



Improving Out-of-School Time Opportunities for Middle School Students
in the District of Columbia
YES! DC

Proposed Business Plan
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Proposed Business Plan
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THE WALLACE FOUNDATION
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THE DC CHILDREN AND YOUTH INVESTMENT TRUST CORPORATION

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Research and data compiled over the past decade has shown that out-of-school time (OST) programs are an important part of a national strategy to improve outcomes for children and youth. Like many cities across the country, the District of Columbia has made a considerable commitment to OST programs for our city's youth — but much more needs to be done. There are concerns that OST programming lacks coordinated, cross-sector leadership, service standards, and data tools, and OST programs within the city remain less effective than they could be. In addition, large populations of students that are most in need of OST interventions remain underserved. Of these, middle school students in grades 6–8 arguably are the most in need of the safe, learning-friendly environment that OST can provide. Middle school is the time when many young people make decisions that largely determine whether they will be successful in high school and beyond. Away from the relative safety of the elementary schools, pre-teens and young teens are at risk on a number of fronts, including academic failure, truancy, dropping out of school altogether, and criminal behavior.

The support of the Learning in Communities initiative of the Wallace Foundation has enabled the city to closely examine these concerns and develop a multifaceted plan to improve the delivery system for OST programs. This plan builds on and connects with a number of initiatives currently under way at various agencies and organizations, most notably DC Public Schools' Master Education Plan and the Deputy Mayor's Office for Children, Youth, Families and Elders' strategic plan, both of which incorporate OST programs as a vehicle for improving outcomes for children and youth. As we designed this business plan, with input from a wide array of community stakeholders, one of the key components of the plan agreed to by all was the need for quality OST programs for middle school students.

Ultimately, the vision of YES! DC is that every child in the District will have access to and information about high-quality OST programs that suit their needs and desires, and that those programs will improve each child's academic performance and overall success in life. Thus, the theory of change (see Exhibit 1) on which the plan is based:

If we build a more effective, aligned OST system that integrates a youth development approach and a new master plan for public education with an increased focus on quality and participation, DC's middle school youth will be more likely to grow up to be self-sufficient, productive adults as a result of participating in programs and services that support their healthy development, school performance, and a smooth transition to high school. This will require effective systems of communication, coordination, and collaboration among families and various stakeholders from the public and private sectors to build all of the needed components.

Successfully implemented, the plan on which this theory of change is based will bring about a major transformation in the way the city delivers OST programs and services, and, most important, this plan will create positive gains for children both academically and developmentally. We have named the project YES! DC, declaring the District's commitment to "Youth Engaged in Success" and conveying our belief that OST is not just "after-school care" but the broad range of experiences and opportunities that we, as a city, will provide for young people. We envision YES! DC will be the catalyst to help:

- Create a movement for children in which spokespeople and champions for OST at all levels emerge to promote OST as an essential component of improving outcomes for children.
- Encourage a more holistic youth development approach to the problems facing our children — an approach that engenders more caring and positive views about children and improves their overall treatment.
- Inspire city leaders to place children and youth high on the political agenda, and create a culture in which city leaders are compelled to join together and form alliances to enact pro-children budgets and policies that allocate the resources to ensure children are given the support they need.

- Produce a diverse supply of high-quality OST programs and services for children that fit their needs and interests and engage them in constructive ways.
- Implement a broad-based communications structure that reaches out to parents, children, city leaders, and other community stakeholders to raise their awareness about OST and engage them in effective ways.
- Lead to the development of an integrated data management system that can be accessed to retrieve data and statistics needed to inform decisions about prevention and intervention strategies for children.
- Construct closer partnerships among schools, other city agencies, and community-based OST providers that build on the strengths of each to help achieve better outcomes for children.

We believe this vision can be realized over the next five years, based on the work that has been done during this planning process and on the action steps outlined in this plan, all of which are based on the fundamental strategy of improving communication, coordination, and collaboration among all key stakeholders. (See Exhibit 2 for the full theory of action.) This plan addresses both the system building and service delivery work needed to accomplish this vision. As part of the system building work, we are:

- Bringing together citywide leadership to advocate for and support OST efforts.
- Developing an effective communications structure.
- Ensuring that all providers, funders, and schools have the ability to effectively measure results. This includes developing youth outcomes and program quality standards that have the support of community stakeholders, as well as creating the necessary data management system that links together and eliminates overlap between existing disparate systems.
- Ensuring that adequate financial resources are available to effectively provide and track high-quality OST programming for all DC children.

The service delivery work we will complete includes:

- Creating an in-depth "inventory" of OST programs in DC.
- Ensuring that community-based organizations (CBOs) and other providers have the capacity to provide enough quality programs through capacity-building initiatives and training and technical assistance.

These strategies will be tested initially through a pilot program, which will target five to seven middle school sites, providing an array of high-quality, age-appropriate OST programs to improve the students' attachment to schools, school attendance, and attitudes toward learning. We will build the infrastructure to manage OST effectively and track the participants' progress in school and on other social indicators to monitor the effectiveness of the intervention. In years three and four of YES! DC, we will develop strategies to improve students' transitions into and out of middle schools.

Through this pilot and the ensuing citywide rollout, YES! DC aims to build a citywide OST system that is not only deep and rich at the top, but at the local level — so that each school and neighborhood has a strong OST infrastructure and quality programs that give all stakeholders (parents, children, and providers) a sense of confidence, clarity, and comfort with OST as a critical component of youth development.

SITUATION ANALYSIS AND OPPORTUNITY

The potential investment by the Learning in Communities initiative of the Wallace Foundation has energized Washington, DC, to come together to begin a long-term process to build a more effective and coordinated Out-of-School Time (OST) system. The work that has taken place over the last four months not only raises the importance of improving the OST system but also brings greater attention to how the city can better serve the multiple needs of its children and youth through strategic coordination and collaboration. Through building a business plan for a strong OST system, stakeholders are recognizing opportunities to strengthen existing systems and create alliances and partnerships — across agencies, organizations, and disciplines — that ultimately will improve outcomes for children and youth.

While the Trust has led the planning work for the city, the involvement of community stakeholders at all levels has helped to guide and shape the OST plan for the city. Thus, this business plan addresses the key areas of work the city has focused on, with the Trust's leadership. During this period, a significant amount of information has been gathered, and critical plans and structures for developing a strong OST system are beginning to take shape. This plan addresses the work to date on both system building (city leadership, communications, outcomes and standards, and data management) and service delivery (analyzing supply and demand for OST; identifying best practices; designing a pilot project; and measuring results.) This plan also lays out the outcomes that we expect this pilot project and the ensuing wider implementation to achieve in each of these areas.

Recent research indicates that many urban children are effectively “lost” during their middle school years. For example, the Philadelphia Education Fund study (see Attachment 1) has shown that children entering middle school with even one of four identified risk factors (failing English grades, failing math grades, poor behavior, or low attendance) have only a 10 percent chance of graduating from high school on time or at all (Balfanz and Herzog, 2005). In addition, the physical, mental, and emotional changes that accompany adolescence often bring a desire for independence that leaves young teens vulnerable to experimentation with drugs, alcohol, and sexual activity (Carnegie, 1992). A National Research Council report (2002) indicates that negative behaviors such as cigarette smoking, school violence, HIV infection, and teen pregnancy remain high, and obesity is on the rise among adolescents. Also, many adolescents face risks of school failure and involvement with the juvenile justice system. This places many youth in jeopardy of not achieving a productive adulthood.

DC's middle-school-aged children face a number of additional challenges:

- Fifty-four percent of DC's middle-school-aged population live in a female-headed household with no male adult present;
- Twenty-seven percent live below the poverty line; 60 percent live in households with income below \$50,000 in one of the highest cost-of-living cities in America; and
- Twenty-two percent live in households where English is not the primary language.

Children in the District of Columbia also face other challenges common to large inner cities: high crime rates and gang presence, low-performing schools, and a lack of positive visions for their futures. As a result, their current educational achievements and other activity measures are incredibly disturbing:

- In the 2004–2005 school year, test scores revealed that less than 41 percent of middle and junior high school youth in public schools were at or above the “Basic” level in reading, and just 36 percent were at or above “Basic” in math.
- Twenty-four of the 27 public schools serving grades 6–8 in the District failed to meet adequate yearly progress (AYP) goals.
- Even more worrisome, only 10 percent of middle school students scored at or above “Proficient” (at grade level) on the 2004-05 National Assessment of Educational Progress in reading and only 6 percent at or above “Proficient” in math.

- The DC Metropolitan Police Department reports that 720 middle and junior high school students were picked up by the police for truancy during the 2004–2005 school year. Seventy percent of those who were truant were enrolled in just eight of the 27 public middle and junior high schools.
- More than 735 students in grades 6-9 dropped out of DCPS during the 2002–2003 school year.
- Crime statistics for 2003 indicate that 2,412 new criminal cases were filed against juveniles in 2003, an 8 percent increase from 2002.

While out-of-school time programs cannot change all of this, research and anecdotal evidence suggest that effective OST programs can:

- Keep students safe and reduce risky behaviors (Blank, 2005; Child Trends, 2003; Fox et al., 2003; Mason Dixon Polling and Research, 2002; Zeff & Redd, 2002; U.S. Dept. of Education and U.S. Dept. of Justice, 2000);
- Enhance relationships with peers and adults and self-esteem (Durlak & Weissberg, 2005);
- Enhance student engagement in learning and cultivate positive attitudes toward school (American Youth Policy Forum, 2006; Huang et al, 2000; Miller 2003; Reisner et al., 2004);
- Help improve school attendance (Reisner et al, 2004; Schinke, Cole, and Poulin, 2000);
- Support academic growth and higher achievement (Higher Achievement Program, 2003; Reisner et al., 2004; Schinke, Cole, and Poulin, 2000; YMCA of the USA, 2001);
- Help increase test scores in reading, math, and English language arts (Birmingham et al., 2005; Fashola, 1998);
- Increase aspirations and improve decision-making skills (Heath, 1994; Huang et al., 2000; McLaughlin, Irby & Langman, 1994);
- Help language learners gain English proficiency faster than their peers (Huang et al., 2000); and
- Help improve chances of finishing high school (Huang et al., 2006).

The benefits to youth from OST programs are dependent both on the quality of the program and the level of participation. YES! DC aims to bring together all the various stakeholders from the public and private sectors to create an effective, aligned OST system that will provide DC youth with a range of choices that will be appealing and engaging and will add value to their non-school hours.

This plan documents our analyses and efforts to date, current hypotheses regarding problems, potential solutions to be tested in a pilot program, and the work plan for completing analyses and implementing the pilot.

