



The District's Dime

Going Beyond the Budget Book

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A Budget That Gives Children a Safe Place to Learn and Grow

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The District's Dime is focusing on the themes that we hope will be reflected in the fiscal year (FY) 2014 budget. Our focus today is on giving children a safe place to learn and grow.

Children need a safe place to go where they can continue to learn and be nurtured outside of the traditional school day. Yet programming for out-of-school time programming within DCPS was cut for the current school year, and it appears that those cuts will remain in place next year under current plans.

The Office of Out-of-School Time Programming (OSTP) within DCPS, promotes high-quality programs and access to out-of-school time services for the city's neediest residents, through a combination of organized school-based services and intentional coordination with community partners.

This year, the OSTP provided programming for 61 sites, but funding was cut by \$3 million and many schools had to share an afterschool coordinator. In addition, DCPS administered a "Proving What's Possible" (PWP) grant competition last summer which awarded 59 schools with grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$490,000 to implement "innovative programming" to improve academic achievement. To date, an evaluation of these programs has not yet been done, making the impact and sustainability of PWP funding uncertain.

In addition, DCFPI's first look at the [initial school budget allocations](#) for next school year suggests that OSTP funding will remain at this year's reduced level. There is also a change in how OST funding will be distributed to schools next year – funding for afterschool program staff now appears within individual school budget allocations to ease the hiring process for schools. The new line item, which encompasses Afterschool Programs, Evening Credit Recovery, and Proving What's Possible extended-day grants, amounts to less than \$5 million across DCPS schools. DCFPI was informed that some additional funding for security, supplies, field trips and other support is expected to be available again from the OSTP central office, and should appear in the Mayor's budget released March 28th.

DCFPI thinks funding for OST programs should be a priority for the District. Research indicates that participation in quality out-of-school-time programs is associated with lower grade retention, greater student attendance, and an increased interest in school, all of which can lead to better academic outcomes.