



Ohio Afterschool Network Recommendations For Creating a School-Age Child Care, Afterschool and Extended Learning Opportunities Infrastructure In the Ohio Department of Education

Governor Strickland's Education Funding and Reform Plan incorporates evidenced-based strategies, including extended learning opportunities. Specifically, expanding the learning day with additional activities, such as community service, tutoring, and health and wellness programs. High-quality school-age afterschool and summer programs provide these and other extended learning opportunities such as hands-on science experiments, developing global literacy, and connecting classroom learning to real-world settings. Recognizing that Ohio has made a significant investment in the quality of school-age care, as well as early care and education, the move of ODJFS to ODE represents an important opportunity to ensure that state efforts to support children birth to five are aligned and coordinated with those serving older children, so that all children and youth can be successful.

The Ohio Afterschool Network is well positioned to support the goals of Governor Strickland's education reform plan. The goal of the Ohio Afterschool Network (OAN) is to support the development of a high quality system of before-, after-school and summer programs that enhances learning, provides safe environments for children and youth, and provides a workforce support for working parents. OAN works to ensure that the system recognizes and supports a mixed market of service delivery, utilizes all existing funding streams and seeks new resources in order to assure program quality and accessibility for all children, youth and families who need and want the services.

The Ohio Afterschool Network's nearly 900 members, representing diverse providers and stakeholders, are excited about the opportunities presented by the integration of the Bureau of Child Care and Development of Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and the Office of Early Learning and School Readiness of Ohio Department of Education into the Center for Early Childhood Development. We believe this integration will consolidate the current parallel systems of licensing, funding and governance into one that will better serve children, families and providers.

With this integration focused on children prenatal through kindergarten, a new opportunity emerges about how to address the needs of school-age children and youth and the provider base that is currently served by both ODJFS and ODE. Some of the issues to be addressed in the transition include:

- Seventy-four percent of the ODJFS-licensed programs serve children ages 5 and above; a new system must recognize that a majority of ODJFS licensed programs serve both young children and school-age children.
- ODJFS licenses stand-alone school-age programs serve children and youth in Kindergarten through age 13.
- ODE licenses some but not all programs serving children age kindergarten and older under their auspices. Many programs serving youth are exempt from all forms of licensing.
- School-agers are 27% of those enrolled in Ohio's licensed child care programs.

- School-age children represent a significant percent of those served by child care subsidies, 41% of total children served and 32% of subsidy dollars.
- Parents need affordable and quality care for their children, 24% of all requests for child care referrals made to Ohio's child care resource and referral agencies are for school-age care.

OAN convened afterschool stakeholders for a process facilitated by The Afterschool Investments Project and the National Child Care Information and Technical Assistance Center, services of the federal Child Care Bureau, to create a set of recommendations on an afterschool infrastructure that will address these issues and support a high-quality system of services for school-age children and youth. These recommendations were then reviewed at an OAN quarterly membership meeting and vetted by 150 members representing a variety of programs and stakeholders.

OAN's Recommendations

	Specific to the Center for Early Childhood Development	Specific to Center that is Responsible for Stand-Alone School-Age Programs	Pertain to Both Centers
Governance		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign responsibility for stand-alone school-age program policy, governance, regulations, quality, workforce development, financing and accountability to the Center for Students Families and Communities. (short-term goal) • The Center for Students Families and Communities will be responsible for coordination and linkage with the Center for Early Childhood Development to support providers that serve multiple age ranges. (short-term goal) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a school-age advisory committee to provide input and feedback to both the Center for Students Families and Communities and the Center for Early Childhood Development on policy and practices that impact school-age programs and services. (short-term goal) • Increase and ensure broad afterschool stakeholder representation on additional governance and coordination groups at the state level. (short-term goal)
Regulations		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a youth development license for stand-alone school-age programs serving children and youth enrolled in Kindergarten and older. (longer-term goal) 	
Workforce Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support a scholarship for school-age professionals to be incorporated into the TEACH Early Childhood Scholarship Program. (short-term goal) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in the development of a school-age credential. (longer-term goal) • Fully integrate school-age into the Ohio Professional Development Network, including: (short-term goal) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Professional registry and alternate pathways ○ Training approval, registration and calendar ○ Increase school-age membership and participation in the committee structure. • Invest in high-quality professional development for all providers serving school-age children and youth using Ohio's Core Knowledge and Competencies document for providers serving children ages 5-12. (short-term goal) • Invest in the development of Core Knowledge and Competencies for providers serving youth ages 13-18. (longer-term goal)

Recommendations continue on next page

OAN's Recommendations (cont.)

	Specific to the Center for Early Childhood Development	Specific to Center that is Responsible for Stand-Alone School-Age Programs	Pertain to Both Centers
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate appropriate school-age measures into Step Up to Quality for provider serving both young children and school-age children and youth. (short-term goal) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a quality rating system for stand-alone licensed school-age programs, using the Ohio Afterschool Network's Program Quality Guidelines. (longer-term goal) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and invest in system to provide technical assistance to school-age programs and staff for both stand-alone and multi-age providers. (short-term goal)
Financing			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicate proportional subsidy and quality Child Care and Development Block Grant dollars to school-age. (short-term goal) Dedicate proportional Child Care and Development Block Grant and 21st Century Community Learning Center quality dollars to professional development and quality enhancements at the program level. (short-term goal) Assure that the mixed-market of providers have ample opportunities to access school-age funds, including Child Care and Development Block Grant and 21st Century Community Learning Center funds. (short-term goal) Increase state investments of flexible funds and reduce barriers to blending multiple funding sources. (short-term goal) Revise school-age co-pays to be in proportion to hours served, not just family income. (longer-term goal) Advocate for increased federal 21st Century Community learning Center dollars. (longer-term goal)
Accountability			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a single data system that includes licensing, enrollment and funding information. (longer-term goal) Create agreed-upon outcome measures for school-age providers. (longer-term goal) Establish formal linkages with the Center for Early Childhood Development and Center for Students Families and Communities to ensure that providers serving a broad age range do not have duplicate requirements and accountability measures. (short-term goal) Provide on-site monitoring for funded and licensed programs. (short-term goal)

OAN leadership and members are eager for an afterschool system that connects to and builds on the work of the Center for Early Childhood Development so that children, youth and their parents can be successful and Ohio has a skilled and effective workforce today and in the future. OAN's leadership welcomes feedback on these recommendations before submitting them to Governor Strickland and Superintendent Delisle. Please direct any questions or comments to Liz Nusken, OAN Director, lnusken@occcra.org or 614-396-5959x310.

Note: The Child Care and Development Block Grant defines a "school-age child" as age 5-18, in Ohio these funds and TANF funds provide child care subsidies for low-income working parents with children ages birth-12 and older youth with special needs, and the Bureau for Child Care and Development currently licenses programs that serve children up to age 14.