

THE GRANTMAKERS FOR EDUCATION OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME IMPACT GROUP

Investing in the Out-of-School Time Workforce: Recommendations for Grantmakers

October 2026



Credit: Girls Inc. of Alameda County, photographer Joyce Xi



GRANTMAKERS FOR EDUCATION | IGNITE POSSIBILITY

This report was commissioned and funded by:



Table of Contents

4 INTRODUCTION

7 PROJECT OVERVIEW

Afterschool and Summer Workforce Solutions Database
Field Partners and Leaders
Thriving Workforce Framework

10 CHALLENGES TO BUILDING A THRIVING OST WORKFORCE

Access Data to Better Understand the Workforce
Ensure Stable Funding for Programs and Intermediaries
Increase Compensation and Offer Benefits
Build Robust Recruitment and Retention Strategies
Clarify Career Pathways and Advancement Opportunities
Center Equity and the Need for Diverse Leadership
Provide High-Quality Professional Development
Support Staff Well-being
Amplify Field Identity and Recognition

25 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PHILANTHROPY

Overview

Recommendations

1. Support the Field to Implement Emerging Solutions
2. Align and Collaborate to Advance Structural Solutions for Building a Thriving Workforce
3. Center OST Workforce Support in Grantmaking Practice
4. Leverage Philanthropic Influence

Requests from the Field

38 CONCLUSION AND WAYS TO ENGAGE

40 REFERENCES

46 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For an executive summary and other resources of this report, click [here](#).

Suggested citation:

Goldberg, R., & Traphagen, K. (2026). *Investing in the out-of-school time workforce: Recommendations for grantmakers*. Grantmakers for Education.



Credit: Partnership for Children & Youth, photographer Amris Mendoza

NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

The Grantmakers for Education Out-of-School Time Impact Group recognizes that the out-of-school time (OST) field uses multiple terms. For this report, we use the following:

- To describe the sector, we use OST, out-of-school time, afterschool and youth development interchangeably.
- The sector encompasses structured programs that happen outside of the classroom – before and after school, in the evenings, weekends and summer; in school buildings or community settings; run by schools, community organizations, libraries, sports leagues, arts and cultural organizations, science centers, parks and recreation departments and local government entities, museums and other organizations, serving children and youth in grades K-12.
- The sector encompasses organizations that run programs and the infrastructure that supports them – including intermediaries, policy and advocacy-focused organizations, technical assistance providers, research, communications, government agencies, philanthropy and other entities supporting the delivery of high-quality programming.
- To refer to staff working directly with children and youth in programs, we use the terms youth work professional, youth-serving professional, youth worker and OST staff interchangeably.

Introduction

Lifelong educator and youth advocate Devan Blackwell shared this story in the 2023 book, The Heartbeat of the Youth Development Field:

“Early in my OST career, one day Ursula presented me with a drawing. It was mostly red bricks drawn on a white sheet of construction paper; and at the center there was a window which opened to a vast blueish-white sky. ‘Wow, I love it,’ I exclaimed, as the fifth grade student smiled modestly. ‘But what does it mean?’ Ursula explained that I had ‘created windows’ where brick walls existed. I had introduced her to possibilities beyond those walls that she felt surrounded her. It was a revelation to me...I recognized that the image on the paper gave representation to who and what I aspire to be as a youth worker.” (Blackwell, 2023, p. 77)

As Ursula’s drawing brilliantly illustrates, positive relationships with caring adults in the context of OST programs can be transformative in the lives of young people.

Aligned with the tenets of positive youth development, OST programs provide learning experiences centered around engagement, agency, belonging and discovery – supporting young people to reach key developmental milestones such as:

- Developing intrinsic motivation, a sense of purpose and self-confidence through discovering and pursuing their own passions and interests.
- Honing problem-solving and persistence skills by taking risks within safe, low-stakes environments.
- Building social and emotional skills and capacities.
- Experiencing belonging, support and affirmation connecting young people to their communities and contributing to positive identity formation.

These and other positive impacts of participation in high-quality OST programs are evidenced by extensive research (Vandell & Simpkins, 2024; Durlak et al., 2011; Lauer et al., 2006; National Research Council & Institute of Medicine, 2002; Weiss & Akiva, 2023; Vandell, 2013).

Over the past few decades, advocates have built a funding infrastructure to bring the promise of OST to millions of children and youth. Hard-won public sector support includes the federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers program (funded at \$1.329 billion in fiscal year 2026) and the Child Care and Development Block Grant (funded at \$8.831 billion in FY 26, with 44% of children served ages 5 to 13). OST is also supported by dozens of other federal programs, state-level and local funds. Philanthropy plays a significant role, supporting programs directly, and providing grants to intermediaries engaged in policy, advocacy, research and professional development.

Although advocates were able to secure funding for key federal programs supporting OST for FY 2026, cancellation in 2025 of federal government support for research, technical assistance

centers and hundreds of program grants is still deeply felt across the field.

The latest national data shows that access to out-of-school time programs is narrowing, not expanding. For the first time in 16 years, the Afterschool Alliance's America After 3PM survey found that afterschool program participation decreased in 2025. Across the U.S., for every child in an afterschool program, there are three more children waiting to get in, and the children most likely to be shut out are from low-income, Black or Latino families who cannot afford the cost of participation. Cost, accessibility and program availability are top barriers to afterschool program enrollment (Afterschool Alliance, October 2025).

How do we increase access to high-quality OST experiences, given the challenges of our complicated, crisis-ridden, post-pandemic era? Significant increases in public sector support and more effective integration of education and youth development systems are needed. We also must tackle longstanding challenges to building and supporting a skilled youth development workforce (National Academies, 2025). We need only to look back at the intense period of early 2020 for a reminder of how essential youth workers are to America's children, youth, families and communities.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME DURING COVID-19

As COVID-19 spread in early 2020, most OST programs were required to close for safety reasons. Some stayed open to provide care for the children of essential workers, with staff risking their own health amid uncertainty about how the virus spread.

With school doors closed, youth workers stepped in to provide emotional and tangible

support to youth and families – including internet access, free meals, online tutoring, enrichment activities and emotional support. In many communities, OST staff were the key connection among families, virtual learning and other critical services (Afterschool Alliance, February 2022).

Youth workers supported young people through upheaval and isolation; losing family and loved ones to the pandemic; weathering economic crises that deeply impacted low-income communities; and enduring the heightened tensions around racial injustice in the aftermath of George Floyd's murder.

Youth workers supported young people even as they experienced their own pandemic-related trauma, many eventually burning out and leaving the field. As programs reopened, providers' top concerns were staff recruitment and retention. Three out of four (74%) respondents to a fall 2021 Afterschool Alliance survey reported difficulty hiring and/or retaining staff. (Afterschool Alliance, January 2022). One respondent noted:

"Our staff need support more than ever. We need to tell our stories and reignite our passion...Most of us don't even consider what we do 'work.' It's our passion. It's in our blood. But we are exhausted. None of us knows how to function anymore. We need each other more than ever."

- Respondent to Afterschool Alliance provider survey, fall 2021

Follow-up surveys have found that providers remain concerned about finding staff to hire and staffing shortages (81% in 2023, 79% in 2024 and 77% in 2025). (Afterschool Alliance, 2026).