SYSTEM BUILDING

Building City Leadership Efforts in Support of OST

It is no secret that the District of Columbia, like most major cities in the United States, has a number of problems. The only way that we, as a city, can solve these problems is by tackling them together — taking on important issues, bringing together the different resources of the city, and building the will, the skills, and the infrastructure to effect change.

The Trust's primary strategy in bringing together the city's leadership has been and will continue to be coordination and collaboration among the wide variety of agencies and organizations contributing to OST opportunities for children. These key functions align well with the strategies that Mayor Anthony A. Williams and Superintendent of DC Public Schools Dr. Clifford B. Janey have brought to their respective posts: reduce overlapping responsibilities and activities, coordinate resources to ensure that key gaps in services are filled, and build evaluation systems and clear accountability so that progress can be measured and resources reallocated if necessary. This coordination and collaboration strategy applies across sectors, and it has already shown some success:

- OST is a critical component of the recently released Master Education Plan for DC Public Schools, as well as the Mayor's Youth Development Plan, and both of those plans are being coordinated with this YES! DC business plan;
- Talks are under way between a number of key agencies on ways to share data and information systems about youth activities and progress;
- Discussions are ongoing about making school facilities more accessible for OST activities; and
- Local foundations are working to build on their collaborative history to coordinate funding for OST initiatives.

Most encouraging, the dialogue around education and OST in the District has become more productive, more inclusive, less based on public posturing, and extremely focused on showing results.

During this business planning process, the Trust has engaged the DC community broadly through a Technical Advisory Group (TAG), comprising more than 45 individuals from all sectors and a wide range of organizations. These are individuals who are on the front lines of program delivery, funding for program delivery, the DC school system and other OST-related activities. Their support has been and will continue to be invaluable in creating and testing the YES! DC plan. We also have built an Executive Committee of key leaders in the city who represent the foundation, business, provider, and advocacy communities. Several of these leaders will continue to provide advice and support to YES! DC as part of the newly created advisory group for the initiative. Additional coordination of activities with different sets of stakeholders are described below, and leaders in various sectors have signed letters of commitment to work with YES! DC on coordinating and supporting OST programming in the District of Columbia. (See Exhibit 3 for a list of signed commitment letters.)

Public Sector

Anthony Williams, the District's current mayor, has been and continues to be supportive of OST efforts in general, and this initiative in particular. However, in the fall of this year, a new DC mayor will be elected along with a new chairman of the city council. These changes will impact the leadership of key agencies and possibly change fiscal and policy priorities for the city. As a result, engaging current city leaders as well as likely new leaders has been a top priority. Over the past few months, the Trust has met with the mayor and his top staff, all members of the city council, all announced candidates for the mayoral election, all members of the school board, and a number of key agency heads. These meetings have resulted in unanimous support for both the overall strategy and the pilot outlines. (See Exhibit 4 for a more complete — but certainly not exhaustive — list of leaders met with and their expressed support for the YES! DC project.)

Outreach and discussion with the DC Public School system (DCPS) has been particularly important. Due to strong coordination and collaborative efforts by the Trust and others, DC Public Schools' Master Education Plan, released on February 27, 2006, explicitly states that OST programs will be strengthened to better serve the needs of middle school students and that DCPS is coordinating with the Trust and other agencies around standards for high-quality programs as well as implementation of programs in school settings. In addition, the Deputy Mayor's Office for Children, Youth, Families and Elders is finalizing the implementation plan for the DC Youth Development Strategy, which also incorporates OST as a critical element of improving outcomes for children and youth. This office is working with Trust staff members to ensure that YES! DC serves the primary coordinating function for OST programs as well as for youth development training. Trust staff members also have built and will continue to build relationships with youth-focused leaders in a range of city agencies. A senior leadership group called the DC Youth Development Strategy Executive Steering Committee that includes Dr. Janey; City Administrator Robert Bobb; Deputy Mayor for Public Safety Edward Reiskin; Deputy Mayor for Children, Youth, Families, and Elders Brenda Donald-Walker; and the Trust's Greg Roberts now meets on a regular basis to ensure coordination.

Efforts to align OST with the city's educational goals are ongoing. In partnership with DCPS, the Trust is training community-based organizations on the DCPS learning standards. The training helps community-based OST

providers to understand how their programs can be adjusted to be in alignment with the standards without changing the programming to look like the regular school day. This effort has been applauded by DCPS and is laying the foundation toward developing quality program standards.

The Trust also has reached out to a number of allied organizations concerned about these issues, including the city's Public Education Fund, which recently merged into the DC Education Compact (DCEC) under the direction of Juanita Wade. We are also working with other organizations that will help to ensure that public demand for quality OST opportunities will stay high and, therefore, remain a priority for any city administration. These organizations include the DC Alliance of Youth Advocates, a citywide coalition of youth-serving community-based organizations (CBOs) that works to promote positive youth development programs and policies in the District of Columbia, as well as DC Action for Children (DC ACT). DC ACT is a nonprofit, independent multi-issue advocacy organization that has extensive experience in effecting policy and budget change in the District in a variety of areas focused on children and youth. They have committed to sharing their experiences around building public will, engaging the community, educating elected officials and residents and targeting advocacy efforts to support this initiative.

Corporate

Engagement is a crucial strategy for YES! DC to focus on with DC's corporate community in addition to coordination and collaboration. Typically, business support in the city for OST has been sponsorships for events or limited support for favored programs. The Trust is collaborating with the Washington Regional Association of Grantmakers (Washington Grantmakers, or WG) to build support among corporate foundations; other business champions for OST are being identified and asked to take an active role, particularly in the area of system building. In addition, new board members joining the Trust this year will represent the business community, and the Chair of the Trust's Board, John Hill, who serves as President of the Federal City Council, has built substantial support among area companies for this initiative. Additionally, he has obtained support for YES! DC from the presidents of the Board of Trade and the DC Chamber of Commerce. (See Exhibit 5 for corporate and philanthropic support.)

Philanthropic

The Trust's planning for YES! DC has benefited from the local philanthropic community's history of working together and its experience with OST programs. Local funders naturally are excited about the potential catalyst provided by a major Wallace grant in DC, and many of them already are evaluating how they will provide additional leverage for DC OST programs — both through YES! DC and through direct support of quality programs that take part in it. Discussions about their engagement going forward have focused on working together to effectively and efficiently fund the high-quality programs needed as well as the training and technical assistance that community-based organizations need to deliver those programs. Several local funders have expressed an interest in funding this component and working with the Trust to develop a variety of training opportunities. The Children, Youth, and Families Working Group of Washington Grantmakers will continue to play a lead role to build on a Wallace investment with local support.

Universities

The Trust is working to engage with local universities to expand their involvement in OST programs. Partners in this work include the GEAR UP program, which is directed by the District's State Education office (SEO). GEAR UP, designed to help low-income students enter and succeed in postsecondary education, partners with five universities (Howard, Georgetown, University of DC, Southeastern, and Trinity) to offer after-school tutoring, mentoring, case management and college preparation to more than 900 students and tracks them from seventh grade through high school graduation. YES! DC will work with SEO to identify funds for a new cohort of middle school students and will work with the GEAR UP office to share best practices and lessons learned in infusing college access principles and activities into OST programming. This is one example of the potential to engage DC's abundance of higher education institutions.

CBOs and Community Stakeholders

On an ongoing basis, executive directors and the staff of community-based providers have been meeting to address issues of concern and the impact of the proposed plan. As a funder of many of these organizations, the Trust has worked hard to build constructive relationships, which have been instrumental in developing this plan. We are currently evaluating a number of potential partnerships with program providers (see Exhibit 6) as well as organizations (e.g., Communities in Schools) that can help with the organizational and infrastructure demands of the pilot and the long-term rollout of YES! DC.

Parents and Children

Building general public will around OST has been an area of focus as well. At Mayor Williams' Citizens Summit IV, the number one priority expressed by the more than 2,000 participants was the need to support the growth and development of all youth. As part of the planning for this project, the Trust convened several focus groups, conducted hundreds of phone interviews, and held two public meetings for parents and children. Other opportunities for two-way communication will continue to be created. Much of what we have learned through these activities is documented in this plan, and all of these events, coinciding with the release of the Master Education Plan and the Mayor's Youth Development Plan, have expanded the public demand for effective OST programs. We believe that in the past few months in DC, expectations have grown in such a way that that demand must be satisfied regardless of the outcome of this grant proposal.

Leadership Engagement Going Forward

The TAG created for the YES! DC planning process will continue for some period to provide expertise, feedback, and a broad communications vehicle to and from different stakeholder groups. We expect that this group will taper off its involvement over the next two to three years, but that different people from the group will become engaged in a variety of other ways.

In the weeks ahead, a governance structure for the initiative will be finalized. The proposed governance structure will include some expansion (from 10 to 15 members) of the Trust's Board of Directors and the creation of a Leadership Council that will serve in a key advisory capacity to the Trust's Board. This Council will represent leaders at the highest levels of government, philanthropy, education, and other sectors. (See Exhibits 7 and 8.) We will continue to evaluate whether a special committee of the Trust's Board (which could include a few members of the Leadership Council) will be needed to oversee efficiently the implementation of the OST business plan, and we look forward to learning more about how the governance structures of other Learning in Communities initiatives have evolved.

Ensuring Adequate Financial Resources

The DC community has placed OST high on their agenda. Although it is very difficult to get accurate numbers, we know that philanthropic funding for local organizations providing OST programs for middle school children far exceeded \$21 million in 2005, possibly reaching \$40 million to \$50 million. Funding over the past few years has included substantial capacity-building investments, including several in organizations that have added or expanded middle school programs and are heavily focused on quality standards and outcomes measurement.

In addition, support for this work from public funds has continued to expand. The Mayor's FY 2006 budget for OST programs and activities is \$51,074,098. This is a \$9,781,922 increase over the approved 2005 budget. This does not include certain youth-focused earmarks, but it does include an increase of approximately 60 percent for the Trust's budget (with additional funds added to the Trust's budget by the council), \$10 million for Aftercare for All, \$16 million for youth employment programs, and \$7 million in before- and after-school child care.

