitted programs to over-enroll participants by a certain percentage. Option I elementary-grades programs were permitted to over-enroll by 20 percent, middle-grades-programs by 25 percent, and high school programs by 30 percent. In its program-level monitoring efforts, DYCD calculated participation rates using the budgeted, rather than actual, enrollment count. For example, an elementary-grades program that was budgeted to serve 100 participants and enrolled 120 participants could achieve its 80 percent participation target through an average daily attendance of 80 students.

Analyses of data from DYCD Online indicate that in the second year of the OST initiative, on average Option I programs successfully scaled up to meet and exceed their targeted enrollment levels. Option I programs had a target enrollment of approximately 50,000 youth, based on the contracts awarded by DYCD. As shown in Exhibit 10, in practice, programs actually served more than 70,000 students from September 2006 through June 2007.

Exhibit 10
Targeted Enrollment and Actual Number of Students Served,
by Grade Level

Grade Level	Targeted Enrollment	Students Served
Elementary	22,083	26,803
Middle	14,494	17,357
High	13,299	13,097
Total	49,876	57,257

Elementary-grades and middle-grades programs were especially successful at meeting or exceeding their enrollment targets (90 percent and 79 percent of programs, respectively), while high school programs were more likely to fall short of their goal (57 percent of programs reached the target). Overall, 80 percent of Option I programs met or exceeded their enrollment targets.

Program directors said that the visibility and reputation of the provider organization often played a role in successfully enrolling high numbers of students:

The agency has been providing services in the community for 20 years. It's the largest service provider for youth in the community.

Program directors described challenges particularly in recruiting middle-grades and high school students and encouraging them to attend regularly:

[In middle school] students are finding themselves. It's better for them to go to the park and play with friends, so sometimes it's hard to recruit kids and keep them... We have the faithful few.

[DYCD should] go back and really look at that daily model for middle school kids. They still require a 75 percent attendance rate in middle school programs, and we are performance based. The high school programs don't expect the kids to come all the time. They can come in cycles, and that's something we can try [in middle school programming].

Teens don't want to hang out in the school past 3:00. The space is the same...and they don't want to deal with the constraints of being supervised after-school.

Recruiting isn't useful because you bring in kids who don't really know what is going on, and we don't have the opportunity to cultivate that interest and commitment to the program because there is not enough time left.

Intensity of OST Participation in Year 2

Based on the program-level OST participation goals established by DYCD, the evaluation calculated the minimum number of hours each Option I participant was expected to receive during Year 2, as shown in Exhibit 11.⁶ Across all grade levels, Option I programs successfully increased their participant-level attendance compared to the first year of the initiative, although

⁶ 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-grades participant at 80 percent of this level, or 432 hours. Using similar calculations, the expected numbers of program hours for middle-grades and high school participants were set at 216 and 76 hours, respectively.

programs serving elementary-grades youth continued to struggle to achieve the expected number hours of participation.

Exhibit 11
OST Participants' Actual and Targeted Mean Attendance, in Hours

Hours of Attendance	Elementary <i>n=24,512</i>	Middle <i>n=15,734</i>	High <i>n=9,941</i>
Targeted hours	432	216	76
Actual hours (mean)	359	213	105
Actual (mean) as percent of target	83%	99%	138%

On average, elementary-grades Option I program attended an average of 359 hours during the year, compared to the 432 hours they were expected to attend. However, this represents an average of 83 percent of targeted hours, which is an increase from the 72 percent of targeted hours attended by elementary-grades participants in the first year of the initiative. Practically speaking, middle-grades participants as a group achieved their targeted number of hours of participation: on average, middle-grades participants attended 213 hours of the 216 hours expected at the middle-grades level. This was a substantial increase over the 159 hours attended, on average, by middle-grades participants in Year 1. Finally, high school participants exceeded their targeted number of hours of participation, attending on average 105 hours in the second year of the initiative, 29 hours above their target of 76 hours and several hours of participation higher than during the first year of the OST initiative (97 hours).

The number of hours of programming attended varied widely for participants at each grade level. The evaluation divided students into three equal groups based on their level of participation in Year 2 to examine the range of hours of attendance. Among elementary-grades participants, one third attended less than 260 hours of programming in Year 2, one third participated between 260 and 443 hours, and one third attended more than 443 hours of OST programming. Among middle-grades students, the lowest-attending third participated for fewer than 114 hours, the middle third between 114 and 268 hours, and the highest-attending third for more than 268 hours. For high school participants, the ranges were less than 54 hours, between 54 and 111 hours, and more than 111 hours, respectively.

Duration of OST Participation Across Years

As reported in the evaluation's second year interim report (Pearson, Russell, & Reisner, 2007), evaluators examined the overall rate at which OST

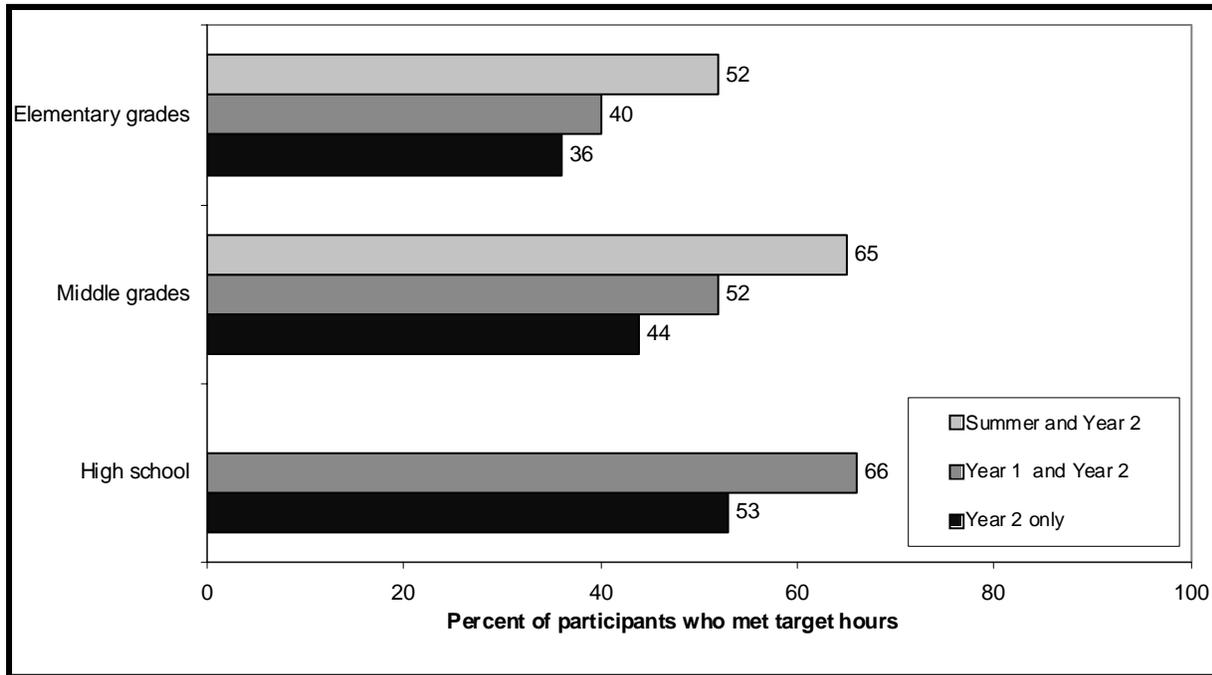
participants from the 2005-06 school year re-enrolled in the same OST program in the 2006-07 school year. Of the 38,860 participants who attended an OST program in the initiative's first year and were eligible to return to that program, 14,527 (37 percent) enrolled in the same OST program in 2006-07. These data may underestimate the percent of Year 1 participants who desired to continue programming for a second year: OST programs typically enroll participants on a first-come, first-serve basis in each year and returning participants are not necessarily guaranteed enrollment for a second year.

As part of its efforts to provide comprehensive out-of-school time services to families throughout New York City, DYCD also funded certain OST programs to provide services to youth during the summer of 2006. Programming was not offered in all programs, and summer enrollment was not guaranteed to school-year participants who wished to attend. In total, OST programs delivered services to over 13,000 participants in 176 locations across the city during the summer of 2006. Overall, OST programs that offered summer programming achieved an average retention rate of 41 percent from 2005-06 to 2006-07, significantly higher than the average 33 percent retention rate for programs without summer services. Across all programs that offered services in summer 2006 and the 2006-07 school year, 49 percent of summer participants continued their enrollment in 2006-07 school-year programming.

As shown in Exhibit 12, two-year participants attended their OST program on average more often than did participants who enrolled for the first time in Year 2. Two-year elementary-grades participants attended an average of 399 hours during the 2006-07 school year, compared to 359 hours for one-year participants ($d=.20$). Middle-grades participants who enrolled for a second year attended 253 program hours in Year 2 (exceeding their target by 37 hours), compared to 213 hours for one-year participants ($d=.26$). Two-year high school participants also attended substantially more hours than did one-year participants (135 hours, compared to 105 hours; $d=.29$).

Participation in OST programming during the summer of 2006 was associated with high rates of participation during the 2006-07 school year. Students in elementary-grades programs who participated in OST services in both the summer of 2006 and the following school year were found to have attended, on average, 441 hours in Year 2 ($d=.40$). Middle-grades summer participants attended an average of 294 hours in Year 2, on average ($d=.52$). There were too few high school participants who attended an OST program in summer 2006 to analyze their patterns of participation.

Exhibit 12
Year 2 Intensity of Participation in OST Programming,
by Duration of Participation



Breadth of OST Participation in Year 2

The DYCD Online data tracking system also records youth participation in specific activities, which program directors assign to one of 17 activity categories. As noted earlier, definitions of the activity categories were not provided to programs. In an effort to increase the reliability of these activity data to describe the breadth of youth participation, evaluators collapsed these categories into six primary activity types: academic enhancement (including homework help), career and work, life skills (including financial literacy), community building, arts and culture, and recreation.

Reflecting program objectives described earlier, the majority of OST program participants attended an academic enhancement activity during the second year of the OST initiative (93 percent of participants in 394 programs that reported offering these activities). Large numbers of students also participated in arts and culture activities (83 percent in 353 programs) and recreation activities (85 percent in 361 programs). In addition, over half of the students enrolled in OST programs in the 2007 school year participated in life skills (60 percent in 254 programs) and community building activities (52 percent in 219 programs). Career and work activities were the least common, offered by 125 programs and attended by 29 percent of participants in these programs.

The number of hours in which youth participated in various types of activities varied by grade level. Academic enhancement activities were by far the most commonly attended in elementary-grades programs (average of 152 hours) and in middle-grades programs (74 hours), as shown in Exhibit 13. Arts and culture and recreation activities were also frequently attended in elementary- and middle-grades programs. Participants in high school programs participated in recreation (30 hours) and academic enhancement activities (26 hours) most frequently, followed by life skills activities (16 hours).

Exhibit 13
OST Participants' Mean Hours of Attendance, by Activity and Grade

Activity	Elementary (n=24,512)	Middle (n=15,734)	High (n=9,941)
Academic enhancement	152	74	26
Arts and culture	49	33	11
Recreation	44	52	30
Life skills	24	10	16
Community building	23	6	10
Career and work	3	2	9

Evaluators also created an index for the number of different types of activities in which students participated, ranging from one to six, to indicate the breadth of activities in which OST programs engaged students. Participants in elementary-grades programs participated in the widest range of activities, with an average of 3.4 of 6 activity types, and middle-grades students participated in an average of 3.1 activities. As expected, findings suggest that high school programs provided a more focused set of activities: high school youth participated in an average of 2.2 different types of activities in Year 2.

Features Associated with Participant Engagement

Associations with program retention. Programs that were most successful in retaining students from the 2005-06 to 2006-07 school years differed from programs with lower retention rates in important ways, as described in the evaluation's second year interim report (Pearson et al., 2007). Programs with higher rates of youth retention paid their program directors higher salaries and employed program directors with more advanced educational credentials. Programs with higher youth retention were also more likely to include a parent liaison on staff, especially a volunteer parent liaison.

These high-retention programs served youth who reported in Year 1 a greater sense of belonging, more positive interactions with program staff, and

higher academic motivation. Programs with high youth retention most often had a strong academic or arts focus, and they offered activities intended to improve participants' academic performance through enrichment activities that included active, hands-on learning experiences (e.g., youth creating a poem collaboratively using both words and physical actions, youth singing a song and analyzing its lyrics to probe its meaning).

One of the strongest predictors of participant retention was program attendance in Year 1. Examined at the participant level and across grades, eligible youth who attended a Year 1 Option I OST program at a rate of at least 66 percent of the days to which they were assigned to an activity had better than even odds of participating again in Year 2.

