



# *Recommendations for High School Out-of-School Time Programs Fortified by **Teen Perspectives and Experiences***

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### **INTRODUCTION**

In 2012, the Wallace Foundation awarded \$765,000 to the City of Grand Rapids to strengthen its efforts to provide poor, urban youngsters with high-quality afterschool programs to produce better outcomes for youth. The City through Our Community's Children and the community collaboration of the Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) Network is using this grant to build a data system, collectively track defined outcomes for children; strengthen program quality; offer best practices training to youth workers and build clearer pathways for career advancement and professional development. In addition, this grant will look more closely at Out-of-School Time (OST) activities for high school teens to see how to actively engage teens in developing programs that will help them on the pathway to college, work and life.

### **PURPOSE**

This assessment aims to capture a point-in-time snapshot of high school OST programs facilitated by members of the ELO which include school-based as well as community-based organizations (CBO) located in Grand Rapids, Michigan. In particular, it will offer program offerings, attendance rates, potential barriers to participation, recruitment strategies, and staff qualifications and training.

This assessment begins with the premise that OST programs are of benefit to those they serve. It does not seek to justify the existence of these programs. It does not identify every program and every activity as a landscape mapping exercise would do in listing a multitude of activities such as private lessons of every variety, sports, church groups, social clubs, etc. Instead, this assessment will illustrate specific examples of programs that exist and more importantly, amplify the voices of students that participate in them. Recommendations are offered for program improvement on activities, recruitment and retention strategies, and staffing.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This assessment focuses on OST programs within the ELO Network specifically designed for high school teens in Grand Rapids, Michigan. It includes a literature review of best practices, data from focus groups, surveys and interviews with teens, high school principals, site coordinators, and providers of service. This report will be presented to the ELO Network Leadership Council, city and school officials, and be included in a final report to the Wallace Foundation. The areas assessed include: **Program Offerings, Teen Participation, Recruitment Strategies, and Staff Characteristics.**

Members of the ELO Network that offer OST activities for high school students occur within school buildings as well as in the community during the school year and in the summer. Activities include: arts and crafts, civic engagement, community service projects, leadership classes, credit recovery, tutoring, photography, graphic design, fabric art, skill building workshops, writing workshops, sexuality education, open computer lab, talent showcases, dining etiquette, reading clubs, employment, board games,

pottery class, vocal music lessons, basketball, swimming, and social engagement activities. The variety of offerings reflects the diversity in interests that teens have during this developmental stage of their lives.

OST program administrators and supervisors listed the *Top 3 Characteristics that All Afterschool Programs Should Provide* as: 1.) Safe Place, tied for 2.) Qualified Staff and Life Skills and 3.) Qualified Curriculum. High school principals listed the *Top 3 Characteristics that All Afterschool Programs Should Provide* as: 1.) Academics, 2.) Qualified Staff and tied for 3.) Food, Life Skills and a Safe Place. In addition, the top two areas OST program administrators and supervisors indicated that they promoted were: Leadership Opportunities and Positive Relationships.

Meanwhile, high school teens view the afterschool space as something that should look and feel uniquely different from the mandatory activities taking place during the school day. They want to socialize and meet new friends, form informal, appropriate relationships with adults that have expertise in a variety of areas of interest, discover and develop new skills, prepare for the future, participate in activities that are project-based within spaces designated especially for them, and experience activities that hold cultural, social and educational significance within the community. Some of these activities that teens say they want cannot exist without the top characteristics listed by program providers and school administrators. While teens and adults emphasize different aspects of OST programs, they are not mutually exclusive. Both teens and adults need to explore together how to best improve the overall program experience.

Programmatic offerings and outcomes, grant requirements, staff expectations, participant input and leadership roles all affect a student's ability and desire to participate. The greatest obstacles reported were: *Transportation* and *Lack of Awareness that a Program Exists*, which require targeted interventions. Decisions that address attendance impact every aspect of an OST program. It's not uncommon for an OST program whether in a school building or in the community to have 20 – 40 students a day participating. Some attendance tallies can shift per day of the week or per program activity. Based on site visit observations, interviews, and survey data, OST programs that do not require consecutive days of attendance but offer project-based activities tend to attract more students.

Thirteen out of the 14 (93%) CBOs listed *Lack of Awareness that a Program Exists* as one of the top two barriers of participation in OST programs for high school teens. Likewise, 6 out of the 7 (86%) students that participated in the focus group reported *Lack of Awareness that a Program Exists* as a barrier to participation. OST staff and students all listed similar recruitment strategies they implemented: flyers, posters, social media, lunchroom visits, classroom visits, in-school intercom announcements, community events, etc. Teen Activity Leaders could serve a critical role in word-of-mouth recruiting and marketing. These teen advocates would have the most experience in OST programs and could speak directly to their peers about the programs' benefits. What needs more discussion, with the assistance of public relations and marketing experts, is the measure and the frequency in which these strategies occur.

Through this assessment, encounters with front-line staff of OST programs were extremely positive. Six of nine staff members or program coordinators reported having obtained a college degree in business,

marketing, criminal justice and art; three staff members did not have a college degree. All had previous experience in the youth development field. Staff members were very excited and motivated by the work they were doing but especially emboldened by the teens. They exhibited a good mixture of classroom control while embracing their understanding of youth culture. Creating a connection between the level of program offerings, as in project-based activities that build upon youth interests, and staff members having positions that are full-time with benefits could retain staff as well as produce desired outcomes for youth.

The following recommendations are offered based on research, interviews and surveys in four areas: Program Offerings, Teen Participation, Recruitment Strategies, and Staff Characteristics.

#### Program Offerings:

- OST programs should be reflective of the needs and wants of the teens they hope to attract
- Teen Activity Leaders should be employed to ensure leadership opportunities and on-going youth input around program development with an added benefit of fostering workforce development skills
- Activities should be a balance between structure and flexibility integrating choice within curriculum
- Program activities should be project-based and promote leadership development with fewer activities that feel broad in nature and are time-fillers
- Teens need and want to socialize with their peers and prepare for their future with college preparatory classes and employment opportunities after school
- All OST programs should incorporate field trips that are educational, entertaining and foster community engagement
- Food in the form of a light nutritious meal should be a constant “staple” and teens should be allowed to give input on food choices
- A YPQA should occur in all ELO Network Provider Programs

#### Teen Participation:

- OST providers need to first address teen engagement to sustain participation
- OST programs should focus more on the quality of program offerings
- Marketing strategies or awareness campaigns help boost visibility and credibility
- OST providers should prioritize transportation needs of their students

#### Recruitment Strategies:

- Recruitment strategies must be continual, intentional and targeted
- A marketing plan and increased funding to support a plan is necessary

- Training by marketing professionals specializing in teen culture should facilitate seminars for OST providers and students to develop a marketing plan
- Teen leaders need to be utilized as recruiters
- Teachers, counselors, principals, community leaders should formally nominate students to become OST program participants

#### Staff Characteristics:

- Staff must establish ground rules, communicate and enforce consequences when rules are broken, and reinforce positive behaviors
- Staff that are emotionally supportive and are keyed into youth culture help build trust and gain their respect
- Staff should have a degree or a combination of education and experience in specialized project-based activities
- Staff positions should be full-time with benefits in order to recruit the best and retain the extraordinary
- Staff should be provided free and on-going professional development courses

#### **METHODOLOGY**

This assessment used several tools of data collection, both qualitative and quantitative among different population groups in order to assess the current state of OST activities for high school teens and explore how this information can be used for maximum results. Data was collected from a Grand Rapids Public Schools' High School Principals Survey (14); in-depth interviews and site visits with Learning Opportunities For Teens (LOFT) Site Coordinators (3), LOFT Activity Leaders (3), LOFT Student Participants (7), Program Coordinators at three CBOs – West Michigan Center for Arts and Technology, YMCA and Cook Arts Academy and students attending CBO programs (3); surveys and a focus group discussion with teens participating in OST programs at school and at CBOs (7); and an on-line survey with OST Providers located within CBOs (14). For internal consistent reliability, answers were compiled from various sources and were compared and contrasted. Direct observation, anecdotal data and the experience of the assessor were also incorporated to support the findings. In addition, a literature review and technical assistance from the Wallace Foundation were used to support this work. See *Appendix A for an overview of the methodology and Appendix B for the survey tools.*

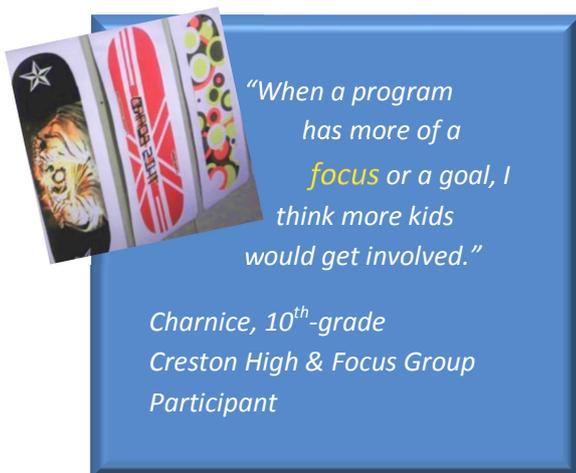
#### **KEY FINDINGS**

Most of the studies on high school OST best practices reported similar findings. The most comprehensive description of best practices was within *Engaging Older Youth in Out-of-School Time: Applying Research to Practice Inquiry to Impact (Little, March 2011)*. This report states that highly effective OST programs for high school teens have opportunities for young people to take on leadership

roles, they meet the developmental needs of older youth, staff demonstrate effective group management and positive relationships are developed.<sup>i</sup> All of which are described below in more detail.

