



**House Bill 694 - Governor's Office for Children - Engaging Neighborhoods,
Organizations, Unions, Governments, and Households (ENOUGH) Grant Program
(ENOUGH Act of 2024)
Appropriations – February 28, 2024, 1 p.m.
Position: Favorable**

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 serves as the backbone organization for the Maryland Coalition for Community Schools. The Maryland Coalition for Community Schools, founded in 2016, advocates for student and family success by leading the charge to expand the Community School Model in Maryland.

MOST and MD4CS enthusiastically support House Bill 694 and applaud the return of the Governor's Office of Children as a distinct agency and its focus on ending childhood poverty. Maryland needs to reemphasize cross-agency collaboration and state and local systems building to build more sustainable and healthy communities where children and families thrive.

The Enough Act of 2024 also creates a new grant program that invests in neighborhood and regional place-based initiatives. Promise Neighborhoods, a similar grant program at the federal level, provides models and lessons learned for Maryland's ENOUGH initiative. Successful initiatives will connect and leverage the rich ecosystem of community-based youth serving organizations. We know expanded learning programs, community schools and youth development approaches will be central to providing comprehensive services and building relationships with youth and families.

We hope this initial strategic fifteen-million-dollar investment will grow, the new GOC and reinvigorated children's cabinet will build quality systems for coordinated delivery, and we will see the tide turn for children and their families in Maryland. We urge a favorable report for House Bill 694.

Ellie Mitchell, & Executive Director, MOST Network/MD4CS, emitchell@mostnetwork.org

Maryland Out of School Time Network / Maryland Coalition for Community Schools

1500 Union Ave / Suite 2300
Baltimore MD 21211 / 410 374-7692
www.mostnetwork.org