Associations between structural and institutional features and Year 2 participation. Because the number of expected hours of participation varied by grade level, evaluators also calculated an attendance rate to measure student participation in OST programs and facilitate analyses of association. The attendance rate reflects the percent of expected days that an individual attended the program. In the 2007 school year, students enrolled in elementary-grades Option I programs attended 75 percent of the days that they were assigned to an activity. Participants in middle-grades and high school programs had lower attendance rates than participants in elementary-grade programs, on average attending 59 percent and 52 percent of the days that they were assigned to an activity, respectively.

Perhaps because of the overall trend toward hiring well-qualified program directors, the evaluation found few notable differences in OST attendance based on program director characteristics. One exception was in middle-grades OST programs, where continuity of staffing was positively associated with Year 2 attendance. Middle-grades programs with a director who had worked in the program in the first year of the initiative had an average attendance rate of 61 percent, compared to 54 percent in programs where the director was new to the program ($d=.36$). In addition, the evaluation found evidence of benefits of regular participation in professional development opportunities: the frequency of program directors' participation in professional development was positively associated with program attendance rates in Year 2 ($r=.18$).

The evaluation also found significant associations between certain staffing patterns and attendance rates in Option I OST programs. In particular, programs that hired at least some young staff members had higher program attendance rates than those without these young staff members. This was true for college student staff members (66 percent, compared to 57 percent; $d=.49$) as well as high-school staff (67 percent, compared with 61 percent; $d=.35$). In addition, programs with school-day paraprofessionals or aides on staff had higher attendance rates than those without (69 percent, compared with 61 percent; $d=.41$). One explanation for this pattern might be that the presence of these younger staff members in

addition to more experienced educators appealed to youth, who could identify and forge connections with staff closer to their age. Another possibility is that lower wages for less experienced staff allowed programs to increase the number of staff employed in the program and thus increase the amount of staff attention to each program participant.

Year 2 program attendance was also positively associated with programs' efforts to engage families, supporting the finding of the importance of family outreach from the retention analysis. In particular, programs with a parent liaison on staff had a higher attendance rate than programs without a parent liaison (68 percent, compared to 62 percent; $d=.32$). In addition, the frequency of program communication with parents was positively correlated with attendance rates ($r=.29$). Although each form of communication with parents was positively associated with program attendance rates, certain types of parent outreach occurring at least a few times a month were associated with particularly strong attendance effects when: holding individual meetings with parents ($d=.68$), sending materials home to parents ($d=.55$), and having conversations with parents over the phone ($d=.49$).

Associations with process and content features. The evaluation also examined whether certain types of activities were associated with higher program attendance rates. Based on program directors' reports of the intensity of certain types of activities in their program offerings, the evaluation found evidence of positive associations between a program's focus on academics, arts, and physical recreation and program attendance:

- Programs that reported a higher intensity of academic activities tended to have higher attendance rates ($r=.26$).
- Analyses found a positive relationship between the degree to which a program focused on activities in the arts and the attendance rate ($r=.19$).
- Programs that engaged participants in physical activity more frequently tended to have higher attendance rates ($r=.19$).

In addition, for elementary-grades programs, there was a positive association between the intensity of activities focused on youth development (e.g., conflict resolution) and program attendance ($r=.19$). This relationship was not significant for middle-grades or high school OST programs.

Social Development Outcomes of Youth

OST programs encourage positive youth development, in part by giving participants opportunities to interact in relaxed settings and by fostering positive

interactions among youth and between youth and adults. A recent study of students who had participated in the LA's BEST after-school program, an initiative similar to the OST initiative in New York City, found that participants who participated regularly in program offerings were less likely than their peers to compile juvenile crime records in later years, suggesting that after-school participation contributed to positive social outcomes (Goldschmidt & Huang, 2007). The Year 2 OST evaluation measured early evidence of positive social outcomes by asking survey questions that were combined into scales measuring youth's sense of belonging and their engagement in prosocial behaviors. Technical details about scale range and reliability are included in Appendix B.

Sense of Belonging

The sense of belonging scale summarizes the extent to which participants feel connected to their OST program. The scale was computed to range from one to four, with four indicating that, on average, participants strongly agreed with the following statements about their experience in the program:

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

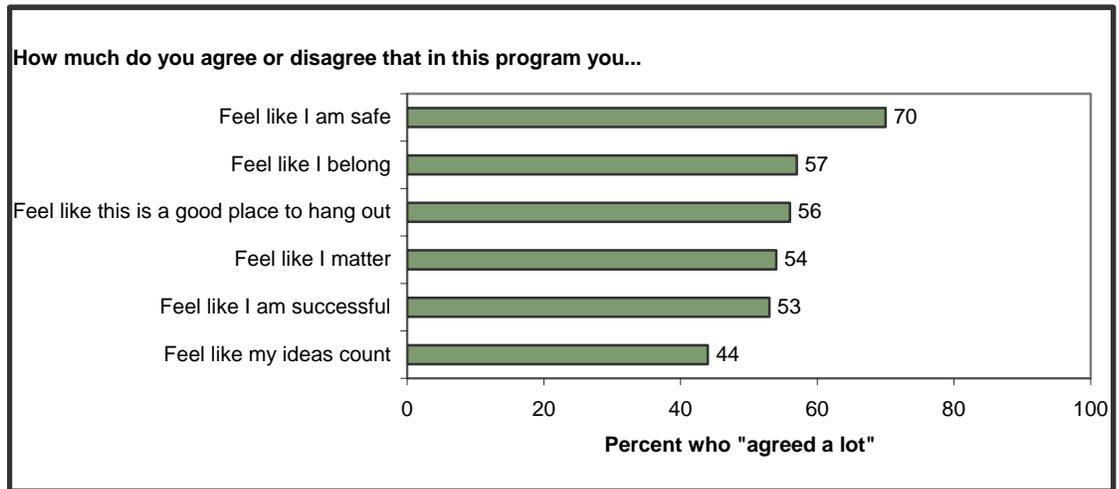
In general, in the second year of the initiative, participants reported a strong sense of belonging in their OST programs: the mean scale score was 3.35 out of 4, similar to the score computed for Year 1 data. There were no notable differences in participant reports of their sense of belonging in the program based on grade level served or program location. Exhibit 14 illustrates the percent of participants who strongly agreed with each item on the sense of belonging scale.

Consistent with the strong sense of belonging that students reported on surveys, one program director spoke of creating a "safe haven," a place students "appreciate" and "look forward to." Another program director explained:

Kids would rather be with us than at home, and that says a lot about the program. They have a sense of connection to the program and the staff.

We take them all, and they are treated all the same. People are clapping for them, rooting them on. They have a sense of importance. They feel for those little moments that they are on top of the world.

Exhibit 14 Participant Reports of Sense of Belonging (n=5,302)



Prosocial Behavior

Middle-grades and high school participants were asked to answer a series of questions related to their engagement in prosocial behaviors. Responses to these items were combined into a scale score ranging from one to four, with four indicating frequent participation in positive behaviors towards others. The items asked participants to report on how frequently they performed the following in the month before the survey:

- Helped someone stay out of a fight
- Told other students how I felt when they did something I liked
- Cooperated with others in completing a task
- Told other students how I felt when they upset me
- Protected someone from a bully
- Gave someone a compliment
- Helped other students solve a problem

Overall, middle-grades and high school OST participants reported moderate levels of prosocial behavior, with a mean scale score of 2.50, similar to their responses in the first year of the evaluation. There were no significant differences between the levels of engagement in prosocial behaviors of middle-grades youth compared to high school youth, or between participants in center- and school-based programs.

In particular, more than half of participants reported that they did the following at least three times in the month prior to the survey:

- Gave someone a compliment (63 percent)
- Cooperated with others in completing a task (62 percent)
- Helped other students solve a problem (58 percent)

Staff members also described examples of improved social behaviors among participants:

When I first came, there was this little girl with attitude. She'd burst out in anger about anything you say to her. She would always act out and have an attitude. [...] We told her she doesn't always have to act out that way. She needed attention. We let her learn that you are not always going to get your way.

We paired two kids who don't talk much together in [the program], and who normally don't talk to each other. But since they had to discuss things they have in common, they found out they have the same favorite color, or live in the same place...It's a start!

In interviews, many participants mentioned that the program has helped them learn about improving their attitudes and behaviors:

[The program] helped me improve my behavior . . . They told me I'd be kicked out of [the program] if I didn't behave.

[We learn about] discipline. Like at Boys' Club . . . they teach about teamwork [and that we] shouldn't be mad at each other.... We watched [a movie], that was about teamwork.

Program Features Associated with Social Development Outcomes

Associations between focus of program content and social development.
 Program-level analyses revealed specific program-content features that are associated with positive social-development outcomes. In general, when program content included a strong focus on civic or social development programming, participants saw measurable benefits in terms of their sense of belonging and prosocial behaviors.

- The extent to which a program focused on youth development (e.g., conflict resolution, peer discussion, social opportunities) was positively correlated with participants' reports of engaging in prosocial behavior ($r_s=.38$).
- There was also a positive relationship between a program's level of civic programming (e.g., discussion of current events, service projects) and participants' sense of belonging ($r_s=.32$).

- A program’s focus on career development activities (e.g., career exploration, field trips to businesses) was positively correlated with participants’ reported sense of belonging ($r_s = .20$).

In interviews, program directors and participants also described the influence of these types of activities on participants’ social behaviors.

We did a can drive, collected cans, and took them to a neighborhood shelter...The kids got to see where people were living—a family of six in a room smaller than this! The kids saw them, it had a huge impact on them and they were hit with that. – Program director

[In conflict resolution], we learned about what we have in common so we’ll get along and we won’t fight. ... You know that you shouldn’t fight because you’re just like this person...and you should find things you have in common with other kids. – Participant

Associations between content-delivery strategies and social development.

The extent to which programs provided opportunities for youth leadership was positively correlated with youth reports of their sense of belonging within the program, as well as their reports of engagement in prosocial behaviors.

Participant-level analyses revealed a positive relationship between the number of leadership opportunities in which a youth participated in the OST program and their sense of belonging in their program, for both middle-grades participants ($r_s = .24$) and for high school participants ($r_s = .52$). In addition, for middle-grades

students, there was a positive association between participation in leadership opportunities and reports of engagement in prosocial behavior ($r_s = .38$). There was no significant association between leadership participation and prosocial behaviors for high school students.

***Promising Practice:
Developing Social Assets***

One middle-grades OST program implemented an “assets building program” that it created based on the 40 developmental assets identified by the Search Institute. According to program staff, the program develops in students an awareness of their own personal strengths and capacities, focusing on responsibility, good citizenship, and positive behavior (www.search-institute.org/assets). As one staff member explained, this program “introduces values and teaches responsibility. We teach them to incorporate those positive assets into action... We emphasize helping each other and being kind and not taking each other for granted. They see these behaviors in action and that really helps them get along and have better behavior.”

Associations between relationships and social development. Participant-level survey findings suggest that programs that successfully fostered supportive relationships among youth and between youth and staff also successfully contributed to youth social development.

Across all grade levels, there was a positive relationship between participant reports of interactions with peers and their reports of their sense of belonging in the program ($r_s = .61$). This association was significant and strong for elementary-grades ($r_s = .65$), middle-grades (r_s

=.56) and high school ($r_s = .72$) programs. Among middle-grades participants, there was also a significant positive relationship between reported interactions with peers and engagement in prosocial behaviors ($r_s = .23$), but the relationship was not found for high school participants.

The evaluation also found a positive correlation between a participant's reports of interactions with program staff members and their sense of belonging in the OST program ($r_s = .68$). This correlation was significant and strong at all grade levels, but particularly for high school youth ($r_s = .79$) and elementary-grades youth ($r_s = .71$). For middle-school youth, reports of positive interactions with staff members were also positively correlated with reports of engagement in prosocial behaviors ($r_s = .22$); this correlation was not significant for high school students.

In interviews, program directors emphasized that OST staff consider building positive interpersonal relationships with participants to be an essential part of their role:

[The key to the program's success is] knowing that somebody cares about you. The day-school teachers think they just have to teach. Or maybe they [students] don't have that at home. So we put ourselves in their shoes. We have been through what [participants] are going through, so we're able to help them with conflicts and learn how to talk to people.

Youth frequently confirmed positive relationships with the OST staff member, and expressed high levels of supportive interactions:

When I have problems we talk to the staff . . . They become like our family or friends, it's not like the teachers at all. We can all talk to [the program director] too . . .

[A certain staff member] helps us be more happy because every time we have problems and feel angry inside, we tell [him] and he starts talking about good things and he solves the problem.

Associations between participation and social development. Analyses did not reveal any patterns of association between a participant's intensity of participation in OST programming and their self-reported social development outcomes.