Opportunities for leadership take the form of teen-led activities where teens can make decisions and are given responsibilities. Programs that meet the developmental needs of older youth are those that involve problem-solving activities and allow teens to try out new ideas in a safe place where they feel respected. Staff that exhibit effective group management do so by communicating expectations, rules and the consequences of poor choices. Programs that promote supportive relationships have staff that are well-versed in youth culture and where participants are able to form healthy and appropriate friendships with one another.<sup>ii</sup> How well our programs incorporate these elements can be found in the following 4 key areas.

The key findings of this assessment focused on 4 areas: **Program Offerings**, **Teen Participation**, **Recruitment Strategies**, and **Staff Characteristics**. Under each key finding is a summary of the current reality, data that was gathered to help support this reality, what the literature says about best practices in the field, and a list recommendations aimed to bolster the outcomes in these main categories.



### **Key Finding #1 - Program Offerings**

OST activities for high school students occur within school buildings as well as in the community. Activities include: arts and crafts, civic engagement, community service projects, leadership classes, credit recovery, tutoring, photography, graphic design, fabric art, skill building workshops, writers workshops, sexuality education, open computer lab, talent showcases, dining etiquette, reading clubs, employment, board games, pottery class, vocal music lessons, basketball, swimming, and social engagement activities. The variety of offerings reflects the diversity of interests that teens have during this developmental stage of their lives; a time when

this population is discovering who they are. They are learning how to prioritize and are trying to find the balance between over-committing and under-committing. They are also expecting returns on their investment of time.<sup>iii</sup> Two out of 3 student participants involved in a community-based organization program said “Yes” their program meets their developmental needs and 1 said “Somewhat.”

Students that participated in the focus group discussed OST programs they considered to be successful in meeting their needs and they specifically mentioned Girl Scouts, the GET (Girls Empowering Together) Club and sporting teams. They not only spoke highly of staff members that lead these programs, but they also stressed that afterschool programs should have a focus in a specific area and should not have as much of an assortment of activities in which to choose.

“When an afterschool program is so broad no one wants to do it. People don’t have a sense of what’s really happening. And it’s not tailored to the people who are going,” said Kelsi Jones, focus group participant and an 11<sup>th</sup>-grade student at The Potter’s House Christian High School. She continued by saying, “[A program] that has a specific goal; people generally go there with people who they consider friends with similar interests. It’s generally something they’re more passionate about and they want to know more about. They take it more seriously and are more dedicated.”

These sentiments align with a Harvard Family Research Project report commissioned by the Wallace Foundation. It surveyed high-performing OST programs designed for high school students and they found that they were:

- Organized more around content and particular skills older youth want to learn
- Gave youth more responsibility through job-like programming, apprenticeships, and mentoring
- Provided formal and informal opportunities to explore and prepare for college and other post-graduation plans<sup>iv</sup>

To further support the effectiveness of these program structures, two additional students that participated in the focus group had this to say:

“I’m a senior and I don’t know what’s going to happen,” said David Nguyen, focus group participant and 12<sup>th</sup>-grade student at Wyoming High. “Why we go to high school is because we want to get an education but it’s beyond an education during senior year. I find myself stressing a lot and I find myself wanting an afterschool program that would provide me with college preparation, resume writing; something that will help me decide what is it that I want to do after high school.”

“Each and every time I go to practice I learn something new and I better my skills in some sort of way,” said Robert Arrington, focus group participant, 3-sport athlete and 11<sup>th</sup>-grade student at Central High School. “There might be kids that don’t attend afterschool programs because they’re not going to better their skills.”

It is clear that students who participate in OST programs have specific motivations to do so. Are program providers clear on what these motivations are? The answer to this question could assist in program development and could even be a catalyst for increased participation. Focus group students, LOFT students and the CBO student participants were asked what motivated them to attend an afterschool program. Below is an **uncensored** and **unfiltered** list on what motivates them to attend, **in their words**:

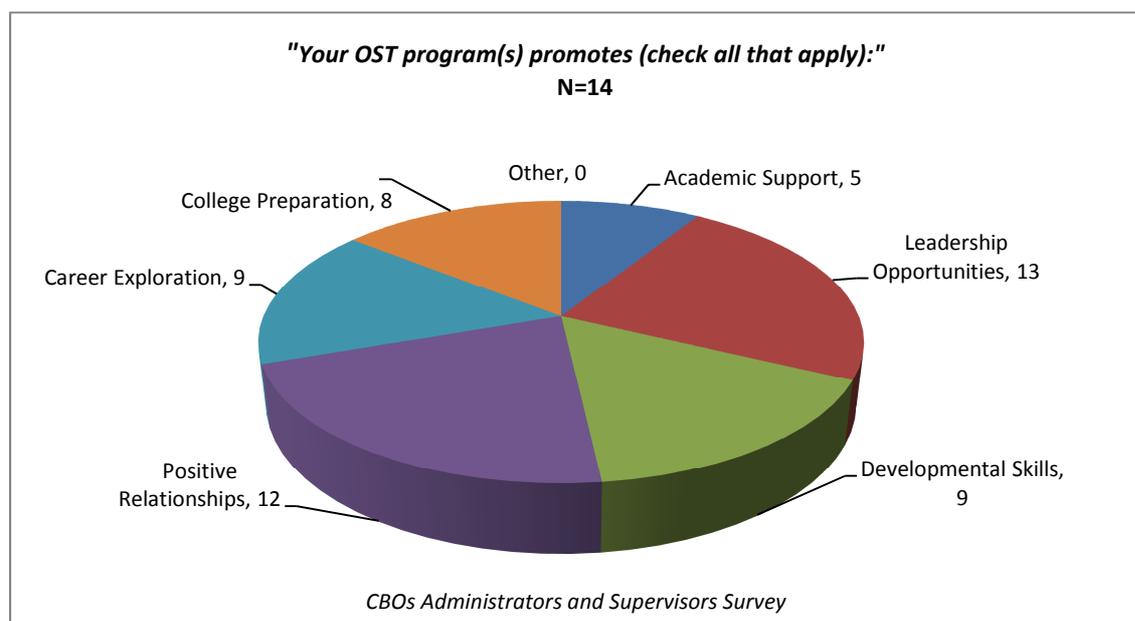
*If it sounds fun; field trips, food, activities, games, relationships; other friends that go, food; the benefits, social interactions, field trips, vendors, food; holding my attention; awards, recognition, self-motivation, encouragement from others; social benefits, grades, leisure event, sports, grades to catch up on; sports, boredom, homework help or to just chill; fun, some don’t want to go home, something to do with my time; food, music, chill with friends; friends are there; reward out of it, adventure, learning something new ###  
**Source: Raw data from Focus Group Participant Survev, LOFT Participant Survev & CBO Participant***

When students were asked to communicate what was missing from the OST programs they attended and how can they be improved, here's an **uncensored** and **unfiltered** list of those responses, **in their words**:

*N/A; the girls; nothing; more people; ACT tutoring, field trips- skating, museums, colleges; field trips, college prep, career packets; college prep; nothing; more equipment to do things, vendors – music, cooking; more people, location change, easier to join, less homework ###*  
**Source: Raw Data from LOFT Participant Survey & CBO Participant Survey**

The key themes that we can take away from these two data sets are that students in an OST space must have an environment where they can create and nurture positive relationships with their peers, they want to benefit from the availability of academic help, they want food, they want to learn new things, they want to be prepared for college and/or work and they want to explore art and culture through experiential learning outside of a building's setting; particularly if the OST program is within a school.

OST program administrators and supervisors in the community were asked about the kinds of programs they promote.



