



32n OST Grants Program State Evaluation 2024–25 Annual Report



MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

Engaged Research
and Evaluation Center
University Outreach and Engagement

Engaged Research and Evaluation Center
University Outreach and Engagement
Michigan State University

Jamie H. Wu, PhD
Xuran Wang, PhD
Gretchen Sheneman, MSW
Herbowicz, Teresa, MS

April 2026

Copies of this report are available from:

Engaged Research and Evaluation Center
University Outreach and Engagement
Michigan State University
Kellogg Center
219 S. Harrison Rd., Rm. 93
East Lansing, Michigan 48824-1022
Phone: (517) 353-8977
Fax: (517) 432-9541
E-mail: outreach@msu.edu
Web: erec.msu.edu

© 2025 Michigan State University. All rights reserved

The views expressed are solely those of the authors. For more information about this report, contact Jamie Wu at the above address or phone number, or email wuhengch@msu.edu

Suggested Citation: Wu, J.H., Wang, X., Sheneman, G., and Herbowicz, T. (2026). *32ⁿ OST Grants Program State Evaluation 2024-25 annual report*. Michigan State University.

Funding

This report was supported by funding from the Michigan Afterschool Partnership and the Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	I
Implementation	i
Accessibility.....	ii
Quality	ii
Challenges	ii
Conclusion.....	ii
Recommendation	iii
OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME PROGRAMS IN MICHIGAN.....	1
History of OST Program in Michigan.....	1
Purpose of the 32n OST Grants Program	2
32n OST Grants Program Priority	2
32n OST Grants Program State Evaluation.....	2
32N OST GRANTS PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION	3
Program Management.....	3
Program Delivery Schedule	3
Children and Youth Served.....	4
Staff Demographics	7
Program Offerings.....	8
32N OST GRANTS PROGRAM ACCESSIBILITY.....	9
Funded Programs	9
Comparison of Funded Sites and Applicant Sites	11
Waitlists	12
32N OST GRANTS PROGRAM QUALITY	13
Youth Perceptions of Program Quality.....	13
Key Themes and Illustrative Quotes from Youth Survey	16
Family Member Perceptions of Program Quality	17
Key Themes and Illustrative Quotes from Family Survey.....	19
32N OST GRANTS PROGRAM OUTCOMES	21

32N OST GRANTS PROGRAM CHALLENGES.....	23
Implementation	23
Communication Between Sites and Grantees	24
Key Themes and Illustrative Quotes from Site Manager Survey.....	25
CONCLUSION	26
RECOMENDATION	27
WORKS CITED	28
APPENDIX A. NUMBER OF 32N OST GRANTS PROGRAMS IN MICHIGAN COUNTIES IN 2024-25	30

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Number of 32n OST Grants Program Site Managed by Grantee	3
Figure 2. Delivery Schedule for 2024-25 32n OST Grants Program Sites	4
Figure 3. Frequency of Youth Attendance	5
Figure 4. Proportion of Youth Served, by Race/Ethnicity	5
Figure 5. Race/Ethnicity of Youth in OST Grants Programs, ZIP Code Neighborhoods and Michigan	6
Figure 6. Proportion of Youth Served, by Grade Level	7
Figure 7. Distribution of 32n OST Grants Program Staff and Youth, by Race/Ethnicity	8
Figure 8. 32n OST Grants Program Sites, by Michigan Prosperity Region.....	10
Figure 9. Distribution of Funded Sites, Applicants, and Michigan ZIP Codes, by Locale Type.....	11
Figure 10. Funded Sites, Applicants, and Michigan ZIP Codes by Community Resource Level	12
Figure 11. Distribution of 32n OST Grants Program Sites by Waitlist Size in School Year and Summer.....	13
Figure 12. Youth Agreement with Themes Related to Program Quality	14
Figure 13. Youth Needing and Showing Improvement in School Behavior, by Frequency of Attendance in 32n OST Grants Program	22
Figure 14. Participating Youth Needing and Achieving Improvement in Soft Skills, by Frequency of Attendance in 32n OST Grants Program	22
Figure 15. Challenges Faced by OST Site Managers, School Year and Summer	24
Figure 16. Frequency of Communication Between Site Managers and Grantee Managers About Specific Concerns	25