Youth Academic Outcomes

One of the goals of the OST initiative is to engage students in learning and to help them become more successful learners. OST programs contribute to this goal of academic outcomes for youth by offering activities geared towards

improving participants' skills and knowledge that can contribute to school success, and also by reinforcing youth perceptions of themselves as individuals capable of academic success. The evaluation's assessment of youth academic outcomes focuses on the measurement of youth attitudes and perceptions regarding academic learning. The evaluation combined youth responses to a series of survey items into two scales, one related to self-reported academic benefits of OST participation and one related to academic motivation. Technical details about scale range and reliability are reported in Appendix B.

Youth-Reported Academic Benefits of OST Participation

The evaluation created an academic-benefits scale to describe the extent to which participants reported that their programs have helped them improve academically. The scale was computed to range from one to four, with four indicating that on average participants strongly agreed with the following statements (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.87$):

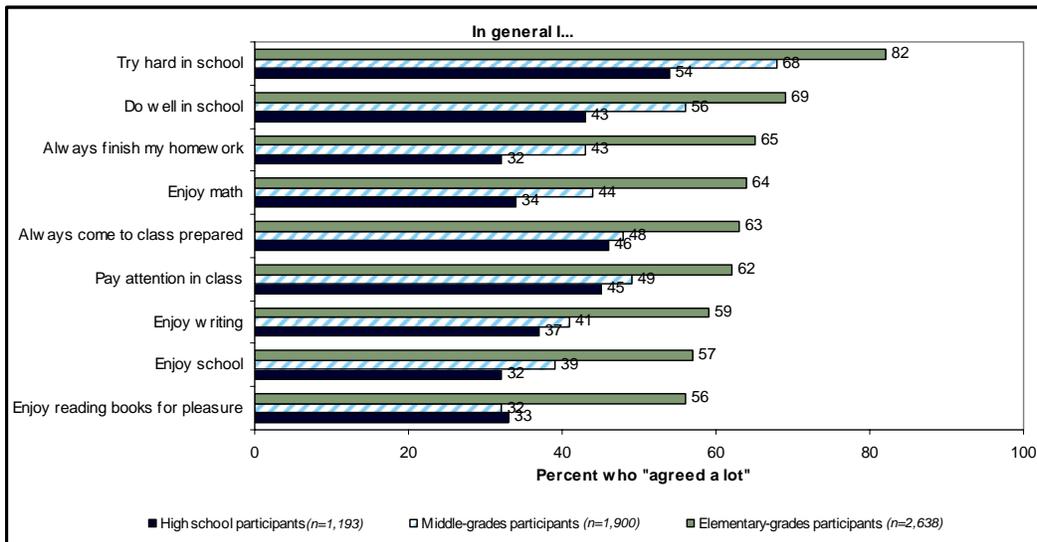
This program has helped me...

- 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

The mean score among participants in the second year of the OST initiative was 2.99, suggesting an overall moderate level of academic benefits. There were no notable differences in reported academic benefits compared to Year 1, and no important differences by program location.

However, elementary-grades participants were more likely than their middle-grades and high school counterparts to report academic benefits as a result of OST programming ($r=.15$ for the difference between elementary and middle; $r=.14$ for the difference between elementary and high). Elementary-grades participants recorded an average score of 3.10 on the scale, while middle-grades participants averaged a 2.84 and high school participants averaged a 2.86. Certain differences between elementary participants and middle and high school participants were quite substantial, as shown in Exhibit 15.

Exhibit 15 Participant Reports of Academic Benefits, by Grade Level



- Sixty-four percent of elementary-grades participants strongly agreed that their OST program helped them to finish their homework more often, compared with 47 percent of middle-grades participants and 33 percent of high school participants ($\gamma = .35$).
- Fifty-one percent of elementary-grades participants, 36 percent of middle-grades participants, and 25 percent of high school participants strongly agreed that their OST program helped them to solve math problems better ($\gamma = .28$).
- Fifty-one percent of elementary-grades participants strongly agreed that their OST program helped them to read and understand better, compared with 32 percent of high school participants and 31 percent of middle-grades participants ($\gamma = .21$).
- Fifty percent of elementary-grades participants strongly agreed that as a result of their OST program, they felt better about their schoolwork, compared with 34 percent of high school participants and 33 percent of middle-grades participants ($\gamma = .15$).
- Forty-nine percent of elementary-grades participants strongly agreed that their OST program helped them get better grades in school, compared with 35 percent of middle-grades and 34 percent of high school participants ($\gamma = .15$).

Promising Practice: Focus on Academics in an Elementary Program

One elementary-grades OST program created procedures to ensure that students were accountable for their homework. Tutors in the program maintained attendance and homework completion records and sent report cards to parents: "We can tell parents what [their children] have and haven't done [in terms of homework]," the director explained. The program structure facilitated homework completion by grouping participants based on their day-school teacher assignments. In that way, "It's easier to keep tabs on homework assignments and completing them."

Participants in this program attributed their improvements and successes in school to the help they received in the OST program. One student explained, "In the beginning of school I didn't know how to divide, and in [this program] they taught me how to do it, then when my teacher asked I knew the answer." Another student described the one-on-one attention that tutors provided to program participants. "When my teacher gave me homework, I didn't understand it and they helped me understand it. When my teacher was giving a problem I didn't understand, now I understand better because my tutor helped."

- Forty-four percent of elementary-grades participants, 32 percent of high school participants, and 31 percent of middle-grades participants strongly agreed that their OST program helped them to write better ($\gamma = .13$).

Although survey data indicate that high school participants reported fewer academic benefits than did younger participants, in interviews several students described the ways in which their programs supported them academically. One program offered preparation for the Regents exam, which served as an important supplement to classroom instruction for students who were willing to make the necessary commitment. Two popular classroom teachers taught in the after-school program, and they attributed the successes of the program to the fact that what is offered goes "hand-in-hand with what [they] do in [their] classrooms." One student proudly explained: "I took English and percussion because I needed an arts credit... and I went from a 65 on the Regents [the first time] to an 85 the second time I took the test."

Academic Motivation

The evaluation's academic motivation scale measures participants' perceptions of their own academic enjoyment and engagement, an important precursor to academic achievement. The scale was computed to range from one to four, with four indicating that on average participants strongly agreed with the following statements (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.85$):

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

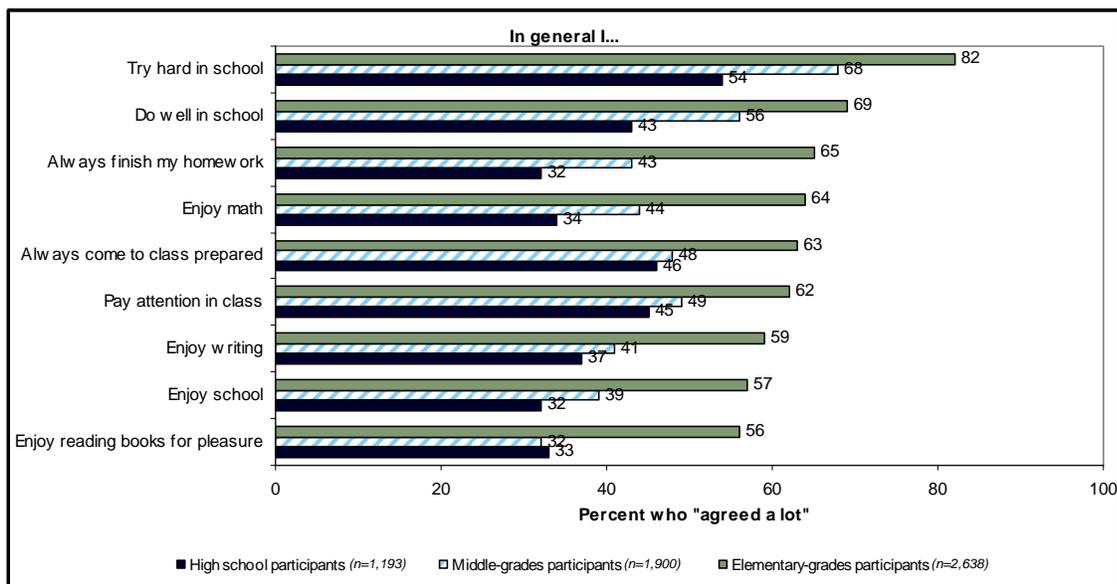
Overall, participants in the second year of the OST initiative recorded a relatively high mean of 3.33 on the academic motivation scale. There were no notable differences between the first and second year of the initiative, or based on program location.

However, there were notable differences in the level of academic motivation based on grade level, perhaps reflecting different developmental stages. Elementary-grades participants reported the highest levels of academic motivation, with a mean of 3.48 on the four-point scale, followed by middle school participants (3.20; $r=.22$) and high school participants (3.11; $r=.29$). As shown in Exhibit 16, elementary-grades participants' ratings of individual items describing their motivation were also substantially higher than those of either middle-grades or high school participants.

Program staff reported that they were attentive to increasing enjoyment of learning among youth participants. During interviews, staff highlighted the connection between students' academic motivation and their actual success in school. They provided concrete support targeted at building their interpersonal relationships with students and, in turn, bolstering students' sense of their own academic promise as well as their enjoyment of learning. One staff member said, "He [a participant] knows that I understand. I got to know him first. I told him he's smart." Another staff member echoed, "We can pay attention to them. That's the good thing...you can take the time to sit down and explain something."

Even though programs at the elementary level were often academically focused, staff also worked to make after-school enjoyable and to create a learning environment where students had more freedom than during the school day. One staff member spoke of encouraging students to read by allowing them to select their own materials. "I don't like to give them a book, because they don't like it. I ask them to bring a magazine to read, something that they like.... If they are done [with homework], we give them more freedom to read what they want."

Exhibit 16 Participant Reports of Academic Motivation, by Grade Level



Program Features Associated with Academic Attitudes and Perceptions

Program-level analyses revealed specific program components associated with positive academic attitudes and perceptions among participants, including staffing patterns, participation in technical assistance, and program content or focus.

Associations between structural and institutional features and self-reported academic outcomes. Staffing patterns were associated with student reports of academic outcomes. For example, participants in programs that hired some high-school aged staff reported greater academic benefits than participants in programs that did not (3.01, compared to 2.79 on the academic benefits scale; $r=.22$). Participants in programs with high school staff also reported higher levels of academic motivation, recording a mean of 3.36 on the academic motivation scale, compared with a 3.24 among other participants ($r=.24$). As noted earlier, programs typically hired staff members with diverse qualifications, and high school staff were supported by more experienced staff members. Among programs that employed high school staff, 89 percent also employed college students, 73 percent hired activity specialists, and 65 percent employed certified teachers. In program observations, high school staff were frequently observed serving as support staff and tutors: a possible explanation for the correlation between the presence of high school staff and participants' reported academic benefits is that programs with high school staff were able to provide more individual attention to students, such as one-on-one or small group tutoring.

Academic motivation was somewhat higher in programs without a master teacher on staff (3.39 out of 4, compared to 3.29; $r=.22$) and in programs without specialist staff (3.40, compared to 3.28; $r=.30$). This finding suggests that programs were more likely to engage professional support when they served populations who were struggling academically, or most in need of additional support services. Another possibility is that the expense involved in hiring highly qualified staff reduced programs' ability to offer low staff-participant ratios. Similarly, participants in programs without specialist staff reported greater academic benefits (3.07, compared to 2.85 out of 4; $r=.30$).

Program efforts to develop staff skills and to engage families were also positively associated with self-reported academic outcomes. In particular, there was a positive relationship between a program director's self-reported level of participation in technical assistance and participants' academic motivation ($r_s=.36$). In addition, there was a positive relationship between the frequency with which program directors communicated with parents and academic benefits ($r_s=.24$) as well as academic motivation ($r_s=.27$).

Associations between process and content features and academic outcomes. Not surprisingly, evaluators found a positive relationship between the extent to which a program focused on academics and participants' self-reported academic benefits ($r_s=.25$). In addition, participants in programs that used a published or externally developed curriculum reported higher levels of academic motivation than participants in programs that did not, recording a 3.35 on the academic motivation scale, as opposed to a 3.26 ($r_s=.42$).

In addition, middle-grades participants who reported taking on more leadership roles in their OST programs tended to report greater academic benefits ($r_s=.29$) and academic motivation ($r_s=.21$). There was no association between the number of leadership roles and academic outcomes for high school youth, however.

Programs that fostered positive relationships among youth and between youth and staff also demonstrated positive academic outcomes. Across all grades, there was a positive relationship between participants' reports of their interactions with peers and academic benefits ($r_s=.54$). There was also a positive association

***Promising Practice:
Creative Staffing Patterns***

In one activity observed by evaluators, a certified teacher from the day school and two high school tutors provided homework help to a group of fourth-grade students. Each staff member had a specific role in assisting students with their homework. The certified teacher focused on "re-teaching" concepts from the school day to struggling students, working with them one-on-one. One high school tutor served as a writing assistant, correcting students' paragraphs in their composition books and answering questions. The second tutor provided focused assistance with math homework; when students finished their worksheets, he created extra practice problems for students to practice their skills. Together, the staff members worked together to promote mastery of the academic concepts in a structured yet friendly atmosphere that allowed for individualized attention.

between interactions with peers and academic motivation for elementary ($r_s=.56$) and middle-grades participants ($r_s=.38$), but not for high school participants.