Additional corporate and philanthropic funding also has begun. Specifically, the Fannie Mae Foundation has already pledged to support the development of the data systems needed to collect and support ongoing research, and the Moriah Fund has discussed the possibility of funding expanded youth development training for youth workers. In addition, an anonymous donor recently committed \$100,000 to the YES!DC initiative. Capital One recently approved \$130,000 in funding for the Trust to provide OST tutoring and mentoring to middle school youth, and company executives have expressed willingness to become more engaged in a variety of ways. PNC Bank, a new corporate player in the city, also has made an initial pledge of \$20,000. Together with Trust staff, John Hill, the Trust's board chair and CEO of the Federal City Council, is working to secure additional support from a wide range of corporations. Other opportunities for corporate involvement have been identified that range from financial and in-kind support to expanded sponsorship of OST providers, "adoption" of schools participating in the pilot, and loaned executives, as well as public statements of support to encourage support by employees and other stakeholders. (See Exhibit 9 for a full list of development prospects.)

National funders are also coming to the table. Through a grant to the Trust from the Youth Transition Funders Group, issues around truancy and disconnected youth will be addressed. This grant ties in with truancy issues for middle school youth that will be examined and hopefully addressed under the Wallace initiative.

The YES! DC initiative has already shown significant capacity to leverage additional funding, and new funding streams will continue to be identified. However, it is clear that while our short-term strategy must be to fund the pilot efforts sufficiently to prove the value of this approach to OST, our long-term strategy must include coordination and collaboration in the area of financing as well. If YES! DC can show solid results over the next few years, we believe that resources will be redistributed citywide to support more effective programs delivered through more efficient coordination. In short, both new investment in OST and significant reallocation of funds will need to occur.

Communication

We believe a robust, vibrant, and comprehensive communications plan is critical to the success of this initiative. If the citizenry of a city embraces an issue, and it is embedded in the values and priorities of the people, the issue becomes "administration-proof" and will thrive regardless of political change. This is the case with early childhood development in the District: a great deal of work was done 10 years ago to bring this issue to the forefront, and now it is an unquestioned part of the District's budget and policies. The same will be done for OST. We will continue to work to build public will around the value of OST. Particularly in this election year, mayoral candidates will receive regular updates on the demand for high-quality programs in every ward of the District, as well as plans for meeting that demand. As DCPS rolls out its Master Education Plan and the District government implements its Plan for Effective Youth Development, we will embark on a YES! DC campaign that complements the partner initiatives while making a clear case for improved OST opportunities across the District.

Our primary focus will be on increasing public and private support of OST and providing parents and youth with information about the OST opportunities in their neighborhood. In addition, we will work to improve communication among OST partners to raise standards and maximize resources.

A communications audit was conducted to inform the communications plan for the implementation of YES! DC. We will need to reach a number of audiences for various purposes. Most of these audiences can be reached by a combination of personal contact, mainstream and community media, and the Trust's internal media. Three primary audiences require special attention: the youth, their parents, and the community-based organizations that serve them. It is these audiences on which the audit was primarily focused. Other influential groups that the Trust will need to communicate with include city leaders and political figures, philanthropists, business officials, school officials and teachers, and the media.

The audit identified a variety of current modes of communications used by stakeholders to receive and share information on OST; specifically 28 listservs, 19 newspapers, six radio stations, six TV stations, and eight websites. The needs identified include peer-to-peer communications, communications training for CBOs, increased community outreach on the part of the Trust, and increased avenues of communications to the Trust for participants and constituents. Our work also indicated that parents and providers would like to have one central source of OST information in the city and to have that information distributed through a variety of strategies.

In response to the audit, we have created a template for a communications plan that will be used to build public will, improve coordination, and encourage collaboration across all sectors of OST stakeholders. (See Attachment 2 for communication audit and draft plan.) Highlights of the plan include a strategy for the potential announcement of the YES! DC launch in partnership with the Wallace Foundation, a strategy for the pilot phase of the project, and a plan for the larger rollout of the project in the ensuing years. All of these strategies will be part of the larger effort to increase awareness of the importance of OST in the lives of the District's families. We are committed to making OST part of the culture of our city — embraced by parents, youth, teachers, policy makers, and funders alike.

Several components of the communications plan are currently under way or in development. First, the name YES! DC has been chosen for this initiative. It conveys a sense of affirmation; of a holistic, youth development philosophy; and the commitment of a city. A YES! DC website is being developed (www.successfulDCyouth.org), with KSA-Plus providing the planning and structuring of the site, as well as the design, writing, editing, and coding. In response to the communications audit, the website will ultimately include:

- Blogs
- Job postings
- Media center
- Shared discussions
- Calendar of OST events
- Best practices in OST
- News
- Links to relevant sites
- Surveys

An e-newsletter for the TAG and other stakeholders is being created to increase regular communications and develop a deeper understanding of this initiative in the community. To garner media interest, an electronic press kit is being developed. To begin the work of increasing public will for OST in the District, we have identified and are developing corporate partnerships — “OST champions.” We plan to include learning from New York City and Providence about their experiences with implementation, and we will work with the Wallace Foundation to avoid pitfalls and borrow successes from our partner cities. Ultimately, we will identify powerful spokespeople that can bridge the generations and speak to parents and youth alike about the benefits of OST and the importance of YES! DC.

Youth Outcomes and Program Standards

Overall Youth Outcomes

We have defined a set of agreed-upon youth outcomes based on research done by Child Trends and informed by other cities' youth outcomes. These outcomes were vetted by a number of stakeholder groups:

- Trust grantees that currently provide OST programs;
- Summer Strategy partners (CBOs, schools, district youth-serving agencies, etc.);
- The funding community, in particular the Children and Youth Workgroup of Washington Grantmakers; and
- The YES! DC Technical Advisory Group

In all, more than 60 OST stakeholders responded to a web-based survey on the proposed outcomes, and additional outcomes were suggested. We will continue to work with Child Trends to incorporate key survey feedback and to “finalize” our outcome measures, although we recognize that they will need to be reviewed occasionally based on new developments and incremental learning.

DOMAIN	MEASURABLE OUTCOMES
Work/Self Sufficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased knowledge of job opportunities; • Increased knowledge of skills and process involved in becoming employed; • Gainful employment/earning a living wage; • Increased length of time maintaining employment; and • Safe and independent housing.
School/Educational and Cognitive Attainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased academic achievement; • Improved school attendance; • Increased likelihood of high school graduation; and • Improved college attendance.
Health and Safety/Risky Behaviors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absence of use of alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs; • Improved reproductive health (absence of risky sexual behaviors); • Empowered to be healthy and make healthy choices; • Reductions in risky, violent, and criminal behaviors; • Absence of violent death and gang activity; and • Less involvement in crime or violence (as victims and perpetrators).
Family Formation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced non-marital childbearing.
Social and Emotional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-esteem, self-confidence, and overall subjective well-being with increased sense of possibilities for their future; • Autonomy, responsibility, and competence; • Moral character; • Strong self-regulation skills; • Positive relationships with caring adults; • Positive peer attachments; and • Enhanced life skills.
Civic Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteering and community involvement; and • Increased cultural sensitivity.

This set of outcomes is being adopted by the Deputy Mayor’s “Effective Youth Development” plan, which will ensure improved coordination of efforts.

The degree to which these outcomes are being met will be measured through both qualitative and quantitative evaluation. Effective quantitative evaluation and the required data collection and analytics (discussed in the next section) will be combined with an independent evaluation model to address the full range of youth outcomes.

Many of the desired outcomes can be measured based on simple data collection. Results measured by data collection include a student’s attendance/truancy rate, promotion from grade to grade, test scores, and school grades that can reflect increased attachment to school and improved attitudes toward learning. Some results will be

indicated by reduced or no involvement with the juvenile justice system and/or gangs, and this information will be available from the data management system. Other outcomes will be measured over the ensuing years, such as gainful employment, postsecondary and tertiary educational attainment, and the absence of non-marital (or very young) childbearing.

Qualitative evaluation will address some outcomes such as those in the social and emotional development category. Surveys, interviews, and program reports will be used to determine a participant's development of moral character, self-regulation skills, self-esteem, confidence, and an increased sense of possibilities for his or her future. Some outcomes can be documented by program staff or self-reported by the participant, such as positive relationships with caring adults and volunteering in the community.

Middle School Program Standards

In 2004, the Trust published a set of standards for OST programs. (See Attachment 3 for complete standards.) These were developed by starting with the National School Aged Care Alliance (NSACA) standards, customizing them for the DC community, and vetting them widely with program providers, teachers, principals, children, and other experts.

These standards must be customized to focus on a middle school population. Research and experience show us that this age group has unique, specific developmental needs that can be supported by high-quality OST programs. Accordingly, we will continue our work for the next six months to create a set of standards for programs that serve the middle school population. The standards will help ensure the programs have the philosophy, tools and resources necessary to help young people achieve the outcomes listed above.

We will use the aforementioned "DC Standards for Out-of-School Time" as a basis for this work and, using best-practices research, will modify them to make them age-appropriate and responsive to the defined outcomes. Our efforts will look at the Edna McConnell Clark work on middle school programs, as well as the High Scope "Youth Quality Program Assessment" tool that examines seven aspects of youth programming:

- Safe environment
- Supportive environment
- Interaction
- Engagement
- Youth-centered policies and practices
- High expectations
- Access.

Our research also has led us to The National Research Council's Committee on Community-Level Programs for Youth (2002) that identifies eight features of "positive developmental settings" (cited in Miller, 2003) that include:

- Physical and psychological safety
- Appropriate structure
- Supportive relationships
- Opportunities to belong
- Positive social norms
- Support for efficacy and mattering (that is, opportunities for autonomy, challenge, and taking responsibility)
- Opportunities for skill building
- Integration of family, school and community efforts.

In addition, the National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning suggests from their research that students get the most out of programs that:

- Develop thoughtful, fun, accessible activities;
- Survey and build on students' interests;
- Motivate and engage all students to participate;
- Connect to grade-level benchmarks, standards, and the school-day curriculum to increase achievement;
- Provide real-world activities that connect to the broader community;
- Provide effective tutoring and differentiated instruction for all skill levels;
- Integrate technology;
- Provide homework help;
- Plan activities that engage students and enhance skills across the curriculum; and
- Provide staff training and professional development.
(retrieved February 22, 2006, from <http://www.sedl.org/afterschool/toolkits/about.html>).

While there is noticeable overlap among these lists, they do provide guidance for identifying the kinds of characteristics the Trust will be seeking in evaluating the quality of programs that will be piloted in the first two years of the grant.

Other supports for this work will include:

- The U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice (2000) set of program standards;
- Policy Studies Associates study for the Southwest Educational Development Lab — shared features of high-performing after-school programs: follow-up to the TASC evaluation;
- American Youth Policy Forum — Help Youth Succeed through Out-of-School Programs;
- Harvard Family Research Project — Understanding and Measuring Attendance in Out-of-School Time Programs;
- Child Trends — Conceptualizing a Monitoring System for Indicators in Middle Childhood; and
- Michigan State University Extension Youth Development Area of Expertise, Dr. Christine Nelson.