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. 32n OST Grants Program Topics Offered and Prioritized, School Year and Summer.....	9
Table 2. Youth Agreement with Statements about Program Quality	15
Table 3. Family Responses to 32n OST Grants Program Quality Statements	18

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Consistent access to out-of-school time (OST) programming enables caregivers to work and can improve academic performance of the served youth, especially those from under-resourced communities. However, youth and families that reside in under-resourced neighborhoods often do not have access to OST programming.

Until recently, the only public funding stream for OST programming in Michigan was the federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) grant program, which targets high-poverty, low-performing schools and serves only about 1% of Michigan students each year. In response to heightened community needs during the COVID-19 pandemic, the state launched its own funding stream—the 32n OST Grants Program—in 2021. Since then, state investment has continued to grow, and Michigan Public Act 120 of 2024, Section 32n(2) allocated \$75 million, where \$19.14 million went to designated grants and capacity building, leaving \$55.86 million available to be distributed for competitive grants to “expand access to quality, affordable programming before and after the school day or during the summer for young people.” Funded programs are expected to “support expanded learning opportunities, including but not limited to mentoring, leadership, community engagement, agriculture, visual and performing arts, literacy, science, technology, engineering, mathematics, health and wellness, recreation, financial literacy, physical fitness, career and college exploration, youth voice, 21st century skills, conflict resolution, and social engagement.” Measurable goals include, but are not limited to, “improved school attendance and academic outcomes, improved attitudes toward school, strengthened positive behaviors, skill development and retention, higher education aspirations, and improved family engagement, with activities linked to research or quality practices.”

To date, Michigan is among the nation’s leading states in state-funded OST support. There are 27 states that have committed state funding to support OST programs, and Michigan stands out as one of nine states that have recently increased its OST investment, demonstrating strong leadership and a deep commitment to expanding high-quality opportunities for Michigan’s youth (Afterschool Alliance, 2024).

Implementation

In 2024-25, the 32n OST Grants Program supported 171 grantees, 782 program sites, and 89,333 youth. Of these, 681 sites serving 76,419 youth were funded through the \$55.86 million 2024-25 competitive grant process, while 101 sites serving 12,914 youth were supported through \$4.5 million in carryover funds from the previous year. Youth-and site-level data were unavailable for carryover services since reporting was not a requirement. Reporting was modified and separately tracked for all carryover funded program sites. This information is included in this report.

According to data from the EZReports system covering 681 funded sites and two rollover grantees representing 43 sites¹ with available youth demographic information, approximately 20% of participants were in early elementary grades (K-2), 37% were in upper elementary grades (3-5), 23% were in middle school (grades 6-8), and 20% were in high school (grades 9-12). Participant race/ethnicity data indicated that 35% identified as Black, 35% as White, 5% as Hispanic/Latinx, 4% as

¹ One of the three rollover grantees operated 58 sites but did not report participant race/ethnicity or grade-level counts; therefore, this grantee was excluded from analyses involving youth-level demographic data.

multiracial, and 2% as Asian and 2% as Arabic, and the remaining 18% of participants indicated "Other" or preferred not to disclose their race/ethnicity.

Accessibility

Through exceptional outreach and comprehensive support for potential applicants, Michigan achieved remarkable early success in engaging communities statewide. For the 2024-25 program year, 332 applicants requested \$122 million to support 1,251 program sites. Grant applications were received from 72% of Michigan's counties. The overwhelming interest from grantees was evident, as MiLEAP was only able to fund approximately 51% of the applications (168 of total 332 applicants) before exhausting available resources. An analysis of funded and non-funded applicants indicates that characteristics of funded sites largely matched those of the total applicant pool.