Associations between participation and academic outcomes. Analyses did not reveal any patterns of association between a participant's intensity of participation in OST programming and their self-reported academic outcomes.

Systems Outcomes

The evaluation assessed system outcomes in relation to the initiative's impact on provider organizations and on parents.

Impact of the OST Initiative on Provider Organizations

Building the capacity of provider organizations. In Year 2, executive directors of provider organizations reported widely varying levels of organizational capacity for delivery of out-of-school time programming. The number of OST programs supported by each provider organization varied considerably: 37 percent of providers operated only one OST contract, while 26 percent operated more than three OST programs funded through DYCD. In addition, 21 percent of executive directors reported that their organization did not support any out-of-school time programs that did not receive funds through the DYCD initiative. In contrast, 38 percent of directors reported that they operated more than three programs that did not receive any OST funding.

Opportunities and challenges for provider organizations. Overall, the majority of executive directors reported that the DYCD initiative had increased their organization's capacity to serve more youth and families either to a great extent (53 percent) or somewhat (27 percent). Executive directors' reports of the opportunities that the DYCD initiative offered their organization reflected the same patterns as in the first year of the initiative. In Year 2, executive directors most frequently reported that the OST initiative had "to a great extent" or "somewhat" increased opportunities for training and technical assistance for their staff (75 percent).

More than half of directors also reported that the initiative had increased opportunities to partner with city agencies (64 percent), cultural organizations (61 percent), and a public school (60 percent). This finding of increased partnerships with public schools was amplified in Year 2: 32 percent of executive directors reported that compared to other out-of-school time programs, their DYCD OST programs established linkages with surrounding schools much more or somewhat more, while 25 percent reported this in Year 1 ($V=.19$).

In Year 2 of the OST initiative, as in Year 1, more than half of executive directors (55 percent) reported that the administrative burden associated with the initiative presented a challenge for their organization.

I have three [grade] levels so [DYCD Online] is more intense for me. It feels like they're trying to make it complicated. It's a little repetitive. They need to minimize the application process. Maybe two sheets [for the application form]...Data entry, for high school especially, is very cumbersome.... It's time-consuming for anyone. Attendance [data entry] is not bad, but I wish they would fix their timing to give us more options, like maybe a section where if an individual has an activity conflict that we can explain that. – Program director

In addition, in the second year of the OST initiative, as earlier noted, DYCD began enforcing attendance and enrollment requirements by withholding a percent of funding from programs that did not meet participation targets. Executive directors' survey responses reflected increased focus on participation tracking in OST-funded programs: in Year 2, 39 percent of directors reported that their OST-funded programs tracked student program attendance more closely than their programs funded through other sources. While this policy may have increased participation rates—as reflected by higher enrollment numbers and higher rates of daily attendance—executive directors reported that it was a challenge to meet these standards. Fifty-one percent of executive directors reported that meeting the initiative's enrollment and attendance requirements was a challenge, significantly more than the 40 percent who reported this challenge in Year 1 ($V=.12$).

To have staff members that stay with you—if you want to keep them—you have to pay them...Usually our CBO finds the money, but that's a big challenge. You also have cover the holiday staff costs on top of that...But if you have 50 [students] registered, and if 30 [students] show up...you still have to have [staff]. – Program director

However, in the second year of the OST initiative, executive directors reported fewer challenges in integrating OST funds with their other funding streams. In Year 2, 16 percent of executive directors reported that it was a challenge to integrate DYCD OST funds with other funding streams, compared to 27 percent of directors in Year 1 ($V=.13$). No other challenges were identified by more than half of executive directors, and there were no other notable differences in challenges reported from Year 1 to Year 2.

OST program funding. In general, provider organization's budgets for out-of-school time programming remained stable in the second year of the OST initiative. Seventy-six percent of executive directors reported an annual budget for all OST programs greater than or equal to \$250,000, and 46 percent reported an annual OST budget of \$500,000 or more. As in Year 1, on average executive

directors reported that the majority of their funds for OST programs supported by the initiative came from DYCD (64 percent), supplemented by general organizational funds (12 percent).

Not surprisingly, the evaluation found notable differences in the capacity of organizations with out-of-school time budgets greater than \$500,000, compared to that of organizations with smaller budgets devoted to out-of-school time programming. In particular, compared to organizations with smaller out-of-school time budgets, provider organizations with at least \$500,000 devoted to out-of-school time were more likely to:

- Employ full-time program directors (88 percent, compared to 69 percent; $V=.22$)
- Offer employment benefits to program directors, including: paid vacation and sick leave (94 percent, compared to 81 percent; $V=.19$); paid training and professional development (92 percent, compared to 78 percent; $V=.20$); health insurance (91 percent, compared to 72 percent; $V=.24$); retirement savings plans (76 percent, compared to 53 percent; $V=.24$); and tuition reimbursement (30 percent, compared to 14 percent; $V=.20$)
- Report opportunities for promotion, including opportunities for promotion within the provider organization (88 percent, compared to 74 percent, $V=.17$) and within the OST program (69 percent, compared to 46 percent; $V=.24$)
- Provide paid training or professional development to program line staff (77 percent, compared to 56 percent; $V=.22$) and provide paid attendance at staff meetings and conferences to program staff (74 percent, compared to 53 percent, $V=.22$)

However, there was also evidence that the OST initiative was helping to increase the capacity of provider organizations with small OST budgets to offer high-quality programming. Executive directors were asked to compare their organization's DYCD-funded OST programs to other out-of-school time programs sponsored by the organization. Directors of organizations with small OST budgets were more likely to report notable differences between their DYCD-funded programs and their other programs. In particular, organizations with small OST budgets were more likely than providers with large OST budgets to report that their DYCD OST programs complied with city and state child care regulations somewhat more or much more (30 percent, compared to 8 percent; $V=.29$). Organizations with small OST budgets were also more likely to report that their DYCD OST programs adhered somewhat or much more to strict standards about hiring and screening qualified staff (32 percent, compared to 10 percent; $V=.28$).

Meeting the Needs of Working Parents

Reasons for enrolling their child. As in Year 1, parents tended to consider academic activities to be the most important feature of their child's OST program.⁷ Seventy-seven percent of parents cited either homework help or academic enrichment as the most important activity. Parents of middle-grades students were more likely to place the highest value on academic enrichment than were parents of elementary-grades participants (40 percent, compared to 29 percent; $V=.16$). No surveys were received from parents of high school students.

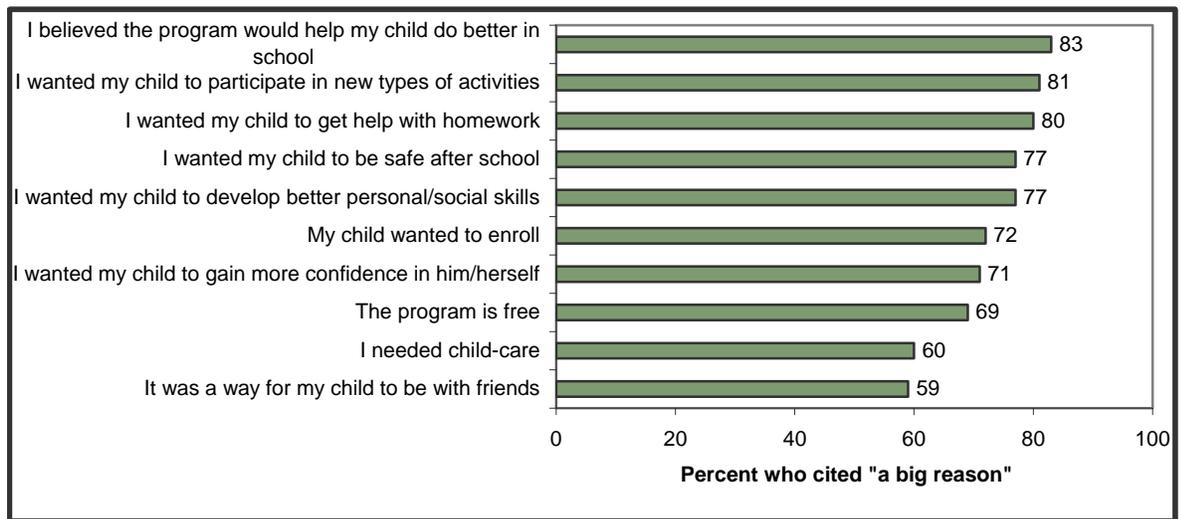
As illustrated in Exhibit 17, parents' reports of reasons for enrolling their child in the OST program reflected this emphasis on seeking academic support: 83 percent of parents believed the program would help their child do better in school, and 80 percent wanted their child to get help with homework.

Although parents of elementary-grades participants were somewhat more likely than parents of middle-grades participants to rate social development as the most important program features (15 percent, compared to 8 percent; $V=.16$), middle-grades parents were notably more likely to cite social reasons for enrolling their child in the OST program. Parents of middle-grades students were more likely than elementary-grades parents to report that their child wanted to enroll in the program (79 percent, compared to 64 percent; $V=.19$). They were also more likely to report that the OST program was a way for their child to be with friends (67 percent, versus 51 percent; $V=.23$).

Parent survey responses indicated that the OST initiative is filling a need for structured after-school opportunities in New York City. Seventy-three percent of parents reported that the OST program was the only structured program their child attends after school. This was especially true for parents of middle-grades students, who were significantly more likely than elementary-grades parents to report that OST was the only structured program that their child attended after school (81 percent, compared to 64 percent; $V=.25$). Middle-grades parents were also more likely more than parents of elementary students to attribute their child's involvement to the free cost of the program (81 percent, compared to 57 percent; $V=.28$).

⁷ The evaluation collected surveys from 500 parents of participants in the 12 elementary- and middle-grades programs in the evaluation's in-depth sample in the second year of the initiative. This represents a substantial increase compared to Year 1 and resulted from improved administration methods, including personalizing the survey for the parents/guardians of all consented participants in these programs, in order to emphasize the importance of completing the survey, rather than relying exclusively on the program director to distribute and track surveys. Because of these changes in data collection and resulting data quality, statistical comparisons of parent responses across years are not reported.

Exhibit 17
Parent Reports of Reasons for Enrolling Their Child (n=500)

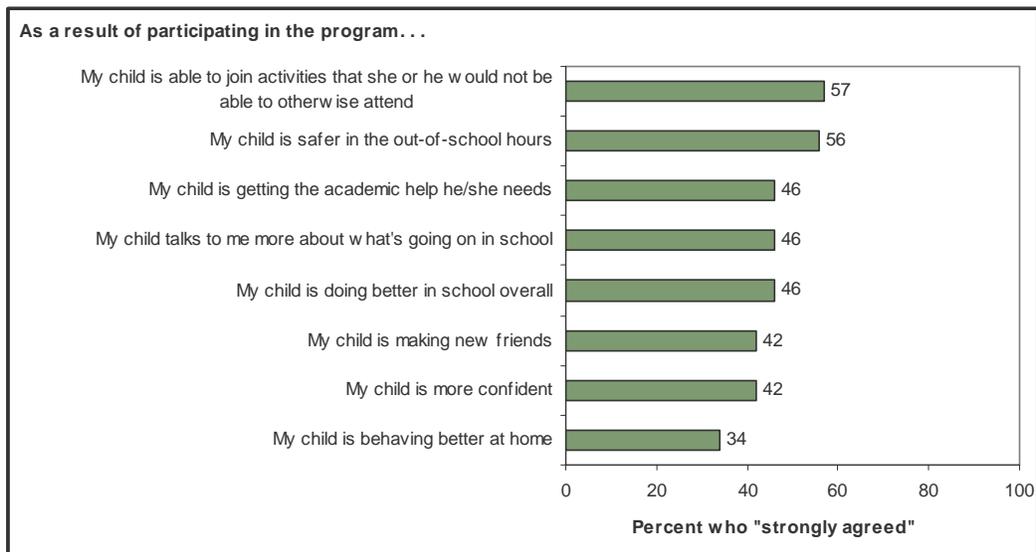


Parent satisfaction with OST programming. Overall, parents were satisfied with the quality of the OST program in Year 2. Sixty-one percent of parents rated the program as “excellent,” and an additional 20 percent said it was “very good.” As shown in Exhibit 18, parents were most satisfied with the OST program’s ability to provide a safe place for students to participate in new activities. Fifty-seven percent of parents strongly agreed that their child was able to join activities he or she would not have attended otherwise, and 56 percent strongly agreed that the program was a safe after-school environment.

My daughter is more confident in herself in the education environment. She is able to relate to issues that prepare her for the high school level of education. She is also more serious about completing homework and the assignments that she has. She express[es] her interest in other areas of education that are available through the program that inspire her interest in a particular field of study.

