

Office of the Secretary

ROUTING/ASSIGNMENT

(Circle will take lead)

Date Assigned: 9/29/16		Date Due:	
SECRETARY		BUDGET	OA
EXEC. DEP. SEC.		LEGAL	OCDEL
CLANCY		LEG. AFFAIRS	OCYF
GRANT		POLICY	ODP
HALLMAN		PRESS	OIM
MESSINGER		CHIP	OLTL
SUROVIEC		SOCIAL PROGRAMS	OMAP
TYRRELL			OMHSAS
WATSON			

Subject:

APOST

<input type="checkbox"/> Prepare Reply for Secretary Signature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Handle Appropriately
<input type="checkbox"/> Please Respond	<input type="checkbox"/> FYI

Comments:



OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

ALLEGHENY PARTNERS FOR
OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME

SEP 29 A 10:58

Wednesday, September 28, 2016

RECEIVED

Secretary Ted Dallas
P.O. Box 2675
Harrisburg, PA 17105

Dear Secretary Dallas:

Effective implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is essential to ensuring that districts, schools, educators, students, and families in our state thrive under the new law. We believe our organization, Allegheny Partners for Out-of-School Time (APOST), is uniquely well-positioned to support state and local implementation efforts, particularly with regard to opportunities for expanded learning and partnerships with community-based and intermediary organizations under the new law.

Schools and districts cannot, and should not, be expected to meet every academic and non-academic need for their increasingly diverse student populations. Our organization supports districts and schools by providing direct, additional support to students and families, and by helping to establish strong partnerships between districts, schools, and community-based organizations that can help complement existing educational frameworks and leverage an entirely new universe of expertise, approaches and resources to drive improved student achievement.

ESSA includes provisions that both encourage partnerships between states, districts, and community partners in the context of expanded learning – including through the 21st Century Community Learning Center Program (21st CCLC) – and explicitly require the inclusion of intermediary organizations in the creation and implementation of Title I programs. APOST is eager to help the state and districts not only comply with the relevant statutory requirements, but also to help them think strategically about how to incorporate high-quality partnerships and expanded learning strategies in support of programming throughout the new law.

We are confident that our experience and expertise can help the state and districts leverage partnerships and expanded learning to meaningfully increase the positive impact of new programming, and generate even better outcomes for students and families. As you consider how to implement the new law, we would encourage you to draw on us as a resource to support planning in a number of specific areas, including:

Ensuring High-Quality Expanded Learning Under 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC)

We are well positioned to play at least two important roles, in partnership with States, in this effort: (1) we can provide expert guidance, examples of best practices, and relevant data as States determine what specific strategies they will identify in their applications; and (2) we can leverage our existing networks to serve as conveners and ensure that all appropriate stakeholders are at the table during the application development process.

State Applications. Note that section 4203(a) of ESSA lays out the requirements for State applications under the 21st CCLC program. Among other provisions, the statute requires that a State’s application “describe how the State educational agency will use funds received under this part...; describe the steps the State educational agency will take to ensure that programs implement effective strategies...;” and provide an assurance that “the application was developed in consultation and coordination

APOST

ALLEGHENY PARTNERS FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME

with...statewide after-school networks (where applicable) and representatives of teachers, local educational agencies, and community-based organizations."

In addition, we can partner directly with States to either provide training and technical assistance to eligible entities, or help States identify qualified, community-based organizations to offer these services.

State Activities. Note that section 4202(c)(3) authorizes States to reserve up to 5 percent of 21st CCLC funding to carry out State activities. These activities may include: "providing capacity building, training, and technical assistance under this part," as well as "ensuring that any...eligible entity identifies and partners with external organizations, if available, in the community."

Finally, ESSA adds a new requirement that states prescreen and provide lists of organizations that would meet the new definition of an "external organization" under 21st CCLC (see below). Done correctly, such lists can be valuable resources for LEAs, and our organization can help develop a screening framework that will reliably identify external organizations that would be high-quality partners for LEAs.

External Organizations. Note that ESSA introduces a new role for an "external organization" under the 21st CCLC program, defined as "a nonprofit organization with a record of success in running or working with before and after school (or summer recess) programs and activities or in the case of a community where there is no such organization, a nonprofit organization in the community that enters into a written agreement or partnership with an organization that has that record of success to receive mentoring and guidance in running or working with before and after school (or summer recess) programs and activities." Under the reauthorized 21st CCLC program, States are required to prescreen external organizations that could potentially qualify under this definition, and make available to eligible entities a list of external organizations that successfully completed the prescreening process.