In addition, research conducted by Market Street Research revealed specific areas of interest and concern that will be folded into the standards, such as:

- Safety in the places that offer after-school activities, as well as in transportation to and from them;
- Processes to deal with poor or threatening behavior by children in the program;
- Job skills training that could lead to a paying job by the ninth grade;
- Life skills and “rites of passage” program content; and
- A variety of activities, with choices.

We plan to develop an initial draft set of standards by May 1, 2006, and we will hold a series of meetings with various groups of OST stakeholders through May and June, including:

- CBO providers
- Funders
- DCPS
- Agency providers (Department of Parks and Recreation, Addiction Prevention Recovery Administration, libraries, etc.) and policy staff (Executive Office of the Mayor and Council Members)
- Research community (Child Trends, Academy for Educational Development, etc.)
- Parents and youth.

The resulting final draft set of standards will be vetted in the field for continuity, comprehensiveness, and alignment with any District regulations for OST providers. The standards will be finalized by August 1, 2006.

Standards Compliance

In the first year of the initiative, standards compliance will be voluntary for all Trust grantees outside of the pilots. Working with the TAG, we will develop consensus around a policy for standards compliance to be rolled out in years two and three. At the pilot sites, compliance with the standards will be monitored by site coordinators as well as YES! DC staff and Trust program associates. Assessment and self-assessment tools will be developed based on existing best practices to provide a clear analysis of a CBO's compliance with the standards. Trust program associates will monitor a grantee's compliance through site visits and program reports. The Trust will provide training and technical assistance to help providers come into and maintain compliance, as discussed further in this plan.

Improving Results by Improving Quality

These outcomes and standards lay the foundation for a system of "approved" or "certified" OST programs that will increase the quality and accessibility of appropriate services for children and youth in the District. The system will:

- Assess the quality of CBOs based on accepted citywide nonprofit and OST standards;
- Assist CBOs with meeting the standards; and
- Assign a "quality" designation to CBOs that meet the standards.

The certification process will take at least several months to develop and will address both organizational and programmatic integrity.

We will utilize a respected "best practices" process for the organizational aspect and work with the "Standards for Excellence Institute." This is a national initiative that promotes the highest standards of ethics and accountability in nonprofit governance, management, and operations, and facilitates adherence to those standards by all nonprofits. The Institute, an operating division of Maryland Association of Nonprofit Organizations, uses the Standards for Excellence program, a comprehensive system of nonprofit sector self-regulation as its vehicle for effective change. The Standards for Excellence program works to strengthen the ability of nonprofit organizations to act ethically and accountably in their management and governance, while enhancing the public's trust in the nonprofit sector. The Trust will become a replication site, potentially in partnership with another agency that covers a broader spectrum of not-for-profits and, will use, the process to verify an organization's qualifications for investment. As a replication site, the Trust will be able to offer the technical assistance developed by the Institute that enables CBOs to make the necessary changes and adjustments that will strengthen their organizations.

For the programmatic content, YES! DC will develop a set of program standards with supporting indicators, as previously discussed, to serve as a baseline for assessment. Organizations wishing to be considered for certification will first complete a self-assessment, and then the evaluation team will evaluate each organization against the standards. Organizations that adequately meet the quality standards will receive a "quality seal," that will create a sense of excellence and increase the confidence of funders and partners (schools, agencies, etc.) in the quality of the organizations and their OST programs. While certification might not be used as a requirement for funding by the Trust, it likely will factor into funding decisions by several organizations and schools' partnering decisions. Organizations that do not receive the "quality seal" can receive technical assistance in the specific areas where they need improvement, and they will be eligible to reapply through an expedited process for certification.

We are considering a "tiered" funding strategy that rewards organizations for meeting as many standards as possible, affording them a higher "per participant" rate of funding (a "gold, silver, bronze" model current exists among the District's Early Childhood providers). Providers that do not meet an adequate number of standards will receive training or other assistance and a limited length of time to meet standards. If they cannot come up to an adequate

level of performance, they will no longer receive funding from the Trust. This system will be vetted by the TAG to ensure that CBOs understand it and that it is equitable and efficient.

In our initial year, we will pilot the standards with a small group of CBOs to determine the amount of assistance and monitoring necessary to make the standards obligatory for all providers.

Data Management System Building

One of the key challenges facing DC's multiple youth-focused agencies as well as the CBOs serving DC youth is the measurement of results. Historically, city agencies have not shared information with each other, much less with CBOs. This has resulted in redundant systems, higher costs, and most important, suboptimal outcomes for children and families, as service providers have been unable to access key information on different aspects of a child's life to see that the child gets the appropriate services. By making possible a system of shared data — integrated across public agencies and made available to key CBOs for measurement purposes — YES! DC can offer better data, better MIS capabilities and lower costs to all those working to improve children's outcomes.

The District is developing a strong data management system in which data can be uniformly collected, analyzed, and accessed across city agencies. A citywide data system that will provide a comprehensive profile of each child in the city is nearing completion. The goal of the system is to have a single point of entry where cross-agency information about each child can be accessed. With a robust data collection system in place, city leaders envision that children in need of additional support and services will no longer fall through the cracks. For example, if a child is failing in school, the social worker involved in the child's life through Child and Family Services will be able to connect with his/her teacher to develop a coordinated strategy to help him or her succeed in school.

The Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) has developed the citywide data collection technology (the "Safe Passages Information System") and has already connected the Department of Youth Rehabilitative Services, Department of Mental Health, and Child and Family Services Agency through a Memorandum of Understanding that addresses all relevant District and Federal privacy and confidentiality regulations. It is in the process of connecting other agencies. Concurrently, the SEO is collecting education data on children (including test scores, grades, attendance, free and reduced lunch participation, enrollment and demographic information) and combining that data with the OCTO database. OCTO's principal role is to warehouse and maintain the data (including ensuring accuracy and data quality), while the SEO will be the primary agency that will analyze data and disseminate findings.

The Trust has secured commitments from both OCTO and SEO to allow the Trust to have access to the aggregated data maintained by these agencies. Under a memorandum of understanding (MOU) developed by OCTO, the Trust will be a member of a consortium of agencies that can access the data. In the weeks ahead, DC public schools also will be added to this consortium, ensuring that the combined data collection is as robust as possible. For each child in the OCTO data bank, information includes demographics, address, client interaction across human services agencies, and contact information, with school participation and academic information soon to be added. We will continue to work with OCTO and others to ensure that the system provides all of the information necessary to measure both a child's progress and a program's effectiveness.

The Trust will fill the void that exists in this system by providing participation data for OST programs. We estimate that we have data on 60 percent to 70 percent of OST programs in the city. Through our WEBSTARS systems, in use since 2002, we are able to collect daily attendance and activity information on virtually any program, regardless of type of program, location, or provider. WEBSTARS also allows providers to collect demographic data on each participant. To address the need for a more complete picture of the OST participation rate, the Deputy Mayor for Children, Youth, Families and Elders has agreed to work with us to ensure that data from OST providers not funded by the Trust is made available.

The Trust has met with school officials, OCTO, and the SEO to determine how the WEBSTARS system can interface with the city data systems described above. Over the next six months, the WEBSTARS developer will design an interface capacity. If the interface is approved by the city and complies with privacy and confidentiality issues, OST providers will be able to access school data on their individual participants and to find out what other programs and services their participants are participating in with Supplemental Education Services (SES) or other OST providers. This integration may not be completed by the beginning of the pilot, but both systems will be operational and capturing the data so that monitoring and analyses can be completed through partially automated combining of the data.

The data management system will be:

- I. **Participant-centered** — The system will collect information about individual participants who receive OST services. This will enable better tailoring of services and programs to the individuals' needs, but will also improve citywide understanding of the quantity and types of services provided, the demand for OST services, and the impact of services on individual and community outcomes.
- II. **Outcomes-based** — The system will be designed to measure the impact of OST programming on a set of pre-defined youth development outcomes. The focus on outcomes will shape all aspects of data collection and will also determine the set of data to be collected from OST funders and managing agencies.
- III. **Integrated** — In order to generate a complete picture of DC's OST clients, services, and program impacts, the data system will integrate information from the multiple public and private sources.

The key features of this system include:

- An OST Participant Information System that will include flexible, comprehensive support for site-level program operations, a shared Participant Model that will ensure accuracy in tracking, and support for Participant-level Outcome Tracking that will enable both better tailoring of services and programs to individual needs and improved planning citywide.
- An OST Funder Information System that will empower better grant monitoring and outcomes evaluation. It will also encourage grant makers to adopt common data collection standards, thereby reducing the reporting burdens on service providers. (The WEBSTARS system currently functions in this capacity to manage grants issued by the Trust, Fannie Mae, and DCPS Supplemental Education Services.)
- An OST Interagency Integration System that will reduce (and hopefully eliminate) the multiple overlapping systems that are managed separately by each city agency that funds and/or manages OST programs. The combination of the integrated OCTO, DCPS, and other agencies' data and the resulting cost savings to individual agencies should be a powerful inducement for all relevant agencies to implement this system as fully and quickly as possible.

Once the interface capacity is put in place, the District will be one of two cities in the country that connects OST providers to city agency data on children on a broad basis. Louisville, Kentucky, is the only other city at this time that has made significant progress in this area. In Louisville, all students participating in OST programs use an electronic swipe card that records their participation in OST and links to the child's school records. This technology has enabled OST providers and school officials in Louisville to have data to design programming and intervention strategies. The Trust also is considering the swipe card technology and its use with the WEBSTARS system.

The data that will be collected will identify children at risk at the start of the pilot program and intervention strategies will be employed at the very beginning. Building on the research from Philadelphia that provides guidance on the academic risk factors to consider, the integrated data management system will allow us to examine other aspects of

the child's life from the beginning of the project. The expanded data system will enable analyses by gender and neighborhood, as well as by school achievement and other social indicators.

This kind of major systems integration and data sharing is not easy, and we will still need to finalize details of how to ensure that all privacy regulations are met and that children's privacy is fully maintained. In addition, the technical integration itself will be a significant challenge. However, the full system — which should be complete by January of 2007 — will generate a citywide data set that enables OST providers to develop programs that better address the needs of children, improve participation rates, support other city efforts to improve outcomes for children, and provide information to better assess the impact of OST programs, as well as to provide DC with the necessary information foundation for more effective citywide strategic planning. (See Attachment 4 for a more complete description of this system.)