The continuing challenges surrounding the workforce are the result of a longstanding problem: the field of youth work in the U.S. has always lacked the systemic infrastructure needed to recruit, train, develop, compensate and support youth work professionals at scale. Jobs in the field are too often characterized by part-time status, low pay, lack of benefits and no clear pathways to advancement. Key obstacles include lack of funding and restrictions on public and private funding that affect programs' ability to support staff.

NOW IS THE MOMENT – CARING ADULTS AND SAFE SPACES ARE NEEDED

In the wake of the grief, loss and crushing isolation of the pandemic, American society has been weathering a series of constant, overlapping crises that are taking a toll on children and youth. Learning gaps that have persisted since school re-openings, heightened economic stress and worry, more frequent and intense climate-related disasters, and a divisive and increasingly hostile political climate are among today's challenges. We are witnessing increased attacks on societal norms, public institutions and marginalized populations. Immigrant communities and their allies are experiencing fear and stress as enforcement actions intensify.

Young people are profoundly impacted by all of this. They experience these crises in their homes, schools, communities and online. More than ever, they need access to safe and joyful spaces and the support of caring adults that afterschool and summer programs provide.

At this moment, we must do many things at once.

We must advance solutions to broaden program access, and at the same time navigate the turbulence of nonprofit destabilization, budget cuts, cancelled grants, impounded funds, attacks on cultural and racially inclusive programming and more. We must do all of this while making progress on building a system that truly supports the people charged with helping every child through these challenging times.

As we illustrate in this report, we do not lack innovative ideas to move us forward. Program leaders and youth workers are testing ingenious solutions that support youth, youth workers, families and their communities. The good news is that there are many ways that philanthropy, working in coordination and collaboration, can support the field to advance toward a robust, resilient OST workforce for the future.



Credit: Allison Shelley for EDUimages



Credit: Boston Afterschool & Beyond

Project Overview

The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation commissioned this report to outline the challenges facing the OST workforce, highlight solutions, and provide recommendations for philanthropy. This project was guided by the following questions:

- What are the key challenges impacting the OST workforce?
- What are the risks to the field should these challenges not be addressed?
- What solutions are emerging in communities across the country? What lessons do they offer?
- Can these solutions be expanded or replicated?
- How can funders support a thriving OST workforce?

The Grantmakers for Education OST Impact Group incorporated a variety of field perspectives on these guiding questions, both historical and current. We conducted field research on emerging solutions, engaged national organizations and other partners to surface additional solutions and completed interviews of field stakeholders, including practitioners, to gather perspectives and recommendations from the field. Additionally, we sought insights on how the early childhood education (ECE) sector, the care fields and leaders in the nonprofit sector are advocating for systemic supports and improvements for their workforces and the role of philanthropy in those efforts.

FIELD PARTNERS AND LEADERS

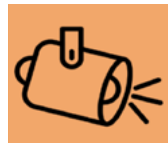
To inform this report, the OST Impact Group asked the Afterschool Alliance, California School-Age Consortium, Every Hour Counts, National Afterschool Association, National Summer Learning Association, National Urban League and the Partnership for Children & Youth to share their perspectives on practice, policy and research advancements needed to support the workforce and recommendations on the role of philanthropy. We also asked those organizations to share emerging solutions to workforce challenges.

The OST Impact Group partnered with the Partnership for Children & Youth and the California School-Age Consortium in support of their statewide summits focused on the California expanded learning workforce, which helped us gather additional input on field level solutions and engage with local funders to inform the recommendations.

We conducted more than two dozen interviews with field leaders, including funders, researchers, advocates, practitioners and intermediary leaders to hear their perspectives. We also reached out to leaders from the early childhood education (ECE) sector, the care fields and the nonprofit sector overall to learn about how they are confronting workforce challenges. We have a particular interest in the ECE sector because of the role ECE funders have played in advancing workforce reforms and the similarities among the OST and ECE workforces. We synthesized all of these findings for this report.

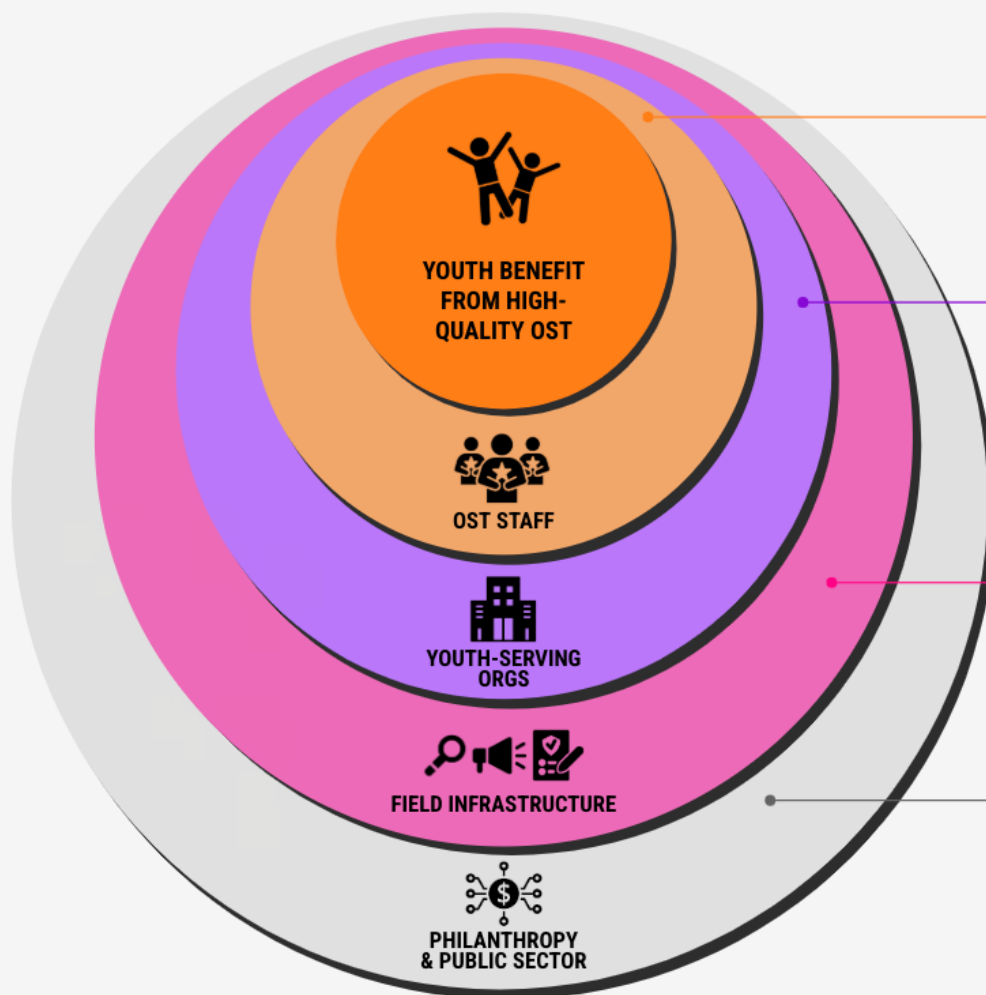
AFTERSCHOOL AND SUMMER WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS DATABASE

Gathering examples of emerging solutions, we learned about dozens of innovations addressing recruitment, compensation and benefits, professional development, career pathways, nonprofit capacity and leadership development. We noticed that the field had no mechanism to track and disseminate these innovations. To address that need, we commissioned the Afterschool Alliance to create the [Afterschool and Summer Workforce Solutions Database](#). Integrating contributions from our partners, this searchable database now includes more than 175 emerging solutions and will continue to grow, serving as a resource to funders as well as OST practitioners, researchers, technical assistance providers, intermediaries and policy leaders.



