A MAPPING OF THE OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME LANDSCAPE IN HARRIS COUNTY

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SCOPE OF THE PROJECT

In 2015, a group of stakeholders began to meet as a collaborative group to discuss access to out-of-school time (OST) programs in Harris County, Texas. As this group began to come together to explore these issues, a number of questions arose:

- How are OST funds distributed across the County?
- What is the current funder investment and interest in OST programs?
- What are the barriers to equitable access to OST programs?

Collaborative Communications, a Washington DC-based consulting group, conducted an out-of-school time fiscal mapping study in Harris County from May to August 2016 to answer questions regarding the public and private investment supporting OST in the greater Houston area. The study resulted in a rich data set and a comprehensive portrait of the supply of and demand for program slots available for children in grades K-12, both across the County and within nine economically disadvantaged neighborhoods.

Data from this study is presented in the following formats:

- A **Fiscal Map** of federal, state, local and private OST funds showing the level of investment across the County.
- A **Program Map** showing the extent to which OST is available in Harris County and in selected neighborhoods.
- A **Supply and Demand Analysis** that matches community context to need factors in order to identify the areas that could benefit from increased program availability.
- A **Data Tool** displaying the supply of and demand for OST programs and highlighting other relevant statistics in targeted neighborhoods as well as across the County.

STUDY PARAMETERS

For the purpose of this study, OST programs are defined as school or community-based programs that provide services to students in grades K-12 after the school day ends and/or during the summer. To be included in the study, OST programs must meet regularly, at least twelve or more hours per week during the school year or the summer.[1, 2] The study does not include activities at drop-in centers, short-term lessons or instruction, athletic teams or sports coaching, or one-time events.

MAPPING INVESTMENT AND PROGRAMS TO DETERMINE SUPPLY

This study mapped the broad landscape of OST programs serving students in Harris County. It also examined the relative supply of program slots for students in nine selected areas across the greater Houston area.[3]

Through surveys, reporting documents and interviews, we built an understanding of: the level of overall investment in OST programs and services and infrastructure and capacity building; goals and outcomes expected by funders; allocation of resources to program locations; and plans for investment in the coming years.

Funders surveyed for this report include:
- Alief Independent School District
- Harris County Department of Education: CASE for Kids
- Houston Endowment
- Houston Independent School District
- Houston Libraries
- Houston Mayor's Office of Education
- Houston Parks and Recreation Department
- Powell Foundation
- Rockwell Fund
- Simmons Foundation
- Texas Education Agency
- United Way of Greater Houston

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[1] "Leveraging the Power of Afterschool and Summer Learning for Student Success." Expanding Minds and Opportunities: Leveraging the Power of Afterschool and Summer Learning for Student Success. Washington, D.C.: Collaborative Communications Group, 2013.

[2] Strobel, et al. Qualities that Attract Urban Youth to After-School Settings and Promote Continued Participation. New York, NY: Teachers College, Columbia University, 2008.

[3] The selected areas encompassed these 9 zip codes: 77021, 77026, 77045, 77033, 77373, 77090, 77088, 77047, and 77075.

The study team used a mixed methods approach to research and analysis by incorporating community context in Harris County into its analysis, assessing funders' commitment to OST, and gaining an in-depth knowledge of program supply in areas with the highest demand.

IDENTIFYING DEMAND

The study defines students "in need" of access to free OST programs and services as those whose families live below the poverty line. This measure serves as a common metric to assess students' eligibility for additional academic services and supports. Research shows that children living in families with annual income levels below the poverty line are more likely to be chronically absent from school, have chronic health conditions and experience interruptions in their schooling due to unstable family and housing situations.[4, 5] These interruptions can lead to low levels of academic achievement. Over time, these students are more likely to drop out of school before receiving a high school diploma.

This study examines the subset of schools in Harris County with a Title I designation, those that serve a student body with a poverty rate of 40 percent or higher. Additionally, the study examines the number of students attending a school that feeds into an underperforming high school. See Exhibit 1 below for a full list of definitions for the need factors and other key terms used throughout this report:

Exhibit 1: Key Terms Used in the Study

- **Out-of-School Time (OST):** Regular learning opportunities outside the school day—including those that occur before school, after school, on weekends and during the summer—that have attendance and enrollment expectations and a defined focus or curriculum.

- **Slot:** An individual seat within an OST program. A slot does not take program attendance into account. For instance, a program may have 150 slots, but may only serve 75 children on a regular basis.

- **Program:** The study reports the numbers of OST programs funded by particular funding streams. A program may offer multiple sessions during a school year, and may meet in multiple sites.

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[4] Chang, Hedy N., and Mariajose Romero. Present, Engaged, and Accounted for: The Critical Importance of Addressing Chronic Absence in the Early Grades. Rep. National Center for Children in Poverty, Sept. 2008.
[5] US Department of Education. (2015). Chronic Absenteeism in the Nation's Schools. Retrieved from https://www2.ed.gov/datastory/chronicabsenteeism.html

- **Funding Year:** We used data from the 2014-2015 school year in this study.

- **21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC):** Largest federal funding stream targeted at providing OST programs to K-12 students.