I am a working parent, so the availability of this program helps me to keep my only child safe after school. He is an only child so placing him in an environment where he can interact positively with other children is a plus. I believe that my son is a leader, but having him be a part of this program has helped him grow into his own person. I am also concerned about him being exposed to negative people and environments so knowing that he is in a positive child-centered place makes me feel good.

Exhibit 18 Parent Reports of Youth Benefits of Participation (n=500)



However, the survey responses also demonstrated that parents felt that there was room for improvement in the quality of OST programming. Overall, slightly less than half (46 percent) of parents strongly agreed that the OST program helped their child academically, an opinion that differed significantly by grade level. Parents of middle-grades students tended to perceive greater academic benefits than did parents of elementary-grades students. Thirty-nine percent of elementary-grades parents strongly agreed that their child was doing better in school as a result of participation, compared to 53 percent of middle-grades parents ($V=.20$). Likewise, 36 percent of elementary parents strongly agreed that their child was getting the academic help he or she needed, compared to 56 percent of middle-grades parents ($V=.23$).

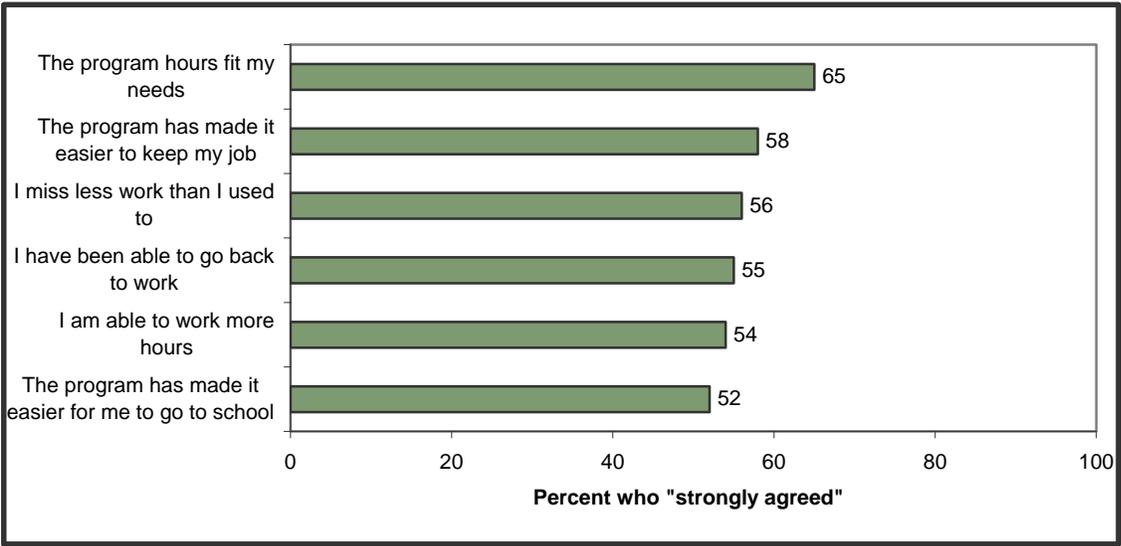
*This program has helped me with my son by him finishing his homework assignments. Since I cannot speak or write English, it is very difficult for me to help him. Also, my son is under the care of qualified people who work there. I wish that the people who help with the homework would dedicate more time to finishing the assignments.*⁸

Parents of elementary- and middle-grades OST participants also reported that the availability of the OST program improved their own opportunities. Eighty-four percent of parents reported that they work outside the home, including 64 percent who work 35 hours or more per week. Sixty-five percent of parents strongly agreed that the program hours fit their needs, and, as illustrated in

⁸ Translated from Spanish.

Exhibit 19, more than half strongly agreed that the OST program met their needs by making it easier for them to keep their job, work more hours, or attend school.

Exhibit 19
Parent Reports of Family Benefits of Participation (n=500)



An elementary-grades OST program director emphasized the program’s success in providing support to working families and noted that he is “contemplating expanding an hour to accommodate the parents. Even though the program is open until 6, we are often here until 6:30/6:45...Especially with younger kids, it is an issue to get kids picked up. In order to provide a cushion for parents, it would be better to expand program by an hour.”

I am able to keep my job and I am able to work 40 hours. When there a holiday, I can still work because of the holiday program.

The availability of the program has helped me and my family. This program helps keep my child busy with social and academ[ic] activities while I work. I don't want to worry that my child is just at home watching TV.

This program is my lifeline; it is essential. I fought like a cat to get him in and he is here five days a week and breaks and Saturdays and Sundays, not because I want to get rid of my child but because I work. Me and my husband work our lungs off to give our children the best education that we can afford, and I couldn't have any higher praises.

I used to work only part-time, I couldn't work full time [because I had to take care of my child]. Now I can work eight hours a day—it has really helped.

Conclusions

Programs, both in the aggregate and on average individually, achieved higher enrollment rates in the second year of the OST initiative. They also achieved higher rates of daily participation. The findings in this report suggest that overall, OST programs were successful in scaling up program enrollment and participation in Year 2 of the initiative, serving more than 69,000 youth throughout New York City. Rates of individual youth participation increased substantially across all grade levels compared to Year 1, indicating that programs were successfully recruiting and retaining participants. Across grade levels, Year 2 participation rates were especially high for students who had also participated in Year 1 and/or summer programming.

Programs improved the quality and capacity of their program staff by hiring staff members with varied experiences and qualifications and by participating in internal and external professional development opportunities. Programs reported significantly fewer challenges in finding qualified staff to hire in the second year of the initiative, perhaps in part because of a relatively high rate of reported staff retention from the first year. Program directors also reported increased satisfaction with the effectiveness of the technical assistance offered through the DYCD initiative in meeting the needs of their programs. Program directors staffed programs with young staff members (such as high school staff or college students) who could identify with and provide individualized attention to youth as well as more experienced professionals (such as specialists or certified teachers) who could provide content expertise and guidance to the young staff members.

Programs offered varied activities to youth but had to balance competing priorities to consistently implement high-quality activities. The OST initiative encourages programming that supports both the social and academic development of youth. In Year 2 of the initiative, some directors reported struggles in maintaining a balance between academic and non-academic activities. While directors were less likely to report that improving academics was a major objective of their program, they were more likely to report that participants' schools wanted programming to emphasize academics. Parents of participants also continued to value homework help and academic enrichment activities. Findings in this report point to the importance of providing a mix of activities and the need for programs to continue to find ways to include both academically oriented activities, which may contribute to improved educational performance, and developmentally oriented activities (such as youth leadership or

recreational activities), which are associated with positive social development outcomes.

In addition, while providing a variety of program-level activities is important, ongoing improvement of activity content is also important in engaging participants and building their skills. In program observations, the evaluation found relatively scant evidence of active, hands-on learning opportunities that provided youth with the opportunity to engage in discussions, apply skills in concrete situations, or make meaningful choices. This finding suggests a need for further professional development focused on improving the capacity of program staff to effectively lead these types of activities.

A set of core features of program quality continues to emerge. Based on patterns of association between OST program features and positive youth outcomes described in this report, as well as features highlighted in recent research on out-of-school time programming (Durlak & Weissberg, 2007; Grossman et al., 2007; Little, 2007), the evaluation identified the following eight features of high-quality programs:

- Youth have opportunities to interact with their peers.
- Youth interact with and develop positive relationships with staff.
- Youth are exposed to new and engaging experiences.
- Youth have the opportunity to participate in both summer and school-year programming
- Programs offer a variety of both academic enrichment and non-academic activities, including arts, recreation, and civic engagement.
- Program staffing patterns include younger staff members supported by more experienced staff.
- Program directors and staff participate regularly in professional development opportunities.
- Programs communicate with schools regularly about student learning objectives.
- Programs reach out to engage families through a parent liaison and/or special events for parents.

In a preliminary analysis, the evaluation combined relevant survey data for six of these features into a program quality index to examine the relationship

between program quality and youth outcomes.⁹ Researchers found strong, positive correlations between the program quality index and: (1) participant reports of academic benefits ($r_s=.64$); (2) participant reports of sense of belonging ($r_s=.59$); (3) participant reports of academic motivation ($r_s=.46$); and (4) participants' number of hours of OST participation ($r_s=.31$).

In Year 3, the evaluation will continue to collect data from OST programs to explore these associations between program-quality features and youth outcomes. As the programs become increasingly well established in their schools and communities and as they scale up youth enrollment and participation, future evaluation reports will examine evidence of changes in program quality and in youth social and academic outcomes.

⁹ Year 2 evaluation data on communication with schools and participation in technical assistance were not collected in a way that supported inclusion in the index. The evaluation has revised survey questions for Year 3 to be able to more completely rate program quality on the full set of features and examine associations between program quality and youth outcomes.

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Appendix A

Program Implementation in Options II and III

The DYCD OST initiative supports programming under three service options. The focus of the evaluation is Option I programs, which serve youth in elementary, middle, and high schools throughout New York City. In addition, 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 operate through the Department of Parks and Recreation and are offered at Parks sites.

The evaluation collected program director survey data for 77 Option II programs and eight Option III programs. DYCD Online data were available for 10,775 participants in 92 Option II programs, and 1,277 participants in 12 Option III programs. Because of the different structures and expectations of Option II programs and Option III programs, evaluators analyzed their data separately. This appendix presents a summary of program implementation under these service options in Year 2 of the initiative.

Structural and Institutional Features

Program objectives. Option II program directors most frequently reported social development goals for their programs. In particular, they reported that a major objective of their program was to provide a safe environment for youth (91 percent). Other major objectives included:

- Provide youth with positive adult guidance and/or mentors (88 percent)
- Help youth develop socially (87 percent)
- Provide leadership opportunities for youth (76 percent)
- Provide health/well-being/life skills development (75 percent)

Option III program directors reported a mix of academics and social development goals. All eight responding Option III program directors reported that a major objective of their program was to provide a safe environment for youth. Other frequently reported major objectives included:

- Help youth improve their academic performance (7 programs)
- Help youth develop socially (7 programs)
- Promote respect for diversity among youth (7 programs)
- Provide hands-on enrichment activities (7 programs)

Strategies for participant recruitment. Three quarters of Option II program directors reported that they have open enrollment for all interested youth. Forty-five percent of Option II programs also reported that they seek to serve youth who were recommended by school-day teachers or counselors.

All eight responding Option III program directors reported that they have open enrollment for all interested youth. More than half of Option III programs also reported seeking to serve youth who scored below proficient on city or state exams (5 programs), youth with siblings already attending the program (5 programs), and youth who participate in other programs sponsored by the organization (5 programs).

Program director qualifications and supports. Program directors of both Option II and III programs reported high levels of experience working in and operating out-of-school time programs. The majority of Option II program directors worked in the same OST program in Year 1: 70 percent were program directors and 20 percent were staff members in the first year of the initiative. All seven responding Option III program directors directed the same OST program in Year 1.

Sixty-three percent of Option II program directors had prior experience as a camp counselor or leader, and 52 percent of program directors had prior work experience as a recreation, youth, or child-care worker. Among Option II program directors, 82 percent had completed at least a four-year college degree, and 43 percent had completed a master's degree or higher.

Four of seven responding Option III program directors reported previous work experience as instructional specialists, while three reported experience as a camp counselor or leader. Five Option III program directors completed at least a four-year college degree, and three completed a master's degree or higher. One Option III program director was certified to teach.

The salaries of Option II and III program directors typically ranged from about \$35,000 to \$55,000 or above. Thirty-one percent of Option II program directors reported a salary of \$55,000 or above. Twenty-one percent of program directors reported a salary between \$45,000 and \$54,999 and 26 percent reported a salary between \$35,000 and \$44,999. The salaries of Option III program directors ranged similarly across each of these categories.

Program director experience in the program. Fifty-eight percent of Option II program directors worked 35 hours per week or more in their OST program. All Option II program directors agreed that they enjoyed working at their OST program and that they found the work there rewarding. Almost all agreed that they got the support and feedback they needed from their supervisor (95 percent), they had the materials they needed to do a good job (92 percent), and had the space they needed to do a good job (81 percent).

Option III program directors were less frequently devoted full-time to their OST program. Two of seven responding program directors worked 35 hours per week or more in their OST program, while two worked between 10 and 19 hours per week and two worked fewer than 10 hours per week. All agreed that they enjoyed working at their OST program, that they found the work there rewarding, that they had the material they needed to do a good job, and that they got the support and feedback they needed from their supervisor.

Program staff qualifications and supports. Option II programs employed relatively few staff members. Sixty-five percent of Option II program directors report having between 1 and 10 paid staff members, and 43 percent report having between 1 and 10 volunteer staff. Staff worked in a variety of roles: 69 percent of program directors reported employing specialists, 68 percent employed college students, 38 percent employed high school staff and 35 percent employed certified teachers. Seventy percent of Option II programs reported hiring a staff member either part- or full-time to provide administrative support, and about half of programs hired a master teacher (50 percent).