Innovative solutions included in the database are highlighted throughout this report as spotlights. We encourage field leaders and funders to explore the database, offer their own solutions and reach out to the contributors to learn more and collaborate.

THRIVING WORKFORCE FRAMEWORK



Positive Developmental Outcomes for Youth in Out-Of-School Time

made possible by:

OST staff working in high-quality jobs, with the skills, attitudes and knowledge to drive positive outcomes for children and youth.

made possible by:

Stable and fiscally sound youth-serving organizations with the capacity to offer jobs with strong compensation/benefit structures, support for staff wellbeing, access to professional development, and pathways to career advancement and leadership development.

made possible by:

A field infrastructure at local, regional, state and national levels, with intermediaries and partners focused on policy and advocacy, fieldbuilding, research, and advancing practice.

made possible by:

Philanthropy and public sector financing at local, regional, state and national levels supporting the true cost of high-quality programming, including support for intermediaries, providers and partners to maintain a skilled and stable workforce.

To organize our thinking and recommendations, we developed a framework that places youth at the center. We named critical roles of youth-serving organizations and the necessary field infrastructure to support a thriving workforce.

This framework helped us to see how various components of the OST field infrastructure contribute to advancing the workforce and the many options for philanthropic investment to support short- and longer-term solutions.

Challenges to Building a Thriving OST Workforce



Credit: Girls Inc. of Alameda County, photographer Joyce Xi

It is important to unpack the challenges facing the field to provide context for our recommendations for philanthropy. In this section we detail the need to:

- Access data to better understand the workforce.
- Ensure stable funding for programs and intermediaries.
- Increase compensation and offer benefits.
- Build robust recruitment and retention strategies.
- Clarify career pathways and advancement opportunities.
- Center equity and the need for diverse leadership.
- Provide high-quality professional development.
- Support staff well-being.
- Amplify field identity and recognition.

ACCESS DATA TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THE WORKFORCE

More comprehensive data about who works in the field and their experiences would help inform solutions to workforce challenges. In 2022, The Wallace Foundation supported American Institutes for Research (AIR) to undertake the Power of Us Workforce Survey, the first national effort to understand the experiences and aspirations of the youth fields workforce. The study defined the workforce as “adults who work with young people in strengths-based interest development and enrichment opportunities through community organizations, institutions, and agencies” (American Institutes for Research, 2025).

More than 10,000 current and former staff and volunteers responded to the survey with information about career pathways, professional learning, professional well-being and compensation. Three in four (73%) respondents noted that they hold leadership positions, and their experiences as leaders are reflected in the data, along with differences based on role, tenure in the field, full- and part-time status and demographics. It should also be noted that one in five respondents (19%) work in California, the state with the largest youth-serving workforce and most significant state funding for expanded learning programs. The full Power of Us data file is available on the [AIR website](#) and can be analyzed to understand responses in regions, sectors and for respondent groups.

The survey data point to the many strengths of the youth fields workforce. Youth work professionals are committed and passionate about their work. Strong majorities report that they chose their first job in the youth fields based on a sense of purpose, they experience a



Credit: The Youth Fields Workforce: Findings from the National Power of Us Workforce Survey, American Institutes for Research

sense of belonging at work and are satisfied with their opportunities for growth. Yet nearly half feel burned out. Pay and benefits are the most common aspects of their job that respondents would change, followed by reducing stress. The survey showed evidence of pay and benefit access gaps for staff of color and younger respondents.

The Power of Us data is an excellent starting place for better understanding the experiences and aspirations of the workforce. This data can inform efforts to improve job quality both through practice and policy solutions. Even so, data that reflects a more comprehensive representation of the workforce — particularly part-time, direct service staff — are needed to gain a more complete picture.

Aside from regular surveys, another approach to gathering accurate data on the workforce is to expand the field's use of workforce registries. Mainly used by the early childhood field, some school-age child care staff also participate in state-level workforce registries, which track participation, job titles, education levels, wages and demographics; promote professional growth and development; and recognize achievements, according to the [National Workforce Registry Alliance](#). (National Workforce Registry Alliance, 2017). State level efforts to expand school-age child care staff participation in these registries would yield additional useful data.

Lastly, the U.S. Department of Labor tracks data on different workforce sectors. Because the youth-serving workforce does not fit neatly into an existing category and likely is spread across multiple categories, a group of advocates led by the California Afterschool Network has submitted a proposal to the Bureau of Labor Statistics to establish a new Standard Occupational Code for the field. If approved, this code would be used to gather a systematic and comprehensive national data set on the workforce.

ENSURE STABLE FUNDING FOR PROGRAMS AND INTERMEDIARIES

The 2025 National Academies report [The Future of Youth Development: Building Systems and Strengthening Programs](#) comprehensively explains how federal, state, local and philanthropic sources support the OST sector, concluding that funding is insufficient, unstable, and overly complicated for providers to access (National Academies, 2025).

Since the report's publication, the funding picture at the federal level has worsened considerably. Grant cancellations targeting diversity, equity and inclusion, federal worker layoffs, elimination of funding for AmeriCorps VISTA, technical assistance centers, data collection and research, and efforts to dismantle the Department of Education have all taken a toll on the OST sector. A strong and organized response from advocates resulted in the release of impounded funds for 21st Century Community Learning Centers and other education programs in the summer of 2025 and the continuation of 21st Century Community Learning Centers in FY 2026. Those victories are significant in an otherwise difficult environment.



South Carolina Afterschool Leaders Empowered

The Riley Institute at Furman University and the South Carolina Department of Education partnered to offer [South Carolina Afterschool Leaders Empowered](#). This 10-month fellowship prepares program directors and partners to be strong policy leaders, positively impact frontline staff, grow their programs, improve the quality of services provided to children, and create sustainable partnerships.



Credit: Afterschool Alliance

State level advocacy has won increased investments in OST programming over the past five years — increasing the total of state level investments from \$264 million in 15 states in 2020 to \$5.7 billion in 28 states and Washington, DC in 2026 (Afterschool Alliance, January 2026). However, stability of these funds will be threatened by the fallout of federal cuts to Medicaid and SNAP contained in HR 1.

Other efforts to win stable funding include new tax revenue, bonds, license plate fees and legal settlements (Afterschool Alliance, Children's Funding Project, Grantmakers for Education, 2023). These strategies hold promise, as evidenced by the passage of local ballot measures increasing funding for children and youth services in the 2024 and 2025 elections (Children's Funding Project, 2024 & 2025). It is also possible that the new Federal Tax Credit Scholarship program set to roll out in 2027 could become a source of support (Afterschool Alliance, September 2025). [Fund IRL](#), led by the Children's Funding Project, is educating decision makers on the importance of allocating social media settlement resources to “in real life” experiences, including out-of-school time programs, that increase opportunities for young people to experience belonging and connection and enhance youth well-being.

Intermediary organizations — funded in large part by philanthropy — at the local, state and national levels have been critical to the advocacy and funding wins that are keeping programs going in this volatile environment. However, several leaders shared concerns that the sustainability of these intermediaries at all levels is also uncertain. Continued and increased support for intermediaries will be critical during this period of public funding instability.

Intermediary organizations — funded in large part by philanthropy — at the local, state and national levels have been critical to the advocacy and funding wins that are keeping programs going in this volatile environment.