The top two areas OST program administrators and supervisors indicated that they promoted were: *Leadership Opportunities* and *Positive Relationships*. *Career Exploration* and *College Preparation* ranked third on the list and although these activities exist within their programs, perhaps providers may want to increase the frequency of these activities to better align with the developmental needs of high school teens.

High School Principals were also asked to weigh in with their opinions and perceptions about the OST programs in their buildings. 12 out of the 14 (86%) administrators that completed the survey indicated

that they would like to have more input into what happens within the afterschool programs in their building. Furthermore, they recommended the following improvements: more qualified academic tutors, additional technology, more collaboration with the advisers to know exactly what they are doing, higher expectations for attendance and academic output, and staffed with more highly qualified teachers. When asked to list their *Top 3 Characteristics that All Afterschool Programs Should Provide*, the top 3 mentions were: 1.) Academics, 2.) Qualified Staff and tied for 3.) Food, Life Skills and a Safe Place. This information is helpful for Learning Opportunities For Teens (LOFT) staff because they can use principals as resources in these three areas. Principals obviously are focused on academic gains and 93% of them responded by saying “Yes” or “Somewhat” to perceiving OST programs as an extension of the school day. However, teens are saying that the OST space must also look and feel different from what they are received during the school day.

“I feel like [afterschool] needs not to be part of school. People don’t want to go if it’s like school. A continuation of the school day... like no one wants that,” said Kelsi Jones, focus group participant and an 11<sup>th</sup>-grade student at The Potter’s House Christian High School.

If this is indeed a sentiment held by many teens, it is imperative that OST programs whether in a school building or outside of one incorporate teens in program development and implementation. Paid Teen Activity Leaders will not only ensure an authentic and functioning leadership structure but they would also provide on-going program development as well as the development of 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce skills. This supports what the research says in *Engaging Older Youth: Program and City-Level Strategies to Support Sustained Participation in Out-of-School Time (April, 2010)*. This report indicated that the number of leadership opportunities offered by a program was the single strongest predictor of program retention.<sup>v</sup> In addition, this supports a recommendation from the Grand Rapids Youth Master Plan, based on a youth survey and community input, to support youth career readiness within youth development programs as an indicator for young people to be successful in college, work and life.<sup>vi</sup>

What is equally important is to ensure that all OST programs in the ELO Network participate in the Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA). Efforts by the Quality Committee of the ELO Network are underway to do just that. As a funding requirement, those receiving 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center dollars are required to perform a YPQA but those that aren’t have the option. Out of the 6 site visits conducted for this assessment, 5 out of the 6 reported that they had or had plans to use the YPQA. The YPQA is a research-validated and field-tested tool designed to evaluate the quality of youth programs and identify staff training needs.<sup>vii</sup> This tool measures the quality of youth experiences within a program from its foundational base of physical and emotional safety to a higher level of engagement through youth voice, choice, planning and reflection. Once assessments are done (self and external), the program provider then creates an improvement plan that addresses areas of change that need to be implemented. In the years that the ELO Network has implemented the YPQA, the area needing greater improvement is in youth engagement, meaning that youth have a say in program activities and are active participants in the program planning.

It is clear that not all afterschool contexts promote developmentally powerful experiences.<sup>viii</sup>

Therefore, this process is essential in determining the effectiveness of not only the program activities, but the program as a whole.

#### Program Offerings Recommendations Recap:

- OST programs should be reflective of the needs and wants of the teens they hope to attract
- Teen Activity Leaders should be employed to ensure leadership opportunities and on-going youth input around program development with an added benefit of fostering workforce development skills
- Activities should be a balance between structure and flexibility integrating choice within curriculum
- Program activities should be project-based and promote leadership development with fewer activities that feel broad in nature and are time-fillers
- Teens need and want to socialize with their peers and prepare for their future with college preparatory classes and employment opportunities after school
- All OST programs should incorporate field trips that are educational, entertaining and foster community engagement
- Food in the form of a light nutritious meal should be a constant “staple” and teens should be allowed to give input on food choices
- A YPQA should occur in all ELO Network Provider Programs

*“I feel the need to be there every day because I love doing it [organized sports]. It’s something I feel passionate about. If I’m passionate about something, I’m going to put my all into it ...”*



*Charnice, 10<sup>th</sup>-grade; Creston High  
Focus Group Participant*

#### **Key Finding #2 - Teen Participation**

Student attendance is a complex issue with many variables. There’s no full-proof formula that can be applied. Programmatic offerings and outcomes, grant requirements, staff expectations, participant input and leadership roles, all affect a student’s ability and desire to participate. Fourteen out of the 17 (82%) youth surveyed said that they would like more input into what happens in their afterschool program.

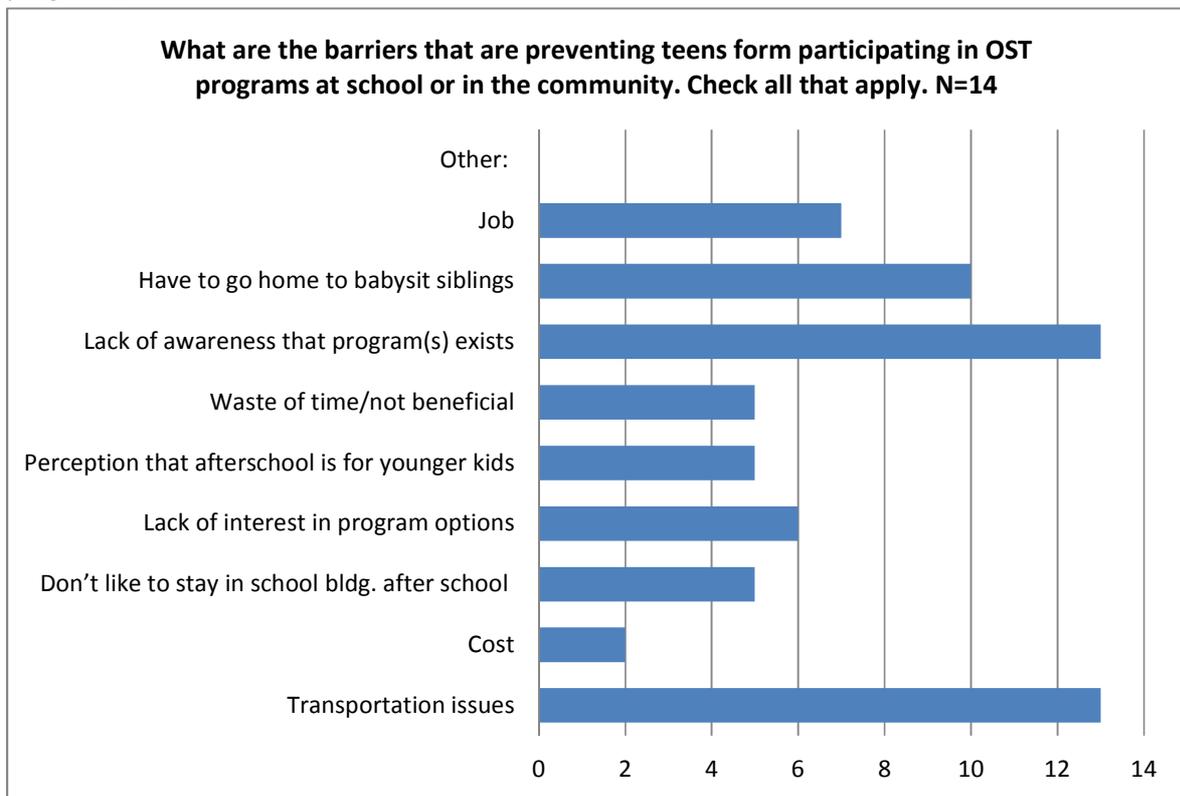
LOFT site coordinators and activity leaders indicated that a student is considered to be a regular participant if they attend their program at least 3 days out of 4 in a given week. Students that participate in the West Michigan Center for Arts and Technology, a community-based

organization (CBO), are required to attend once a week to be considered a participant in good standing. Another CBO, the YMCA, doesn’t have an attendance policy but typically sees regular participants at least 3 days out of the 5 that the program is offered in a given week.