Option II program directors who hired certified teachers typically paid them \$31 per hour or more. College students typically received \$6 to 15.99 per hour, and high school staff \$6 to 10.99 per hour. Specialists' typical wages ranged widely, from \$16 per hour to more than \$31 per hour.

Seven of eight responding Option III program directors reported having between one and 10 paid staff members, and only one program had volunteer staff. Five programs employed college students, and four programs employed high school staff. Five programs had a part-time paid administrative support position, and four Option III programs hired a master teacher on either a part-time or full-time basis. Option III program directors reported that the typical hourly wages for college students were \$6 to 15.99 per hour and \$6 to 10.99 per hour for high school staff.

Staff challenges. Sixty-six percent of Option II program directors reported that more than half of their program staff worked in the same OST program during the previous year. However, hiring and adequately compensating qualified staff remained a challenge for most Option II program directors. More than half of Option II program directors reported the following as obstacles to implementing high-quality programming:

- Affording to offer the competitive salaries necessary to hire qualified staff (61 percent)
- Finding volunteers with the time and expertise needed (60 percent)
- Not being able to afford to offer potential staff enough hours of paid employment (57 percent)

Four of eight Option III program directors reported that more than half of their program staff remained in their program in Year 2. Among Option III program directors, about half reported that not being able to afford to offer potential staff enough hours of paid employment and offering the competitive salaries necessary to hire qualified staff were challenges to implementing high quality programming in Year 2.

Technical assistance and supervision. Option II program directors reported frequent internal supervision and training opportunities. Nearly all (97 percent) Option II program directors reported holding staff meetings at least monthly, and 39 percent of program directors held staff meetings at least once a week. Fifty-eight percent of program directors required most or all staff to submit activity plans on a regular basis, and 41 percent of programs used a published or externally developed curriculum to guide at least some of their activities.

Eighty-eight percent of Option II program directors reported participating in workshops offered through the OST initiative, 70 percent participated in institutes or conferences, and 65 percent participated in on-site consultations. The topics on which more than half of program directors received training or professional development were program development and management (86 percent) and developmentally appropriate practices (54 percent). Program directors reported that their staff received similar types of training in similar topics.

Five of eight Option III program directors reported holding staff meetings at least monthly, while two program directors held staff meetings at least once a week. Three program directors required most or all staff to submit activity plans on a regular basis and three program directors occasionally asked staff to submit activity plans. Two programs used a published or externally developed curriculum to guide at least some of their activities.

Among the training and professional development activities offered to Option III program directors through the OST initiative, five reported participating in workshops, five participated in institutes or conferences, and two participated in on-site consultations. The topics that one half or more of program directors received training or professional development on were academics, enrichment, and learning (four programs) and program development and management (four programs).

Program structures and partnerships. Option II program directors reported establishing effective program policies and structures in the second year of the initiative. All Option II program directors strongly agreed or agreed that the time allowed for activities in their programs was generally appropriate. Three-quarters or more of Option II program directors strongly agreed or agreed that procedures for dealing with participant behavior were in place and effective (96 percent), groups were small enough for staff to meet participant/individual

needs (95 percent), procedures were in place to report suspicions of child abuse and neglect (93 percent), the program had links to organizations where they could refer participants in need of additional services (91 percent), the program had a process in place for obtaining participant input and suggestions (90 percent), participants with special needs were successfully integrated (84 percent), and participants had regular opportunities to lead activities (75 percent).

More than three-quarters of Option II program directors reported that at least one other organization besides the sponsor organization provided activities or services to youth enrolled in their OST program (77 percent), and about half reported discussing the needs or progress of individual students with principals, teachers, or other key school staff on at least a monthly basis (52 percent).

Option II program directors also reported some common challenges. More than half of Option II program directors reported that a major or minor challenge to implementing high-quality programming was that they do not have sufficient funds to provide high-quality programming (59 percent) and that families were not sufficiently involved in their child's participation at the program (55 percent).

Similarly, directors of Option III programs reported effective program structures. All eight Option III program directors strongly agreed or agreed that groups were small enough for staff to meet participant/individual needs, the time allowed for activities was generally appropriate, procedures for dealing with participant behavior were in place and effective, participants with special needs were successfully integrated, and that procedures were in place to report suspicions of child abuse and neglect. Option III program directors most commonly reported discussing homework assignments with school principals, teachers or other key staff at least monthly (six programs) and discussing the needs or progress of individual students (five programs). Seven Option III program directors reported that at least one other outside organization provided activities or services for participants, and six reported that other organizations provided additional funding through grants or contracts (six programs).

Option III program directors most commonly reported challenges related to youth recruitment or participation. Seven of eight program directors reported that a major or minor challenge to implementing high-quality programming was that youth do not attend the OST program regularly enough to have enriching experiences, and six reported that they cannot recruit enough youth to participate.

Changes from Year 1 to Year 2. At least half of Option II program directors strongly agreed or agreed that, compared to Year 1, in the second year of the OST initiative:

- The program did a better job of fostering positive relationships between youth and staff (66 percent)

- The program offered activities that were more appropriate for and attractive to the youth served (64 percent)
- There was greater interest in and demand for the programming offered (63 percent)
- The professional development that the director received through the initiative was more useful (60 percent)
- The professional development that the staff received was more useful (58 percent)
- DYCD's approach to program monitoring was more effective (53 percent)
- The relationship between the OST program and its feeder/host schools was stronger (51 percent)
- The program served more youth (50 percent)

Six of eight Option III program directors strongly agreed or agreed that, compared to Year 1, the program did a better job of fostering positive relationships between youth and staff in the second year.

Process and Content Features

Program content. The evaluation analyzed the activities that program directors reported offering to all or most youth in every month in which the program was open. More than half of Option II program directors reported offering the following activities to the majority of participants on an ongoing basis: peer discussion of topics that are important to youth (61 percent), discussion about diversity issues (51 percent), and unstructured time for socializing (51 percent).

Option III program directors most frequently reported offering the following activities to the majority of participants on an ongoing basis: homework help (seven programs), discussion of issues, events, or problems in their community (seven programs), group instruction in specific academic subjects (six programs), recreational reading (six programs), organized writing activities (six programs), and unstructured time for socializing (six programs).

Parent outreach. Seventy-three percent of Option II program directors reported that supporting working families was a major or minor objective, as did seven of eight responding Option III directors.

Seventy percent of Option II program directors reported having conversations with parents over the phone at least monthly. Fifty-seven percent of program directors reported meeting with one or more parents at least monthly. Program directors reported doing the following at least monthly: sending material about the program home to parents (44 percent), holding events or meetings to which community members were invited (28 percent), and holding events or meetings to which parents were invited (27 percent). At least half of Option II program directors reported that their program sponsored the following events or activities for parents/families at least monthly: events at the program (84 percent), and opportunities to attend cultural or recreational events in the community (55 percent).

Three of eight Option III program directors reported having conversations with parents over the phone at least monthly. Two program directors reported meeting with one or more parents at least monthly. Seven Option III program directors reported offering families opportunities to attend cultural or recreational events in the community at least monthly, and six invited parents to events at the program on a monthly basis.

Participant Engagement

Participation and enrollment. As shown in Exhibit A1, in general Option II and III programs fell slightly short of their enrollment goals. However, Option II middle-grades and high-school programs exceeded their enrollment targets, as did Option III elementary-grades programs. Analyzed by program, 59 percent of Option II programs and 17 percent of Option III programs met or exceeded their enrollment targets in the second year of the OST initiative.

Exhibit A1
Targeted Enrollment and Actual Number of Students Served,
by Option and Grade Level

Grade Level	Option II		Option III	
	Targeted Enrollment	Students Served	Targeted Enrollment	Students Served
Elementary	3,465	3,247	175	365
Middle	975	1,220	150	117
High	3,187	3,276	150	25
Multiple	3,411	3,032	1,075	770
Total	11,038	10,775	1,550	1,277

Option II programs were expected to offer at least 160 hours of programming, with a 70 percent rate of participation. On average, Option II participants attended 172 hours of programming in Year 2, exceeding this goal. Option III programs were expected to offer 144 to 360 hours of service, depending on the youth served. However, on average Option III participants attended only 83 hours of programming during the 2006-07 school year.

Appendix B

Technical Properties of Participant Survey Scales

Academic Benefits of the Program

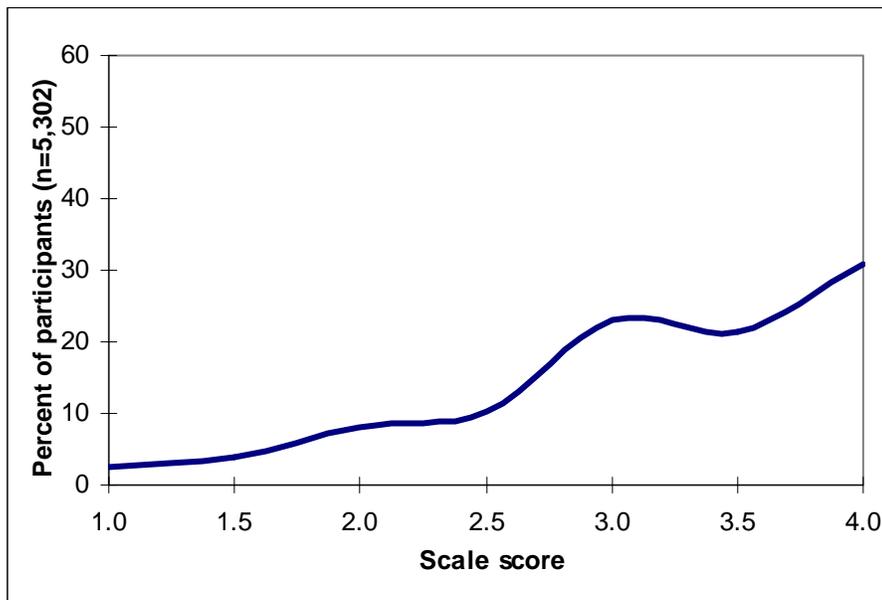
The Academic Benefits of the Program scale was computed to range from one to four, with four indicating that on average participants strongly agreed with the following statements:

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 th Percentile	75 th Percentile	Maximum
0.87	2.99	0.78	1	2.57	3.57	4



Academic Motivation

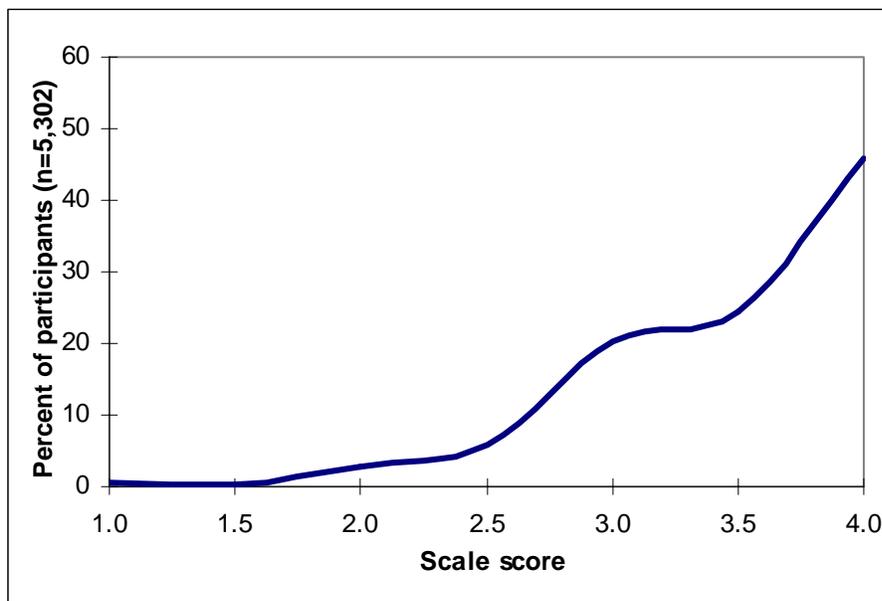
The Academic Motivation scale was computed to range from one to four, with four indicating that on average participants strongly agreed with the following statements:

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 th Percentile	75 th Percentile	Maximum
0.85	3.33	0.59	1	3.00	3.78	4