Of the funded sites, 59% were located in under-resourced neighborhoods; about 42% were in cities, 25% in suburbs, and 33% in rural areas, indicating a balanced distribution of funding across communities. The site manager survey asked whether sites had enough slots to serve all children who wanted to attend. Results show that 2% of school-year programs and 39% of summer programs had to place potential participants on waitlists.

Quality

Program quality aspects were assessed by youth and family surveys. Overall program satisfaction was high, with 91% of youth reporting that they enjoyed attending the program and 97% of families indicating that they felt supported and welcomed. At least 85% of youth respondents agreed that the programs fostered a positive climate and supported a growth mindset, while at least 74% agreed that participation strengthened their connection to school, promoted healthy living, and supported identity development. Areas with comparatively lower levels of agreement included opportunities for youth voice and collaboration (approximately 70%).

Challenges

The site manager survey asked respondents to choose from a list of common OST program challenges. Nearly half chose staff shortages, a problem consistently faced by both school-year and summer programs. The next most cited problem, transportation, was more acute in the summer. Other challenges included family needs and youth behavioral or mental health needs that exceeded program capacity. These challenges affected both school-year and summer programming, but were reported as more significant during the summer.

Conclusion

As Michigan continues to lead in expanding affordable, high-quality out-of-school time learning and care, the 32n OST Grants Program remains essential for improving equitable access statewide. Implementation data show continued progress, including an increase in participants compared to the prior year, high youth and family satisfaction, and expanded reach into under-resourced communities across both rural and urban areas. The 2024-25 program year also marked MSU's second year as the state evaluator and the first year youth-level data were available through EZReports, enabling more reliable and comprehensive data collection. Survey findings from youth and families reflected overwhelmingly positive experiences, highlighting OST programs' role in providing engaging, supportive

environments while helping caregivers balance work and family responsibilities. However, sustaining this momentum will require continued investment and close monitoring to ensure more Michigan youth have access to high-quality programming during critical out-of-school hours.

Recommendation

Based on statewide findings, the 32n OST Grants Program should continue expanding equitable access to high-quality out-of-school time programming while strengthening the supports needed for effective implementation. This includes sustaining investment in under-resourced communities and maintaining year-round capacity to meet high demand, strengthening staffing through improved compensation, and deepening program quality through effective management practices that reduce negative experiences such as bullying and excessive waiting time, while also increasing youth voice and meaningful decision-making opportunities. Programs should also continue building on strong family engagement practices. Finally, MiLEAP, MASP, and partners should promote consistent communication between grantees and sites to ensure all programs receive regular monitoring, coaching, and continuous improvement support throughout the year.



Picture credit: www.michigan.gov/mileap/

OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME PROGRAMS IN MICHIGAN

School-age youth spend 80% of their waking hours outside of school (Afterschool Alliance, 2019). Consistent access to quality out-of-school time (OST) programming can improve academic performance, especially for youth from under-resourced communities (Jenson et al., 2018; Morris, 2015; Seitz et al., 2022), while enabling caregivers to work (Afterschool Alliance, 2022). However, low-income youth and families often have less access to reliable OST programming than more affluent families (Covay & Carbonaro, 2010; Heath et al., 2022).

History of OST Programming in Michigan

Michigan has a long history of community education. For example, the city of Flint received support from the C. S. Mott Foundation to establish the country's first-ever "lighted schoolhouses" back in 1935 (Passantino, 1975). The initiative aimed to transform schools into community hubs, providing after-school programs, adult education, and family support services to school communities. The success of this model laid the foundation for the community education movement and inspired later after-school initiatives (Krajewski, 1997), including the federal 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) program, which institutionalized the approach at the federal level.

Until 2021, Michigan's public investment in OST programs largely relied on the federal 21st CCLC, established in 1994. In the first few years, grants were administered federally. Michigan communities first received 21st CCLC funding in 1998 with 18 program sites; in subsequent years, about 40 communities operated 21st CCLC programming annually (Reed et al., 2003). Reauthorization under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 changed the allocation process. The U.S. Department of Education awarded a portion of the federal allocation to each state using a need-based formula, so that the states became the grant administrators. Michigan's 21st CCLC allocation started at about \$12 million in 2001 and 2002 (U.S. Department of Education, 2003) and increased in subsequent years. Since 2007, funding has remained steady at about \$37 million. During the last two decades, about 270 sites have been funded each year, serving 25,000 youth annually with year-round before-school, after-school, and summer programming.

