

Attachment B

The Meaning and Importance of Out-of-School Time

Summary of Discussion Following Dr. Marczak's Presentation

Dr. Marczak's presentation highlighted research findings about the amount of time available to youth during non-school hours and implications of their time-use choices. A video clip featuring Dr. Karen Pittman, Executive Director of the Forum for Youth Investment, provided additional research evidence confirming the importance of youth opportunities for learning and development during out-of-school hours. Commissioners broke into small groups to share reactions and identify questions raised by research.

Small group discussions revealed surprise for some about the amount of discretionary time available to youth during their waking hours. Key questions regarding youth needs for out-of-school time opportunities were created by groups and are summarized below:

How do youth and families decide?

- Self-selection criteria: how do youth decide if they will participate in OST opportunities and what influences the type of program they choose?
- What's out there in terms of numbers of programs and youth participating?
- Over vs. under scheduling: Do young people really need structured activities? Are there informal support networks that serve the connection purpose?
- Barriers-What are barriers to participation and how do we reduce them?

How do we meet the needs and engage young people?

- How do we re-engage disengaged youth? Increase youth involvement?
- Today's reality: How to accommodate family/community/societal changes through OST opportunities for youth. How do these influences affect youth needs?
- Special Populations: What are the needs of special youth populations and what are cultural, logistical, and program implications in providing OST supports and opportunities to these youth?
- Program Types/Structure: What types of structure are most appealing to youth and how can OST settings structure programs to optimize learning and development?
- Location: What role do site and geographic location play in youth participation?
- Communities: How can Communities utilize their social capital to ensure youth have access to OST supports and opportunities?

What are the issues we have to consider?

- Finances-What are others doing to cover program costs?
- Policies that support OST - What are others doing?
- Training for staff - How do we support the field?
- Marketing – How do we make the case youth and families?

Attachment C

The Meaning and Importance of Out-of-School Time

Summary of Discussion of Key Issues

After sharing areas of interest and reactions to research findings, Commissioners identified key issues involved in OST and topics that warrant further consideration by the Commission. Several themes emerged through small group discussions, which were summarized in bullet points on a flip chart for large group consideration and a first round prioritization.

Communications: Framing & Strategic Marketing

- Do we make a case based on risks/negative incentive vs. positive youth development?
- How to get buy-in from corporations, government and community?
- How to sell idea to youth and parents? How to market OST?
- How to involve youth in marketing quality programs?
- Build value statement around the connection between skills learned through OST opportunities and adult strengths
- Build powerful case statement—involving youth in quality OST is powerful investment in successful development
- Identify key audiences and build public will

Funding Policy and Strategies

Current Situation

- Current and past state/ federal funding levels
- Cost per child for average program
- Geographic differences in cost
- Impact of cuts in school budgets, Parks and Recreation programs
- Impacts of cuts to program funding (After School Enrichment grants)
- Community access to a range of resources (besides funding) to make OST opportunities available to youth

What are others doing?

- Leverage other resources like volunteers, sponsorships
- Youth Funders Consortium
- Bonding possibilities
- Local levy funding
- Lottery
- Fee for service and sliding scale
- Finance project possibilities from other states
- Reward best quality with most resources

- Share facilities, co-locate with partners

Policy

- Need to stabilize long term funding
- Identify differences in policy issues for different types of geographical locations
- Profile of how current OST system of resources fits and works together
- Policy models in other states and nations to inform our work

Access Issues

- What are barriers to participation and how do we reduce them?
- Transportation
- Location of programs
- On-line resources versus the digital divide
- Issues of small communities-under 2,500 population—600 of these in MN
- How to increase youth involvement in OST programs and measure gains
- Re-engage disenfranchised populations, like new Americans and low income youth

Quality and Best Practices

- How do we support the field to obtain the best quality programs?
- How to measure outcomes and streamline evaluation
- Service learning
- Cross-age youth helping youth opportunities
- Challenge, high structure, supportive adults
- How important is program structure?
- Need to increase program options to broaden choices for all youth
- Programs should include options for youth service to communities

Special Needs and Special Populations

- Who is engaged and taking part?
- What about new populations in community, immigrant groups?
- What about rural communities with limited resources?
- Be aware of low income family resource limitations
- Cultural programs -- critical to engage new Americans and immigrant populations

Attachment D

Requests for Further Information from Staff

Following discussion about issues to be prioritized for further study by the Commission, Commissioners were asked to think about needs for additional information. They identified needs in five areas summarized below:

Funding

Sources of Program Funding

- How are typical OST funding plans in communities structured?
- What are the contributions from state, federal, local, and private sources?
- What combinations of resources aside from funding are available to provide OST opportunities? In-kind, volunteer, public-private partnerships?

Cost and Payment Options

- What is the average cost per youth for OST program participation, including staffing, training, transportation, education, supplies, and equipment?
- What is a reasonable approach to fees for OST programs? Are there models for fees, funding, and scholarships?

Communications/Marketing

- What is the cost of not providing OST programs for youth?
- What are benefits to youth for participation in OST programs? Social, Economic, Educational
- Need a strategy to make the case that OST programs are a financially, morally, intellectually smart investment—engaging hearts, minds, wallets
- Investing in OST is a “win-win”—youth increase chances to advance their healthy growth and development and to become contributing adults

Accessibility

- Where are gaps in access to OST supports and opportunities for MN youth? Create a geographical roadmap that outlines resources and gaps.
- What are all of the elements that make up the OST ‘system’ in MN communities?
- How do program options differ with location?
- What programs successfully address the changing demographics of MN youth population? How is diversity embraced and accepted?
- For which areas and youth is transportation a major issue in accessing OST activities?
- What types of facilities house OST activities? How are fees structured per type of facility?
- What are major access gaps for immigrant youth?

Quality and Best Practices

- How many OST programs are sponsored by Community Education and what types of programs do they offer?
- Quality of OST programs matters for youth outcomes—What are research findings to support and confirm necessary elements for positive youth development?
- What are differences in program offerings based on geographical location?
- What types of programs successfully address changing demographics of MN's youth population? What programs attract diverse youth?
- What kind of support, training, etc. is there for program staff?

Policy Options

- Identify existing policies impacting OST at state and local levels.
- Recent efforts to impact/create policies for OST programs in other states and countries?
- What are elements of OST-friendly youth policies---including volunteer and Park/Recreation programs
- Are there policies in other locations that have been evaluated for effectiveness in addressing OST issues?