SERVICE DELIVERY

Determining the Supply and Demand for OST in the District of Columbia

Initial assumptions about the supply and demand for OST programs, particularly for middle school youth, were tested through research conducted by our team and Market Street Research. Our initial hypothesis that the District of Columbia lacked sufficient programs for middle schoolers appears to be incorrect. We now believe that the District lacks the right programs in the right places for the needs and interests of the children and their families.

In order to measure both program capacity and demand, we have utilized a measure that we call a "program slot." One program slot is defined as one middle schooler attending a program for one day. Hence, program capacity is measured in terms of both how many middle schoolers they serve and the number of days the program is offered (i.e., a program's total capacity in program slots is the days per week a program is offered multiplied by the number of children that could be served each day).

Demand — Number of Potential Participants

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, there were approximately 19,000 children in grades 6 through 8 residing in the District of Columbia in 2005. Approximately 11,200 of these children are enrolled in DC public schools. Another 4,000 are enrolled in public charter schools, with the remainder either in private schools or not currently accounted for.

As stated earlier, DC's children face enormous challenges at home, in school, and in their OST. The research conducted for the Trust by Market Street Research indicates that the majority of these children and their parents look to OST programs to help overcome these challenges: to keep them safe, excite them about learning, teach them new skills, help them learn to get along with others, and to allow them to have FUN. (See Attachment 5 for full report summarizing the research and its findings.)

Currently, about 60 percent of children and parents report participation in OST activities between one and five days per week. (Note that for purposes of analysis, we are using the average of parent and child responses. Interestingly, parents consistently reported that the children were in OST programs more often than the children reported, although the mismatches were not substantial.) On average, those that participate estimate attendance at an average of three and three-tenths days per week. Assuming that all middle schoolers (regardless of what kind of school they attend) participate in OST activities, that indicates about 11,400 (60 percent of 19,000) children and about 38,000 program slots currently in use.

More than 67 percent of parents stated that their children had no other responsibilities any day of the week that would prevent them from participating in OST activities. (Note that for purposes of this research, weekdays were the major area of focus.) Eleven percent said that other responsibilities would take precedence one or two days per

week; 5 percent said other responsibilities would take precedence three or four days per week; and almost 14 percent said that other responsibilities would take precedence five days per week. Students reported a slightly higher number of days that other responsibilities would take precedence.

Thus, in order to calculate a rough estimate demand for OST activities, we are assuming:

- All 19,000 children in middle school are in the “market” for OST opportunities.
- Seventy percent to 80 percent of all students would attend OST programs three and a half days per week if high-quality programming were available and known about. (Note that survey responses indicated that on average all children would participate three and a half days per week. However, we know that at least 19 percent have other responsibilities three to five days per week, and that research responses tend to be significantly higher than actual participation. In addition, the survey asked parents to assume that all programs were free, but we cannot base a realistic demand estimate on that assumption. Hence, we are assuming 80 percent of children participating an average of three and a half days per week as the maximum that we could achieve.)

This gives us an estimated demand of between 13,000 and 15,000 students and between 47,000 and 53,000 program slots.

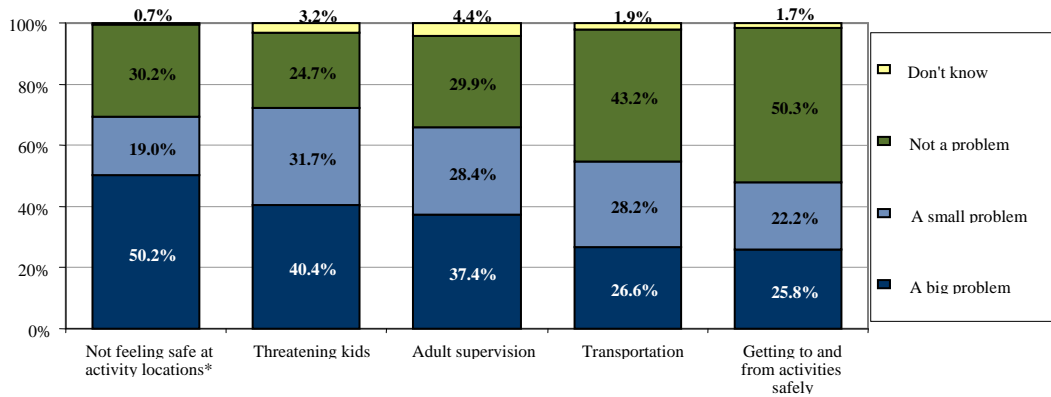
Demand — Other Factors

Sixty percent of families surveyed indicated that they liked the way their child spent time after school “a lot.” Thirty-eight percent indicated that they liked the way the child spent time “some” or less, indicating a level of interest in changing. By far the two most common dislikes that parents cited were that the activities were not productive and/or engaging (23 percent) and that the programs did not include desired learning activities (22 percent). These ranked No. 2 and No. 3 with the children (cited by 16 percent and 15 percent, respectively,) with their No. 1 dislike being that the activities did not include desired athletic activities (cited by 22 percent of children, but only 7 percent of parents). In total, more than 75 percent of those surveyed indicated at least one dislike, in spite of the high number indicating overall satisfaction with the programs.

Two other interesting findings from this “dislikes” question are at odds with results from focus groups, feedback from schools, and “common knowledge” of the DC area. Only 9 percent of parents and less than 1 percent of students indicated that concerns about safety were a key dislike about their current OST program. Also, only about 6.5 percent of each group indicated that they disliked the quality of their current program. Are these indications that both safety and quality are better than the general belief, or is this a result of people’s tendency to be comfortable with what they know? Given that safety appears to be the major barrier to participation in OST activities (see below), we must assume that safety is an issue of highest priority for YES! DC to address. In addition, the current academic and other outcomes of children in the District of Columbia make quality a key imperative.

BARRIERS TO OST PARTICIPATION

Responses of 400 parents and children



Twenty-seven percent of respondents indicated that transportation to and from programs was a big problem, and 28 percent said it was a small problem (vs. not a problem at all). Similar numbers (26 percent and 22 percent, respectively) said that getting to a program safely was a problem. This, combined with the 31 percent who believed that there were not enough programs, supports our hypothesis that there is great demand for programs that are more geographically accessible to families and students.

In short, the research indicates that DC needs a selection of quality programs that more closely match families' needs, desires and neighborhoods — and parents want to know about them.

Supply

Based on feedback from parents and schools about the shortage of OST programs, our initial hypothesis was that the quantity of programs and slots in those programs was insufficient. This is clearly not the case. We have identified more than 150 programs that serve at least some middle school children. These programs range from the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Washington, which serve approximately 7,000 DC middle school children each school day, to the ARCH Training Center, which serves about three middle schoolers each day, using the goal of literacy to develop fun and educational opportunities for at-risk youth.

Analyzing only the 57 middle school programs funded by the Trust showed us that there are sufficient program slots available. Even with 20 percent of the data still missing, we have identified almost 50,000 program slots for middle school children. Adding information for larger programs not currently funded by the Trust, DC certainly has more than enough OST program slots for middle school children, and that is without including slots in 50 to 75 smaller programs. These programs run the gamut from academics to sports to arts to mentoring to full-scale intervention programs with elements of all of these. (See Exhibit 6 for current — but still not complete — supply information.)

However, 12 of the 27 public schools serving middle school youth in DC do not have any OST programs operating in their schools. Schools with OST programs were likely to state that they had about one to two OST programs. Two schools named three programs; two had four; one school had five programs; and one school had eight programs. Six of the schools with one or no OST programs also had the highest rates of truancy in the city. This research indicates there are some significant disparities and possible barriers for OST programs to operate in schools. These hypotheses are confirmed by anecdotal evidence from OST providers, parents, children, and school administrators.

In addition, our market research asked CBO program providers (as those most likely to be knowledgeable about the choices) about the range of programs offered for middle school children. Only 29 percent said that they like the options available in OST programs for middle schoolers “a lot.” Thirty-one percent of respondents said that their dislikes about OST opportunities included lack of programs or lack of available information about programs. Twenty-

three percent cited the lack of desired learning activities, while 21 percent cited the quality of programs' administration, partners, and/or evaluation; 6 percent cited the need for higher quality facilities and/or equipment; 4 percent cited the need for higher quality leaders, and 19 percent cited other quality concerns. Overall, 60 percent of CBOs reported concerns about the activities offered; 51 percent reported quality concerns, and 32 percent reported lack of availability or lack of information.

The Gap

We now realize that the capacity of current programs is sufficient, but there are significant problems with those programs. While there remains substantial analysis to be completed — with time-intensive data gathering on existing programs remaining to be done over the next several months — it now appears that DC faces problems similar to those identified on a national level in the RAND study: we need a better selection of high-quality programs in the right places that meet the needs and interests of children and families. For example:

- Alignment with schools is lacking. Since more than 41 percent of parents and children surveyed had a preference for programs in schools, and transportation and safety issues are clearly important for programs not based at schools, there appears to be a gap in quality programming at least at DC public schools. Particularly, given that research that indicates alignment with schools is a key success factor, further research is needed to find out why these disparities exist and how to overcome any barriers. This will be a major focus of this initiative.
- Initial analyses indicate that the programs are not geographically aligned with the highest numbers of children, so we must continue to analyze the potential location mismatch, particularly given the concerns about transportation and safety to and from programs. Forty-five percent of those surveyed preferred programs that are not located in schools; 63 percent of parents and children preferred programs located near their homes; and 74 percent preferred that all activities take place in one location. This points to a need for some OST programs and centers located in residential areas near large numbers of children.
- Parents indicate a lack of programs, which suggests either lack of program capacity in their area or lack of knowledge about the available programs.
- Parents and children indicate that the available programs do not match their desired activities.
- While the quality and safety issues were not reported as major concerns with current programs, statistics on educational achievements, child safety, and other outcomes compel us to believe that both quality and safety must be improved overall.

The Trust will continue to gather information and attempt to profile the supply at a greater level of detail. We will need to know, by neighborhood, (1) what type of programs are offered, (2) which programs are perceived to be of sufficient quality, (3) which programs are offered free or at affordable cost, and (4) which programs target what kinds of children — by need, by ethnicity, by age, etc. We know it would be nearly impossible (and extremely inefficient) to try to profile all programs, so we will focus on those that serve 30 or more children and on those that already serve neighborhoods that are selected to participate in the pilot program. In addition, our supply-side analyses will be guided by the needs assessment conducted at each pilot site in order to target our work most efficiently.