- **Need:** Research has identified common academic and socio-economic factors surrounding the children who may fall into a student achievement and opportunity gap. They include:

    o **Poverty:** Families who earn less than 50 percent of the median income in a geographic area.

    o **Attending a Title I school:** A school where more than 40 percent of students live in low-income households.

In the conclusion to this report, we use the insights from this analysis to offer recommendations and considerations for next steps and further study.

BENEFITS OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME

A growing body of research on the effectiveness of OST programs and opportunities demonstrates that they can increase school attendance and student achievement; decrease youth crime and violence; and improve youth-adult relationships across a community.[6, 7] A 2014 study assessing the social return on investing (ROI) in OST programs identified social ROI of $4.54 for every dollar invested in out-of-school time during the 2012-2013 school year.[8] This ROI includes: $124 million in cost savings from reduced grade retention; $7 million in cost savings from increased attendance; $82 million in potential increased annual earnings; and $1 million from avoided incarceration costs.[9]

RESULTS OF STUDY

Findings from our research and analysis are presented on the following pages, including the context that increases the relevance and meaning of that evidence.

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[6] Mendels, Pamela. Opportunity in Hard Times: Building Out-of-School Time Learning Systems That Last. Rep. The Wallace Foundation, 4 Feb. 2009.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Colvin, Jabot, et al. Houston's Youth Investment: Creating a Framework for Assessing the Social Return on Investing in Out-of-School Time Programs. Rep. ENRICH After School and Bush School of Government and Public Service, Texas A&M University, 2014.
[9] Ibid.

Total Funding OST Investment in Harris County

Based on the scope of the study and funder documents reviewed, there was approximately $33.8 million in total OST investment in Harris County during the 2014-2015 school year. This figure includes $12.8 million in private funding and $21 million in public funding (federal, state and local).

Exhibit 2: Significant Investment in OST

Funding Source	TOTAL OST funding
United Way of Greater Houston	$9,685,843
CASE for Kids (administered & other funds)	$6,250,183
21st Century Spring Branch ISD	$2,770,416
21st Century Houston ISD	$2,199,544
Workforce Investment Act	$2,073,083
21st Century Alief ISD	$1,894,258
21st Century Pasadena ISD	$1,803,250
21st Century YES Prep	$1,678,791
Houston Endowment	$1,000,000
Rockwell Fund	$960,000
Houston Parks and Libraries	$500,000
The Simmons Foundation	$485,000
Powell Foundation	$283,000

Public funding captured in this figure originates from a wide variety of sources that include: the Texas Workforce Opportunity and Investment Act, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Texas Education Agency, as well as Harris County and Houston municipal funding.[10]

Exhibit 3: Unpacking Public Investment in OST

Funding Source	TOTAL OST funding
21st Century Learning Community Centers	$10,456,259
Workforce Investment and Opportunity	$2,073,083
Texas Education Agency	$6,946,933
Harris County Municipal Funds	$1,500,000

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[10] Data does not include Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) dollars for school-age care as administered by Texas Department of Family and Protective Services as these dollars can only be used to support children until the age of 12.

21st Century Community Learning Funds

The US Department of Education provides funds to support out-of-school time programs through the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) formula grant program. As a formula grant, each state receives a funding allotment based on the percentage of its school-age children that live in poverty. Over the past three federal fiscal years, Texas' allocation has ranged between $89 and $103 million.

2015 (actual)	$101,389,316
2016 (estimated)	$103,166,330
2017 (estimated)	$ 88,399,440[11]

The allocated funds are awarded to the Texas Education Agency, which in turn manages a statewide competition for eligible entities, including school districts and community-based organizations. Grantees receive five years of funding to provide programs and services designed to support student performance in the following areas: *academic performance, school attendance, school behavior, promotion rates* and *graduation rates.*[12]

Although the 21st CCLC program provides a sizeable amount of dedicated funding for OST time in Texas, the amount of the annual allocation to Texas varies based on the size of the federal education budget and the continued reauthorization of the program. Additionally, given intense statewide competition for these funds, only 30-50 grantees across the state receive funding per grant cycle. During the most recent grant cycle, for example, Dallas did not receive funding for any programs.

Finally, 21st CCLC grants have significant reporting requirements. Grantees must participate in professional development—offered through the Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE) initiative—and meet program, data, fiscal and quality assurance requirements to continue to operate.

Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act

Additionally, just over two million dollars of federal Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds are devoted to district- and community-based OST programs in Harris County. WIOA funds are administered by the Department of Labor annually and awarded to the Texas Workforce Commission, which distributes these funds as a result of a competitive proposal

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[11] Department of Education Funds for State Formula-Allocated and Selected Student Aid Programs, by Program; state allocations for fiscal years 2015 and 2016 programs are preliminary estimates.
[12] Texas 21st Century Community Learning Centers Year 2 Evaluation Report February 2013 Prepared for: Texas Education Agency (American Institutes for Research (AIR).

process. Funding allotments also depend on continued reauthorization of the program and the federal budget. Currently, Katy ISD, Pasadena ISD and Spring ISD receive these allocations for vocational courses and competency training, and five sites in the Houston Community College System use these funds to offer academic enrichment programs for high school youth. Each site receives an average of $251,942. WIOA, a federal funding stream administered at the state level, aims to support programs that provide youth and adults with the supports and training to excel in the 21st century labor market.