According to The After-School Corporation (TASC), high school students cannot or will not attend an after-school program every day and programs that are most effective will require not daily attendance,

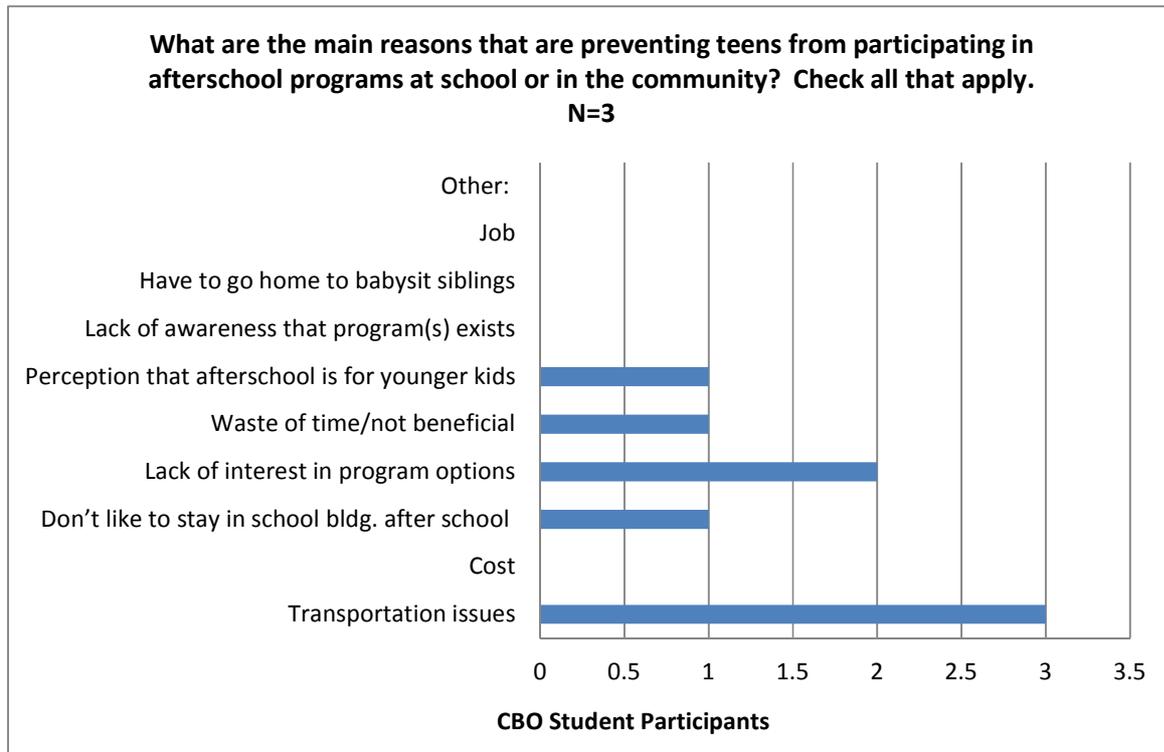
but rather that which is sustained.<sup>ix</sup> If this finding is universal, then the question becomes how is sustained attendance accomplished and what are those barriers that may prevent a program from achieving this desired outcome? The distinction between attendance rate versus the retention rate is worth being made. Whether students attend a program versus a student attending a program over the course of time wasn't explicitly explored in this assessment, however the issue of a student being engaged upon arrival at an OST program is and does have bearing on retention.

When providers of high school OST programming were asked what they believed prevented high school students from participating in their OST programs, they stated equally *Transportation Issues* and *Lack of Awareness that the Program(s) Existed*. Transportation issues make obvious sense because community-based organizations typically are located outside of the school building and participants must travel to get there. The *Lack of Awareness* barrier speaks to the necessity of OST programs, whether in a school setting or in the community, having a strong marketing plan. As one indicator of highly effective OST programs, recruitment efforts must be intentional and varied.<sup>x</sup>

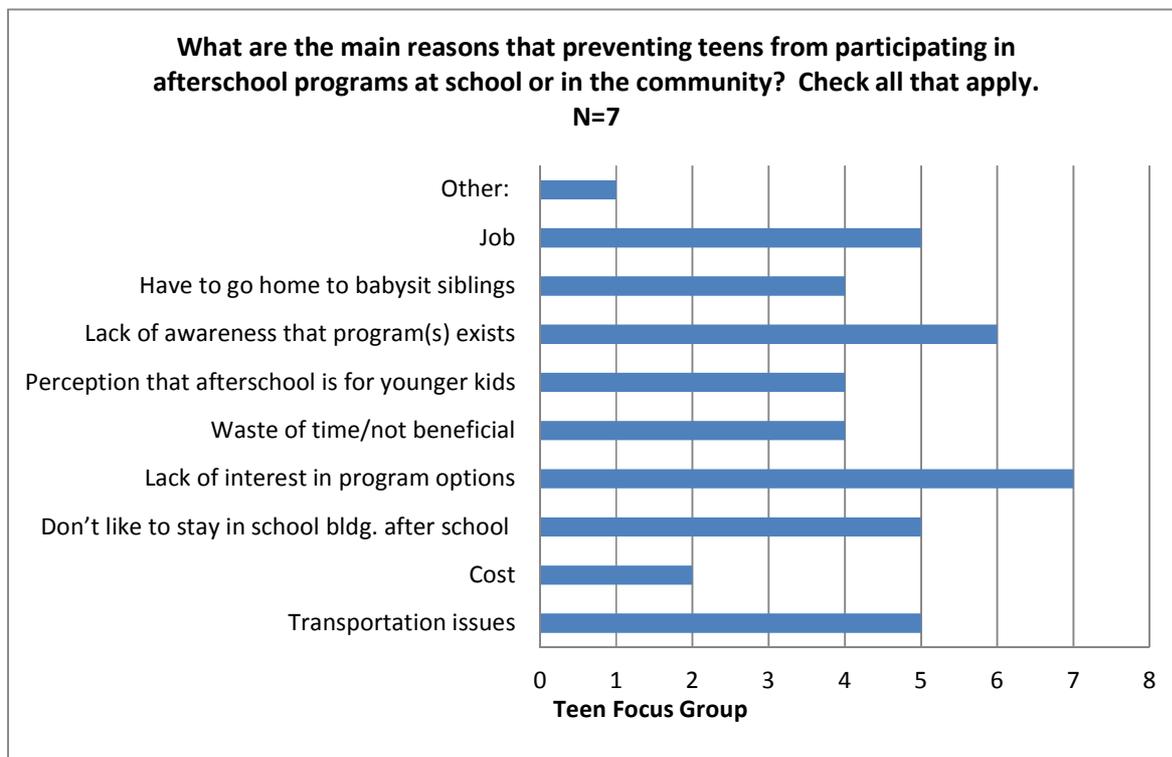


High School CBO Providers' Survey

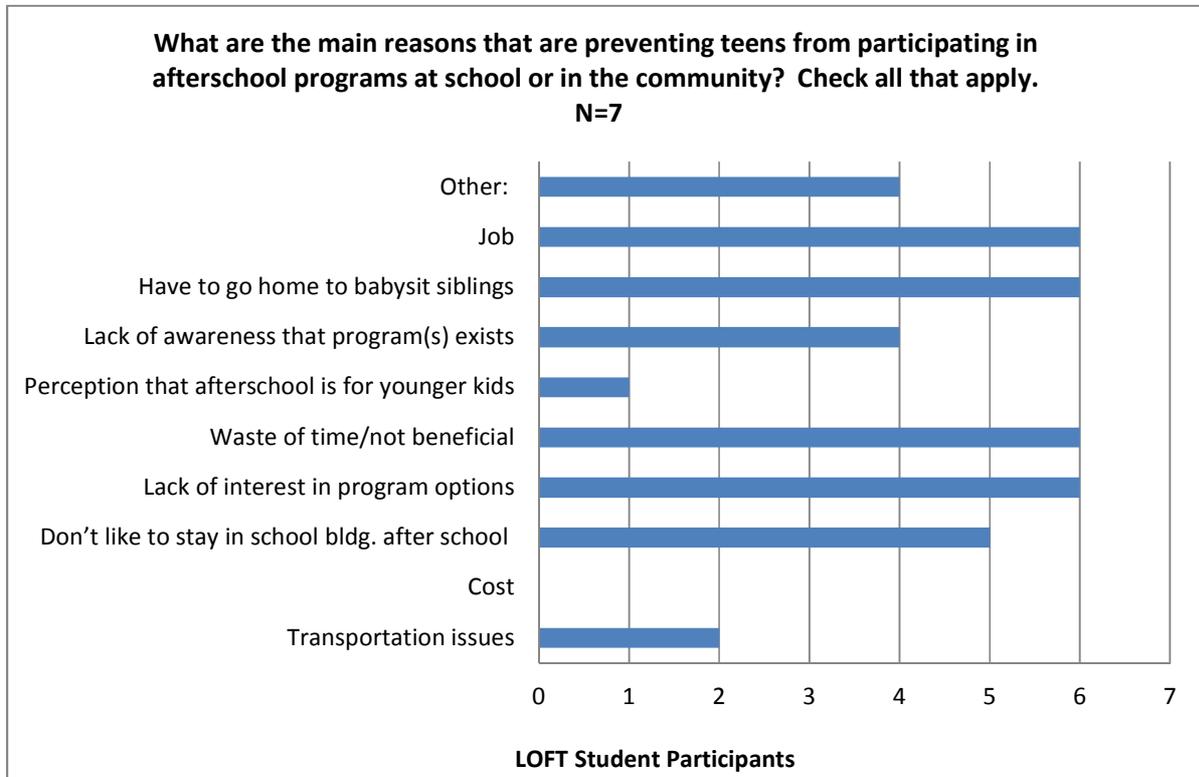
Teens that participate in CBO programs indicated the same barrier to participation – *Transportation*.