Michigan's state funding for OST program started in 2021. Using American Rescue Plan Act funds, Michigan allocated \$5 million to nonprofit community-based organizations to address the pandemic-caused demand for care for children in grades K-8 (Public Act 3 of 2021, Section 23e). That same year, the state added another \$5 million, for a total of \$10 million for 2021 (Public Act 87 of 2021, Section 1001). State funding was increased again to \$25 million under Michigan Public Act 144 of 2022, Section 32n. The Michigan Department of Education administered this funding as the 32n OST Grants Program through a competitive process. Building on the success of the initial implementation and responding to the growing demand for high-quality out-of-school-time programs, the State of Michigan took decisive action by substantially increasing its investment in the 32n OST Grant. Leveraging State School Aid funding, Michigan Legislature designated MiLEAP as a state administrator of the 32n OST Grants Program and allocated \$50 million for 2023 under Public Act 103 of 2023, Section 32n, and \$75 million for 2024 under Public Act 120 of 2024. This bold commitment not only expanded opportunities for youth and families but also positioned Michigan as a national leader, one of nine states recognized in recent years for making significant new investments in after-school and summer learning programs.

Purpose of the 32n OST Grants Program

Public Act 120 of 2024, Section 32n specifies that programs should address measurable goals, including, but not limited to, “improved school attendance and academic outcomes, improved attitudes toward school, strengthened positive behaviors, skill development and retention, higher education aspirations, and improved family engagement, with activities linked to research or quality practices.” 32n OST subrecipients must use their funding to “support expanded learning opportunities, including, but not limited to, mentoring, leadership, community engagement, agriculture, visual and performing arts, literacy, science, technology, engineering, mathematics, health and wellness, recreation, financial literacy, physical fitness, career and college exploration, youth voice, 21st century skills, conflict resolution, and social engagement programming.”

32n OST Grants Program Priority

The 2024-25 competitive grant was open to any OST provider that is a licensed childcare organization, an entity with an active application to become a licensed childcare organization, or an exempt entity. The program required that at least 60% of grant funding be awarded to community-based organizations. Awards were determined through an application scoring process based on the following priorities: (a) demonstrated need; (b) the percentage of low-income families in the service area; (c) provision of services for the full school year; (d) the applicant’s track record of delivering quality, affordable before- and after-school or summer programming; and (e) for providers serving grades K-12, licensure status (or an active licensure application) or implementation of the Michigan Out-of-School Time Standards of Quality for exempt entities. Geographic representation across the state was also considered in final grant selections.

32n OST Grants Program State Evaluation

With support from Michigan Afterschool Partnership (MASP) and in partnership with MiLEAP, the Engaged Research and Evaluation Center (formerly Community Evaluation Programs) within Michigan State University’s Office of University Outreach and Engagement became the state evaluator for Michigan’s 32n OST Grants Program in January, 2024. During the first year of evaluation, data collection and reporting systems were still under development; therefore, estimates of youth demographics and attendance were based on site manager surveys administered by MSU.

Beginning in 2024-25, EZReports was implemented statewide for 681 non-carryover sites, with accompanying technical assistance from MSU. Funded programs were asked to submit youth demographic and attendance data on a monthly basis. Program quality and impact data continued to be collected through large sample surveys completed by participating youth and family members. Surveys were offered in three languages—English, Spanish, and Arabic—and were available in both paper and online formats. Overall, the findings in this report provide a strong representation of the perceived quality and impacts of Michigan’s 32n OST Grants Program.