FUND THE TRUE COST OF QUALITY – INCREASING COMPENSATION AND OFFERING BENEFITS

Early childhood education leaders advised the OST field to first focus on improving compensation for people who are currently doing the job – without tying pay increases to achievement of a professional credential. Since many of the lowest paid youth workers are women of color – similar to the early childhood field – ECE leaders emphasized that prioritizing increased compensation is a core equity issue.

Many interviewees noted that the field has a “scarcity mindset,” developed over years of requiring lean budgets with low hourly wages and inadequate administrative support. Providers reasonably assume – based on practices of philanthropic and public decision makers – that budgets supporting equitable wages and a sustainable organizational infrastructure will be rejected as too expensive.

Reaching consensus on a cost per participant for a quality program - assuming living wages and organizational supports and taking into account differences in geography, type of program and other factors – is an important step toward reducing the scarcity mindset. The [Cost Calculator](#), created by The Wallace Foundation in 2009 to estimate programming costs, is being updated with a new OST cost study led by American Institutes for Research which will produce a new cost calculator with an estimated release in 2026.

Children’s Funding Project encourages communities to complete cost modeling to measure the true cost of high-quality programs and trains state and local government agencies, intermediary organizations and nonprofit organizations to use cost modeling. In 2025, Children’s Funding Project launched a cost modeling learning cohort for the OST field. The Nonprofit Finance Fund also offers a [Full Cost Framework](#) to help nonprofits and funders align on what’s needed to run thriving and effective programs.

Even assuming wages can be improved, will the field always feature entry level, low-paying, part-time, direct service jobs? Some field leaders advocate for converting part-time into full-time jobs as a strategy to improve pay, benefits and job stability (Fabiano, 2023). Others note that part-time entry-level direct service positions attract young staff who bring important strengths that lead to deep connections and relationships with young people.



Liberatory Compensation Framework and Living Wage Calculator

The Kalamazoo Youth Development (KYD) Network and Prevention Works collaborated on a Liberatory Compensation Framework. The framework includes an organization-level compensation strategy and a field-level advocacy agenda for equitable compensation. The framework provides guidelines for reviewing wages and benefits by position utilizing the [Living Wage Calculator](#), pay ranges within the local OST sector, and differences between leadership and practitioner pay.



Credit: Afterschool Alliance

BUILD ROBUST RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION STRATEGIES

There is no ‘typical’ entryway into youth work careers. Some people transition from program participant to staff, bringing valuable lived experience into the program. Others learn about jobs in afterschool programs or summer camps through online search engines or their personal networks. Many pursue a degree in youth work, education, social work, psychology, criminal justice or a related discipline, or perhaps enter the field through an AmeriCorps/VISTA placement. This constellation of entry points yields a diverse workforce – but can also be confusing. Many people who would bring talent and passion to the field may not ever know that youth work is a viable career option.

To improve recruitment and retention, it is necessary to learn more about how people enter the field, expand and improve all the field’s entry points, and understand why people leave and where they go. It is also important to amplify awareness of the youth development field and value of youth work to increase interest among potential staff.

A few examples of innovative ideas for recruitment and retention:

- Sam Piha and Samantha Fasen of the How Kids Learn Foundation discussed the benefits of hiring high school-age youth to staff OST



Leadership Pathways Project

American Camp Association offers a [Leadership Pathways Project](#), supported by Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies, to support camps with peer learning and technical assistance to start/expand/improve counselor-in-training programs as pathways for camp work opportunities. This project addresses staff recruitment, career pathways and supporting leaders of color.

programs in a 2021 report. They recommended dissemination of effective practices and clear guidelines on the use of government funding to support high school students. (Piha & Fasen, 2021).

- Girls Inc. of Alameda County and partners launched the first [Expanded Learning Program Leader Registered Apprenticeship Program](#) in 2023, a two-year earn and learn model where participants gain experience working in Girls Inc. afterschool programs and take tuition-free courses at Berkeley City College toward an associates degree. This apprenticeship program serves as a recruitment and retention strategy and provides clear pathways toward career and wage advancement. The apprenticeship is now being expanded in Oakland, San Francisco, and other communities. Similarly, Woodcraft Rangers in Los Angeles launched the [Early Education Expanded Learning Apprenticeship Program](#) in 2024.
- Vermont Afterschool offers the [After-school and Youth Work Certificate](#) through the Community College of Vermont (CCV) to support youth workers in advancing their careers. This online program offers participants a total of 24 credits and eligibility to receive a \$2,100 bonus upon completion of the certificate. Courses in this program may also be applied to CCV's Early Childhood Education or Behavioral Science Associate's degrees.
- Change Impact, a capacity-building organization with specialized experience in education, youth development and workforce development, offers [a model](#) for transforming part-time entry level youth work jobs into workforce development experiences by integrating intentional coaching, skill development, credentials and wrap-around support. This approach is designed to increase recruitment, retention and job quality. (Change Impact, 2025).
- Hello Insight is partnering with youth researchers to better understand the experiences and conditions that promote growth in young staff. Early findings emphasize relationships, reflection, shared power and mentorship. Hello Insight's founder Kim Sabo Flores, writing in Youth Today, notes, "what we're discovering is that these jobs aren't just stopgap employment. They are often launching points, shaping young people's sense of purpose, confidence, critical thinking and readiness for work and life." (Sabo Flores, 2026).
- An October 2025 brief by the Partnership for Student Success advocates for more deliberate coordination among afterschool program providers and institutions of higher education (IHEs) to recruit and support college students to work in afterschool programs. "IHE partners may also be able to provide transportation to work sites, incentivize participation through class credit or the ability to meet service requirements, or even dedicate Federal Work Study funding to students working in an afterschool program, lowering the cost of operation and allowing for expansion of services." (Partnership for Student Success, 2025).
- There are untapped opportunities to partner with IHEs and public workforce development systems to leverage resources such as Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds to strengthen recruitment, training, career planning and retention.



Credit: After School Matters & Every Hour Counts

CLARIFY CAREER PATHWAYS AND ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST) created the foundation for career ladders/lattices for the OST field as part of their system building efforts in the early 2000s. A career ladder is a linear progression of roles stepping up in career advancement, while a career lattice is a more flexible approach where people can move up, down, sideways or diagonally across roles, gaining diverse skills. Since NIOST's early work, many states have adopted career lattices. These efforts center the early childhood sector and include school-age child care workers, but not staff working with adolescents, and they are not necessarily connected to careers outside the sector.

To serve the OST field, more work is needed to clarify the diverse career possibilities in and adjacent to the sector. How does a youth worker become familiar with and gain the knowledge and experience to move into management or another role such as organizer, systems builder, trainer, facilitator, researcher, communicator, advocate, policymaker or grantmaker? Many people gain skills and experience in afterschool jobs that lead to careers in education, social work, psychology and other allied fields, but the career pathways are not well articulated or publicized.



Educator Career Development Center

Created by ExpandedED Schools, a nonprofit that works with schools and community partners to expand learning opportunities for young people across New York City, the [Educator Career Development Center](#) is a resource for non-certified educators in New York City, including afterschool staff and tutors, that offers professional development, career support and guidance on pursuing a teaching credential. The center outlines the types of certification, offers a peer learning community and provides information for educators about available teacher preparation programs.