When this same question about barriers was asked in a focus group of OST students involved in school and community programs, their number one barrier was *Lack of interest in program options*.



Among surveyed LOFT students (7) there was a tie among the following barriers: *Job, Have to go home to babysit siblings, Waste of time/not beneficial, and Lack of interest in program options.*



The obstacle of transportation is very real and a strategic plan is needed to address it. Some cities provide free transportation to youth involved in OST programs. As previously mentioned, high school students are not going to participate in an OST program everyday so being realistic about attendance requirements is imperative. Decisions that affect attendance affect every aspect of an OST program. It's not uncommon for an OST program whether in a school building or in the community to have 20 – 40 students a day participating. Some attendance tallies can shift per day of the week or per program activity. From site visit observations and interviews to survey data, those programs that do not require multiple days of attendance but offer project-based activities tend to attract more students. Commitment to a program cannot be measured by hours attended but by the quality.<sup>xi</sup> The exception to this can be found in high school athletic teams that require a high level of participation that's attached with consequences if attendance expectations aren't met. Sporting teams also offer students the ability to discover new talents or improve upon existing skills. Coaches are typically proficient in their area of athletic expertise and students expect and respect criticisms and look forward to being encouraged by their coaches.

Participation rates mimic the inconsistencies of adolescence. Teens need to be guided by the topic and actively engaged in decisions and learning.

### Teen Participation Recommendations Recap:

- OST providers need to first address teen engagement to sustain participation
- OST programs should focus more on the quality of program offerings
- Marketing strategies or awareness campaigns help boost visibility and credibility
- OST providers should prioritize transportation needs of their students

*“With a lot of community afterschool programs, usually adults are promoting those but I think if **more teens promote** it then they’ll be like ‘hey that sounds pretty interesting and teens my age are there so I should just **totally** do it!’ ”*

*Danielle – 10<sup>th</sup>-grade; Central High, Focus Group Participant*



### **Key Finding #3 - Recruitment Strategies**

Thirteen out of the 14 (93%) CBOs listed “Lack of awareness that a program exists” as one of two top barriers of participation in OST programs for high school teens. Reporting the same top barrier was 6 out of the 7 (86%) students that participated in the focus group from both students that have participated in both CBO afterschool programs and those located within their school building.

OST staff and students all listed similar recruitment strategies they had implemented: flyers, posters, social media, lunchroom visits, classroom visits, in-school intercom announcements, community events, etc. This is encouraging because studies indicate that high performing OST programs for high school students must have varied and intentional recruitment strategies.<sup>xii</sup> What needs more work is the degree and the frequency in which these strategies occur as well as an increase in the amount of available financial resources to effectively execute these strategies. It is strongly recommended that the ELO Network sponsor a day-long

workshop with a marketing firm that specializes in marketing to older youth.

With equal importance is a strategy that costs little to nothing to execute: word-of-mouth. Even in this tech savvy society, the influence of word-of-mouth marketing is not lost on teens. “While teens are less likely to respond to email blasts, they are significantly more responsive to word-of-mouth and referrals than older consumers,” says Lauren Hutter, SVP and group planning director at BBDO New York. “It’s their countercultural currency ... It’s how to break into the group, how you bring something into the mix,” Hutter says.<sup>xiii</sup>

Utilizing the Teen Activity Leaders could serve a critical role in word-of-mouth recruiting and marketing. These teen advocates would have the most experience in OST programs and could speak directly to their peers about the programs’ benefits. Through word-of-mouth -- using authentic teen vernacular along with promotional items that make sense to them (not every teen wants a key chain or a letter opener) – they would canvass schools, teen hang-outs, community events, churches, etc. to pique interest and persuade enrollment.

In regards to incentives being a strategy to increase participation, 57% of LOFT students said that performance-based incentives would increase their level of participation and 43% said incentives wouldn't make a difference. The issue of incentives with all the students interviewed and surveyed didn't seem to be a huge draw to those already enrolled in an OST program. But incentives could quite possibly be used as recruitment tools. Research on incentives support that there are initial benefits that tend to weaken over time.

Another recruitment effort of particular interest that used the word-of-mouth strategy occurred at the Union High School LOFT site. This recruitment strategy encouraged current participants to invite their friends to the program for a day to experience what it had to offer. On-site program registration, food, games, promotional items and activities were all part of the festivities used to increase the program's participation numbers. Although this strategy was just being tested, it has the potential to be highly effective. Perhaps other sites in school buildings and in the community could have similar events. A week-long open enrollment or "free pass" for students could be a way of showcasing the types of activities that occur during an OST program. It could also serve as an opportunity to collect much needed data on the population of teens that don't normally attend an OST program. Another word-of-mouth strategy offered by a student in the focus group centered around having a teacher, counselor or community leader formally nominate a student(s) to join an OST program. "The student will then feel like somebody is looking out for them and that motivates them to join," said Kessia Graves, 10<sup>th</sup>-grade student at East Kentwood High School. This obviously isn't peer-to-peer marketing but the message would be coming from an adult the teen highly respects and with whom he/she has a positive relationship. This could make all the difference.

#### Recruitment Strategies Recommendations Recap:

- Recruitment strategies must be continual, intentional and targeted
- A marketing plan and increased funding to support a plan is necessary
- Training by marketing professionals specializing in teen culture should facilitate seminars for OST providers and students to develop a marketing plan
- Teen leaders need to be utilized as recruiters
- Teachers, counselors, principals, community leaders should formally nominate students to become OST program participants

*"I want to see people that are **passionate** about education and working with children."*

*Kessia – 10<sup>th</sup>-grader, East Kentwood High, Focus Group Participant*



#### **Key Finding #4 - Staff Characteristics**

Qualified staff is critical to highly effective OST programs.<sup>xiv</sup> Staff must set ground rules, be consistent and fair when rules are broken and reinforce positive behaviors.<sup>xv</sup> This held true when focus group student participants were asked to describe the staff of programs in which they've been participants. One student considered participation on an athletic team to be an afterschool program. He mentioned that his football coach gave a lot of positive reinforcement which not only helped build his confidence and athletic abilities, but it also led to his consistent participation.

Staff that are emotionally supportive and in tune with youth culture have a better chance of engagement.<sup>xvi</sup> Students in both the LOFT program and students participating at the YMCA spoke about the adults that led their activities. "They [staff] are cool, they're like your friend and they look out for us," said a YMCA participant. "They are good, they help you out a lot and keep you on track academically," said a LOFT participant. In addition, 100% of LOFT students believe that their program supports positive relationships.

The After-School Corporation (TASC) suggests that staff that serve high school students have to be more expert and sophisticated in their subject matter to engage a high-school student.<sup>xvii</sup> A program design that carries this same philosophy can be found in Chicago's Afterschool Matters (ASM) where high school students participate in project-based apprenticeships in the arts, science, sports, technology and communications at community-based organizations. According to their website, in the 2011-2012 summer and school year, ASM had the capacity to provide 20,000 program opportunities for teens at 45 high schools and over 100 community-based organizations.<sup>xviii</sup> These CBOs employ professionals that specialize in a particular genre of art or industry. A similar program exists in Grand Rapids through the West Michigan Center for Arts and Technology (WMCAT) program. On average, 225 students participate per year in at least one class taught by a degreed-professional artist working full-time in their specific discipline outside of the parameters of an afterschool program. On WMCAT's website, a student had this to say about her instructors: "The teachers here are like family," said Nicole. "They are really motivating. They boost me up. They have helped me develop myself as a grown-up."<sup>xix</sup>

Through this assessment, encounters with front-line staff of OST programs were extremely positive. Six of nine staff members or program coordinators reported having obtained a college degree in business, marketing, criminal justice and art; three staff members did not have a college degree. All had previous experience in the youth development field. Staff members were very excited about the work they were doing and seemed to be very motivated by the work and especially by the teens. They exhibited a good mixture of classroom control while embracing their understanding of youth culture. In addition, 100% of LOFT Site Coordinators and Activity Leaders believed that they perform effective group management; 86% of LOFT student participants agreed, 14% said "Somewhat."