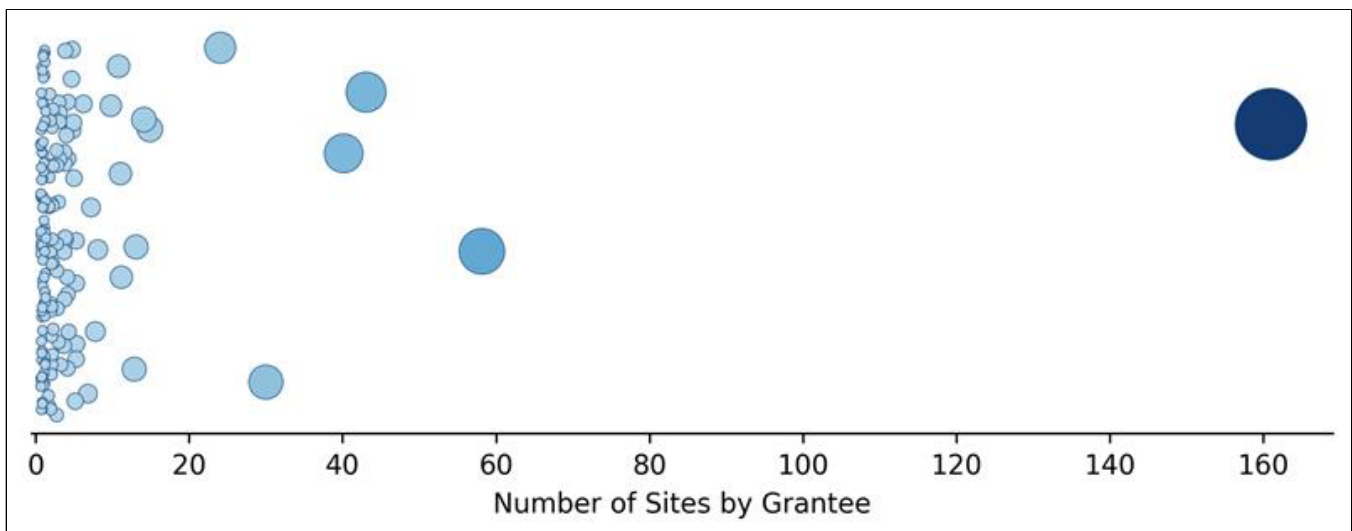
32n OST GRANTS PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Program Management

During the 2024-25 state fiscal year, 32n OST Grants Program funding supported 782 OST program sites operated by 171 grantees.

- About half of the grantees (50%; 86) were one-site grantees, meaning they were small organizations directly managing their own programs (Figure 1).
- One grantee operated 161 sites accounting for 21% of all 32n OST Grants Program sites.
- 75% (129) of all grantees were community-based organizations.²

Figure 1. Number of 32n OST Grants Program Site Managed by Grantee

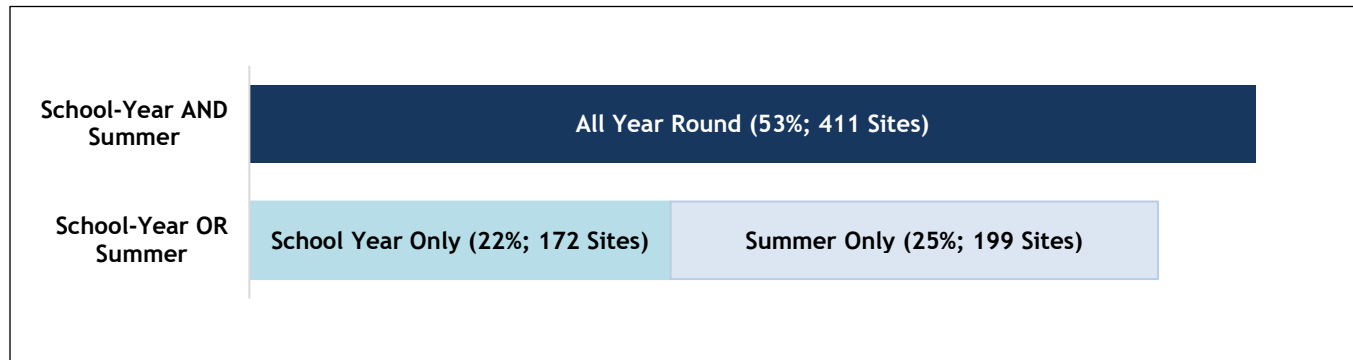


A bigger dot size and darker color intensity indicate larger number of sites managed by one grantee.

