

March 24, 2023

Dear OST Partners and Providers,

Thank you for your continued partnership in the provision of high-quality Out of School Time (OST) programs and services to children and youth across the District of Columbia (the District). This week, Mayor Bowser presented her [Fiscal Year 2024 \(FY24\) budget proposal](#) to the Council. Amidst constrained budgeting, due to the ramping down of federal funds, lower revenue forecasts, and increasing costs, **the Mayor has continued to prioritize our children and youth across the District.**

We are excited to share that Mayor Bowser's budget has included additional investments to strengthen and expand access to afterschool opportunities for District children, youth, and families. In addition to sustaining nearly \$17 million in grantmaking funding for the OST Office, the FY24 budget includes an additional \$5 million to build "My Afterschool DC." **This additional investment represents the first step in our bold vision towards, 1) creating guaranteed access to high-quality afterschool programming, which will be piloted and located in elementary schools across the District, and 2) filling targeted programmatic gaps across the District, for children and youth with the greatest needs, through strategic grant-making.**

The vision for My Afterschool DC is to serve as a one-stop shop for all things OST, including by-right programs, and programs of choice, resulting in an increase in access to OST programming for children, youth, and families across the District. Through this newly created system, we seek to model and, over time, expand access to free of charge, high-quality OST programming at elementary schools, and to expand lottery-based access to OST programming across the District.

Of the newly proposed \$5 million investment, \$3.125 million will go towards grants for afterschool providers at priority elementary schools, and \$1.875 million will go toward the infrastructural development and capacity building needed to run and oversee the "My Afterschool DC" hub.

In addition, the Mayor's budget proposal reflects our commitment to prioritizing OST access for students with the greatest needs. In FY24, the OST Office will provide expanded training opportunities to ensure all OST providers are well-equipped to serve students with special needs. The OST Office will also ensure **\$2.5 million** of existing grant funds is targeted towards students with specialized education needs. The Department of Parks and Recreation will also receive **\$3.4 million** to support the Inclusive Summer Plus recreation activities and accelerated learning opportunities for the students that were most affected by the pandemic, and **\$409,000** for additional summer camp slots across sports and aquatics programs for children and youth with disabilities.

Over the next 70 days, the Council will review and revise the Mayor's budget proposal. We encourage you to share with the Council **the importance, value, and urgency of this funding priority.** You can share your feedback directly with the Council at the upcoming [budget oversight hearing](#) on education (through the Committee of the Whole), for public witnesses on **Wednesday**,

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**April 5, 2023**, starting at **9:00 a.m.** You can register to testify at the education public hearing by signing up at [www.ChairmanMendelson.com/testify](http://www.ChairmanMendelson.com/testify) by **5:00 pm** on **Monday, April 3, 2023**.

We remain grateful for your continued efforts to support our children, youth, and families across the District of Columbia. We also deeply value your ongoing feedback. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us with any questions you may have.

Sincerely,



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Paul Kihn  
Deputy Mayor for Education



Dr. Shontia Lowe  
Executive Director  
Office of Out of School Time Grants and Youth Outcomes  
Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education