In the *Growing the Next Generation of Youth Work Professionals: Workforce Opportunities and Challenges in Grand Rapids* report from 2009, it revealed that youth workers employed by providers within the ELO Network were “Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied” with their job (73%).<sup>xx</sup> What this study also revealed was that these satisfied youth workers, of which 55% had intentions of staying in the field for 5 or more years, tended not to stay in their jobs for very long.<sup>xxi</sup> This held true with LOFT staff when interviewed for this assessment. Six out of 6 were new to their positions, although two had worked at the same site the year previous, but had different job responsibilities.

The same report recommended clearer pathways for career advancement and increased program resources as the top two factors that would help the profession with professional development opportunities, employee benefits and compensation being additional factors.<sup>xxii</sup> This study reported that 51% were part-time paid staff of which 90% reported that they would like to work full-time. And that just 35% had medical insurance and 49% having no benefits at all.<sup>xxiii</sup> What’s also interesting about this report was that compensation and career development were among the reasons these jobs have high mobility rates.

Creating a connection between the level of program offerings, as in project-based activities that build upon youth interests, and staff members having positions that are full-time with benefits could retain staff as well as produce desired outcomes for youth. This also promotes greater professionalism and commitment among staff. Consistency in staff and career exploration among students who see staff as role models are additional benefits.

Staff must also be able to access free and on-going professional development courses in conflict resolution, classroom management, marketing and recruitment, non-cognitive skill building and evaluation to ensure their programs are meeting their outcomes. Through ELO Network and the Youth Development Network, several on-going and low cost trainings, including the YPQA and Youth Worker Credentialing are made available. These training opportunities should be not only mandatory for both providers and staff, but providers should assuming the cost of the trainings and allow staff paid-leave time to attend them. These resources are essential to improving youth development work.

Though another evaluation tool, Youth Program Quality Intervention tool (YPQI), was not explored as part of this assessment, it’s important to make mention of a study - *Continuous Quality Improvement in Afterschool Settings: Impact findings from the Youth Program Quality Intervention* - that was done by the David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality. This study concluded that the positive and near significant impact on staff tenure hints at the effect of the YPQI on building a positive organizational culture and climate that increases staff retention.<sup>xxiv</sup> Furthermore, when site staff are more deeply engaged in a continuous quality improvement process, the quality of their instruction improves.<sup>xxv</sup>

### Staff Characteristics Recap:

- Staff must establish ground rules, communicate and enforce consequences when rules are broken, and reinforce positive behaviors
- Staff that are emotionally supportive and are keyed into youth culture help build trust and gain their respect
- Staff should have a degree or a combination of education and experience in specialized project-based activities
- Staff positions should be full-time with benefits in order to recruit the best and retain the extraordinary
- Staff should be provided free and on-going professional development courses

### CONCLUSION

The OST programs for high school students is perhaps one of the few important opportunities left outside of faith, family and school in which communities can help shape a young person's life before they navigate the world of adulthood. It's imperative that these opportunities occur, improve and expand so that students can play a role in the success of their own lives. The students interviewed and surveyed for this assessment were quite candid in their responses, showed a level of pride in their programs and have hope for their future. LOFT students rate their program an 8 on a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being the highest. The adults that were interviewed were equally as passionate about the work they're doing and shared the same confidence that their programs offered great things, but they also have the desire for them to offer much more. The majority of all groups interviewed and surveyed identified OST programs as being a safe place and a place in which to build upon social skills. This is a great foundation but OST programs as a whole for high school students must be able and willing to do what it takes to incubate dreams, talents, and budding careers. We must also prioritize the students that aren't taking advantage of these opportunities and develop strategies that can eliminate their barriers to participation. OST program providers and advocates must also keep in mind that not all programs are going to attract every student but illuminating their existence will give them the attention they deserve.

*"I've been in an afterschool program since the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and it's the reason why I'm **successful** in high school." – Anna, 12<sup>th</sup>-grade LOFT student, Creston High School*

## Footnotes

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<sup>i</sup> Priscilla M. Little, *Engaging Older Youth in Out-of-School Time: Applying Research to Practice Inquiry to Impact*, ppt., March 11, 2011, <http://www1.extension.umn.edu/youth/training-events/docs/Little%20handouts/Engaging-Older-Youth-in-Out-of-School-Time.pdf>.

<sup>ii</sup> Ibid

<sup>iii</sup> *Meeting the High School Challenge: Making After-School Work for Older Students, 2007 Report*. The After-School Corporation. <http://www.expandedschools.org/policy-documents/meeting-high-school-challenge-making-after-school-work-older-students>.

<sup>iv</sup> Sarah N. Deschenes, Amy Arbretton, Priscilla M. Little, Carla Herrera, Jean Baldwin Grossman, Heather B. Weiss, with Diana Lee, *Engaging Older Youth: Program and City-Level Strategies to Support Sustained Participation in Out-of-School Time, April 2010*. Harvard Family Research Project, Public/Private Ventures, Wallace Foundation. <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/after-school/coordinating-after-school-resources/Pages/engaging-older-youth-city-level-strategies-support-sustained-participation-out-of-school-time.aspx>.

<sup>v</sup> Priscilla M. Little, *Engaging Older Youth in Out-of-School Time: Applying Research to Practice Inquiry to Impact*, ppt., March 11, 2011, <http://www1.extension.umn.edu/youth/training-events/docs/Little%20handouts/Engaging-Older-Youth-in-Out-of-School-Time.pdf>.

<sup>vi</sup> Grand Rapids Youth Master Plan, 2010 Report, [www.grchildren.us](http://www.grchildren.us).

<sup>vii</sup> <http://www.cypq.org>

<sup>viii</sup> Smith, C., Akiva, T., Sugar, S., Lo, Y. J., Frank, K. A., Peck, S. C., Cortina, K. S., & Devaney, T. (2012). *Continuous quality improvement in afterschool settings: Impact findings from the Youth Program Quality Intervention study*. Washington, DC: The Forum for Youth Investment.

<sup>ix</sup> *Meeting the High School Challenge: Making After-School Work for Older Students, 2007 Report*. The After-School Corporation. <http://www.expandedschools.org/policy-documents/meeting-high-school-challenge-making-after-school-work-older-students>.

<sup>x</sup> Sarah N. Deschenes, Amy Arbretton, Priscilla M. Little, Carla Herrera, Jean Baldwin Grossman, Heather B. Weiss, with Diana Lee, *Engaging Older Youth: Program and City-Level Strategies to Support Sustained Participation in Out-of-School Time, April 2010*, <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/after-school/coordinating-after-school-resources/Pages/engaging-older-youth-city-level-strategies-support-sustained-participation-out-of-school-time.aspx>.

<sup>xi</sup> Ibid

<sup>xii</sup> Ibid

<sup>xiii</sup> Direct Marketing News, July 2012, <http://www.dmnews.com>.

<sup>xiv</sup> Sarah N. Deschenes, Amy Arbretton, Priscilla M. Little, Carla Herrera, Jean Baldwin Grossman, Heather B. Weiss, with Diana Lee, *Engaging Older Youth: Program and City-Level Strategies to Support Sustained Participation in Out-of-School Time, April 2010*, <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/after-school/coordinating-after-school-resources/Pages/engaging-older-youth-city-level-strategies-support-sustained-participation-out-of-school-time.aspx>.

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[after-school-resources/Pages/engaging-older-youth-city-level-strategies-support-sustained-participation-out-of-school-time.aspx](http://www1.extension.umn.edu/youth/training-events/docs/Little%20handouts/Engaging-Older-Youth-in-Out-of-School-Time.aspx).

<sup>xv</sup> Priscilla M. Little, *Engaging Older Youth in Out-of-School Time: Applying Research to Practice Inquiry to Impact*, ppt., March 11, 2011, <http://www1.extension.umn.edu/youth/training-events/docs/Little%20handouts/Engaging-Older-Youth-in-Out-of-School-Time.pdf>.

<sup>xvi</sup> Ibid

<sup>xvii</sup> *Meeting the High School Challenge: Making After-School Work for Older Students, 2007 Report*. The After-School Corporation. <http://www.expandedschools.org/policy-documents/meeting-high-school-challenge-making-after-school-work-older-students>.

<sup>xviii</sup> <http://afterschoolmatters.org/>

<sup>xix</sup> <http://wmcats.org/>

<sup>xx</sup> *Growing the Next Generation of Youth Work Professionals: Workforce Opportunities and Challenges in Grand Rapids*. 2009. ELO Network.

<sup>xxi</sup> Ibid

<sup>xxii</sup> Ibid

<sup>xxiii</sup> Ibid

<sup>xxiv</sup> Smith, C., Akiva, T., Sugar, S., Lo, Y. J., Frank, K. A., Peck, S. C., Cortina, K. S., & Devaney, T. (2012). *Continuous quality improvement in afterschool settings: Impact findings from the Youth Program Quality Intervention study*. Washington, DC: The Forum for Youth Investment.

