



Senate Bill 810 – Maryland Priority Out-of-School Time Program – Alterations
Finance Committee
Budget & Taxation Committee
Position: Favorable with Amendments
March 16, 2023

The Maryland Out of School Time Network (MOST) is a statewide organization dedicated to closing opportunity gaps by expanding both the quantity and quality of afterschool and summer learning opportunities for school-aged young people. MOST is one of the fifty statewide networks supported by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation and serves as Maryland's affiliate to the National Afterschool Association.

MENTOR Maryland | DC is the statewide affiliate of MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership in Maryland. Our shared mission is to increase both the quality and quantity of mentoring relationships. This is accomplished through support to on-the-ground mentoring programs to improve their quality, effectiveness, and scale while coalescing stakeholders to expand engagement and investment locally.

Afterschool, Summer, and Mentoring programs are critical supports, made even more important by the impact on learning from the last several years of COVID-19. Maryland remains in the bottom ten states for access to afterschool programs. In Maryland, unmet demand for afterschool programs has reached an all-time high, with nearly 390,000 children who would be enrolled in a program if one were available to them. As demand for afterschool in Maryland surges, parents see key benefits from afterschool, including keeping kids safe, helping them learn and grow, and providing peace of mind for working families. As families face barriers to participation, such as cost and accessibility, there is strong support behind public funding for afterschool programs in the state. Eighty five percent of parents support public funding for afterschool and that support is strong across all party affiliations (America After 3 p.m.,2020).

Currently we are moving backwards rather than forwards in our state's support for youth serving programs. Several state funds that directly support after-school are at threat. LEAP grants (Learning in Extended Afterschool Program), funded at 4.5 million in FY23, were eliminated in the proposed FY24 budget. Public School Opportunity Enhancement - PSOE remains in the budget at just 2.5 million dollars.

Senate Bill 810 proposes to rename the Public-School Opportunity Enhancement grant to the Maryland Priority Out of School Time Program, move it to the Governor's Office for Crime Prevention, Youth and Victim Services and increase the grant program's appropriation to 8.5 million. SB 10 would help maintain level funding for youth development programs while making the program more accessible to a variety of community-based youth services providers.

In addition, part of this legislation is forward thinking. We hope and advocate that in the future, the Governor's Office for Children will be reestablished along with the Children's Cabinet and the new GOC will ultimately manage this grant program, and the appropriation will grow over time to be commensurate with the need and demand. Therefore, we support the amendments that direct the grant program specifically to the Children and Youth Division and require collaboration with the local management boards in administering the funds.

With these amendments we urge the committees to provide a favorable report for Senate Bill 810.

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