Texas Education Agency

Finally, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) also administers funds to several large providers of out-of-school time programs across the state. Harris County received nearly $6.5 million of this funding in 2014-15. As with the WIOA, recipients range from traditional nonprofits to state-based initiatives that have a site in the county. While these funds are not contingent on federal programs and funding trends, they do depend upon statewide approval and authorization which requires buy-in and investment from the state legislature. There are currently efforts to expand this funding stream to support a growing number of providers across the state, but any changes will not go into effect for at least another year. Current recipients in Harris County include: Big Brothers, Big Sisters Lone Star, MATHCounts, GEARUP and the Texas Literacy Initiative. Although programs that receive these funds are primarily focused on academic enrichment and workforce development, they may be used for other purposes; Big Brothers, Big Sisters, for example, receives TEA funds for its mentoring of youth with incarcerated parents.

A Deep Dive into 21st Century Community Learning Center (CCLC) Funding in Harris County

Seven major recipients of 21st CCLC funding operate across Harris County: Harris County Department of Education, Houston ISD, Alief ISD, YES Prep, Spring Branch ISD, SHAPE Community Center, and Pasadena ISD. This significant investment underscored the need for an in-depth analysis of this single funding stream.

21st CCLC funding is awarded to programs throughout Texas using a competitive process. The amount of funding Harris County receives during each funding cycle is unpredictable and highly dependent upon external factors. Additionally, 21st CCLC funds have been targeted for decrease or elimination from the federal education budget over the past five years, making this a volatile funding stream. The amount of 21st CCLC funds, which account for $10 million of the total OST investment in Harris County identified in this study, can vary significantly from year to year.

Analysis revealed that 21st CCLC funding is concentrated in elementary schools. The large size of 21st CCLC investment in Harris County likely contributes to the substantial number of elementary OST programs.

The 21st CCLC grant amounts awarded to ISDs and community-based organizations range between $1.6 million and $2.7 million. Each grant serves approximately 1,000-2,000 students with an average cost per slot of $1,648. The cost per slot appears to be related to the staffing model that each program uses. Grantees that use school day staff as OST program leaders and staff tend to have a lower cost per slot than grantees that engage external contractors to run all or some of the programs.

OST Demand in Harris County

Of the over 990,000 school-age children living within Harris County, 317,090—or 32 percent—live in poverty. This high level of poverty manifests in a large number of Title I schools in Harris County. To be Title I eligible, 40 percent or more of a school's students must live in poverty. Eighty-two percent of the schools in Harris County receive compensatory Title I funding from the United States Department of Education to provide additional academic supports. The need for additional academic supports is evident in the low rate (37 percent in 2015) of fourth grade students reading proficiently, as assessed by the STAAR exam.

Exhibit 4: Demand for OST in Harris County

	Harris County	Texas	National
School-Age Children	990,567	6,971,181	72,637,885
Total Number of Children in Poverty	317,090 (32%)	1,748,003 (25.3%)	15,907,395 (21.9%)
Qualifying for Public Assistance	64%	60.3%	51.3%
High School Graduation Rate	82.5%	87.7%	82%
4th Grade Reading Proficiency	37%	31%	35%

As noted in Exhibit 5 below, the proportion of schools with a Title I designation decreases from elementary to high school. The decrease in Title I eligibility across grade levels follows a national trend. The broader student population in middle schools, drawing from a large geographic area, tends to suppress the percentage of students living in poverty to below the forty percent eligibility threshold needed to qualify for Title I funding. In high schools that effect is even more evident, owing to a larger geographic catchment area and higher dropout