Filling the Gap

Positive youth development refers to “the ongoing growth process in which all youths endeavor to meet their basic needs for safety, caring relationships, and connections to the larger community while striving to build academic, vocational, personal, and social skills” (Moore & Lippman, 2005; Pittman & Wright, 1991). This approach reflects the framework that the Trust supports for OST programming.

Research on best practices of OST programs for a culturally diverse, urban middle school population shows that there is no ideal, one-size-fits-all model. There are, however, some clear indicators of quality in programs that meet the needs of youth in the transition from childhood to adulthood. According to Bodilly & Beckett (2005) in their report for the Wallace Foundation (conducted by the RAND Corporation,) these indicators include:

- A clear mission
- High expectations and social norms
- A safe and healthy environment
- A supportive climate
- A small total enrollment
- Stable, trained personnel
- Appropriate and engaging content and pedagogy
- Integrated family and community partners
- Frequent assessments.

In addition, since adolescents have relative freedom to choose how to spend their free time, the Trust will focus attention on recruiting and encouraging consistent participation by middle school youth in the programs it supports. Bodilly & Beckett (2005) identify motivations, intentions, and environmental factors as the main factors influencing decisions. While environmental barriers (such as lack of scheduling, information, or constraints to access) can be identified and addressed, young people's attitudes about how to spend their time will be a strong determining factor in their participation. They must see that the activity will benefit them and consider the trade-offs of competing activities. Also, perhaps most significant for young adolescents, the power and pressure of "key influencers" (especially family members and peers) may affect participation. While it is not clear from existing research what precise "dosage" is optimal for impact of OST programming, we do know that youth must get in the door for there to be any effect.

Research on effective recruitment strategies suggests that both general and targeted approaches will be needed. In addition to the dependable word-of-mouth tactic, Bailey, Grossman, and Walker (2005) in their report for Public/Private Ventures suggest actively informing parents and school staff, going directly to youth, matching activities with their interests, and soliciting their input to shape some aspects of the program. Young people attend programs that they value and that meet their needs. The report notes that such programs "enable youth to form relationships with adults, facilitate a cooperative peer environment, offer a range of activities, and provide a safe, orderly environment".

Bodilly & Beckett (2005) propose several practical ways to increase enrollment and attendance in programs, drawing from job training, military training, and OST fields. They suggest "identifying all possible participants, dedicating sufficient and effective resources for outreach and recruitment, locating such efforts in places where targeted youth and their key influencers congregate, and combining advertising resources across like organizations. Monitoring attendance and quality, following up on absentees, and offering incentives to programs for achieving high attendance rates are potential ways to improve attendance. Most important, to successfully target a group and provide accessible services requires knowledge of their needs at the local level".

Drawing from these effective practices and strategies, the Trust will develop the standards for quality and participation in the implementation of YES! DC.

Proposed Pilot Program

Beginning in fall 2006 (Year One), we will pilot an intensive community-based OST program for middle school students. Using community-based providers, the pilot sites will be primarily public school buildings with the launch of three school sites in fall 2006 and an additional two to three schools and one to two non-school sites in Year Two. In Year Three, we will examine the possibility of adding more sites, including public charter schools and public library.

(Recently city and federal agencies have earmarked \$480,000,000 to renovate and build new libraries in the District.) Also in Year Three, the systems that enable the coordinated approach to OST will be made available to all middle schools and potentially all other schools as well. The overriding objective is that by Year Five, all middle schoolers in the District will have access to the full range of OST benefits and that eventually every child will have that access.

At each site, there will be an array of high-quality, age-appropriate program offerings. Using the WEBSTARS technology that will interface with the school, OCTO and other DC agency data, we will be able to track students' progress in school, determine the impact of OST programs over time, and provide additional support to those students that need it. The goal of the pilot program is to develop a model for prevention and intervention strategies that will lead to a citywide OST approach to the problems facing children and youth.

In designing the District's pilot program, we examined the Beacon program model now in place in several cities across the country and the Community Schools model developed by the Children's Aid Society based in New York. Both of these models use school buildings as public spaces for OST programming and other social services. School buildings are highly desirable for OST programs because they have space, are within walking distance for most students and, for the most part, are considered safe by parents and children. While there are some unresolved issues that must be addressed about the use of school space over the long term, the Trust has reached an agreement with the DCPS Superintendent to use schools as the program sites for most of the pilot. Although school based, each pilot is intended to serve the neighborhood in which the school is located. While the vast majority of program slots will be reserved for students attending the schools, we hope to open some slots to students that live in the community but do not attend the pilot school.

Other priorities identified by the market research as well as our investigation of other models include availability of some kind of healthy snack for children after school and the security of pilot sites. The afternoon snack for the participants in the pilot program can be provided by a USDA sponsor through the Child and Adult Care Food Program. We will work with DCPS or DPR (both current USDA sponsors) to ensure a healthy, nutritional snack is a part of each day's activities. In Year Two, we look forward to a potential USDA "supper pilot" program in the District that would allow for a more substantial meal at these sites, and we will work with the Food Research and Action Center to make our pilot programs part of the "supper pilot."

Security for pilot sites also will be a key consideration. Many schools and CBO sites already have significant security presence, and YES! DC will evaluate whether additional security or longer security hours will be required. DCPS is confident that security concerns at schools can be adequately addressed, and other sites for Year Two pilot programs will be chosen in part based on their security arrangements.

The pilot program design required us to develop selection criteria for school sites, develop an orientation program, identify appropriate programming for each site, and develop a structure for the management and oversight of the pilot sites. Each of these activities is discussed below.

Selection Criteria for the Pilot Sites

The final selection of school sites for the pilot program will be made in early May, as DCPS's plan to close and consolidate some schools will be released at that time. We have been meeting with school officials to get some guidance on schools that are being considered as pilot sites, and a preliminary list will be presented to DCPS by the Trust for review next week.

In selecting pilot sites, we are looking for diverse locations, demographics, and academic profiles. Based on the research conducted, it was determined that OST programs are most needed in areas of the city that have the largest student populations. In the District, the areas where most students live also are the areas where children and youth experience the most risk factors for poor outcomes. African Americans comprise 82 percent of the middle school population in the District. However, a growing Hispanic population experiences similar risk factors but does not live in

the wards of the city with the highest student population. Therefore, to get a better diversity of students, a decision was made to include school sites where Hispanic students comprise a significant portion of the student population.

As stated earlier, the overwhelming majority of schools in the District have not met AYP goals as defined by the federal No Child Left Behind Act. Rather than focus solely on those at the low end of the spectrum, our criteria include having schools at both ends to ensure that we learn enough to roll out OST programs in a variety of schools in later years. (We should also note that many of those schools at the high end of the test results still have less than 70 percent of the students scoring as proficient, so there is still a lot of room for improvement.) Research has shown that OST programs can have a proven impact on school attachment and attendance (Child Trends, 2003), so we will include at least one school with a very high truancy rate.

Recognizing that strong school leadership is key to program and student success, we are hoping to have several schools that have principals or assistant principals that participated in the New Leaders for New Schools program as part of the selection criteria. The New Leaders for New Schools program is rigorous training that prepares educators to be successful administrators. Nine of the current schools serving middle school children have a New Leaders for New Schools principal or assistant principal. Schools with Teach for America teachers also will be targeted for participation. Four of the schools serving middle school youth have at least one Teach for America teacher. Last year, a Teach for America teacher at one of our potential pilot sites was recognized as National Teacher of Year. While we will not be targeting only schools with award-winning faculty, we do recognize that we will need committed professionals for YES! DC's first group of schools in order to manage implementation and document learning. Further, both New Leaders and Teach for America are expanding their presence in DC, and we hope that the majority of schools will benefit from their presence — or that of teachers who have achieved other recognition of their competence, such as national certification — by the time YES! DC is rolled out broadly.

Programming for Each Site

Quality programming for each site will be selected based on research that revealed that parents and students want a variety of programs in the OST hours. The most desired kinds of programming were tutoring and homework help, arts, and sports programming. To target the right kinds of programming at each site, we are developing a process for gathering input from school officials, principals and teachers, parents and children, and program providers that currently serve children from the pilot schools. Then we will identify which specific quality providers can offer those kinds of programs.

As noted earlier, there are numerous programs in the city serving middle school youth, many of which have been recognized as high quality by parents, students and funders. Yet, in looking at the total supply of high-quality OST programs serving middle school youth, there is a concern that there may not be enough to serve the anticipated demand over the long term. Our challenge will be to expand those of excellent quality, improve those of acceptable quality, and either improve or weed out those that do not and cannot meet the quality standards.

In the first year of the pilot, the goal will be to provide a wide variety of programming of demonstrable quality at each site. Because the grant making research already has been done, we will consider first those programs funded by the Trust (as the grant-making research has already been done) that we believe have the capacity to meet the anticipated demand at program sites while meeting the quality standards and the requirements for monitoring and evaluating progress. In addition, we will invite proven programs offered through such organizations as the Smithsonian, the National Academy of Sciences and other nontraditional providers to operate at the pilot sites. In addition, the Trust has worked successfully on OST summer programs with organizations as diverse as the Carnegie Institute, NASA, and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, and these will be approached as potential partners. We are also working with the DC Arts and Humanities Education Collaborative that includes a number of visual and performing arts groups as well as the Kennedy Center.

We also will add some programs based on information from other funders. For example, several organizations that have received substantial capacity-building grants in the past few years are already planning to expand and have

built excellent evaluation processes into their programs. For this first year, we will work closely with our partners in the selection of programs for the pilot sites to benefit from shared knowledge about both the process and the proposed programs.

These programs will meet the program quality standards that are already in place. Given the time pressure involved with a fall 2006 pilot, they will be assessed initially on whether they have been recognized and evaluated (by other funders, program participants, school officials, other certification organizations, etc.) as high quality. Other factors that will be considered include demonstrated commitment to middle school students, proven capability with the needs of youth like those in pilot schools, and whether they have partnered with the school system or operated in a school building before. In subsequent years, we will bring on more programs as needed. Programs selected in the first year with the potential to expand will be placed in more sites. Other programs that may not yet meet all the quality standards will be given technical assistance to help them become a part of YES! DC in future years.

During the first year, YES! DC will work with school officials to develop and institutionalize a formal process for engaging community-based OST providers in the school setting. We have consulted with the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) to review best practices and provide recommendations on the use of school space and on selecting community-based providers to operate programs in school buildings. (See Attachment 6 for the complete report and recommendations.) We will share these findings with Superintendent Janey and will implement an agreed-upon process in Year Two of the plan.

