

**Report to the Maryland General Assembly  
Public School Opportunities Enhancement Act**

**Presented by the  
Maryland State Department of Education**

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## Introduction

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) completed the third year of implementation of the Maryland Public School Opportunities Enhancement Program (PSOEP) grant. Pursuant to Section § 7-1701 through 1706 of the Education Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, the PSOEP grant authorized the MSDE to award grants to local school systems, community schools, and non-profit organizations. These grantees are used to expand or create extended day and summer enhancement programs. The initial award in the 2016-2017 school year was \$2,500,000. The MSDE made awards on a competitive basis to eligible entities that proposed to serve the following:

- a) Local school systems and the Seed School with at least 50 percent of public school students that qualify for free lunch under the National School Lunch Program; and
- b) Extended day and summer enhancement programs for students between the ages of four and 19 that take place:
  - Before and after the school day;
  - On weekends and holidays; and
  - During vacations and summer breaks.

## Implementation

The award for the 2019-2020 school year was \$2,500,000. Funding was awarded to expand or create extended day and summer enhancement programs that provide access to enrichment opportunities that improve work habits, reduce academic achievement gaps, and improve academic skills. Fourteen grants were awarded to organizations and local school systems to expand or create extended day and summer enhancement programs for Maryland students. The PSOEP was offered in six local school systems: Allegany, Caroline, Prince George's, Somerset, Wicomico, and Baltimore City. The grantees are: Board of Education Allegany County (Allegany); Parks and People Foundation (Baltimore City); Medical Education Resources Initiative for Teens (MERIT) (Baltimore City); YMCA of Central Maryland, Inc. (Baltimore City); Elev8, (Baltimore City); The Family League of Baltimore (Baltimore City); Caroline Human Services Council, Inc.(Caroline); Central American Solidarity Association (CASA) de Maryland, Inc.(Prince George's); GapBuster, Inc.(Prince George's); Futuristic LLC/ Healthy Solutions, LLC.( Prince George's); The ERHKY Foundation (Prince George's); Community Youth Advance (Prince George's); Somerset County Local Management Board (Somerset); and Ward Foundation, Inc.(Wicomico).

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the PSOEP programs that were operating school year programs transitioned to a virtual environment in mid-March to provide instruction to students.

All summer programs operated in a virtual environment. Each program submitted Program Weekly Closure Forms that described the activities that were being implemented to include (1) curriculum work; (2) lesson plan development, (3) online/distance learning; (4) staff/professional development; Out of School Time (OST) program data collection; and (6) systems planning work that included summer programs, evaluation, and sustainability efforts. Grant managers in the OST programs worked closely with their partners and service providers to convert lessons and activities to online formats. The MSDE OST team made reasonable and fair accommodations with regards to any reduction in results within OST programs goals due to COVID-19. In addition, flexibility was provided to grantees to reallocate dollars in grant budgets to accommodate for programs transitioning to a virtual environment.

### Grantees and Programs

<b>The PSOEP Total Grant Award per Jurisdiction and Lead Agency with the Program Name and Description</b>				
<b>Program Name</b>	<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Grant Amount</b>
Full STEAM Ahead with ACCESS - After-School Community Collaboration for Enrichment and Student Services	Allegany County	Board of Education Allegany County	The program provides enrichment activities in science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM) for economically disadvantaged students in the four middle schools in Allegany County.	\$200,000
Super Kids Camp: An Environmental and Literacy Summer Camp	Baltimore City	Parks and People Foundation	SuperKids Camp serves 500 rising 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , and 5 <sup>th</sup> grade students during a six week, 29 day, six hours a day literacy and environmental program. The program is designed to prevent learning loss in literacy skills.	\$250,000
MERIT Health Leadership Academy	Baltimore City	Medical Education Resources Initiative for Teens	MERIT provides longitudinal academic support and career opportunities to students from low-income backgrounds who are interested in healthcare.	\$168,214

<b>The PSOEP Total Grant Award per Jurisdiction and Lead Agency with the Program Name and Description</b>				
<b>Program Name</b>	<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Grant Amount</b>
Elev8 Baltimore	Baltimore City	Elev8	Elev8 Baltimore, in partnership with William Pinderhughes Elementary/ Middle School, provides afterschool and summer homework assistance and targeted academic support to improve math, reading, and project-based STEM activities.	\$157,274
Y in Central Maryland Afterschool Enrichment at Johnston Square Elementary School	Baltimore City	YMCA of Central Maryland, Inc.	Y Afterschool enrichment immerses 70 students who are having trouble meeting academic standards in an environment with high-quality Mathematics-focused academic instruction. The program provides homework assistance, a nutritious meal, and enrichment clubs that include environmental stewardship development, service learning, character education, the arts, science, engineering, technology, math (STEM), and fitness.	\$190,000
Pre-K Out-of-School Time Program	Baltimore City	The Family League of Baltimore, Inc.	This project is an expanded extended day program that will serve six pre-k programs at six Baltimore City public elementary schools. The intended outcome of the program includes increased standardized test scores. In addition, siblings of program participants will more likely attend out-of-school programming.	\$190,000