rates among students living in poverty. Therefore, elementary schools may serve as a leading indicator of changing student demographics for the Houston OST community.
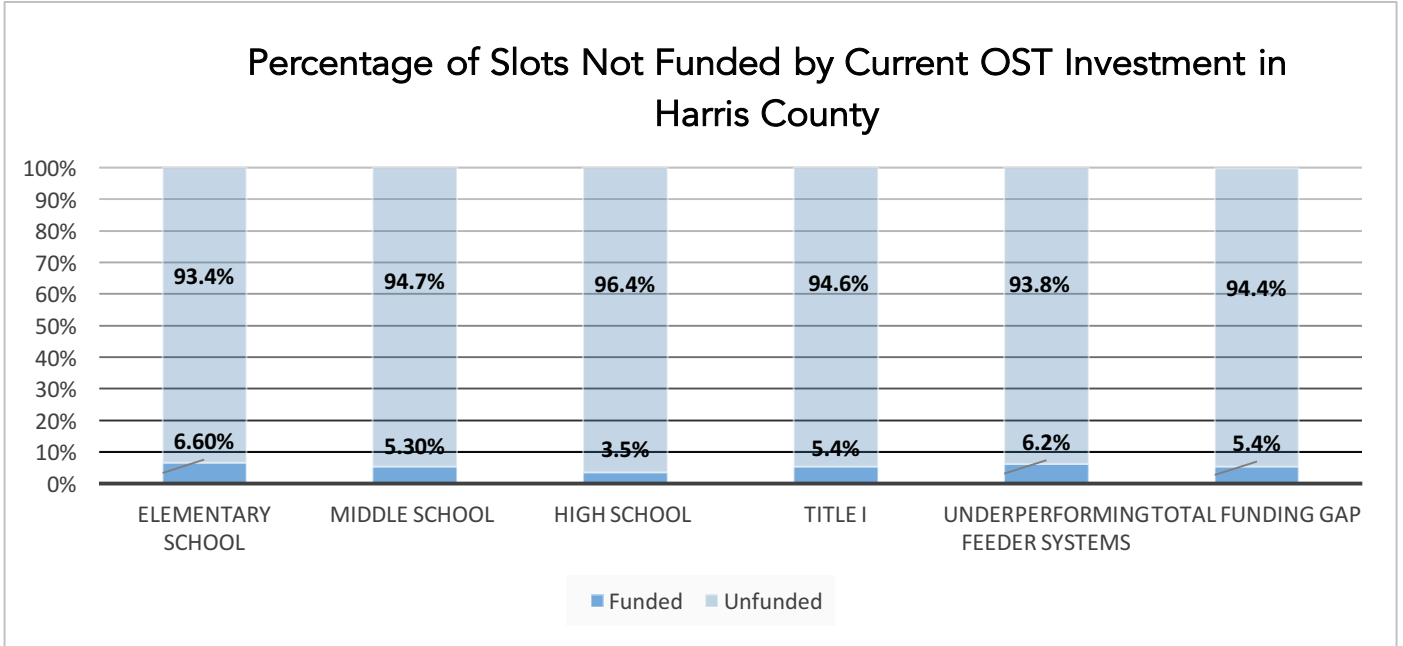
As noted, an additional need factor in Harris County relates to the graduation rate, particularly in underperforming high schools. A study conducted in 2015 by Texas A&M University, on behalf of United Way of Greater Houston, revealed that 34 high schools chronically underperform compared to their peers when it comes to graduating their students within four years. In Exhibit 5, we have identified the number of underperforming high schools as well as their feeder elementary and middle schools—all of which could be priority locations where students may benefit from OST programs.

Exhibit 5: Potential Demand for OST in Harris County: Title I Schools

	Schools in Harris County by Grade and Student Population	Title I Schools in Harris County by Grade and Student Population	Underperforming High Schools and Feeder Schools
Number of Elementary Schools	596	490	244
Elementary School Student Population	446,779	360,453	152,152
Number of Middle Schools	215	178	90
Middle School Student Population	195,466	151,203	66,495
Number of High Schools	204	81	34
High School Student Population	210,289	152,790	71,430
Total Number of Schools	915	749	368
Total Student Population	**852,534**	**664,446**	**290,347**

The data showed 161 OST programs in Title I schools and 80 programs in underperforming high schools and associated feeder schools across Harris County. There are 35,640 OST program slots serving students in Title I schools and 17,976 OST slots serving underperforming high schools and their feeder schools. As noted above, the supply of programs and slots decreases as we move along the education continuum, aligning with national trends.

Percentage of Slots Not Funded by Current OST Investment in Harris County

	Funded	Unfunded
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	6.60%	93.4%
MIDDLE SCHOOL	5.30%	94.7%
HIGH SCHOOL	3.5%	96.4%
TITLE I	5.4%	94.6%
UNDERPERFORMING FEEDER SYSTEMS	6.2%	93.8%
TOTAL FUNDING GAP	5.4%	94.4%

■ Funded ■ Unfunded

In addition to examining the supply and demand for OST programs across Harris County, the study investigated OST trends in selected geographies that have a higher concentration of student need.[13] With this comparison, stakeholders can identify whether the distribution of programs, slots, and public and private investment in those neighborhoods aligns with county-wide trends.

The selected geography represents approximately 10 percent of the school-age children in Harris County whose neighborhoods have greater than average need. The high school graduation rate across these neighborhoods averages 70 percent, and fewer than one in three fourth grade students is a proficient reader. Exhibit 8 (page 11) highlights the demand for OST programs across both Title I and underperforming feeder systems in the selected geography.

Exhibit 7: Selected Geography

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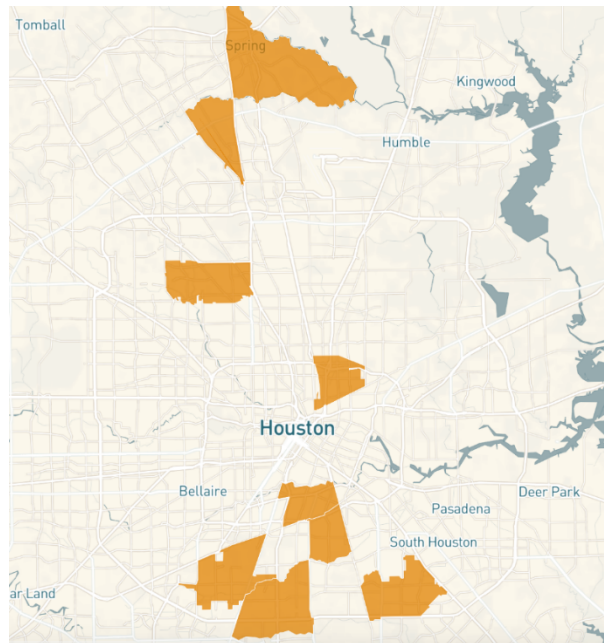
[13] The selected areas encompassed these 9 zip codes: 77021, 77026,77045, 77033, 77373, 77090, 77088, 77047, and 77075

