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Philadelphia announces William Penn Quality Grant for Children's Out-of-School Programming

Philadelphia — Today, Philadelphia Department of Human Services (DHS) Commissioner Cynthia Figueroa announced progress made under the William Penn Foundation grant for quality in Out-of-School Time (OST) programming.

The \$1.5M grant, which is managed jointly by the [Citywide Out-of-School Time Initiative](#) and DHS, began in 2018 to kickstart work for creating a framework to measure and improve quality in Out-of-School Time programs (after school, summer and weekend programs for children and youth). DHS has been leading the work for quality improvement within their network of 100-plus, DHS-funded OST program providers.

Mayor Jim Kenney, along with City and School District officials, spoke today at a citywide convening where OST stakeholders, subject experts, and program providers shared best practices for continuous quality improvement.

"Philadelphia's OST landscape offers opportunities to thousands of children – after school, on weekends, and throughout the year – thanks to close partnerships between City departments and community organizations," said **Mayor Kenney**. "We're fortunate to have a generous philanthropic community that believes in the value of OST and is committed to supporting quality programming."

Attending enriching out-of-school programming can be vital to a child's academic and social development. [One in five children in the U.S.](#) are unsupervised between the hours of 3 to 6 p.m. Particularly in the city's poorest neighborhoods, this leaves children vulnerable to high-risk behaviors and exposure to crime and harassment. Involvement in structured OST programming reduces those risks and works to improve educational outcomes.

"We have so much forward movement to celebrate," said **DHS Commissioner Cynthia Figueroa**. "Our citywide partnerships are having a big impact on quality Out-of-School Time programs in Philly. Through this grant, we are working to strengthen existing programming, and ensure that data is used strategically – to align, support, and understand impact and outcomes."

The City has been building a network of OST providers in the Cityspan database system, and in early fall will launch a new, map-based program locator to help families connect with OST programs.

The City of Philadelphia's **Managing Director Brian Abernathy** said, "We are thankful to the providers, the funders, the school district, and the city departments that support OST. Our hope is to continue to create new and innovative opportunities to make these needed resources available to all of our children."

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[The Citywide Out-of-School Time Initiative](#) is a public-private partnership that brings together stakeholders – City departments, School District of Philadelphia, nonprofit organizations, Philadelphia families, and OST providers – to work toward shared goals of continuous quality improvement and increasing access to OST (after school, summer, and weekend) programming for youth.