Credit: After School Matters & Every Hour Counts

Recent field innovations to better articulate career pathways include:

- A 2024 paper by Change Impact focused on how youth workers can leverage their skills and competencies into fields such as K-12 teaching, social work and mental health professions (Change Impact, 2024).
- The New York Network for Youth Success created the [Afterschool Pathfinder](#) to help New York youth development professionals explore new job and career opportunities in the field and highlight several success stories of individuals' career journeys.
- California Afterschool Network (CAN) is partnering with institutions of higher education, local education agencies, community-based organizations and statewide workforce development and apprenticeship systems to implement a stackable apprenticeship model to support pathways into the expanded learning field as well as from expanded learning into teaching and other human service professions including certified wellness coaches.
- A 2021 paper by EdTrust explores how after-school staff of color are entering the teaching professions and provides recommendations for how non-traditional teacher preparation programs can better meet their needs (Cherfas, 2021).

CENTER EQUITY AND THE NEED FOR DIVERSE LEADERSHIP

Centering equity in the OST field is essential to supporting staff in creating the relationships and environments critical for young people to experience belonging and develop their racial, cultural, gender and other identities. In a recent journal article, researchers shared that:

“Inclusive, culturally responsive programming depends on who facilitates these programs and their ability to receive ongoing training and professional development. Furthermore, commitment to this kind of programming and support of OST staff requires an honest interrogation of how racism(s) and colonial mindsets are embedded within the field and concerted efforts to push back alongside young people.” (Baldrige et al., 2024).

A 2022 brief summarizing findings from research commissioned by The Wallace Foundation noted difficulties faced by LGBTQIA+ staff and staff of color working in OST spaces:

“Interview and focus group participants also reported personal experiences and those of their colleagues in which LGBTQIA+ staff and staff of color felt marginalized or tokenized (i.e., being hired or included only to give the appearance of diversity and equity) by white program leaders and predominantly white boards of directors.

Youth workers (frontline staff)—many who come from historically marginalized communities themselves and therefore serve as important mentors to young people in OST programs—report experiencing racism in the workplace as well as a tendency for programs to assume that the participating young people need to be ‘fixed,’ a deficit perspective rooted in racism and paternalism. They also report low wages and job instability.” (The Wallace Foundation, 2022).

Although data is imperfect, available sources suggest that people who identify as Black, Indigenous or people of color or with other marginalized identities comprise a significant percentage of direct service workers in the field. However, assuming the OST field aligns with the overall nonprofit workforce, leadership is overwhelmingly white (Lugo, 2023; Diomande, 2024).



Leadership Development Institute (LDI) for Emerging Leaders of Color

California School-Age Consortium launched the [LDI for Emerging Leaders of Color](#) in 2011 to cultivate a pipeline of equity-focused leaders of color that are prepared to take on advanced leadership positions in the OST field. The program supports fellows to explore and uncover healthy ways to navigate, challenge, and interrupt systems of oppression in their leadership, programs, and communities.

Founder and principal of the Thrive Paradigm, field leader Jimena Quiroga Hopkins noted in [The Heartbeat of the Youth Development Field](#) that supporting staff of color and closing racial leadership gaps will require centering equity in structures that support the youth field, including competencies, professional development, quality standards and policies. Additionally, organizational leaders and staff must do the personal and professional work to integrate a commitment to equity throughout their operations, including anti-racist training, human resource policies and organizational cultures. To close the leadership gap specifically, Hopkins calls for funding “leadership development programs that can help provide exposure to and build the social capital that youth workers from communities of color need to advance their careers” (Quiroga Hopkins, 2023).

PROVIDE HIGH-QUALITY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Access to professional development mapped to youth work competencies is critical for staff to grow and advance in the field and for programs to meet desired youth outcomes. The National Afterschool Association’s [Core Knowledge, Skills and Competencies for OST Professionals](#) (CKSCs), revised in 2021 to reflect updated research and best practices specific to diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism, is “a framework that describes the dispositions, knowledge, skills, and competencies individuals need to provide high-quality OST programming, support the learning and development of children and youth, and advance equity, particularly for those who have been historically excluded” (National Afterschool Association, 2021).

The CKSCs provide a unifying framework to inform the design of professional development, assisting youth workers to hone their craft and connect to career advancement opportunities that provide increasing recognition, responsibilities and compensation.

Yet even with the revised CKSCs, many providers struggle to ensure staff receive access to adequate professional development. Insufficient funding, time and staff to provide coverage limit access to professional development, either online or in-person. Although some states and localities – led by intermediaries – have advanced systemic approaches to professional devel-

Professional Development Exchange



[Professional Development Exchange](#), offered by Ignite Afterschool, an OST intermediary in Minneapolis, offers training modules, workshops, and videos to transform the skills of afterschool professionals. The platform equips program managers and youth workers with tools and knowledge and fosters a community of continuous learning and collaboration including a Training of Trainers that equips afterschool educators to become trainers and deliver accessible professional development to the field.

opment, uneven progress emphasizes the utility of a national, unified and accessible system for youth worker professional development.

The youth development field has not historically had a nationally recognized credential that could play a similar role as the Child Development Associate credential in early childhood education. Some leaders advocate for a nationally recognized credential to advance the field; others fear this would push out talented staff with lived experience who are unable to pursue the required coursework. As part of its Thriving OST Workforce Initiative, the National Afterschool Association is piloting a new comprehensive national youth development credential in 2026 with several organizations and plans to expand its implementation after learning from the initial launch (National Afterschool Association, 2026).

Some states have pursued state-level credentials. For example:

- The [Alaska Afterschool Network](#) partnered with the Academy for Competent Youth Work and the Child & Youth Care Certification Board to expand the number of youth development professionals with credentials in child and youth care. This credential provides an alternative educational pathway for Alaska's OST workforce and ideally could help with opening pathways into leadership positions.
- Vermont has both [certificate](#) and [credential](#) options administered by the Community College of Vermont and the state human services agency in partnership with Vermont Afterschool.
- Prime Time Palm Beach County, a local intermediary in Florida, developed the [ACHIEVE OST](#) incentive program which encourages practitioners to complete credit and non-credit coursework earning financial incentives ranging from \$50 to \$3,000 based on individual achievements. The program was developed to offer a flexible pathway starting with non-credit and certificate coursework that could lead to credit and degree programs.

A national, unified
and accessible
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development is needed.

SUPPORT STAFF WELL-BEING

Many direct service staff and organizational leaders who have navigated through the upheavals of the past several years are experiencing stress and burnout. Staff shortages are exacerbating the problem, as supervisors are filling in for missing direct service staff – compressing the time needed to fulfill their own duties as organizational leaders, contributing to their own stress and lessening their capacity to support their direct reports.

The youth development field is not alone in experiencing an increase in burnout among both leaders and staff, with resulting leadership and staff gaps. The [Center for Effective Philanthropy's \(CEP\) State of Nonprofits 2026: What Funders Need to Know](#) report found that “burnout, for both nonprofit staff and leadership, has intensified in the last year, as many organizations confront a combination of increased demand for their services and a tougher funding environment.” (Center for Effective Philanthropy, 2026). CEP offers a series of blog posts from nonprofit and philanthropic leaders that explore both the root causes of widespread staff burnout as well as suggestions for philanthropy to help address burnout and nonprofit stability. Similarly, the Nonprofit Finance Fund published a report sharing data on the state of the nonprofit workforce in California and recommendations for nonprofit leaders and funders on strategies for supporting nonprofit workforce well-being (Nonprofit Finance Fund, 2026).