Exhibit 8: Potential Demand for OST in Selected Geography

	Number of Title I Schools in Selected Geography	Underperforming Feeder System Schools in Select Geography
Elementary	57	38
Student Population	39,151	20,692
Middle	17	8
Student Population	14,702	9,034
High	10	4
Student Population	19,238	9,704
Schools (Total)	84	50
Student Population	73,091	39,430

Eleven percent of the County's Title I schools and 27 percent of the underperforming high and feeder schools are located in the selected geographies. Thirty percent of OST programs and 17 percent of OST slots are in select neighborhoods that have a high need for these resources. Yet, just 5.8 percent of the OST investment that we identified targets these selected neighborhoods. Data shows a mismatch between investment and need.

Funding for OST slots also drops along the educational continuum. Exhibit 9 highlights the decrease in investment as students move up in grade level.

Exhibit 9: OST Funding in Selected Geography vs. Harris County

Funding	Selected Geography	Harris County
OST Investment: K-5	$1,188,000	$20,280,000
OST Investment: 6-8	$554,400	$9,464,000
OST Investment: 9-12	$237,600	$4,056,000
Total OST Investment	$1,980,000	$33,800,000

Finally, as shown in Exhibits 10 and 11 regarding program and slot supply across Harris County, the proportion of OST programs and slots in the selected geography decreases across grade levels. This tracks with assorted studies that illustrate a significant impact on reading and math achievement for elementary and middle school students—and a more marginal impact for high school students.[14] In the selected geography, there are 22 OST programs available to serve 57

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[14] Lauer, P. A., Akiba, M., Wilkerson, S. B., Apthorp, H. S., Snow, D., & Martin-Glenn, M. L. (2006). Out-of-school time programs: A meta-analysis of effects for at-risk students. Review of Educational Research, 76, 275–313.

Title I elementary schools, 10 programs to serve 17 Title I middle schools, and four programs to serve 10 Title I high schools. Exhibits 10 and 11 on the next page display this comparison of OST programs and slots respectively.

