



# Mi-LEAP Recommendations

Michigan has provided funding for Out-of-School Time (OST) for the past three fiscal years. These investments have marked a significant improvement in opportunities for youth participating in before, afterschool, and summer learning programs.

We are still compiling the numbers from the FY 23 investment of \$25 million; however, we know that the first \$10 million state investment provided OST programming to 50,000 youth statewide.

As the Governor's administration moves to create a new department that prioritizes OST, it is the hope of Michigan Afterschool Partnership (MASP) that we systematically build upon the lessons learned, relationships built, and constructive work that has been completed with the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and policymakers over the past three years.

**Below are descriptions of recommendations that MASP endorses and asks that Governor Whitmer's team consider as OST is incorporated into the new Department of Lifelong Education Advancement and Potential (Mi-LEAP).**



**1** **Allocate at least \$50 million in School Aid Funds (FY 24-25) to support community-based and school-based before, afterschool and summer learning programs.** For the past three years, Michigan has dramatically increased state funding for OST, something that has been much needed to supplement flat 21st Century federal funds. As MiLEAP moves forward to build a system of OST, we must ensure that funding distribution is equitable and strategic to grow sufficient numbers of providers to meet needs in every region of the state.

**2** **Transfer 21st CCLC administration to Mi-LEAP.** In addition to the OST state grants, MDE administers the federal 21st CCLC program. This move will ensure coordination between the programs, avoid duplication of efforts, support quality of OST programs, and maximize the number of youth served through OST and 21st CCLC grant programs.

**Hire a full-time OST Director.** Best-practice examples for equitably scaling OST opportunities in California rely upon a full-time dedicated Director of OST. This position doesn't currently exist in MDE, but it is something that has been in discussion between MDE and MASP. In order to help fill in the large OST deserts and most efficiently and effectively coordinate with the OST community, MASP asks that MiLEAP include a full-time director, with authority to oversee state and federal funding and state standards, within the 'partnerships' area of MiLEAP.



**3** **Move all OST staff to Mi-LEAP.** It is important that all existing MDE OST and 21st CCLC staff positions (that are currently funded in part by philanthropy) transfer under the new director. The current positions funded by philanthropy include the OST grants manager, OST education coordinator and OST grants technician. These positions are currently contracted roles, through MASP, with MDE.



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**5** **Continue the Michigan Out-of-School Time (MOST) Advisory Committee.** In FY24, Michigan began its first steps to include representatives from the field in directly designing Michigan's new system of out-of-school-time. From the work thus far, the responses to this effort are very positive and should help ensure that greater degrees of equity are included in the design of funding distribution models and the growth of programs around the state. The intent of the MOST Advisory Committee beyond initial OST system design efforts, is to serve as an engagement group that is empowered to work with the state's OST Director to advise the distribution of funding and implement continuous improvement techniques in perpetuity. MASP asks that Mi-LEAP embrace the work that has been done here and build upon it to ensure this vision becomes the future reality. The work of this committee is funded by philanthropy, staffed by MASP, and guided by the National Equity Project.

**Explore collaborative opportunities within the department, and particularly the office of higher education, for the Mi-YDA program.**

The Michigan Youth Development Associate Certificate credential supports quality programs for school-age youth by providing standards for training and evaluation. The Mi-YDA is administered by MASP and recognized by MDE.

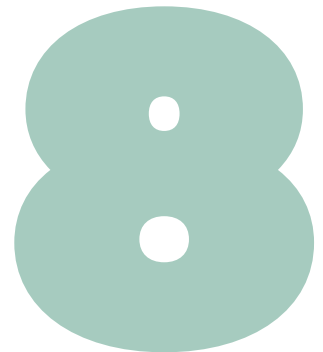
Student concentrators in state-approved CTE programs and staff currently working in OST programs are eligible to apply for the program. The MI-YDA covers safety and wellness, professional development and leadership, cultural competency, family, school, and community relationships, program planning and development, interactions with children and youth, child/youth growth and development, learning environments and curriculum, child/youth observation and assessment, and youth engagement.



**Change licensing rules for childcare centers as they relate to school-age programs.** The licensing rules for childcare centers apply to both early childhood and school-age programs, which causes confusion on the part of providers and state consultants and results in unnecessary financial hurdles for school-age providers. Overall, the rules are much more stringent for youth in OST programs, compared to the rules for youth during the school day. MASP has provided LARA with specific recommendations for revisions.



**Enhance partnership between community-based organizations and schools in the delivery of OST programs.** Youth often say one of the most important elements of quality OST programs is when the programs are community-based, thus not "feeling" like school to participants. For the youth populations who need OST the most, this aspect is incredibly important. As Michigan moves forward, it will be critical that the on-the-ground "feel" that community-based providers offer be maintained, while building partnerships with schools to scale more equitable youth engagement.



*"Every Michigander deserves a path to 'make it in Michigan' with strong, lifelong learning support."*

—Gov. Gretchen Whitmer



**Support OST connections to Early Childhood, K-12 and Higher Education.** One of the many benefits to MiLEAP's charge is the ability to coordinate across the entire youth learning spectrum - from OST and childcare to Pre-K, to K-12 to post-secondary education. MASP advises that there be a deliberate inter-government coordinating effort that includes both leadership from each of these areas, as well as field representatives from providers in each of them, to advise the Governor and Legislature on department goals and help implement consistent strategies across these constituencies. Additionally, as K-12 will still be managed within MDE, it will be imperative that leaders from that department be engaged and aligned with mutually shared goals for our young Michiganders.