Program Delivery Schedule

- Over half of all program sites (53%; 411) received funding for both school-year and summer programs (See Figure 2).
- About 22% (172) of sites received funding to operate programs only during the school year.
- Over 25% (199) of sites were awarded funding for summer programming only.

² Community-based organizations (CBOs) are organizations that are exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (26 USC 501). Other organizations eligible to apply for the 32n OST Grant and considered non-CBO entities include institutions of higher education, public libraries, local governments, and intermediate school districts.

Figure 2. Delivery Schedule for 2024-25 32n OST Grants Program Sites

Applicants were awarded school-year funding to operate before and/or after school program for at least 80 days between November 2024 and the end of the 2024-25 school year. Programs received additional funding for operating 100 or 120 days. Additionally, school-year 32n OST funded programs were expected to operate at least three days a week.

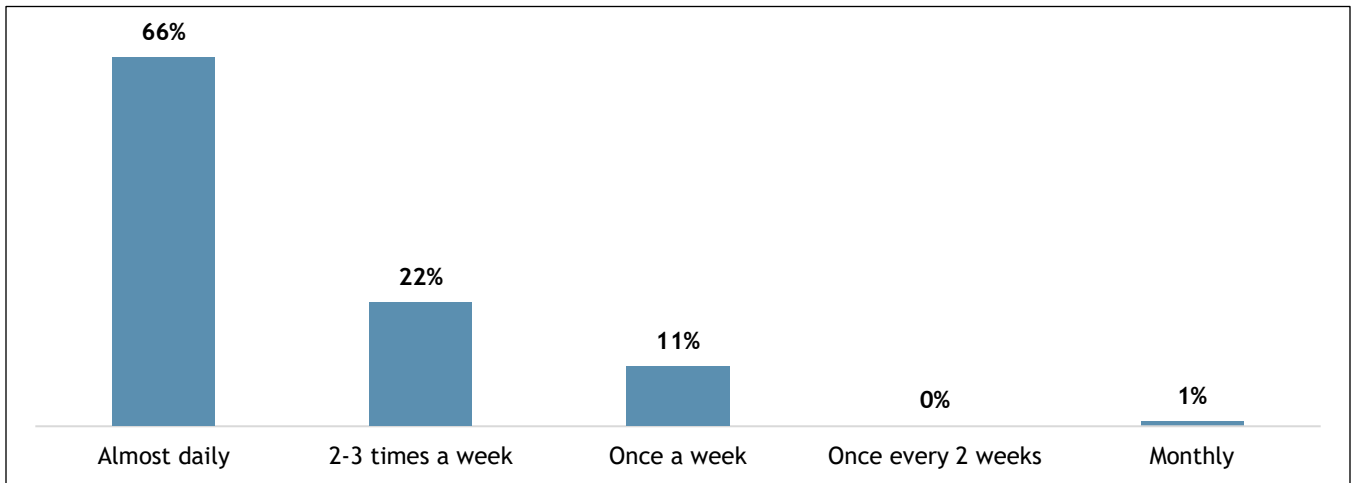
Summer programs were expected to provide at least four hours of OST programming per day for a minimum of 24 days. Additional funding was available at increments of 32 and 50 days of operation.

Programs that committed to operating year-round—including both the school year and summer—were prioritized for funding. Programs that chose to serve the maximum number of days—ensuring youth were safe and supported for extended periods during both the school year and summer—were also given priority.