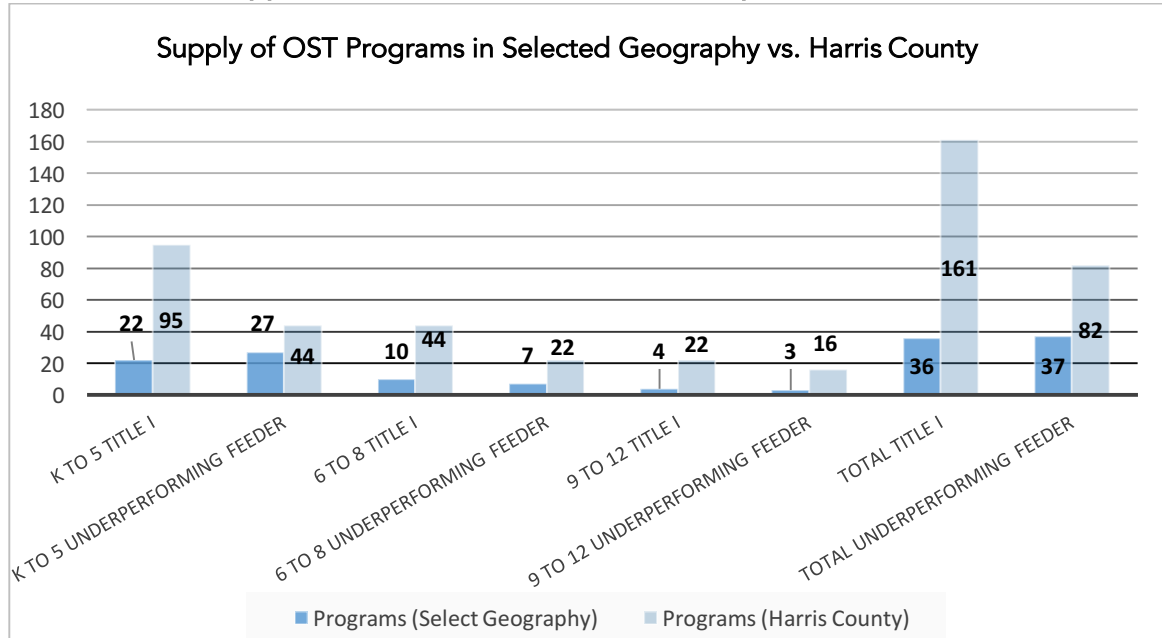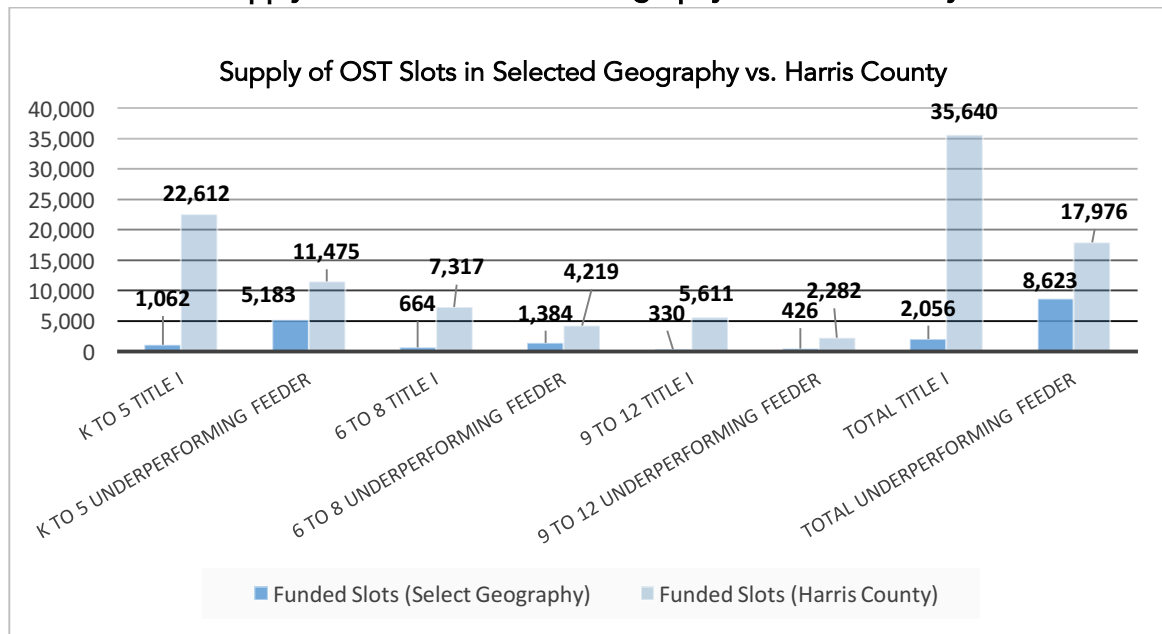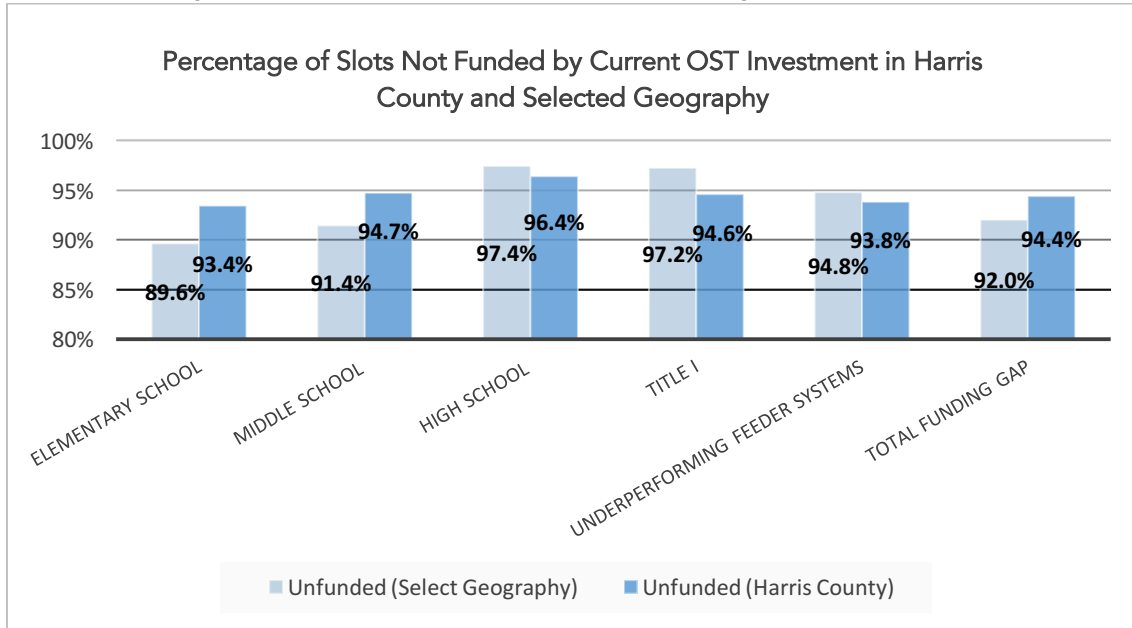**Exhibit 10: OST Supply of Programs in Selected Geography vs. Harris County**

Supply of OST Programs in Selected Geography vs. Harris County

Exhibit 11: OST Supply of Slots in Selected Geography vs. Harris County

Supply of OST Slots in Selected Geography vs. Harris County

Ten percent of Harris County schools are located in the selected geography while six percent of the total OST investment goes to those neighborhoods. Exhibit 12 shows the overall funding gap for OST slots in the selected geography to be slightly less than for Harris County.