<sup>xxv</sup> Ibid

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## Appendix A - Methodology

This assessment used several tools of data collection, both qualitative and quantitative among different population groups in order to assess the current state of OST activities for high school teens and explore how this information can be used for maximum results. Data was collected from a Grand Rapids Public Schools' High School Principals Survey (14); in-depth interviews and site visits with Learning Opportunities For Teens (LOFT) Site Coordinators (3), LOFT Activity Leaders (3), LOFT Student Participants (7), Program Coordinators at three CBOs – West Michigan Center for Arts and Technology, YMCA and Cook Arts Academy and students attending CBO programs (3); surveys and a focus group discussion with teens participating in OST programs at school and at CBOs (7); and an on-line survey with OST Providers located within CBOs (14). To get accurate and candid responses, answers compiled from various sources were compared and contrasted helped strengthen the recommendations highlighted in the Executive Summary and reiterated under the Key Findings. Direct observation, anecdotal data and the experience of the assessor were also incorporated to support the findings. In addition, a literature review and technical assistance from the Wallace Foundation were also used to support this work.

GRPS High School Principals (14) - Survey was filled out anonymously by principals, vice-principals and designated staff

### Interviews and Site Visits

- LOFT Site Coordinators at Union High, Creston High and Ottawa Hills High (3) – Austin Suttner, Chanelle Charity and Orlando James
- LOFT Activity Leaders at Union High, Creston High and Ottawa Hills High (3) – Christine Sanboren, Eric, and Trisha Lewis
- LOFT Student Participants at Union High, Creston High and Ottawa Hills High (7) – Anna, Briana, Aaron, Rashard, Tatianna, Tawaunn, and Sophia
- Community-Based Organizations:
  - West Michigan Center for Arts & Technology (WMCAT) – Leanne Rhodes, Teen Programs Manager*
  - David D. Hunting YMCA – Jamiel Robinson, Youth & Teen Director; Student participants: Marquis D., Noah J., and Savion L.*
  - Cook Arts Center – Stephanie Rosario, Program Director; Madeline Kaczmarczyk, Pottery Instructor*

### Teen Focus Group (7)

Gender: 2 males and 5 females  
School Districts: Grand Rapids Public Schools – 4; Kentwood PS - 1; Wyoming PS – 1; The Potter's House Christian -1  
Grade Levels: 10<sup>th</sup> – 3 ; 11<sup>th</sup> – 3; 12<sup>th</sup> – 1  
Race: African-American – 4; Asian -1; Caucasian – 1; Bi-Racial – 1  
Students: Kelsi Jones, Robert Arrington, Danielle Feeback, Keesia Graves, Charnice LaGrone, David Nguyen, and Kelley Jones

Community-Based Organization Administrators and Supervisors (14) - Our Community's Children, West Michigan Refugee Education and Cultural Center, UICA, Vocal Music Workshop, The Salvation Army Ray & Joan Kroc Center, School-To-Career Progressions, WMCAT, Grandville Avenue Arts & Humanities, YMCA of Greater Grand Rapids, Community Ministries Program of Trinity United Methodist Church, Grand Rapids Community Foundation, Planned Parenthood of West and Northern Michigan, Bridge the Gap Ministries of North America, Inc., and Grand Rapids Public Library

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## Appendix B – Survey Tools

*Note: Site visits of OST programs at Union, Creston and Ottawa as well as site visits at WMCAT, YMCA and Cook Arts Center were conducted as interviews in that the Assessor asked the following survey questions and wrote down the responses from students and the adult leaders. All other surveys were completed by the following respondents: high school principals, focus group participants, YMCA student participants and CBO administrators and supervisors.*

### **GRPS High School Principals - Afterschool Programs Survey**

1. Do you have an afterschool program(s) in your building? Yes  No
2. Is your afterschool program (s) a LOFT site or something else?  
Yes  Something else  \_\_\_\_\_
3. Give a word or phrase you would use to describe the afterschool program (s) in your school building?
4. Do you think the program (s) is well organized? Yes  Somewhat  No   
*Please explain.*
5. Do you perceive the afterschool program (s) in your building as an extension of the school day?  
Yes  Somewhat  No
6. Do you believe the afterschool program (s) in your building promote:

Academic Achievement	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Academic Support	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Leadership Opportunities	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Developmental Skills	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Positive Relationships	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
7. List the Top 3 Characteristics (e.g., qualified staff, quality curriculum, safe place, food, tutoring, credit recovery, employment opportunities, life skills, social networking, etc.) afterschool programs should provide.
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
8. If given the opportunity, would you like to have more input into what happens within the afterschool program (s)? Yes  No  Not Sure
9. How often do you meet with afterschool program staff?  
Often  Somewhat often  Not often  Rarely

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10. In your opinion, how can afterschool programs attract more students to participate?

11. Are there any additional improvements that should be made to afterschool programs in your building?

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## **High School Afterschool Program - Site Coordinators & Activity Leaders Survey**

1. Describe the structure of your program?
2. Is there a set curriculum? If so, who's responsible for its creation?
3. Describe the demographic make-up of your students, female to male, grade level, GPA, athletes, etc.
4. How many students on average come to your program each day?  
How many of those students attend your program on a regular basis?  
Define regular basis?  
How long do they stay once they're here?  
How many days a week does an average student attend your program?
5. On a scale of 1 to 10, how satisfied do you think the students are with this program?
6. Is there a formal evaluation that's done to determine this? Yes       Somewhat       No
7. How often does your program get evaluated and who evaluates it?
8. How often do you internally evaluate your program; self-assessments; ask students what they want to do?
9. How are EZ Reports used?
10. Do you think this program(s) is well organized? Yes       Somewhat       No   
*Please explain.*
11. Do you perceive the afterschool program (s) in you building as an extension of the school day?  
Yes       Somewhat       No
12. Do you believe this program promotes:

Academic Achievement	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Academic Support	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Leadership Opportunities	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Developmental Skills	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Positive Relationships	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Career Exploration	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
College Prep	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

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13. List the Top 3 Characteristics (e.g., qualified staff, quality curriculum, safe place, food, tutoring, credit recovery, employment opportunities, life skills, social networking, etc.) afterschool programs should provide.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

14. If given the opportunity, would you like to have more input into what happens within this afterschool program? Yes  No  Not Sure

15. How often do you meet with school administrators or staff; is this needed?

Often  Somewhat often  Not often  Rarely

#### 4 Program Features:

**Provide opportunities for leadership?** Yes  Somewhat  No

(Teen led activities, teens making decisions about activities, teens paid to be here, community service opportunities)

**Meet the developmental needs of older youth?** Yes  Somewhat  No

(Are teens able to try out new ideas, are they challenged, do they get to meet new people, socialize, feel safe and respected, is there a balance of structure and freedom, do you assign responsibilities)

**Exhibit effective group management?** Yes  Somewhat  No

(Are there rules, how are they communicated, what are the expectations around attendance, what are the expectations around behavior, are there consequences for bad behavior, are students happy to be here)

**Promote supportive relationships?** Yes  Somewhat  No

(Staff engage the students, get encouragement, make time to talk to students, do you contact parents, do you know about youth culture)

#### 4 Structural Features:

**Intentional and varied recruitment strategies?** Yes  Somewhat  No

(Are the recruitment efforts effective, comfortable space that feels different from school)

**Policies and procedures in place to support program quality?** Yes  Somewhat  No

(Is there an attendance policy and is it flexible; rewards, incentives, credit recovery, field trips, evaluations, staff meetings about program quality)

**A commitment to family engagement?** Yes  Somewhat  No

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**Partnerships?** Yes       Somewhat       No   
(Teachers, businesses, organizations)

16. In your opinion, how can afterschool programs attract more students to participate?

17. If you had the ability to expand your program, describe what that would look like.

18. How often do you attend professional development courses?

19. What's your educational background?

20. How long have you been in this position?

21. What are your future goals?

**Name:**

**Position:**

**School Site:**

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**LOFT Student Participant Survey**

Student Name:

Gender:

Grade:

School:

1. How did you find out about the LOFT program?
2. How often do you attend this program?
3. Do you participate in any other afterschool programs?
4. What do you enjoy the most about the LOFT afterschool program?
5. What do you least like about the program?
6. On a scale of 1 to 10, how satisfied with this program are you?  
(10 - Completely Satisfied; 1 - Being Not Satisfied at All)
7. What kind of incentives could the adults leading this program offer you that would increase your level of participation, if anything?
8. Tell me about the adults that lead this program.
9. What are your expectations for this program?
10. Are they being met?
11. Do you believe the LOFT program in your building promotes:

Academic Achievement	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Academic Support	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Leadership Opportunities	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Developmental Skills	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Positive Relationships	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Career Exploration	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
12. What's missing from this program? How can it be improved?
13. Describe the students that attend this program. For example, are they athletes, academically on track, mainly males or females, the popular students, etc.?
14. If given the opportunity, would you like to have more input into what happens within the afterschool program(s) at your school? Yes  No  Not Sure

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15. What motivates teens to attend an afterschool program of any kind?