Hopefully, YES! DC will be able to attract and/or inspire sufficient funding to serve every middle school student at every pilot school. However, several of DC's middle schools are extremely large and may get larger with the new DCPS site plan. If sufficient funding is not available to serve every student, we will work with the schools and selected providers to determine which grade or grades at the schools should be engaged in the first year of the pilot.

YES! DC, through the integrated data management system described above, will be able to track each of these students through high school for academic progress, graduation rates, employment information and juvenile justice activity. YES! DC likely will put additional effort toward targeting students with one of the four risk factors identified by the Philadelphia study (poor attendance, bad behavioral problems, failing math grades and/or failing English grades,) but we may refine those factors over the next few months, leveraging other research to do so (e.g., Moore, Vandivere, and Redd, 2006).

Program Orientation

Prior to launching the pilot, the Trust has agreed to work with school officials to develop a YES! DC orientation program for principals, teachers, students, and parents. The orientation program will be an important component to building school ownership and support of the initiative. During the orientation period, school officials also will have an opportunity to meet with OST providers that will be working in their schools. The orientation program will begin in early June with a session for all middle school principals to inform them about the initiative in general and the specifics of the pilot design. Plans also are under way to conduct site visits to New York to get a better understanding of the Beacon model. Throughout the summer, the Trust will conduct information and focus group sessions for parents and students to get input on the pilot design and strategy for evaluating the program pilot.

The OST providers selected for the pilots also will participate in a program orientation during the summer. Providers will receive information on policies and procedures for using the school space, meet with school officials, and learn about the data collection and analyses that will be required under the project. Providers also will be able to meet each other and discuss issues, possible concerns and how they will work together at school sites.

Pilot Management

For each pilot site, the Trust will help fund a site coordinator position to oversee the OST programs and the use of the school site. The site coordinator will conduct needs assessments, identify needed programs and attract them to the

school, manage an efficient registration process, secure needed space, ensure that key site services (e.g., security, janitorial) are in place, and make certain that policies and procedures are followed. Site coordinators will be jointly selected by YES! DC staff and DCPS. In addition, the Trust will hire a Project Associate who will monitor all of the pilot sites. The Project Associate will work closely with site coordinators, school officials and OST providers to ensure that pilots are running smoothly, children are well-served, data is being collected and reports are being submitted properly.

Throughout the first year, the site coordinators, school principals and Trust staff will meet on a monthly basis to assess how the pilots are working. Refinements or modifications of the pilot design will be made according to these monthly assessments. Quarterly reports on the pilots will be provided to Superintendent Janey.

Implementing these pilots at the beginning of the 2006–07 school year is an extremely ambitious undertaking, and the Trust is well aware that we will need every day between now and then to accomplish it. Planning will continue even before the Wallace Foundation’s decision is made in order to ensure that appropriate staff are hired, MOUs signed, schools selected and programs identified that can achieve the objectives of this plan. In addition, we are aware that Trust staff must bring together a number of other organizations to get this pilot up and running just four months after the April decision, and our work plan (see Attachment 7) documents required activities.

Summer Programs

Expanding and deepening the impact of the pilot by making the most effective possible use of the summer months will be an important part of our planning as we move forward. The Trust already has substantial experience with summer programs. Washington, DC, also has been focusing significant time and attention on developing effective summer programming, including a Summer Bridges program in DCPS that uses the summer months to prepare fifth graders for middle school and eighth graders for high school. With much of our planning and their planning still under way, we will continue to coordinate our efforts with those of DCPS and other city agencies.

Evaluation of the Proposed Pilot Program

Given the importance of the YES! DC initiative for expanding program options and improving program quality for the middle school population in Washington, DC, the inclusion of an evaluation component is essential to understand effects on participants, as well as barriers and successes in implementing the proposed pilot plan. Child Trends, which currently is conducting the outcomes monitoring study for programs funded by the DC Trust, probably will continue to work with us to fully articulate the evaluation plan, balancing competing needs (e.g., cost and scientific rigor). The evaluation plan will be refined as we finalize the program standards, choose the array of programs and services to be offered, and determine exactly what data will be available through the integrated data management system. The evaluation will be two-fold, including both outcomes and process components:

- **Outcomes Component** — There are various methods available for evaluating this type of initiative that answer different questions and provide different pieces of information regarding the success of the initiative. Below, we outline alternatives that we will explore to understand the benefits to youth of participation:
 1. A longitudinal outcomes-monitoring study, using baseline data collected when students enroll into the program and follow-up data collected at interval time points that are coordinated with the school calendar (e.g., each fall and spring). This design would let us track participants to determine their progress on key outcomes across each program year. Data can be collected from the participants, program staff, teachers, and parents to fully understand how various stakeholders in the process perceive the impact of the intervention on the outcome variables of interest. This data can be linked with attendance data to describe youths’ patterns of participation as well how intensity, duration and breadth of participation are linked with change over time.

2. Depending on the sites selected, it may be possible to conduct a quasi-experimental study where schools are randomly assigned to a treatment or control condition. This methodology utilizes a comparison group of students matched on key demographic characteristics who attend middle schools that do not yet receive the standards-based programming provided through YES! DC. This design would afford a better understanding of how the programs are influencing youth functioning on the outcome variables of interest.
- **Process Component** — Process evaluation, the second component of evaluation design, describes how the program operates, services it delivers and functions it carries out. In addition, a process evaluation addresses whether the program was implemented and is providing services as intended. By documenting the program's development and operation, it permits assessment of why performance is successful or unsuccessful and provides information for potential replication. Possibilities for incorporating a process evaluation for YES! DC will need to be explored. Child Trends can use several methods to assess program implementation over time including: interviews with program directors and staff; focus groups with program participants and parents; observational site visits at each site during which programs are rated using agreed-upon standards; and collection and review of program forms and participation data collected by the programs and the Trust.

Training and Technical Assistance

The Trust has been effective in providing technical assistance (TA) to the OST community over the past five years, and has improved the capacity of providers to serve children and youth, increased the quality of the programs being delivered, and helped to ensure the sustainability of grassroots programs serving their neighborhoods. For example, the Trust is the local provider of the "BEST" curriculum and has trained more than 600 youth workers from more than 100 agencies and organizations. The Trust offers to CBOs across the District a variety of training, seminars and networking opportunities that address a wide range of topics. A list of current offerings is attached. (See Exhibit 10.) This year, the Trust received \$200,000 from the City Council earmarked for technical assistance to CBOs in Wards 7 and 8, investing public dollars in grassroots organizations in areas of great need.

Building on this experience, the Trust will create a division that will serve as the main source of technical assistance to District CBOs wishing to increase their capacity to provide high-quality OST programming to young people and to meet the standards developed by the OST stakeholders. Our plan will be to build on and deepen our current internal capacity for programmatic training and technical assistance and to partner with existing leaders in the field for organizational capacity building. Some aspects of the TA will be specific to the pilot programs in the first year, and others will be available to any youth-serving CBO in the District. The lessons learned in the pilot programs will help us develop additional TA for CBOs working in schools, aligning with DCPS learning standards and supporting the youth outcomes.

This training will focus on building capacity in several key areas critical to the success and sustainability of CBOs, including:

- *Organizational Development*
 - Strategic planning
 - Resource development
 - Board development
 - Financial systems
 - Partnerships and collaborations
- *Program Content*
 - Curricula development
 - Project-based learning
 - Academic enrichment and alignment with DCPS Learning Standards
 - Evaluation methods

- Possible program of “OST Masters” who would travel around the city and train CBOs/schools on particular areas of their expertise
- *Staff*
 - DC BEST and the “Advancing Youth Development” courses
 - Classroom management, basic OST skills, etc.
 - “Emerging Leaders” initiative — new program designed to increase the pool of qualified Executive Director candidates for succession and replication roles
 - DCPS teachers have requested OST-specific training in experiential learning, youth development, alternative methods of learning

The training programs will offer several strategies that allow CBOs to receive assistance through workshops, intensive assistance, an OST certificate program, and forums that focus on specific youth and OST issues.

Continuing Areas of Focus Over the Next Six Months

At this stage of the planning process, several components of the plan require additional work and refinement. These components include: final selection of the program sites; selection of the OST providers that will be placed at the sites; completing the management structure for the pilot sites; developing and refining program standards and the process for implementing the standards; developing the interface technology and appropriate permissions and MOUs for the data management system; securing additional resources for the project, which includes obtaining additional financial commitments from the public and private sectors; and finalizing the governance structure.

During the next six months, we also will continue to conduct outreach to city leaders, parents, and youth to help refine the plan. We will host several focus groups, community stakeholder meetings and meet with the leading candidates for mayor, chairman of the city council and school board. In addition, we will tailor our draft communications plan to ensure that it is appropriate for the audiences we need to reach. Also, we will recruit and hire program staff that will be needed to execute this plan. The timeline for completing all these tasks can be found in Attachment 7, with a draft YES! DC organizational chart and relevant job descriptions outlined in Exhibits 11 and 12.

OUTCOMES

System Outcomes

Each component of the proposed OST system will allow for a number of outcomes.

Citywide Leadership and Public Will

- **Commitment of Public Officials** — As we begin our work in an election year, it will be critical to keep leading mayoral and council candidates fully informed of our progress. Continued contact and communications with potential new leaders will enable OST to be part of any transition plans the successful candidates develop. In addition, our deep and broad relationships within DCPS will ensure that OST remains near the top of their agenda. The infrastructure of YES! DC provides assurances of quality and accountability that will engender the support of new leaders. This initiative will be seen as a win-win for anyone in a position to make the policy and funding decisions required to sustain YES! DC. If the District receives an investment from the Wallace Foundation, that will enhance the results of local dollars legislated and donated for direct service programs. In addition, OST programs will be aligned with the DCPS reform efforts, and children and youth will receive higher-quality OST programs. This outcome will be measured by budget and policy support for YES! DC and the extent of OST focus within DCPS.