<b>The PSOEP Total Grant Award per Jurisdiction and Lead Agency with the Program Name and Description</b>				
<b>Program Name</b>	<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Grant Amount</b>
Caroline Human Summer Learning Program	Caroline County	Caroline Human Services Council, Inc.	The Caroline Human Services Council along with Caroline County Recreation and Parks, and Caroline County Public Schools will provide a summer learning enrichment program at three school sites throughout the county. These programs will provide 450 kindergarten through sixth grade students with academic supports to overcome summer slide, and also address social-emotional needs and physical health.	\$125,500
CASA's Mi Espacio Program	Prince George's County	CASA de Maryland, Inc.	The CASA's "Mi Espacio" after school program aims to address academic challenges, improve academic achievement, and enhance college/career readiness through a dynamic and highly tailored program. Participants meet for three hours each school day. The program focuses on academic success, leadership development, and socio-economic integration.	\$160,000
Building Schools for the Future	Prince George's County	GapBuster, Inc.	GapBuster, Inc. offers an extended day, academic/development program after-school and on weekends. The program provides a safe setting for vulnerable youth, many of whom have little supervision.	\$101,777

<b>The PSOEP Total Grant Award per Jurisdiction and Lead Agency with the Program Name and Description</b>				
<b>Program Name</b>	<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Grant Amount</b>
Health and Arts Learning HUB	Prince George's County	Futuristic LLC/ Healthy Solutions, LLC.	The Health and Learning Arts Hub (HUB) is a youth development resource center designed to equip students with the tools to grow stronger physically, emotionally, and academically. The HUB will serve 120 students in grades two through six. The program provides students with the support needed to improve math and reading achievement scores and develop leadership values of trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, and citizenship.	\$179,149
ERHKY's Pathway to Success Program	Prince George's County	ERHKY Foundation	The ERHKY Foundation will use a host of researched-based strategies and community support initiatives to improve academic performance of students and engage students in social entrepreneurship and financial literacy programming.	\$210,000
CYA Saturday and Summer Academies	Prince George's County	Community Youth Advance	The Community Youth Advance Saturday School and Summer Bridge Academy will serve students residing in the Langley Park Community. The intended outcome of the project is for 75 percent of participating students to meet or exceed state performance targets in reading/language arts, science, and mathematics.	\$197,525

<b>The PSOEP Total Grant Award per Jurisdiction and Lead Agency with the Program Name and Description</b>				
<b>Program Name</b>	<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Grant Amount</b>
The FACES of Somerset	Somerset County	Somerset County Local Management Board	FACES of Somerset provides intensive academic support, builds character in the student, and strives to raise reading test scores.	\$134,589
Science, Technology, Research, Environment, Art and Math (STREAM).	Wicomico County	Ward Foundation, Inc. Operating as Ward Museum	The Ward Museum's Science, Technology, Research, Environment, Art, and Math (STREAM) after school program uses Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience (MWEE) which is infused, arts-integrated, project-based programming. The program seeks increases in science, math, and literacy performance at four of Wicomico's Title I schools.	\$235,972
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$2,500,000</b>

### **Funding by Jurisdiction**

The total percentage of funding and the number of grantees is outlined below:

- 39 percent of total funding awarded to five Baltimore City grants;
- 34 percent of total funding awarded to five Prince George's county grants;
- 9 percent of total funding awarded to one Wicomico county grant;
- 8 percent of funding awarded to one Allegany county grant;
- 5 percent of funding awarded to one Caroline county; and
- 5 percent of funding awarded to one Somerset county grant.

There are a total of fourteen grantees with seven programs providing school year only services, four programs providing school year and summer services, and three programs providing summer only services.