Credit: Girls Inc. of Alameda County & photographer Joyce Xii



Indiana Youth Worker Well-Being Project

A coalition of intermediary organizations in Indiana created the [Indiana Youth Worker Well-Being Project](#) with funding from the Lilly Endowment. The initiative provides free telehealth and virtual mental health services for up to 10,000 youth workers, peer learning groups, a leadership development series for emerging leaders of color, and convenings for organizational leaders on supporting staff well-being.

AMPLIFY FIELD IDENTITY AND RECOGNITION

People in the youth work field would welcome increased visibility for the work they do. This might also increase public support for funding programs and attract more people to the workforce. One example is the positive “[Power of Us](#)” branding that highlighted the many roles youth workers play and the impact they have on young people.

The issue of terminology is a challenge for new narrative efforts. After engaging more than 20 field leaders, we found no consensus on preferred terminology for the workforce. Many leaders expressed a preference for including the word “professional” in the title such as “youth work professional,” “youth-serving professional,” “youth fields professional” and “youth development professional.” Several people want to eliminate the use of military terminology when referencing the workforce by retiring the term “frontline staff” and ending references to staff working “in the trenches.” Youth workers also identify their work differently depending on whether they are employed by school systems or community-based organizations, the age of the children they serve, whether or not they are union members and many other factors.



Credit: Partnership for Children & Youth, photographer Amris Mendoza



Next Generation of Afterschool Leaders Award

National Afterschool Association's [Next Generation of Afterschool Leaders Award](#) recognizes and cultivates the talent of afterschool champions (age 30 or under) with the potential to influence the afterschool field for years to come. The selected honorees have a track record of influencing organizations and communities, a passion for developing themselves and others, and active engagement in efforts to elevate the afterschool field.

Recommendations for Philanthropy

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. SUPPORT THE FIELD TO IMPLEMENT EMERGING SOLUTIONS.

As part of this project, the Grantmakers for Education OST Impact Group supported the development of the [Afterschool and Summer Workforce Solutions Database](#). The database includes dozens of examples of innovative solutions on compensation, staff wellness supports, professional development, diverse leadership and career pathways. In addition to program-focused solutions, the database includes projects focused on field infrastructure, policy development and advocacy, research and intermediary support. We recommend funders and grantee partners explore this database to gather and implement ideas that align with their communities' priorities.

Among the dozens of interviews we conducted, increasing compensation was the most important and urgent intervention cited. The solutions database includes examples of local, state and regional initiatives that have increased compensation for direct service workers and others in the OST, early childhood or nonprofit sectors.

In addition to supporting implementation of priority ideas, we recommend funders establish learning communities or communities of practice so their grantees can engage in testing and improving new solutions. For example:

- In 2025 Search Institute created a [Communities of Practice Implementation Guide](#) as part of a three-year study it conducted in partnership with San Antonio-based UP Partnership's Excel Academy with support from the John Templeton Foundation.
- In 2023, the Lilly Endowment invested in five intermediaries to collaborate on the Indiana Youth Worker Well-Being Project. This project supports peer learning communities, a mini-grant program focused on developing trauma-informed workplaces, a fellowship for emerging leaders of color, and access to telemedicine and virtual mental health services for youth workers.



Registered Apprenticeship Programs in Expanded Learning

Supported by the Hellman and Irvine Foundations, Partnership for Children & Youth piloted the [registered apprenticeship program](#) with Girls Inc. of Alameda County and is currently expanding the apprenticeship to other providers. Apprentices are paid employees who receive on-the-job training, mentorship and earn college credits towards an AA degree. The model reduces turnover and provides opportunities for professional growth and higher paid positions.

- After attending the National Afterschool Association Workforce Summit 3.0 in 2024, three California-based leaders created a statewide community of practice among practitioners to promote collaboration and explore workforce solutions by testing out strategies and innovations. Called the [Linking, Learning, Leading \(3LN\) Workforce Development Network](#), the second cohort is now underway.

2. ALIGN AND COLLABORATE TO ADVANCE STRUCTURAL SOLUTIONS FOR BUILDING A THRIVING WORKFORCE.

Support robust research focused on the workforce and workforce solutions.

Early childhood funders providing advice for this project noted how important it is to understand the experiences of employees, their demographic characteristics, working conditions, the roles they play and the economic stress they are experiencing.

The [Power of Us](#) survey provided the field with an important initial data set. Funders could support additional analysis of the Power of Us data. For example, the Overdeck Family Foundation is supporting the National Institute on Out-of-School Time to lead additional surveying efforts focused on the OST science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) workforce and conduct a secondary analysis of the Power of Us STEM-related data.

Funders could also collaboratively support periodic administration of the survey to enable benchmarking of key indicators over time, similar to the [Afterschool Alliance's America After 3PM](#) survey. Funders can also continue to support [provider-focused surveys](#) by the Afterschool Alliance.

Funders could consider helping to advance knowledge of the workforce by supporting:

- Convenings among researchers and practitioners to develop a comprehensive research agenda that is informed by voices of direct service workers.
- Recommendations in the recent National Academies report for more research on recruitment and retention,

Among the dozens of interviews we conducted, increasing compensation was the most important and urgent intervention cited.

including “(1) criteria and best practices for preparing youth development practitioners to enter the field and for continued training and education for those in the field; (2) specific competencies to serve children and youth from low-income and marginalized backgrounds; (3) cost of staff turnover to participants and organizations; and (4) the impact of greater investments in job quality measures, such as wages, benefits, job design, and career advancement.” (National Academies, 2025).

- Research into how state and local workforce registries could be leveraged to yield more comprehensive data on the OST workforce.
- The upkeep and expansion of the [solutions database](#) to perhaps include reporting the impact of these initiatives and/or serve as a way to connect practitioners and researchers.

Early childhood funders have collaborated over several decades to support the ECE workforce, including jointly supporting two workforce-specific research and technical assistance centers, the [Center for the Study of Child Care Employment](#) at the University of California, Berkeley and the [McCormick Center for Early Childhood](#) at National Louis University in Chicago.

Early childhood funders also collaboratively invested over the past decade on numerous reports by the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine and its affiliated boards and centers that have examined workforce challenges and solutions, including The Institute of Medicine’s report, [Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation](#) and the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine’s report, [Transforming the Financing of Early Care and Education](#). To achieve systemic change that will deeply impact the field, the early childhood funders supported the initial studies and co-developed and implemented grantmaking strategies advancing implementation of the studies’ recommendations.

For example, the [Early Educator Investment Collaborative’s](#) grantmaking strategies are designed around the need to actualize the recommendations of the National Academies reports. In 2023, the collaborative awarded \$9 million in grants to Colorado, Washington, D.C. and Louisiana to support systems-level innovation for increasing early childhood educator compensation.



Credit: Afterschool Alliance



Credit: Afterschool Alliance

The selected states are using varied strategies, such as creating pay equity funds, expanding health care access, conducting studies of the cost of quality care, piloting a teacher salary increase, submitting state budget requests for salary increases and conducting a compensation demonstration project in local communities. The fund also supports a community of practice among the grantees. In 2025, the collaborative launched a grassroots narrative change campaign called “[In Our Hands](#),” to elevate the voices of parents and providers through storytelling to address the undervaluing of early educators which leads to low compensation.

The National Academies reports and follow-up work also led the Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Children and Families to establish the [National Early Care and Education \(ECE\) Workforce Center](#), a \$30 million joint research and technical assistance center run by Child Trends and other partnering organizations. The ECE Workforce Center supports states, communities, territories and tribal nations to improve the recruitment and retention of a diverse and qualified workforce across early care and education programs.