Interactions with Staff

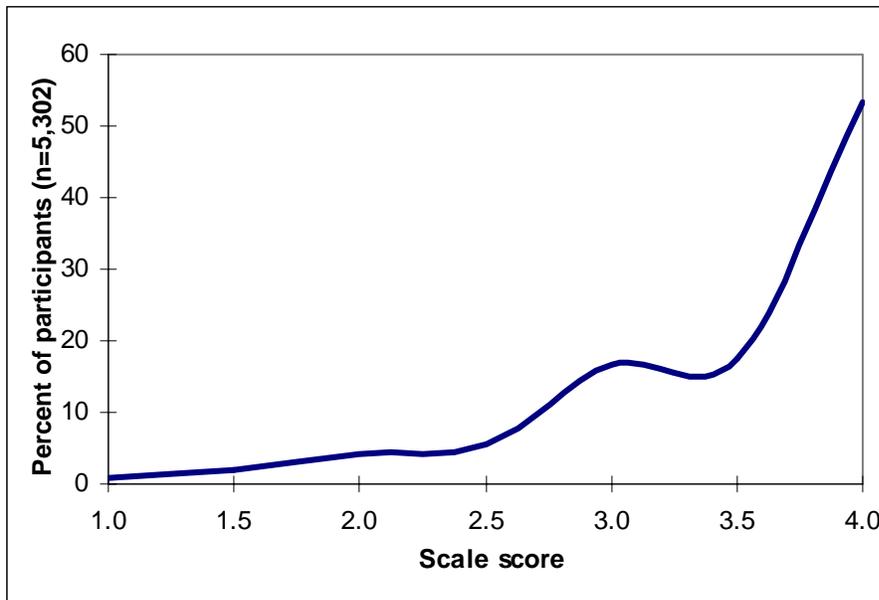
The Interactions with Staff scale was computed to range from one to four, with four indicating that on average participants strongly agreed with the following statements:

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 th Percentile	75 th Percentile	Maximum
0.92	3.34	0.69	1	3.00	3.89	4



Exposure to New Experiences

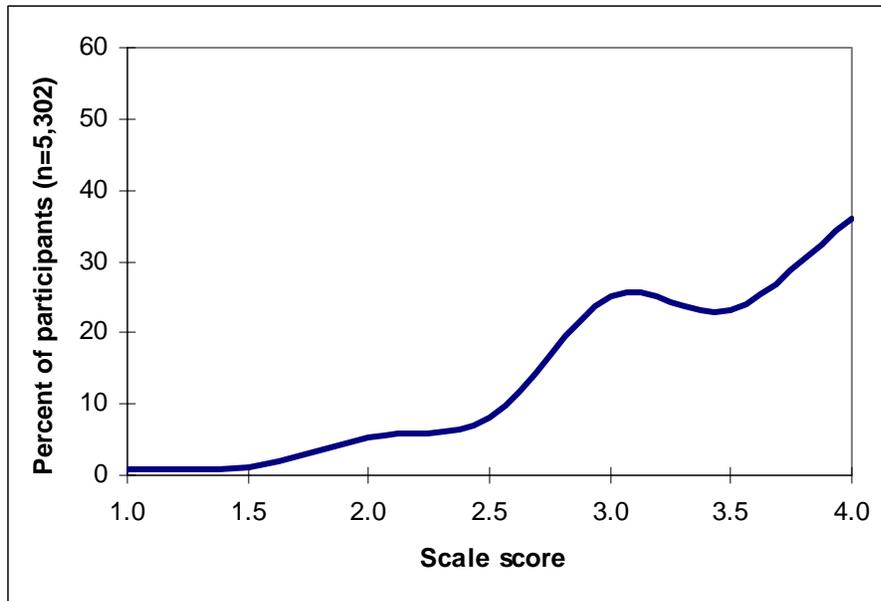
The Exposure to New Experiences scale was computed to range from one to four, with four indicating that on average participants strongly agreed with the following statements:

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 th Percentile	75 th Percentile	Maximum
0.77	3.17	0.66	1	2.80	3.60	4



Sense of Belonging

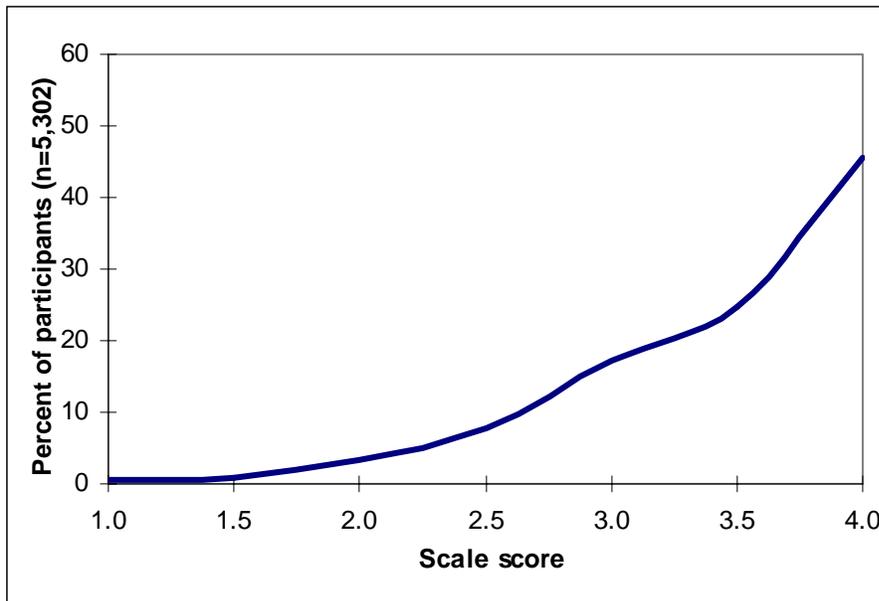
The Sense of Belonging scale was computed to range from one to four, with four indicating that on average participants strongly agreed with the following statements:

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 th Percentile	75 th Percentile	Maximum
0.83	3.35	0.63	1	3.00	3.83	4



Interactions with Peers

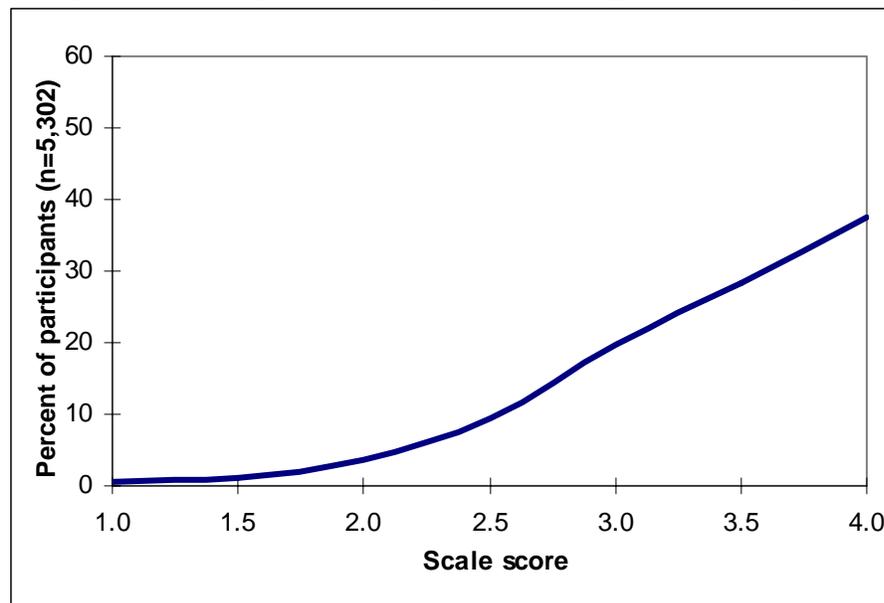
The Interactions with Peers scale was computed to range from one to four, with four indicating that on average participants strongly agreed with the following statements:

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 th Percentile	75 th Percentile	Maximum
0.83	3.27	0.62	1	3.00	3.83	4



Prosocial Behavior

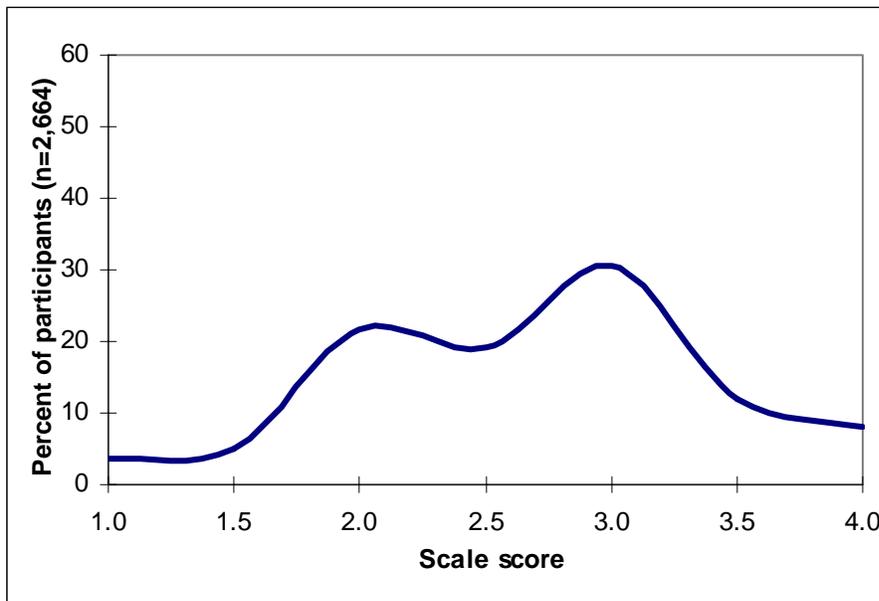
The Prosocial Behavior scale was computed to range from one to four, with four indicating that a participant engaged in the behavior at least six times over the past month, and one indicating that they never engaged in the behavior. The survey asked middle and high school participants to report on the following behaviors:

In this program I...

- Helped someone stay out of a fight
- Told other students how I felt when they did something I liked
- Cooperated with others in completing a task
- Told other students how I felt when they upset me
- Protected someone from a bully
- Gave someone a compliment
- Helped other students solve a problem

Descriptive Statistics:

Alpha	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	25 th Percentile	75 th Percentile	Maximum
0.80	2.50	0.70	1	2.00	3.00	4



Appendix C

Technical Properties of Observation Scales

Evaluators conducted 10 to 12 activity observations in each of the 15 in-depth study sites. Evaluators used PSA's OST Observation Instrument to conduct these structured 15 minute observations. In total, observation data represent 199 independent observations and 33 activity co-observations with an inter-rater reliability of 0.72. Each observation indicator was rated from one to seven, with seven meaning that the indicator was highly evident and consistent throughout the observation. The four scales described below are based on the SAFE (Sequenced, Active, Focused, Explicit) model of program quality features identified by Durlak & Weissberg (2007) in their meta-analysis of after-school programs.

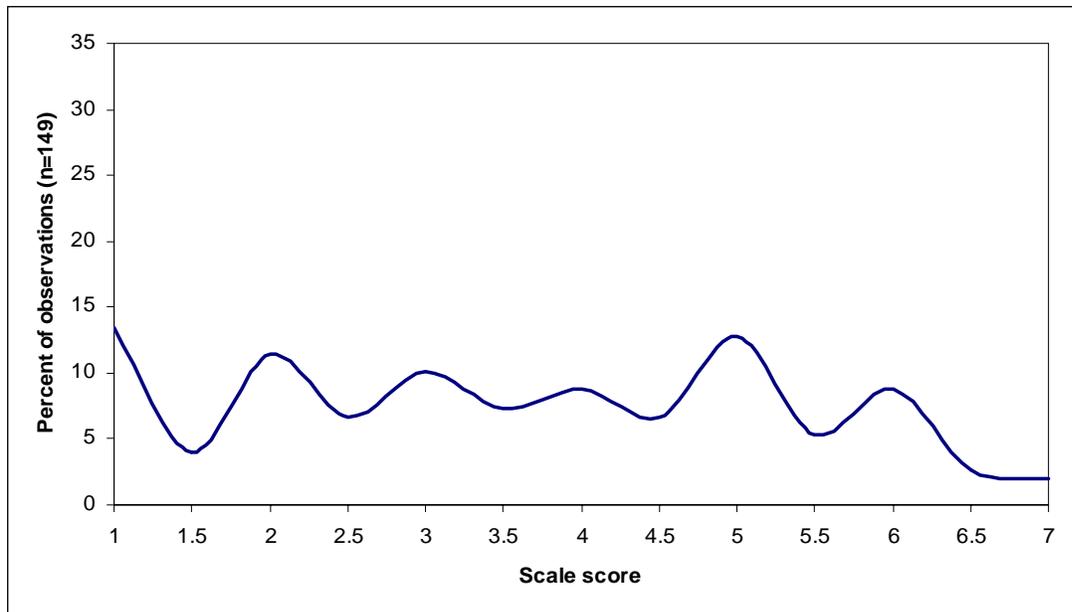
Sequenced: The activity builds on skills and content to achieve goals.