Exhibit 12: Gap of Children to Slots in Selected Geography vs. Harris County

Percentage of Slots Not Funded by Current OST Investment in Harris County and Selected Geography

- ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: 89.6% / 93.4%
- MIDDLE SCHOOL: 91.4% / 94.7%
- HIGH SCHOOL: 97.4% / 96.4%
- TITLE I: 97.2% / 94.6%
- UNDERPERFORMING FEEDER SYSTEMS: 94.8% / 93.8%
- TOTAL FUNDING GAP: 92.0% / 94.4%

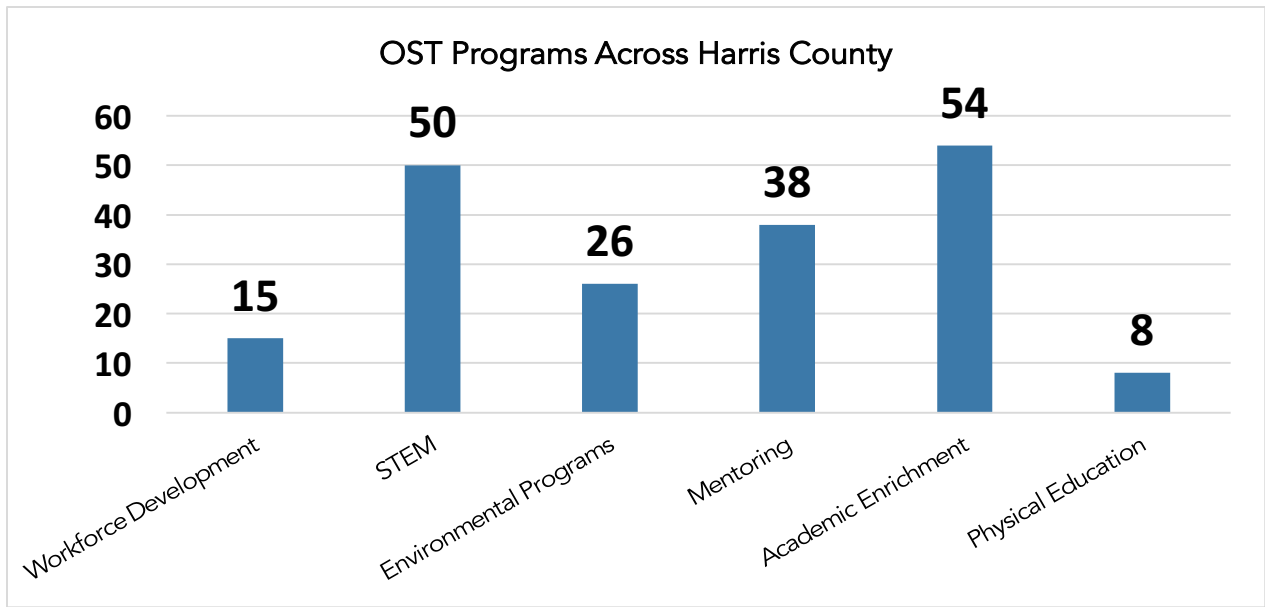■ Unfunded (Select Geography) ■ Unfunded (Harris County)

QUALITATIVE INSIGHTS

The study team used a mixed methods approach to gather the data that informs this report. In addition to the data included above, written survey responses and stakeholder and funder interviews provided important insights into OST programming in Harris County.

Program Types

Harris County benefits from a diversity of afterschool programs, as shown in Exhibit 13. The large number of STEM programs, driven by Houston Libraries and 21st Century Community Learning Center programmatic priorities, aligns with a recent increase in the amount of public and private investment in informal STEM education. Furthermore, several programs have contributed to a growing number of environmentally-focused OST options in Harris County.

Exhibit 13: OST Program Types across Harris County

OST Programs Across Harris County

Category	Value
Workforce Development	15
STEM	50
Environmental Programs	26
Mentoring	38
Academic Enrichment	54
Physical Education	8

Notable Insights from Stakeholders

Interviews with OST funders and large program providers underscored many themes that arose in the data analysis, and they also illuminated additional issues for consideration. OST stakeholders expressed concern about the significant drop off in the number of programs available for middle and high school students as compared to elementary students—a decrease that follows a national trend.

Additionally, stakeholders alluded to a lack of awareness around the measurable, positive impact of OST programs. Some stakeholders noted that this awareness gap serves as a significant barrier to scaling up OST investment, particularly for school-based programs. School principals are seen as gatekeepers to greater access, but they may have uneven appreciation for the impact of OST. Some stakeholders went so far as to say that OST investment is dependent upon principal engagement and interest. In addition to the potential lack of awareness among principals, still other stakeholders noted that there is a more widespread misunderstanding that OST initiatives are drop-in, recreational programs that are inexpensive to operate or can be run by untrained staff. This misperception can be an obstacle to raising adequate funding to sustain a high-quality OST program that meets regularly and is able to produce the types of outcomes noted earlier in this report.