16. What are the main reasons that are preventing teens from participating in afterschool programs at school or in the community? Check all that apply.

- Transportation issues
- Cost
- Don't like to stay in school bldg. after school
- Lack of interest in program options
- Waste of time/not beneficial
- Perception that afterschool is for younger kids
- Lack of awareness that program(s) exists
- Have to go home to babysit siblings
- Job
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

4 Program Features:

**Provide opportunities for leadership?** Yes  Somewhat  No

(Teen led activities, teens making decisions about activities, teens paid to be here, community service opportunities)

**Meet the developmental needs of older youth?** Yes  Somewhat  No

(Are teens able to try out new ideas, are they challenged, do they get to meet new people, socialize, feel safe and respected, is there a balance of structure and freedom, do you assign responsibilities)

**Exhibit effective group management?** Yes  Somewhat  No

(Are there rules, how are they communicated, what are the expectations around attendance, what are the expectations around behavior, are there consequences for bad behavior, are students happy to be here)

**Promote supportive relationships?** Yes  Somewhat  No

(Staff engage the students, get encouragement, make time to talk to students, do you contact parents, do you know about youth culture)

4 Structural Features:

**Intentional and varied recruitment strategies?** Yes  Somewhat  No

(Are the recruitment efforts effective; comfortable space that feels different from school)

**Policies and procedures in place to support program quality?** Yes  Somewhat  No

(Is there an attendance policy and is it flexible; rewards, incentives, credit recovery, field trips, evaluations, staff meetings about program quality)

**A commitment to family engagement?** Yes  Somewhat  No

---

**Partnerships?** Yes       Somewhat       No   
(Teachers, businesses, organizations)

17. In your opinion, what's the best way to promote afterschool programs within your school?

18. If money was no option, what would the perfect afterschool program look like and tell us why teens would attend this program on a regular basis.

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**Teen Focus Group - Afterschool Programs Survey**

1. Do you have an afterschool program (s) at your school?      Yes       No
2. Do **you** participate in an afterschool program of any kind?      Yes       No   
    If so, please list the program(s) you attend at your school:  
    Please list the program(s) you attend in the community:
3. Does your school have a LOFT site or something else?      Yes       Something else  \_\_\_\_\_
4. Give a word or phrase you would use to describe the afterschool program (s) in your **school** building?
5. Give a word or phrase you would use to describe the afterschool program (s) in your **community**?
6. Do you think the program (s) at **school** is well organized?      Yes       Somewhat       No
7. Do you think the program (s) in the **community** is well organized?      Yes       Somewhat       No
8. Do you perceive the afterschool program (s) in your **school** to be an extension of the school day?  
    Yes       Somewhat       No
9. Do you perceive the afterschool program (s) in your **community** to be an extension of the school day?  
    Yes       Somewhat       No
10. Do you believe the afterschool program (s) in your **school** promotes:

Academic Achievement	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Academic Support	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Leadership Opportunities	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Developmental Skills	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Positive Relationships	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Career Exploration	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
College Preparation	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
11. Do you believe the afterschool program (s) in your **community** promotes:

Academic Achievement	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Academic Support	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Leadership Opportunities	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Developmental Skills	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Positive Relationships	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Career Exploration	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
College Preparation	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

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12. List the Top 3 Characteristics (e.g., qualified staff, quality curriculum, safe place, food, tutoring, credit recovery, employment opportunities, life skills, social networking, etc.) afterschool programs should provide.

1.

2.

3.

13. Do you believe the programs you've participated in provide the things you've listed above?

Yes  No  Not Sure  If yes, list those programs here:

14. If given the opportunity, would you like to have more input into what happens within the afterschool program (s) at your school or in the community? Yes  No  Not Sure

15. How significant are afterschool programs to teens?

Very Significant  Somewhat Significant  Not Significant at All

Please explain:

16. How often do you attend an afterschool program of any kind at your **school**?

4x a week or more  2 – 3x a week  1x week  Rarely  Not at all

17. How often do you attend an afterschool program of any kind in your **community**?

4x a week or more  2 – 3x a week  1x week  Rarely  Not at all

18. What's the perception of students that attend afterschool programs, for example, are they athletes, academically on track, academically behind, immature, mainly males or females, the popular students, etc.

19. What motivates teens to attend an afterschool program of any kind?

20. What are the main reasons that **preventing** teens from participating in afterschool programs at school or in the community? Check all that apply.

Transportation issues

Cost

Don't like to stay in school bldg. after school

Lack of interest in program options

Waste of time/not beneficial

Perception that afterschool is for younger kids

Lack of awareness that program(s) exists

Have to go home to babysit siblings

Job

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

21. In your opinion, what's the best way to promote afterschool programs within your school?

22. In your opinion, what's the best way to promote afterschool programs in your community?

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23. If money was no option, describe what would the perfect afterschool program look like and tell us why teens would attend this program on a regular basis.

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## **Providers of Out-of-School Time Programming for High School Students – Survey**

You are receiving this survey because you have been identified as an administrator/supervisor that is providing out-of-school time programs for high school students. As part of our Wallace Foundation grant, the ELO Network through Our Community's Children is conducting an assessment of out-of-school time programs for high school teens. This assessment includes a literature review of best practices, focus groups, and surveys and interviews with teens, high school principals, site coordinators, and providers. A report will be compiled with recommendations to be presented to the ELO Network and city and school officials as well as will be included in our report to the Wallace Foundation. Your input is critical in this process and we thank you in advance for taking the time to complete this survey by Monday, January 21, 2013. If you're interested in participating in a follow-up phone interview, please include your contact information at the end of this survey. Thanks again!

\* Required

1. What is the name of your organization? \*

2. How many high school out-of-school time programs do you offer during the school year? \*

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- Other:

3. Please list and describe the high school out-of-school time program(s) you offer during the school year.\*

4. How many high school out-of-school time programs do you offer during the summer? \*

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- Other:

5. Please list and describe the high school out-of-school time program(s) you offer during the summer. \*

6. Is there a specific curriculum that is used? \*

- Yes
- No

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- Other:
7. How many youth are enrolled in all of your high school out-of-school time programs during the school year? \*
8. How many youth are enrolled in all of your high school out-of-school time programs during the summer? \*
9. Describe the expectation level you have around attendance for your high school student participants. For example, is there a strict attendance policy around how many times they are to participate in a program offering? Must they attend a specific number of days a week or hours a month to be considered a regular participant or a participant in good standing? \*
10. Do you perceive your out-of-school time program (s) for high school students as an extension of the school day? \*
- Yes
  - No
  - Somewhat
  - Other:
11. Your out-of-school time program (s) promotes (check all that apply): \*
- Academic Achievement
  - Academic Support
  - Leadership Opportunities
  - Developmental Skills
  - Positive Relationships
  - Career Exploration
  - College Preparation
  - Other:
12. Check the top 3 characteristics that all out-of-school time programs for high school students should provide. \*
- Credit Recovery
  - Employment Opportunities
  - Food
  - Life Skills
  - Quality Curriculum
  - Qualified Staff

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- Safe Place
  - Socializing with Friends
  - Tutoring
  - Other:

13. What are the qualifications for hiring the staff that facilitate your high school out-of-school time program (s)? \*

14. Describe the professional development opportunities you offer to your staff? \*

15. How do you formally and informally evaluate the effectiveness of your program (s)? Please list the evaluation tools and/or methods. \*

16. In your opinion, how can out-of-school time programs attract more high school students to participate? \*

17. What are the barriers that are preventing teens from participating in out-of-school time programs at school or in the community? Check all that apply. \*

- Transportation issues
- Cost
- Teens don't like to stay in school bldg. after school
- Lack of interest in program options
- Teens perceive programs are a waste of time/not beneficial
- Teens perceive that afterschool programs are for younger kids
- Lack of awareness that program(s) exists
- Have to go home to babysit siblings
- Job
- Other:

18. Describe what challenges you've faced in offering an out-of-school time experience to high school students. \*

19. If you could expand your out-of-school time offerings for high school teens, what would that look like? \*

20. Would you like to participate in a telephone interview to expound upon your answers? \*

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

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21. Please give us your name and contact information.