## Technical Assistance

Technical assistance was provided to all grantees throughout the 2019-2020 school year. The assistance included support for grantees to remain in fiscal and program compliance. The MSDE OST staff conducted three in-person trainings and eight webinars during the 2019-2020 school year. Professional learning and technical assistance topics included: national OST programming and online professional learning resources, STEM, summer learning programmatic practices, contracted services documentation and accountability practices, grants fiscal management protocols, and budgetary amendment training. The MSDE OST team hosted an annual state retreat for OST grantees and local evaluators to enhance knowledge of programmatic and fiscal practices, as well as, explore measurements of effective evaluation of services. The MSDE also utilized the Continuation of Funds Report to identify future technical assistance needs.

The MSDE OST staff also partnered with You for Youth, an organization that provides support to federal programs to provide online professional learning and technical assistance to support OST programs. Grantees were required to include in their budget proposals funding for two trainings, bi-monthly networking meetings, and State trainings.

The MSDE completed the third year of the PSOEP grant in August 2020. The legislation mandates that grantees follow the Maryland Out-of-School Time (MOST) Quality Framework. The MOST Quality Framework is a clear and accessible tool to assist OST programs in the State of Maryland as they serve youth ages five to 19. The framework can serve as a guide for program leadership to build or enhance a culture of continuous learning and improvement, focused on effectively serving the young people of our State. The framework is both foundational, setting standards for baseline program quality, and broad, providing a framework general enough for all types of programs. The framework can serve as a springboard to:

- Develop or refine program policies and procedures;
- Promote staff conversations about program quality: areas of success, and needed improvement;
- Share and compare concerns about programming and the organization;
- Develop, revisit, and refine a collective vision, language, and message amongst staff; and
- Strengthen communication to external funders and stakeholders.

## Evaluation and Effectiveness

Grantees submitted continuation reports in August 2020. The MSDE grant managers have reviewed continuation reports to determine the effectiveness of the program and the risk level for continuation for Fiscal Year 2021. The MSDE extended learning specialists will continue to

conduct monitoring visits throughout Year Four to ensure effective and continuous implementation of programs and activities, and to identify technical assistance needs.

Grantees were required to develop program objectives based on the following accountability measures:

- Incorporated features that had a measurable impact on the conditions of well-being for children and youth as identified by the Maryland Out-of-School Time Programs' Quality Standards Framework;
- Integrated an educational component that assisted students in meeting academic on grade level requirements (for extended day programs);
- Provided learning and enrichment activities that assisted students in achieving at or above grade level in the next school year;
- Exposed students to future learning and life opportunities (for summer enhancement programs);
- Enhanced the educational purpose of the school day or enhanced students access to physical, social, and emotional support (for educational programming during the school day); and
- Leveraged private and existing funding sources.

In the continuation report, grantees reported progress in meeting three self-defined performance objectives. The findings demonstrated that overall grantees met or demonstrated progress towards the three objectives. The data reported that an average of 74 percent of grantees had met or were progressing towards the three objectives. The data reported an average of 26 percent were classified as “unable to measure.” The PSOE programs unable to provide measurement at the time of the submitted report cited justifications including the inability to effectively assess student performance because of the abrupt school closings due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the cancellation of assessments, and/or evaluation results not yet being available.

Grantees are responsible for hiring an external evaluator as outlined in the Request for Proposals. The external evaluator in concert with the grantee is responsible for developing a plan to assess progress toward meeting objectives, milestones, and anticipated outcomes. In addition, the external evaluator must be an integral element in the project's planning, design, and implementation of the program. The evaluation plan will enable project managers to determine which strategies and activities have been successful, and those that need to be revised.

## Summary

In 2016, the Maryland General Assembly enacted the PSOEP grant (§ 7-1701 through 1706 of the Education Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland). The statute requires the MSDE to

submit a report on the effectiveness and an evaluation of programs funded annually. The reports for the PSOEP grant were submitted to the General Assembly in December of 2017 and 2018. The MSDE is submitting this report in order to provide the Governor and the Maryland General Assembly with information requested by the Education Article (§ 7-1701 through 1706 of the Education Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland.) The MSDE will continue to assist grantees during implementation of OST programs and support existing educational programming during the school day, including recruitment, training, and ongoing professional learning of new teachers.

The number of students served in the third year of implementation of the PSOEP grant is indicated below.

<b>PSOEP Grantee and Total Number of Students Served in 2019-2020</b>	
<b>Grantee</b>	<b># of Students Served 2019-2020</b>
Allegany	143
Caroline	219
ERKHY	114
MERIT	30
Somerset	130
Ward Museum	178
Parks and People Foundation	75
Futuristic	57
Community Youth Advance	213
YMCA	68
The Family League of Baltimore	58
Elev8	60
GapBuster's Inc.	37
CASA de Maryland, Inc.	30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1412</b>

In fiscal year 2019, a budget amendment to the PSOEP program specified that \$500,000 of the funding be authorized to provide a grant to a nonprofit organization to support existing educational programming during the school day, including recruitment, training, and ongoing professional learning of new teachers. The competitive grant was open only to nonprofit

[501(c)(3)] organizations that target local school systems with at least 50 percent of public school students that qualify for free lunch under the National School Lunch Program.