Finally, not all OST program providers are created equal. Expectations regarding the level of organizational capacity and sophistication for OST providers in Harris County are relatively high. New organizations or smaller-scale programs are sometimes at a disadvantage comparted to larger, more well-established programs that have well-honed systems and track records of success. Newer and smaller programs do not have the resources in place to compete for limited funding and cannot scale their programs without external support for

capacity and infrastructure building. A system benefits from an array of program types, program content and program sponsors. This barrier to funding constrains the scope of the OST landscape to programs that have established reputations and the resources and knowledge to access available dollars, making it more difficult for start-up programs to access funds to respond to evolving community needs across Harris County.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on this study and analysis of the OST landscape in Harris County, as well as significant experience with and deep knowledge of strategies other cities and states have pursued to ensure equitable access to quality afterschool and summer programs, the study's authors highlight the following promising practices. They include:
- Pooling philanthropic funds to create greater impact
- Braiding federal funding targeted to children and youth to support more prevention programs instead of reserving funds to pay for more expensive deep end services
- Building awareness among ISD leadership about existing funding streams that can be used to support OST and summer programs
- Working with Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) agencies to leverage available subsidy dollars to serve school-age youth
- Creating an OST program locator map
- Exploring a state or local dedicated funding stream

Pooling philanthropic funds to create greater impact

Baltimore, Maryland convened small, medium and large philanthropies—as well as community-based organizations—to design a cohesive strategy to make summer programs available to children in need across their community. Two actions in particular significantly increased the number of children in safe summer programs.

First, funders pooled capital allocated to summer programs and agreed to the need for a single agency to manage the grant application and award process. By pooling funds from multiple agencies into a single administrative process, individual funders no longer had to manage grant and award processes, thereby increasing the percentage of funds going to direct service. Additionally, funds could be distributed more equitably across the city.

Second, the community-based organization managing the application and award process worked to ensure each site could receive certification as a summer meals location. By serving summer meals, sites noticed increases in daily attendance at their programs and also eliminated a meals line item from project budgets.

Braiding federal funding targeted to children and youth to support more prevention programs

A recent review of programs administered by seven federal agencies identified numerous funding streams that can support OST and summer activities. Funding from a number of these programs can be braided and blended together to achieve greater impact. Some communities have worked with local and state agencies that administer federal funds to consolidate administrative and reporting requirements and increase flexibility of narrow funding streams.

Harris County should explore the Place-Based Initiatives (PBI) and Performance Program Pilot (P3) grant programs, both of which provide federal technical assistance and additional flexibility to communities. With these supports, cities can maximize the impact of their federally-funded programs for children and youth.

Building awareness among ISD leadership about existing funding streams that can be used to support OST and summer programs

The passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act has changed the way federal education dollars can be used to support students at the district and school levels. The US Department of Education continues to issue new non-regulatory guidance that provides additional details on how federal Title I and IV dollars can support OST and summer programs. An OST collaborative group in Harris County could consider positioning itself as a resource to ISDs and schools that look to capitalize on the new opportunities arising through ESSA non-regulatory guidance and other choice-driven initiatives from the next administration. Additionally, the Steering Committee can leverage the expertise of organizations such as TXPOST to aid in these efforts.

Working with Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) agencies to leverage available subsidy dollars to serve school-age youth

Many families in Harris County qualify for Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) subsidies, which can be used to offset the cost of afterschool care for children through age 12. CCDF administrative agencies can develop strategies to increase the number of spaces available for school-age children through the creation of vouchers or other set asides. By coordinating carefully with the child care system to fund additional elementary school slots, funders have additional flexibility to devote resources to under-resourced middle and high school OST programs.

Creating an OST program locator map

Dallas Afterschool Association has developed an OST program locator map. This map has many benefits, but two are of special note here. First, the locator map supports external communication with children and families, serving as a clearinghouse of programs, their focus areas, their location and more. Second, the map provides important data, potentially including funding details, that can help create a more complete picture of the funds that support OST. In turn, Harris County can more easily identify and leverage untapped or underutilized funding streams.

Exploring a state or local dedicated funding stream

As found in Miami-Dade County and California's After School Education and Safety Program, some states and jurisdictions have successfully advocated for a dedicated funding stream for OST. Local sales tax and use tax carve outs, sin taxes, state budget line items, and real estate millage set asides have provided large, flexible funding streams that increase the overall number of OST programs, build the capacity of providers to increase program quality, and create targeted opportunities for children most in need of safe places after school and during the summer.

While legislation must be carefully crafted, nearly all jurisdictions that have created dedicated funding for OST have been able to sustain the funding stream, even amid changes in administration and through voter referendums.

ABOUT COLLABORATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

Collaborative Communications is a strategic consulting and communications firm dedicated to collaborative solutions to community, education and related workforce challenges.

Collaborative forms and nurtures partnerships with individuals, government, philanthropic, and education organizations at the federal, national, state, district and community levels to achieve our clients' goals through superior consulting, organizational strategy development, and program management strategies. Our team works in partnership with entities from across sectors in developing strategic blueprints to sustainable growth and maximum impact.

For more information about this project, please contact Shawn Stelow Griffin at griffin@collaborativecommunications.com or Adam Rabinowitz at rabinowitz@collaborativecommunications.com