The OST sector has a start with the 2025 National Academies report [The Future of Youth Development: Building Systems and Strengthening Programs](#), an update to the 2002 foundational report, [Community Programs to Promote Youth Development](#), supported by The Wallace Foundation. With further philanthropic support, this report from the National Academies could serve as a foundation for further studies on the policy and financing levers needed to fully support the OST workforce.



Credit: Girls Inc. of Alameda County, photographer Joyce Xi



Funding Field Research

The Wallace Foundation has made substantial investments over many years in research and dissemination of findings related to the impact of high-quality out-of-school time and summer programs. Two key recent reports, [Power of Us](#) and [The Future of Youth Development: Building Systems and Strengthening Programs](#) included workforce specific data and recommendations. Overdeck Family Foundation is also supporting [workforce research focused on the OST STEM workforce](#).

Support policy and advocacy.

In this volatile policy environment, intermediary organizations at the local, state and national levels are leading efforts to preserve existing funding sources and explore opportunities for new funding streams. Additional philanthropic funding toward these critical efforts is necessary.

Specific policy and advocacy recommendations for funders to consider include:

- Amplify, share and use resources authored by the Children's Funding Project and commissioned by the Grantmakers for Education OST Impact Group:
 - [Funding Out-of-School Time Programs: Now and In the Future](#), which details a range of funding sources at the federal, state and local levels, with case examples and useful links;
 - [Leaders and Champions: The Role of Funders in Strategic Public Financing](#), which focuses on the role of philanthropy.
- Create a pooled fund inspired by the Early Childhood Funders Collaborative [Raising Child Care Fund](#) to support and strengthen grassroots organizing, bringing in voices of parents, caregivers, youth and communities to advocate for OST.
- Support messaging development that amplifies the image and voices of workers and firmly connects workforce support efforts to outcomes for children and youth.
- Fund state level policy summits and ongoing coalitions to bring together youth work professionals, advocates, policymakers and allies to identify and work toward policy solutions to support the workforce.
- Fund local and state level advocacy organizations to identify, prepare and support advocates – from direct service professionals, to program directors, young people, parents and guardians, and other allies, to build support for policy change.
- Provide general operating support to policy-focused organizations so they can advocate for the needs of youth workers.



Funding Field Advocacy

The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation helped to seed the Afterschool Alliance, the national policy and advocacy organization focused on expanding young people's and families' access to high-quality afterschool, summer learning and enrichment opportunities. A 2026 grant will enable Afterschool Alliance to coordinate and support permissible advocacy efforts to expand access to high-quality after-school programs funded at the state level.



Credit: Boston After School & Beyond & Every Hour Counts

- Fund communication campaigns to educate policymakers and others about the needs of the workforce and related policy solutions.
- Support policy and advocacy organizations to ensure young people have a voice in workforce-focused campaigns.

Support communications and narrative shift.

Youth development professionals often point out that their work is neither understood nor appreciated by the public at large. If people understood more about what youth workers do, the skills the job requires, and the difference youth workers make in the lives of young people, respect for the profession would increase, helping to pave the way for additional funding and support. Funders can work with field leaders and practitioners to:

- Amplify and financially support recognition programs to raise awareness, gain recognition and attract media attention, for example: New York City's Partnership for After School Education's [PASEsetter Awards](#), BOOST Conference [Out-of-School Time Individual \(OSTI\) awards](#), and the National Afterschool Association's [Afterschool Professionals Week](#).
- Provide speaking opportunities for youth workers and others in the field in funder gatherings and before foundation leadership and trustees.
- Host funders, field leaders, and youth workers to examine lessons from narrative shift knowledge products, including [Funding Narrative Change, An Assessment and Frame-](#)

[work](#) and [Funding Narrative Change: How Communities are Shaping and Wielding Narrative Power](#), by the Convergence Partnership, and the [Work/Shift Project](#) from FrameWorks Institute.

- Fund polling and analysis to determine optimal professional identity terms.
- Fund communication campaigns with multiple modalities including popular culture, music, film, social media and mainstream media messaging to amplify how youth uniquely benefit from participation in OST programs and the role of skilled youth work professionals in making those outcomes possible. Youth Today's [Thriving Youth Need a Thriving Workforce](#) series is a great example that elevates the importance and voices of youth workers and systemic solutions to support them.
- Examine lessons from other countries on increasing visibility of youth work in their societies, including the United Kingdom and Canada.
- Author and support others to write articles, blog posts and op-eds promoting the importance of out-of-school time programs, the role of youth-serving professionals, and the needs of the workforce, such as this [Forbes article](#) written by the STEM Next Opportunity Fund.

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Credit: CitySprouts Massachusetts

3. CENTER OST WORKFORCE SUPPORT IN GRANTMAKING PRACTICE.

Increase financial support without increasing expectations for the number of youth served.

Grantmakers often focus on scale, prioritizing the number of young people served. While scale is an important goal, it has sometimes superseded a commitment to high-quality jobs and adequate support for the workforce. Given that past grant budgets may not have explicitly addressed workforce challenges, and operational costs have risen significantly due to inflation and other factors, funders should consider increasing grant awards without an expectation of grantees offering more services.

Connect grantees with workforce resources.

The youth development field is populated with innovators who are continuously devising new solutions to the array of challenges facing the workforce. Grantmakers can help connect their partners and grantees with useful resources available - including the [Afterschool and Summer Workforce Solutions Database](#), the Afterschool Alliance [workforce resources webpage](#) and other resources cited throughout this report.

Use grantmaking processes to assist grantee partners in supporting the workforce.

As part of their existing due diligence and reporting processes, grantmakers could consider asking grantees about their approaches and challenges regarding staffing and adjust grants where possible to better support grantees to meet workforce challenges. Questions to ask in conversation with grantees could include: how grantees approach workforce challenges, supports they are currently offering staff, outstanding needs, and how they include direct service workers' perspectives in developing workforce policies.



Endeavor Fund - Nonprofit Sustainability & Pay Equity

The Walter & Elise Haas Fund launched the Endeavor Fund in April 2023 aiming to close the racial and gender wealth gap and promote nonprofit worker well-being. With over \$24 million, the [Endeavor Fund](#) gave seven California Bay Area organizations seven-year general operating grants of \$3.5 million each to pursue their mission along with supporting nonprofit worker well-being, including compensation and benefits.

Stay committed to an equity-focused approach.

Funders and grantees are now operating in a political environment hostile to equity-focused work. That does not make the work any less urgent or important. As the field advances toward a well-supported and robust workforce, all the key components of this work must be designed to intentionally center equity, including efforts to establish structures to gather data on the workforce; increase compensation and benefits; improve recruitment and retention; develop career pathways; support effective leadership; invest in staff well-being; and build the field's identity. In the current environment, providing flexible, long-term funding to grantees to engage in this work could support continued commitment to equity without incurring additional exposure or risk. Perhaps most importantly, sustainable, flexible, long-term support is needed for organizations led by/representing communities of color and other historically excluded communities to engage in the field's policy and advocacy, research, communications, professional development and other foundational field-defining work.

Build support among foundation leaders for focusing on the workforce.

It is important for leaders in grantmaking organizations to understand the depth and complexity of the workforce challenges grantees face – and the implications for program quality and youth outcomes. Early childhood funders noted that highlighting the link to outcomes was critical in convincing their boards that workforce investments were worthwhile, despite the complexities and longer time horizon these issues demand.