Teach for America (TFA) was awarded the Public School Opportunity Enhancement Professional Learning Program (PSOEPLP) grant. Teach for America is a nationally validated program that recruits, selects, and trains new teachers for placement in schools serving low-income students. With the funding from the MSDE, TFA made innovations to their training for new teachers to strengthen their capabilities to increase the academic and personal growth of students in Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS) and Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS).

Specifically, TFA made innovations to the training for new teachers to strengthen their capabilities to increase students' academic and personal growth in Baltimore City and Prince George's County. TFA reports that 12 percent of 44,000 applicants were accepted last year, bringing 95 new teachers to Baltimore City Public Schools and 28 new teachers to Prince George's County Public Schools for the 2019-2020 school year. For the 2020 cohort, TFA maintained competitive standards while ensuring the incoming corps members were reflective of the community. In Baltimore City, 50 percent of the 2020 corps members identify as a person of color, 45 percent identify as coming from a low-income background, and 32 percent were the first in their family to graduate from college. Fifty-eight percent of corps members will teach in hard-to-staff content areas, including math, physics, biology, chemistry, special education, English for Speakers of Other Languages, and Spanish.

Throughout the 2019-2020 school year, TFA developed both first and second-year educators through the continuum of training and support. The multi-tiered structure of support for educators included one to one TFA coaches who worked closely with each corps member in their cohort to help them grow as a teacher, biweekly content sessions with an expert teacher in their subject area, and quarterly professional development days designed to strengthen teaching skills and cultural competencies. Based on the mid-year survey of corps members, 79 percent of corps members agreed or strongly agreed that their coach helped them grow in their capabilities as an instructional leader.

As Maryland schools moved to remote learning due to COVID-19, TFA adjusted the approach to better address educators' and students' needs. Starting in mid-March, all forms of support transitioned online. Coaches remained in weekly communications with their assigned corps member, checking in on their needs both in the classroom and outside. Although there was no end of year survey, coaches completed end of year conversations with each corps member where corps members had an opportunity to reflect on their development and student achievement. All content specialist sessions moved to virtual platforms and the remaining two quarterly professional development days were held over Zoom.

Additionally, both Baltimore City and Prince George's County corps members were offered various professional development opportunities based on the types of programming requested by corps members. In Baltimore, there were trainings on virtual teaching, wellness during COVID-19, and financial planning. Similarly, Prince George's County corps members had the opportunity to attend a virtual District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia Region Community Conversation where they had the opportunity to discuss topics such as wellness, virtual teaching and learning, and leadership in times of uncertainty.

To prepare for distance learning in the fall, TFA redesigned the summer training institute so that new teachers would be prepared to teach in a virtual context. Virtual Summer Teacher Training provided core pedagogical content in a five-week online training that was centered on effective instruction and culturally responsive curriculum development. This training was specifically tailored to support teachers in carrying out impactful distance learning and preparing them for a potential transition back to the physical classroom.

Furthermore, anticipating a significant need for more direct coaching support of corps members in the new school year, in Baltimore City, TFA will be giving each corps member individualized coaching support for their first 90 days. This structure will include one-on-one support in daily contact with observation classroom visits and concrete feedback at least four times a week. Direct cycles of observation and feedback will allow for more substantial alignment to the Virtual Summer Teacher Training's training cadence. They will enable coaches to shorten the timespan between feedback and implementation than what would be normally experienced in the first 90 days of a teacher's first year.

In collaboration with district partners, TFA monitored corps member retention closely to ensure corps members are receiving the support that is needed to be successful. Throughout the 2019-2020 school year overall, TFA had an 89 percent retention rate from the first day of school with 81.5 percent of the corps members, and 96.5 percent of first and second year corps members respectively retained. In Baltimore City, 100 percent of second year corps members were retained. The high retention rate for second year corps members is attributed to the multiple levels of support available, as well as an increased focus on wellness. New retention and engagement strategies such as community dinners and a back to school barbecue were developed. Also, corps members created wellness plans which were leveraged by coaches and content specialists to support corps members throughout the school year. In addition, corps members were also able to opt-in to turn-around coaches that utilized a behavior management coach in addition to the corps member's program coach.



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