Profiles of Innovation:
Out-of-School Time Workforce Supports

This Profile of Innovation is part of a series highlighting innovative initiatives implemented or planned by Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Lead Agencies. These profiles feature activities aligned with recovery priorities and many were funded with federal COVID-19 funds including Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act, and the American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds. The profiles may include proposed ideas that are in the implementation or approval phase. The information is from publicly available sources and reviewed by the Lead Agency.

OCC has issued Information Memoranda (IM) for all the COVID-19 federal response and recovery funds. These guidance documents include an overview of the funds, details about the obligation and liquidation periods, allowable use of funds, administrative cost cap, etc. OCC has strongly encouraged Lead Agencies to use these funds as part of a cohesive vision to implement policies that will better support the developmental and learning needs of children, meet parent’s needs and preferences with equal access to high-quality child care, and support a professionalized workforce that is fairly and appropriately compensated.

Overview of Out-of-School Time Workforce

Child care workforce supports through federal response and recovery funds are crucial for programs serving children across the age continuum, but the out-of-school time workforce (OST) faces unique challenges. The OST workforce includes providers who care for school-age children before and after school, over summer, and during school breaks. The OST workforce has distinctive features compared to those professionals who work with younger age groups. Many OST staff are part-time with little formal preparation, while others are full-time specialists and may bring targeted expertise, such as being certified teachers or social workers. Recruiting and retaining well-trained staff remains a challenge across OST programs, and due to the primarily part-time nature of these positions resulting in low wages, can be even more difficult.

A report by the Afterschool Alliance, “Where Did All the Afterschool Staff Go?”, found that OST programs that reported receiving COVID-19 relief funding were much more likely to take steps to attract or retain staff, such as increasing salaries, providing additional professional development opportunities, and/or providing free child care for staff. The following examples highlight innovative strategies that CCDF Lead Agencies are leading to support the needs of the OST workforce.

HIGHLIGHTS
- MI is investing in OST career pathways and credentials
- NJ & UT are providing quality enhancement grants to OST providers that include funds to support staff recruitment and retention
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Innovations

**Michigan:** The MI Department of Education (MDE) is investing in the OST workforce by establishing the [Michigan Youth Development Associate Certificate and Credential Program](https://www.michigan.gov/yda). The MDE is working closely with partners in career technical education (CTE), the regional Comprehensive Center Network, and the Michigan AfterSchool Partnership (MASP), to align core competencies to develop the Future Proud Michigan Educator program. The career pathway for high school students starts with work-based learning in both early childhood and OST programs that can translate into immediate jobs and participants can transfer credential credits to some associate degree programs. Students have an opportunity to leave high school with a credential – the Infant Toddler CDA, Pre-school CDA, and the MI-Youth Development Associate Credential – aligned with teacher certification. By establishing a state OST credential – there is no nationally recognized credential for OST – MI is incentivizing students to pursue OST careers, which addresses OST staffing shortages and creates pathways for advancement that can lead to higher wages. This program intentionally supports equity by offering opportunities for high school students to learn and work in programs in their own communities while earning a credential at no cost, removing income barriers to educational attainment. For more visit the [Credential Tip Sheet: Michigan Youth Development Associate (MI-YDA)](https://www.michigan.gov/yda).

**New Jersey:** The NJ Department of Health (DOH) and Department of Human Services (DHS) worked in partnership to launch the [2022 Summer Youth Camp Grant](https://nj.gov/humanservices/health/programs/health.aspx). Programs that have an approved DOH Certificate of Approval to operate a Summer Youth Camp during the summer 2022 may be eligible to apply for the Summer Youth Camp Grant. Grant funds must be used across two categories: 50% of the grant amount can be used to provide financial assistance to families in need, the additional 50% of the grant amount must be used to support operational expenses, staff recruitment; approved hiring bonuses, wages, and benefits for staff. Summer Camp grants range from $7,500 to $25,000, depending on camp enrollment and the length of the camp operating season.

**Utah:** The UT Department of Workforce Services (DWS), Office of Child Care (OCC) is offering quality grants to programs serving school-age youth (5-12). The [School Age Quality 22 Grant](https://dws.utah.gov/about/offices-office-of-child-care/school-age-quality-22-grant/) is a competitive grant offered to “DWS Approved - Exempt School Age Programs” that use the funds to either offer safe and engaging programs or to work towards increasing the quality of their afterschool programs through focused engagement opportunities, including professional development. To support OST programs with achieving and maintaining quality, programs receive professional development that includes 25 hours of staff-focused training on topics such as leadership, management, mentoring, youth wellbeing, and quality programming. Funds will be available to all those awarded from July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2025. A maximum amount of up to $76,000 per program site will be awarded. These efforts of investing in professional learning and training for OST staff can help to attract new staff and retain those already in the workforce.

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW MORE?**

Please contact the Office of Child Care regional office, the State Capacity Building Center’s state systems specialist, or the Tribal technical assistance specialist for your region to request additional information.