Advanced Leadership Network

The Pinkerton Foundation's [Advanced Leadership Network](#) offers leaders of color the opportunity to create a new community that provides the space, support, and professional development resources needed for participating leaders to sharpen their skills, share insights, and explore new ways to drive impact in the youth development field. The Advanced Leadership Network is now supporting its third cohort of leaders.

4. LEVERAGE PHILANTHROPIC INFLUENCE

Support the youth development field's visibility and influence within the broader movement for workforce reforms.

Efforts to support the OST workforce have much to gain by learning from and joining with early childhood, care, workforce development, and nonprofit sectors as well as the labor movement overall. This might include joining pooled fund efforts and advocating for an expanded focus to include the OST workforce. Funders should also support OST intermediaries and other field leaders to make these connections in the practice, policy, research and narrative spaces.

Attract more funders to the youth development field.

Unfortunately, several influential philanthropic partners have exited the OST/youth development space in the last decade due to sunsetting or strategy shifts. We recommend that foundation leaders and staff who currently prioritize OST talk to their philanthropic peers about the importance of investing in this sector.

OST funders can consider joining and actively participating in funder collaboratives, philanthropy infrastructure organizations, and cross-sector efforts focused on better integrating education, youth development experiences, career exploration, and civic engagement to prepare young people in their K-12 years and beyond to succeed.

Grantmakers have the influence and positional power to elevate the youth development perspective. They can invite youth development leaders to speak to funder audiences. Funders can build relationships with other funders, introduce them to the value of the youth development space, and invite them to become members of Grantmakers for Education and participate in the OST Impact Group community.

Grantmakers have the influence and positional power to elevate the youth development perspective.



Credit: Afterschool Alliance



Credit: After School Matters & Every Hour Counts

REQUESTS FROM THE FIELD

We wrap our recommendations for funders with a few requests we heard from field leaders. Funders, please:

- Pay the full administrative costs needed for strong nonprofit infrastructure, and end caps on administrative costs.
- Understand that short-term (less than 5-year) grants are unlikely to deliver the outcomes the field is striving for.
- Prioritize the perspectives of those most proximate to the issues to drive the solutions, and always compensate people for their time.
- Support the role of intermediaries as critical advocates and connectors in the field. Intermediaries are important partners in developing and testing solutions focused on the workforce.

Conclusion and Ways to Engage



Credit: Partnership for Children & Youth, photographer Amris Mendoza

The OST field is still recovering from impacts of the pandemic while also feeling increased urgency to support young people's wellness, learning recovery, and safety. The reality is that the field must equip itself to operate sustainably in a state of ongoing crises. Much like the young people in programs, youth workers are in urgent need of support, including increased compensation and benefits, high-quality professional development, advancement opportunities and public recognition for the difference they make every day for youth.

We invite funders to collaborate to meet the moment, including leveraging the [Grantmakers for Education OST Impact Group](#) to learn, collaborate, push for collective action and hold ourselves accountable. We look forward to working with funders and all the sector's leaders toward a skilled, supported and sustainable workforce, so that all of our children and youth experience the joy and opportunity of high-quality out-of-school time programs.

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Acknowledgements

Acknowledgements

PARTNERS AND CONSULTANTS

The Grantmakers for Education Out-of-School Time Impact Group values its partnership with the Afterschool Alliance, California School-Age Consortium, Every Hour Counts, National Afterschool Association, National Summer Learning Association, National Urban League, and Partnership for Children & Youth. For this project, each organization gathered feedback from their constituencies, contributed innovations and research to the Afterschool and Summer Workforce Solutions Database, and submitted memos outlining their perspectives on workforce challenges, solutions and opportunities for funder actions.

Jennifer Brooks gathered and synthesized helpful insights from the early childhood education sector's efforts to support its workforce including from field leaders, advocates, researchers and philanthropic funders to share lessons for the OST field.

This report and the Thriving Workforce Framework graphic were designed by Lauren Baier.

FIELD LEADERS

We thank the following field leaders for their invaluable insights and advice on strategies for supporting a thriving OST workforce:

Bianca Baldrige, Harvard Graduate School of Education

Julee Brooks, Woodcraft Rangers

Diana Cournoyer, formerly with the National Indian Education Association, currently with Camp Fire

Laurie Dien, The Pinkerton Foundation

Steve Fowler, FowlerHoffman

Tasha Franklin Johnson, formerly with YMCA of the USA, currently with TNTF

Loh-Sze Leung, Workforce Matters Fund for Workforce Equity

Chrishana Lloyd, Child Trends

Alissa Marotto, Kids Included Together

Sally Matsuishi, Beyond Differences (now merged with Sandy Hook Promise)

Deborah Moroney, American Institutes for Research

Ruth Obel-Jorgensen, Corazon Catalysts

Kari Pardoe, Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation

Laurie Pearson, American Camp Association

Terry Peterson, The Riley Institute, Furman University

Sam Piha, How Kids Learn Foundation

Karen Pittman, Knowledge to Power Catalysts

Danielle Pulliam, The Pinkerton Foundation

Jody Rhodes, Association for Child and Youth Care Practice

Stephanie Rodriguez, formerly with with STEM Next Opportunity Fund, currently with the American Association for the Advancement of Science

Heidi Rosenberg, Education Development Center

Autumn Saxton-Ross, National Recreation and Park Association

Tami Silverman, Indiana Youth Institute

Polly Singh, The Wallace Foundation

Rusty Stahl, Fund the People

Betsy Starr, National Institute for Out-of-School Time

Tony Streit, Education Development Center

Choua Vue, Care for All with Respect and Equity Fund

Jenny Weissbourd, Families and Workers Fund

THE OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME IMPACT GROUP STEERING COMMITTEE

The OST Impact Group's steering committee provided leadership and oversight of the project. Thank you to each of our steering committee members (past and present) for helping lead this and many other efforts to support the OST field:

Dale Anglin, formerly with The Cleveland Foundation, currently with Press Forward

Nicole Eovino Diebold, The C.E. & S. Foundation

Tysa Hardy-Sellers, Lilly Endowment, Inc.

Gwynn Hughes, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation

Michelle Jaramillo, The San Diego Foundation

Katherine Lewandowski, The Wallace Foundation

Erica Lim, The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation

John Lozecki, formerly with McElhattan Foundation, currently with Boys & Girls Clubs of Western Pennsylvania

Anna Luna, Hellman Foundation

Kari Pardoe, Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation

Danielle Pulliam, The Pinkerton Foundation

Amber Roos, Altria

Richard Tagle, formerly with Denver Public Schools Foundation, currently E3 Alliance

Terry Whitfield, formerly with Skillman Foundation, currently TEWday Strategies, LLC.

Finally, special appreciation to Gwynn Hughes of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation for having the foresight to commission this report and for serving as a valuable thought partner along the way.

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As the leading network for education philanthropy, Grantmakers for Education offers an unparalleled platform for learning, collaboration and influence – backed by front-line sector research, exclusive insights and a vibrant community of peers. We believe in the value of philanthropy as a catalytic partner in creating a just world. We strive to prepare our members – a diverse association of organizations, staff, trustees and individual donors in education philanthropy - with the tools, knowledge and relationships to meet the challenges and pursue opportunities they face in serving learners of all ages. We serve as a hub for new connections and ideas, a compass to help education funders navigate their work, a spur for collective action and a champion for positive change in education. For more information, please contact us at information@edfunders.org.



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