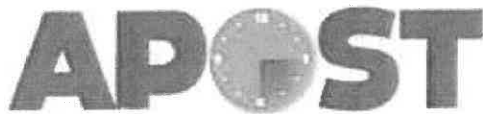
Leveraging the Expertise of Intermediary Organizations to Give Boost to Title I Implementation

The potential contributions of our organization are not limited to programs that deal exclusively with expanded learning time. Our organization can be a resource as states think more broadly about how to leverage partnerships and innovative strategies throughout Title I.

Intermediaries as Partners

First and foremost, working with our organization can help the state meet the requirement that it partner with an intermediary organization (or organizations) in the development and implementation of Title I programming. Having an intermediary organization at the table during this process will help ensure that the state is effectively leveraging existing community resources to meet the new requirements of Title I.

State Plans – Intermediary Organizations. Note that section 1111(g) of ESSA requires that State educational agencies provide an assurance that the State will ensure that "local educational agencies, in developing and implementing programs under this part, will, to the extent feasible, work in consultation with outside intermediary organizations (such as educational service agencies), or individuals, that have practical expertise in the development or use of evidence-based strategies and programs to improve teaching, learning, and schools."



ALLEGHENY PARTNERS FOR
OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME

Developing Plan for the 5th Indicator

In addition, our organization can support state efforts to identify and measure the new, required indicator(s) of "School Quality or Student Success." Our experience has provided insight into meaningful indicators – beyond the academic indicators enumerated in the statute – that have a clear correlation to student achievement.

Innovative Assessment and Accountability Demonstration Authority

ESSA's new "Innovative Assessment and Accountability Demonstration Authority" enables the Secretary to allow States (initially up to seven) to implement innovative assessment systems, including competency-based assessments, in all or some, at least initially, of their districts. Community partners and intermediary organizations have a potentially critical role to play in the development of these innovative systems, specifically as providers of both direct services and technical assistance that allow districts and schools to provide students with high-quality learning opportunities before, during, and after the school day. Ensuring that students have access to a wide-variety of interest-driven learning opportunities where they can demonstrate mastery regardless of the time or setting is critical to building a truly student-centered assessment system. We hope the state will look to our organization as an expert partner as they develop any application or plan under this new authority.

Effectively Using Funding under New Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant Program

Similar to the role we can play in helping the state implement the updated 21st CCLC program, our organization can also support state efforts to implement the new Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant program under Title IV. We can help the state use the flexibility granted under this program to maximize the positive impact for students and families by helping to (1) coordinate programming under this new program by convening existing networks of community organizations and other stakeholders, and (2) providing direct support to LEAs, as well as information on best practices, to help achieve the priorities identified by the statute.

State Activities. Note that ESSA authorizes States to use funding reserved under the new grant program for a range of activities, including "identifying and eliminating State barriers to the coordination and integration of programs, initiatives, and funding streams that meet the purposes of this subpart," and "supporting local educational agencies in providing programs and activities that – (A) offer well-rounded educational experiences to all students...; foster safe, healthy, supportive, and drug-free environments that support student academic achievement...; or, increase access to personalized, rigorous learning experiences supported by technology."

Thank you for your consideration; we look forward to the opportunity to work closely with you on the implementation of ESSA. Please let me know if you have any questions regarding the potential ways our organization can partner with the State or specific districts, or if I can provide any additional or background information.

Sincerely,

Mila Yochum
Director, Allegheny Partners for Out-of-School Time (APOST)



www.afterschoolpgh.org

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QUALITY

Out-of-School Time is expanded learning
through afterschool and summer programs


EXPANDED LEARNING

Quality Out-of-School Time (OST) inspires learning, keeps kids safe, and helps working families.

APOST fosters QUALITY expanded learning

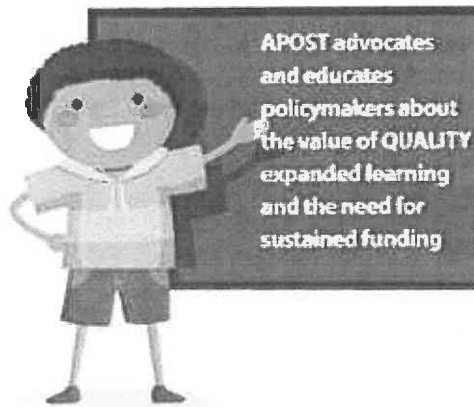
46 Quality Campaign Members
serving
22,725 students

Training more than 700 youth practitioners annually



APOST—Allegheny Partners for Out-of-School Time—is an alliance of providers, funders, and intermediaries, dedicated to building a quality expanded learning system that contributes to the healthy, successful development of young people in Allegheny County as they progress through their school years, graduate from high school, and enter into adulthood.