- **The emergence of OST champions at all levels** — In many cities, OST has been championed by local leaders who have been willing spokespeople promoting the benefits of OST programs. In the District, OST is supported by public officials, but none have stepped forward and made OST their rallying cry. No city leader or celebrity has taken on OST as his or her cause. Through city leadership-building work, we hope to elevate the importance of OST and identify champions among public officials, business leaders, parents and youth. These OST champions will be called upon to help raise funds, serve as advocates and spokespeople in public forums and will be asked to be involved in the communication strategies. Youth leaders will be identified to be a part of the initiative. This outcome will be measured by the public statements expressed by city leaders and the willingness of leaders to be identified as OST supporters. In the first year, we hope to identify at least one well-known community leader to develop a public service announcement for OST.
- **Broad input on YES! DC plans and activities** — YES! DC will continue to create a broad base of support for OST in the District by engaging city leaders, OST providers, funders, parents, youth and children in the creation of a robust institutionalized infrastructure that will enable us to meet the demand for high-quality OST programs across the city. The Leadership Council, plus additions to the Trust's already talented Board of Directors, will ensure that numerous viewpoints and experiences are represented along with the highest level of expertise to guide the initiative. In addition, the TAG will continue to bring hands-on expertise and viewpoints to this initiative. This outcome will be measured both by the continued involvement of these groups and by the leaders attracted to the different roles.
- **Improved coordination and collaboration among city agencies and OST providers** — Over the past six months, we have worked closely with city agencies, particularly with DC Public Schools, to develop the plan. Through this process we have created a level of trust and cooperation that never existed before. The Trust's role as the representative voice for community-based OST providers is now widely accepted within many city agencies. In the months ahead, we will build upon these relationships as we develop policies and procedures for schools and community-based organizations to work together, as well as program standards. These activities will be useful for other agency partners such as the Department of Parks and Recreation, Libraries, and the Department of Employment Services. This outcome will be measured by the creation of new partnerships between and among these agencies and OST providers.
- **Increased resources for OST from public and private sectors** — Additional resources for high-quality OST programs are important to the success of the YES! DC initiative. Through our research, we have learned that OST providers need resources for staff, program materials and training. As the program pilot expands, there will be an even greater need for financial resources. Through the stronger engagement of corporate partners, resources will be increased to help bring YES! DC to scale. Increased dialogue with the business community will also lead to innovative investments and volunteerism in areas such as the pilot program and technical assistance offerings. Technology companies can provide the tools needed to collect data as well as the hardware and software used in programs. Financial institutions can bring expertise to programs for children — and parents — in areas such as planning, life skills and career training. We believe there is great potential for creative partnerships in OST, and the Federal City Council, Chamber of Commerce and Board of Trade will become key resources for ideas and investment in YES! DC. In the first year of the project, the Trust plans to invest up to \$500,000 per school site. A list of target funders in Exhibit 4 indicates some of our early work, and progress on this outcome will measure in dollars.
- **Increased opportunities for parent and youth engagement in OST programming** — Many OST providers and school officials often complain of difficulty in getting parents involved in OST programs. Also, in designing OST programs, youth views and opinions about what they want in OST programs are not reflected. The planning process has created opportunities through focus groups and in-depth interviews to find out what parents and youth want in OST programs. To fully engage them in the initiative, parent and youth representatives will be invited to join the Leadership Council and serve on the boards of community-based organizations. We will measure this outcome both on the number of individuals engaged and level of their engagement.

Communications

- **Public education campaign** — The YES! DC public education campaign will increase the awareness of the value and importance of OST programs and the many ways they support improved youth outcomes. Building support from the ground up will ensure our OST system becomes institutionalized and consequently “administration proof.” If the citizenry demands a high-quality OST system, elected officials will respond by continuing to support — and enrich — the YES! DC infrastructure. Policies, partnerships and budgets will reflect our unified commitment to OST and our young people’s successful transition to adulthood. This will be measured by adequate funding for OST in the District’s annual budget.
- **Improved and increased communications between OST stakeholders** — Another component of the communications strategy is to improve and coordinate communications among the various stakeholders — providers, funders, DCPS, research community, and most important, youth and their parents. This will encourage the replication of best practices and improvement of programs at pilot sites as well as non-pilot sites. Parents will be better informed about available programs for their children. Providers will be more aware of the types of programs desired by parents and youth — improving the balance of demand and supply. Methods for measuring this communication network’s effectiveness are being developed.

Outcomes and Standards

- **Defined youth outcomes** — Developing a set of youth outcomes that has been vetted by a rich, cross-agency group of stakeholders will provide the District with a framework for OST and all other initiatives that serve young people and promote a philosophy of youth development. The more broadly we promote the outcomes with our partners, the more coordinated programs will be, and the more effective investments will be. We will measure this outcome by the extent to which OST is supported by other key public plans like the Master Education Plan and the Mayor’s Effective Youth Development Plan.
- **Program standards** — A supporting set of standards will enable funders and parents to make sound choices in selecting programs. Measurable indicators for these standards will allow providers to improve the quality of their programs — tangible, attainable goals will improve the content of programs and sustainability of organizations. Our goal is to continue to review the outcomes and standards, both learning from and sharing with the national OST field. We will measure the effectiveness of these standards based on documented improvements in program quality as measured by data analysis and external evaluations.

Data Management Systems

One of the most critical aspects of YES! DC is the creation of the shared data collection system.

- **Tracking risk factors** — The pilot program will track certain indicators for participants — truancy, grade-to-grade progression, graduation, etc. — that will be collected through the MIS. Health factors, interaction with the juvenile justice, etc. will also be trackable in the new system. This initiative comes at a time with the District has embraced the idea of “Services Modernization Programs” for its various data collection systems, and the potential shared data is only beginning to be realized. Students will be tracked and monitored for six years. We will measure our tracking based on rates of data accuracy and completeness.
- **Tracking participation rates** — Participation rates will be critical to analysis of the pilot program. It is difficult to ensure full participation (five days a week) with middle school students, but the more we can learn about what aspects of programming garner the fullest participation, the better we can develop a model for replication in other middle school sites. We will measure our tracking based on rates of data accuracy and completeness.

- **Real-time data analysis** — The integrated data management system will give us important data for evaluation, and immediate access to a variety of information on the youth they serve will allow providers to provide better interventions — both at the program level as well as the individual level. Curricula can be adjusted to address issues such as truancy, failing grades, behavioral problems, etc. Individually, providers can make referrals to human services providers or, conversely, human service providers can direct a service provider to be aware of particular challenges facing a youth or family. We will assess our tracking based on rates of data accuracy and completeness.

Service Delivery Outcomes

The pilot program will result in several program and participant outcomes. The program outcomes will include:

- **Policies and procedures governing the use of school buildings** — As described above, the city lacks clear and consistent policies and procedures that give direction to OST providers and school officials on how school buildings should be accessed, paid for and managed for OST programming. Through the pilot program, we will address these issues over the next year and help develop a written manual that will include a vision statement for how community-based OST providers are welcome to operate in the schools and how their engagement contributes to the goals of the school system and the community. The manual also will address what if any fees should be paid by OST providers to use school buildings. The manual also will outline school building use requirements for OST providers such as insurance coverage, background checks on staff and appropriate medical tests to protect students.
- **An agreed-upon process for selecting community-based organizations to operate programs in schools** — In the first year of the pilot, the Trust will take the lead in selecting the OST programs for the pilot sites. In the second year, we would like to develop a selection process that more fully engages the schools and parents. As a result of research conducted by IEL, a special RFP may be developed in which school site officials and the OST providers respond jointly to request programming in a selected school site. The applicants will be required to specify the program outcome, describe how the program is aligned with the DC learning standards, outline the program staffing, how much space will be needed, and how students will be recruited and selected for the program.
- **Development of a generic MOU to fully define the desired relationship between community-based organizations and schools** — Based on the research conducted by IEL, it is recommended that schools and OST providers have a general MOU in place that builds upon the requirements outlined in the RFP and serves as the starting point for more in-depth negotiations. The MOU would address topics such as:
 - Responsibilities and expectations of the school and CBO;
 - Management protocols for the OST program to operate in the school building;
 - Plans for ongoing communications;
 - Monitoring and evaluation responsibilities for the school and OST provider;
 - Staffing procedures; and
 - Training for OST staff and school staff.
- **Increased number of quality OST programs through training and technical assistance** — The pilot will provide programming opportunities for up to 200 children and youth at each site, offering a wide variety of activities and learning opportunities. The Trust will provide the curricula and program design and any technical assistance that may be required by the providers to meet the demands of the parents, schools and youth.

- **Increased alignment between OST and DCPS Learning Standards** — Building on existing trainings, the Trust will support alignment with a three-phased training for CBOs. The training helps providers “break down” the learning standards in a way that enables them to incorporate the learning standards into their program content and design, and helps them see the synergy between what happens during the school day and what happens in OST hours.

The participant outcomes will include:

- **Increased participation in OST programs** — The delivery model at the pilot sites is designed to offer youth a variety of safe, engaging activities. The element of choice is very important to the model, as this age group values the opportunity to make some decisions for themselves. Dynamic, high-quality programs are likely to yield increased rates of participation for the targeted population.
- **Reduced rates of truancy and increased rates of attendance** — As attachment to schools is increased and commitment to programs is increased, children will be more likely to attend school on a regular basis. We expect to see reduced rates of truancy and improved attendance at the schools engaged in the pilot.
- **Improved attitudes toward learning and fewer behavior problems** — When youth experience success and achievement through nontraditional learning opportunities, they gain self-esteem and a sense of accomplishment. These experiences can carry over into the regular school day and improve their attitudes toward learning, giving youth an increased chance of academic achievement. With a greater commitment to education and more regular attendance in school and OST programs, reductions in risky behaviors such as delinquency and teen pregnancy can be anticipated.

CLOSING

The DC Children and Youth Investment Trust respectfully submits this business plan to the Wallace Foundation on behalf of the District of Columbia, with gratitude for the support we have received in developing our plan. The first two phases of the “Learning in Communities” initiative already have resulted in tremendous progress, with all the OST partners coming together as never before — sharing ideas, talents, skills, expertise and a truly heartfelt commitment to improve the lives of our children and youth. We ask the Wallace Foundation to continue its support of this dynamic, crucially important work by funding this proposal for \$6,936,000 over three years. We sincerely look forward to a deepening partnership with Wallace and to meeting your challenge to bring the city of DC together on behalf of our children.

List of Exhibits

1. Theory of Change
2. Theory of Action
3. Letters of Commitment
4. List of Public Leaders Met with and Records of Public Statements of Support
5. List of Corporate and Philanthropic Leaders Met with and Indications of Support
6. List of CBOs/Supply
7. Proposed Governance Structure
8. Potential Leadership Council Composition
9. Development Prospects
10. Training and Technical Assistance
11. Draft YES! DC Organizational Plan
12. Draft YES! DC Position Descriptions

List of Attachments

1. Philadelphia Education Fund's Dropout Prevention Study
2. Communications Audit and Draft Communications Plan
3. Trust Standards for OST in the District
4. Draft Plan for Integrated Data Management System
5. Market Street Research Report
6. Institute for Educational Leadership Report and Recommendations
7. Work Plan
8. Bibliography