The Sequenced scale combines ratings from the following indicators:

- Activity involves the practice or a progression of skills
- Staff challenge youth to move beyond their current level of competency
- Activity requires analytical thinking
- Staff employ varied teaching strategies
- Activity challenges students intellectually, creatively, developmentally, and/or physically
- Staff assist youth without taking control
- Staff verbally recognize youth efforts and accomplishments

Descriptive Statistics:

Alpha	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	25 th Percentile	75 th Percentile	Maximum
0.92	3.38	1.69	1.00	2.00	4.71	7.00



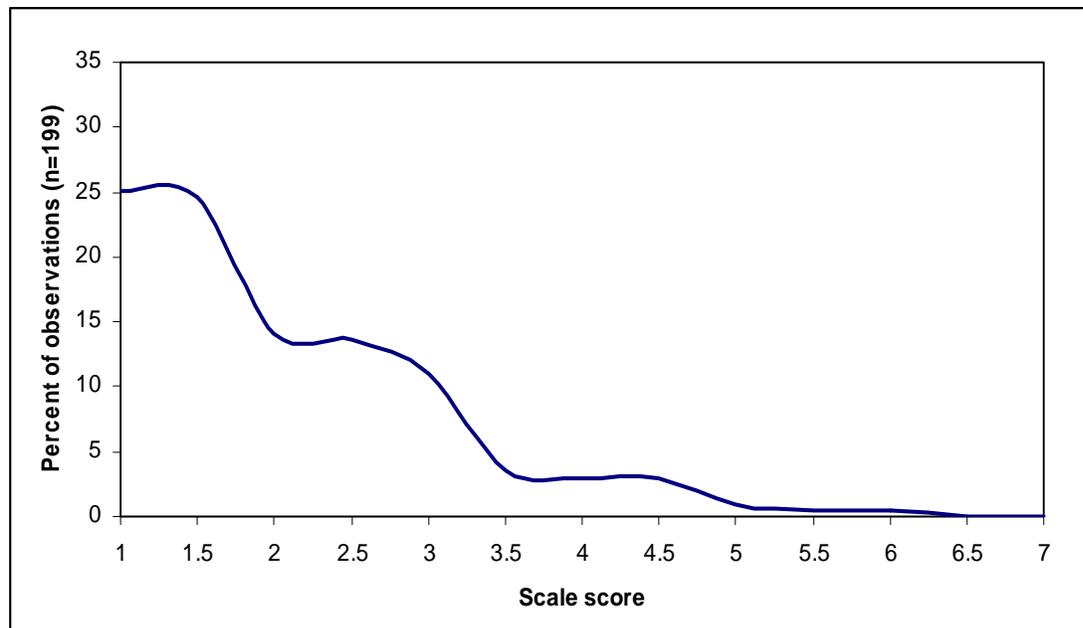
Active: The activity offers youth opportunities to actively participate in learning.

The Active scale combines ratings from the following indicators:

- Staff plan for and ask youth to work together
- Youth are collaborative
- Youth take leadership responsibilities and roles.
- Youth have opportunities to make meaningful choices
- Youth assist one another
- Youth contribute opinions, ideas and concerns to discussions
- Staff encourage youth to share their ideas, opinions and concerns
- Staff ask youth to expand upon their answers and ideas

Descriptive Statistics:

Alpha	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	25 th Percentile	75 th Percentile	Maximum
0.75	1.95	1.04	1.00	1.00	2.50	6.50



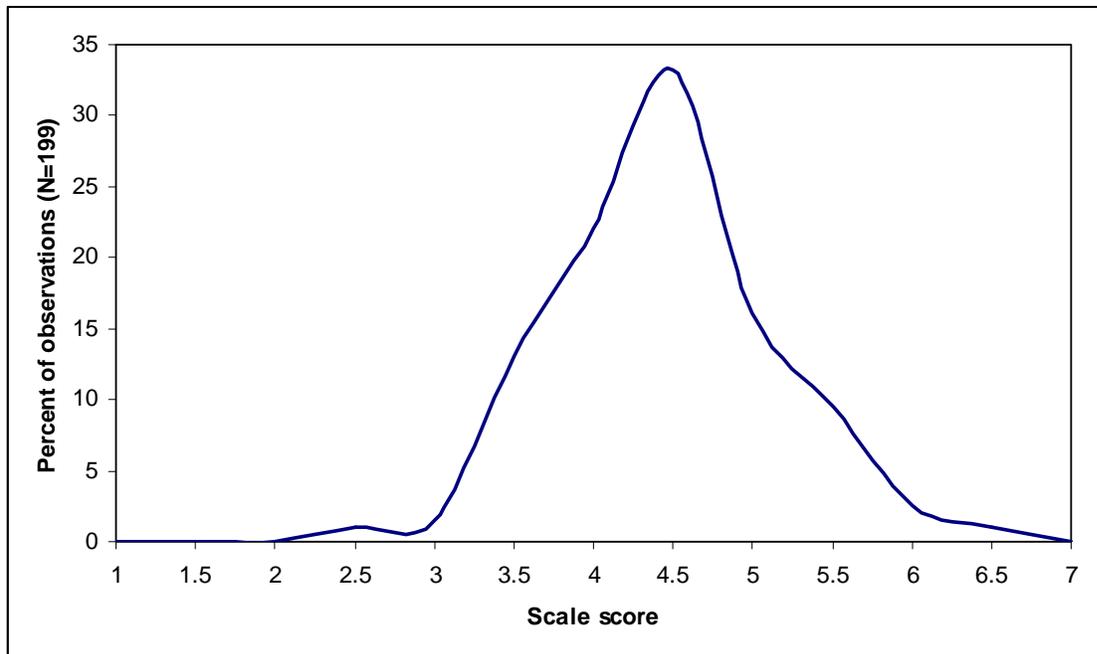
Focused: The activity focuses on developing positive relationships among youth and with staff.

The Focused scale combines ratings from the following indicators:

- Youth show positive affect to staff
- Youth are friendly and relaxed with one another
- Youth respect one another
- Staff show positive affect toward youth
- Staff guide for positive peer interactions
- Staff use positive behavior management techniques
- Staff are equitable and inclusive

Descriptive Statistics:

Alpha	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	25 th Percentile	75 th Percentile	Maximum
0.75	4.28	0.68	2.13	3.88	4.62	6.25



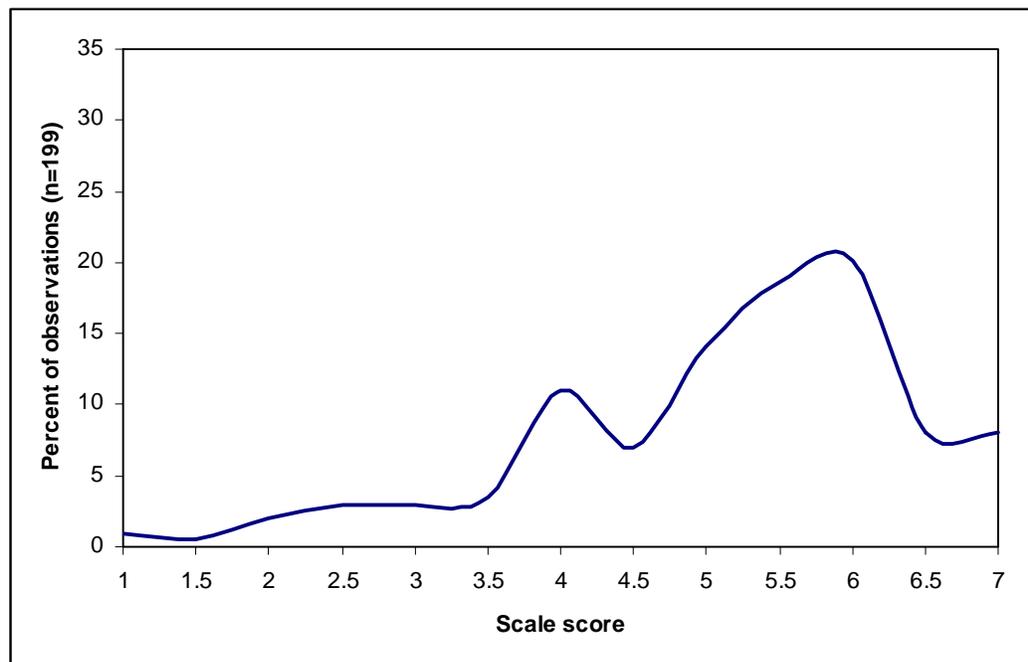
Explicit: The activity explicitly targets specific learning and social development goals

The Explicit Activity scale combines ratings from the following indicators:

- Activity is well organized
- Youth are on task
- Staff communicate goals, purposes, and expectations
- Youth listen actively and attentively to peers and staff
- Staff attentively listen to and observes youth

Descriptive Statistics:

Alpha	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	25 th Percentile	75 th Percentile	Maximum
0.91	4.96	1.27	1.00	4.20	5.80	7.00



Appendix D

Alignment of Program Director Survey Activity Data and DYCD Online Activity Categories

Two sources of information about OST program activities were available to the evaluation: a series of questions about the frequency and scope of various activities in the program director survey, and activity data entered by program directors in DYCD Online. In order to assess the alignment of these two data sources in describing OST programming, evaluators conducted correlational analyses.

Program Director Survey Activity Indices

For 41 different activities, the program director survey asked directors to report: (1) whether the activity was offered at all; (2) whether the activity was offered in every month that the program was open; (3) whether all or most youth participated in the activity; and (4) how frequently youth typically participated in the activity. Based on these responses, evaluators calculated a score for each activity, and then averaged activity scores within a category to form an intensity index score. Six activity indices were created based on these survey data to examine the extent to which OST programs offered activities to support participants' growth in specific content areas: academics, arts, youth development, physical activity, civic engagement, and career development. The following activity components made up the six indices:

- *Academic*: homework, group instruction, organized reading, recreational reading, organized writing, training in computer skills, study skills, math games, learning games, and field trips to high schools
- *Arts*: music, dance, drama, visual arts, creative writing, field trips to performances, and opportunities to meet and talk with professional artists
- *Physical*: organized team sports, organized individual sports, fitness classes and activities, martial arts instruction, and free time for physical play
- *Career development*: career exploration, field trips to local businesses, orientation to job search, internships, and job shadowing

- *Civic*: service projects in the program, service projects in the neighborhood, mock government/elections, simulation games, discussion of issues, events, or problems in your community, and discussion of current events
- *Youth development*: learning about different cultures, discussions about diversity issues, organized social events, mentoring, unstructured time for socializing, life skills, conflict resolution training, health or nutrition education, and peer discussions

These activity indices were constructed using a six-point scale, ranging from zero (not offered) to six (all or most youth participate throughout the year.) Programs earned one point for simply offering the activity at any point during the school year and an additional point if most or all of the youth in the program participated in the particular activity. Programs earned a point if the activity was offered throughout the year (i.e., every month the program was open). Programs scored one point if youth participated in the activity for a few hours a month; two points if youth participated in the activity for one to three hours a week; and three points if youth participated in the activity for four to five hours a week. A program scoring six points for a particular activity would offer the activity each month that the program was open and have most or all of the youth enrolled in the program participating for at least four to five hours a week.

DYCD Online Activity Categories

Evaluators also examined activity data entered by program directors in DYCD Online. Program directors were asked to categorize each activity they offered throughout the year in one of 17 primary activity categories identified in DYCD Online. DYCD did not provide guidance or definitions for assigning activities to categories. Evaluators collapsed these 17 primary activity types from DYCD Online into six categories aligned to the extent possible with the survey indices: academic enhancement, arts and culture, recreation, career and work, community building, and life skills. The following activity types, as listed in DYCD Online, were included in each category:¹⁰

- *Academic enhancement*: academic enhancement, homework help, computer instruction, literacy, and numeracy
- *Arts and culture*: arts and culture
- *Recreation*: recreation, unstructured physical recreation, and structured physical recreation

¹⁰ Evaluators excluded the following activity types from categorization: snack/supper, DOE extended day, and holiday programming.

- *Career and work*: career awareness and school to work
- *Community building*: community building
- *Life skills*: life skills and financial literacy

Alignment Between Data Sources

In order to check the approximate alignment between the data sources, evaluators analyzed correlations between similar program director activity indices and the average number of hours of service programs offered in each of the DYCD Online activity categories. These correlations were limited to the four categories with the most closely matched content. As shown in the table below, all of the program director indices and the DYCD Online activity categories whose content approximately matched were correlated with one another. These analyses revealed moderate but statistically significant correlations for academics, arts, and physical activity/recreation, but only a small correlation for the career development activity index.

Program Director Index	DYCD Online Activity Category	Pearson's r	p-value
Academics	Academic enhancement	.34	.00
Arts	Arts and culture	.33	.00
Physical	Recreation	.37	.00
Career development	Career and work	.10	.01

In Year 2, evaluators chose to rely on the program director survey indices to remain consistent with Year 1 analyses and because of concerns about the definitions of DYCD Online activity categories, as described above. In future years, evaluators will continue to work with DYCD to refine these activity categories and improve the alignment between data sources.