The Cost of Out-of-School Time Initiatives

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The Finance Project

NCSL: A Look at the Research and Policy Around Time and Learning

Tampa, Florida
December 3, 2011
The Finance Project is a specialized non-profit research, technical assistance and training firm for public and private sector leaders nationwide.

Our work focuses on financing and sustainability for initiatives supporting children, youth & families.
Overview

• Frameworks for determining OST costs

• Key Findings of TFP’s OST cost studies

• What’s next: strategic financing, sustainability planning, and calculating social return on investment
OST Systems & Programs

Two Types of OST-related costs:

1. Program Costs
2. System Costs

OST Systems
Integrated city or state infrastructure that supports leadership, program quality, access and financing and sustainability across multiple OST providers and agencies.

Support & strengthen programming
Inform system building

OST Programs
Organizational infrastructure that supports leadership, program quality, access and financing for an individual OST program or agency.
OST Program Cost Considerations

Does this framework:

- Clearly define the service(s) to cost-out?
- Include information out-of-pocket expenditures and in-kind resources?
- Include adjustments for cost-of-living across cities or regions?
- Calculate cost ranges and averages per slot for different types of programs?
OST System Cost Considerations

Does this framework:

• Identify the multiple components of OST infrastructure that will be costed out?

• Identify cost-sharing across agencies or departments?

• Account for shared governance and accountability?
OST Cost Studies

Cost of Quality Out-of-School-Time Programs

Investments in Building Citywide Out-of-School-Time Systems: A Six-City Study

Cost of Quality Out-of-School Time Cost Calculator
Investments in Building OST Systems

Based on site visits to six cities-Boston, Chicago, Charlotte, Denver, New York and Seattle-in Fall 2007

Analyzes trends and patterns related to:

- The strategies and activities commonly pursued in building citywide OST systems;
- Monetary and in-kind investments that are associated with these efforts;
- How investments vary from city to city; and
- How system-building efforts are financed.
## Elements of an OST System Infrastructure

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<th>Strategies for Providing Leadership</th>
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OST Systems: Key Findings

- Size of the investments in particular strategies and activities depended largely on the availability of funding.

- Investments need to be embedded in on-going city agency budgets to be sustainable.

- Strong partnerships enabled leaders to seed, grow, or enhance their OST systems. In several cities, in-kind investments were critical to early systems-building work and leadership.
OST Systems: Key Findings

• Interesting trends:

  *Leadership*: approx. 5-36% of total investments (significant portion in-kind, foundation funding central)

  *Program quality*: approx. 55-87% (largest share, mix of public and private funding, foundation support critical for large one-time expenses (e.g. data systems, pilots, creating standards or certification programs)

  *Expanding access*: approx. 3-17% (tended to be more modest one-time investments)

  *Financing and sustainability*: approx. 1-17% (smallest share, but given early developmental stage and foundation support, local leaders were more focused on building than sustaining)
Study Purpose: Understand the range of resources needed to provide *quality* OST programming

Generate concrete cost estimates for variety of different types of programs:
- Age group of participants (elementary, middle and high school)
- Location (schools and the community)
- Provider (CBOs and schools)
- Content area (academic, single focus and multiple focus)
- Schedule (school-year and summer portion of year round programs)
- Geographic area (6 mid- to large-size urban cities: Boston, Charlotte, Chicago, Denver, New York and Seattle)
Characteristics of all programs in the study:

**Staff/Youth Ratios:** for elementary school students, staff-youth ratios could not exceed 1:20; for teen program could not exceed 1:25

**Participation Rates:** Have at least \( \frac{3}{4} \) of participants attending “most of their scheduled days” (if they served ES or MS students)

**Years in Operation:** In operation for at least two years (maturity)
OST Programs: Key Findings

Quality OST program costs differed depending on their characteristics (age of participants, focus, schedule, etc.)

But even programs of similar type had a large range of costs

Not surprising because program leaders:
- Respond to different needs, preferences and priorities in their communities
- Face different resource constraints
Executive Summary Figure 1
Summary of Cost Per Slot Ranges for Programs Serving Elementary and Middle School Students

- **Daily Summer Costs ($21-$36)**
- **Daily School-Year Costs ($14-$31)**
- **Hourly Summer Costs ($2-$5)**
- **Hourly School-Year Costs ($3-$9)**

The boxes visually represent the cost ranges from the 25th percentile of program cost to the 75th percentile.

($X$-$Y$) Values for the 25th and the 75th cost figures are indicated in parentheses.

Indicates the mean cost.
Executive Summary Figure 2
Summary of Cost Per Slot Ranges for Programs Serving Teens

Daily Summer Costs ($24-$63)

Daily School-Year Costs ($15-$49)

Hourly Summer Costs ($3-$12)

Hourly School-Year Costs ($4-$12)

$0  $10  $20  $30  $40  $50  $60  $65

The boxes visually represent the cost ranges from the 25th percentile of program cost to the 75th percentile.

($X$-$Y$) Values for the 25th and the 75th cost figures are indicated in parentheses.

Indicates the mean cost.
HOW PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS AFFECT COST:

Three Examples
Cost Variations of School-Year Programs Serving ES/MS Students by Age Group

- Elementary school: $5.80
- Elementary and middle school: $8.20
- Elementary, middle, and high school: $9.00

Legend:
- Red: Hourly
- Blue: Daily

Average cost per slot: $0 to $35
Cost Variations of School-Year Programs Serving ES/MS Students by Program Focus

Average cost per slot

- Multiple focus: $5.70 Hourly, $22 Daily
- Single focus: $9.00 Hourly, $31 Daily
- Academic: $12.50 Hourly, $27 Daily

Legend:
- Hourly
- Daily
Cost Variations of School-Year Programs Serving ES/MS Students by Program Size

Average cost per slot

- 0-50 participants: $8.90 (Hourly), $29 (Daily)
- 51-100 participants: $6.10 (Hourly), $20 (Daily)
- 101-150 participants: $9.10 (Hourly), $29 (Daily)
- 151-200 participants: $3.30 (Hourly), $13 (Daily)
- Over 200 participants: $7.40 (Hourly), $24 (Daily)
Cost of Quality
Out-of-School Time Cost Calculator

The Wallace Foundation > Cost of Quality > Cost Calculator

Out-of-School Time Cost Calculator

How this tool works

1. Program Goals
2. Implementation
3. Size & Staffing
4. Results
5. Next Steps

Please respond to the 11 questions below. All questions are required. You will not be able to proceed to the next step before you complete the current page. Do not navigate elsewhere in the site once you begin; your responses will not be saved.

About you
1. What is your role?
   Select One...

Age of participants
2. What level of children will you serve?
   □ Only Elementary
   □ Only Middle
Financing and Sustaining OST

- Strategic Financing Plans for Providence, San Antonio, Seattle, Making Connections Sites
- Sustainability Planning for Promise Neighborhood Sites and Initiative
- Social Return on Investment methodology for Children’s Aid Society Community Schools, including costs (and monetizing benefits) of:
  - After school
  - On site or school-linked health and mental health program
  - Parental education and engagement
  - Other family support services
THANK YOU!

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