APOST advances a POLICY agenda



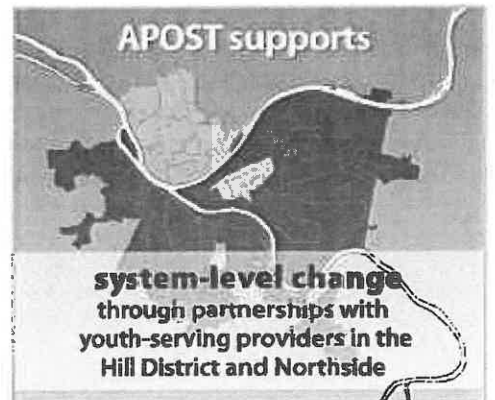
101 students & adults from 12 organizations took the out-of-school time message to Harrisburg

APOST engages in COLLABORATION

Digital Learning Kayaking
Culture Acting MEDIA
Swimming FOOTBALL
Science Broadcasting
Making Art EXPLORE Play
Adventures Theater Singing
Dance Robotics
Math Writing

APOST partners with Pittsburgh Public Schools for youth enrichment opportunities

APOST supports system-level change through partnerships with youth-serving providers in the Hill District and Northside



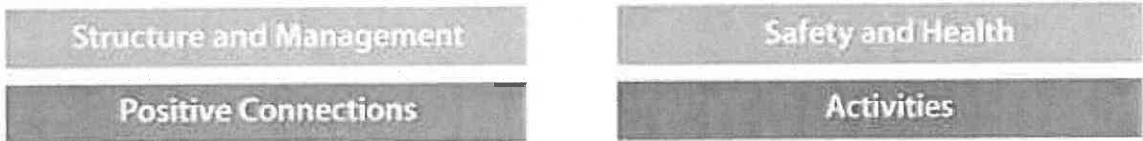
apost@uwac.org



afterschoolpgh.org

What Does It Take to Be a Quality Campaign Member?

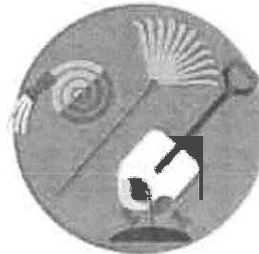
The Quality Campaign was created by APOST in partnership with youth service providers to increase accessibility to **quality** Out-of-School Time programs for school-age youth in Allegheny County. The Quality Campaign is a network of OST providers that are committed to continuous quality improvement. Quality Campaign members are dedicated to these values:



Some hallmarks of Quality Campaign Members are:



Well-trained, consistent staff and volunteers that represent the community being served



Opportunities for youth to contribute to the well-being of the community



Activities promote understanding and respect for youth's and other's cultures



Safe, well-maintained, accessible environments and programming that promote fitness, good nutrition, and healthy choices

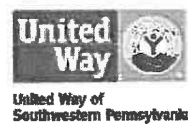


Positive relationships between and among youth and staff, and strong partnerships with families, schools and businesses, and stakeholders



Activities intentionally-designed to develop skills, promote learning, and combine different academic, recreational, and culture elements

The APOST Quality Self-Assessment is based on the quality program elements of the Pennsylvania Statewide Afterschool Youth Development Network (PSAYDN). For more detail on the Quality Self-Assessment, visit the APOST website at afterschoolpgh.org.



afterschoolpgh.org

apost@uwac.org



October 5, 2016

Mila Yochum
Director Allegheny Partners for Out-of-School Time
PO Box 735
Pittsburgh, PA 15230

Dear Ms. Yochum:

Thank you for submitting your thoughts on the Every Child Succeeds Act (ESSA) to Secretary Dallas. At his request, I am responding to your letter to share that we are forwarding your comments to the policy staff within the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE).

PDE has responsibility for facilitating the development of the state plan required under ESSA. As part of the plan, PDE is committed to soliciting stakeholder feedback. If you have additional comments you would like to advance please email them to RA-edESSA@pa.gov.

Thank you for your support of children and families in the Allegheny county area.

Sincerely,



Tracey Campanini
Chief of Staff