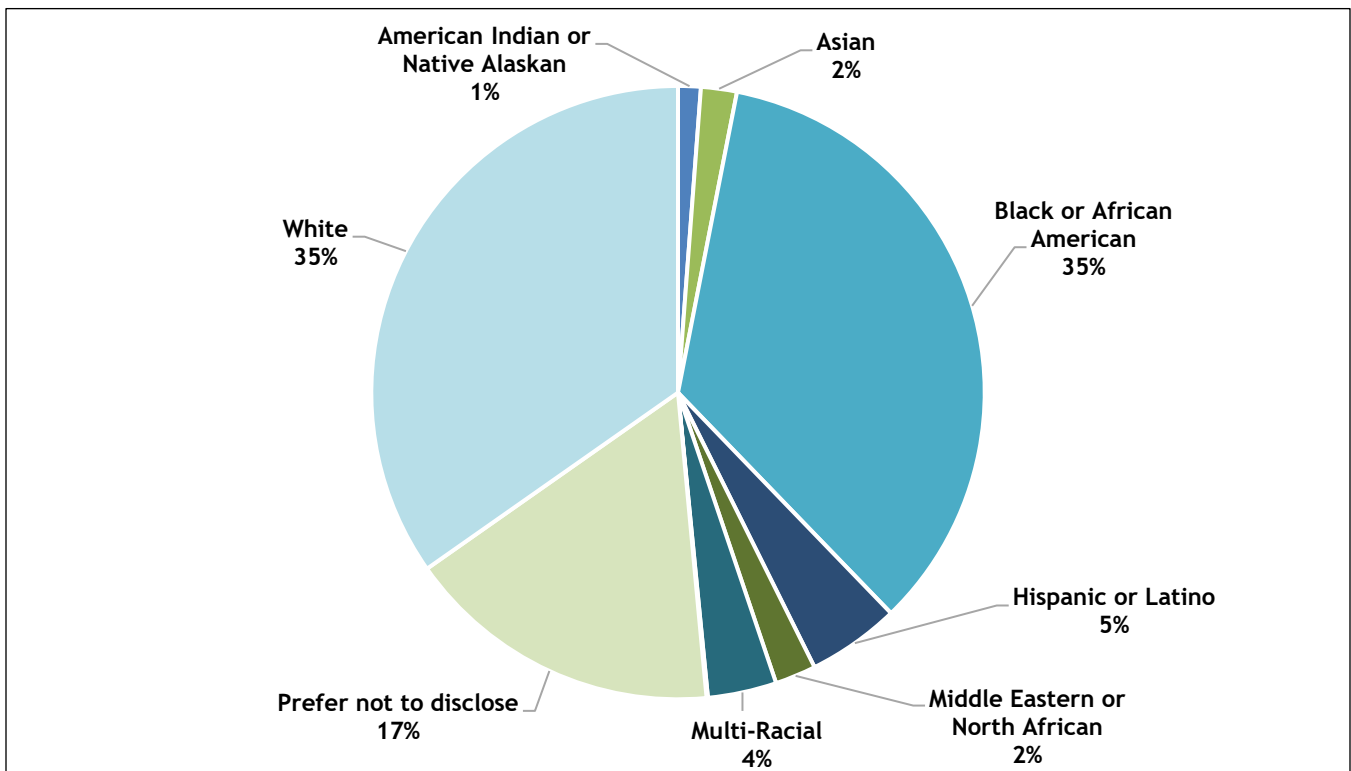
Children and Youth Served

Nearly 90,000 youth were served through 32n Grants Programs during 2024-25 (N = 89,333), including 76,419 youth documented through EZReports attendance records and 12,914 youth reported by carryover-funded sites. This was an impressive level of engagement that reflects the success of Michigan's significant investment in expanding access and support for communities statewide.

Attendance records from EZReports for the 76,419 youth also enabled estimation of attendance frequency. During the school year, 32n OST funded programs served an average of 30 youth per day, while summer attendance increased to an average of 49 youth per day. Almost all participants attended at least weekly, including 66% who attended daily, 22% who attended two to three times per week, and 11% who attended once a week. This high level of consistent participation is a program strength, as regular participation increases the likelihood of positive impacts (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Frequency of Youth Attendance

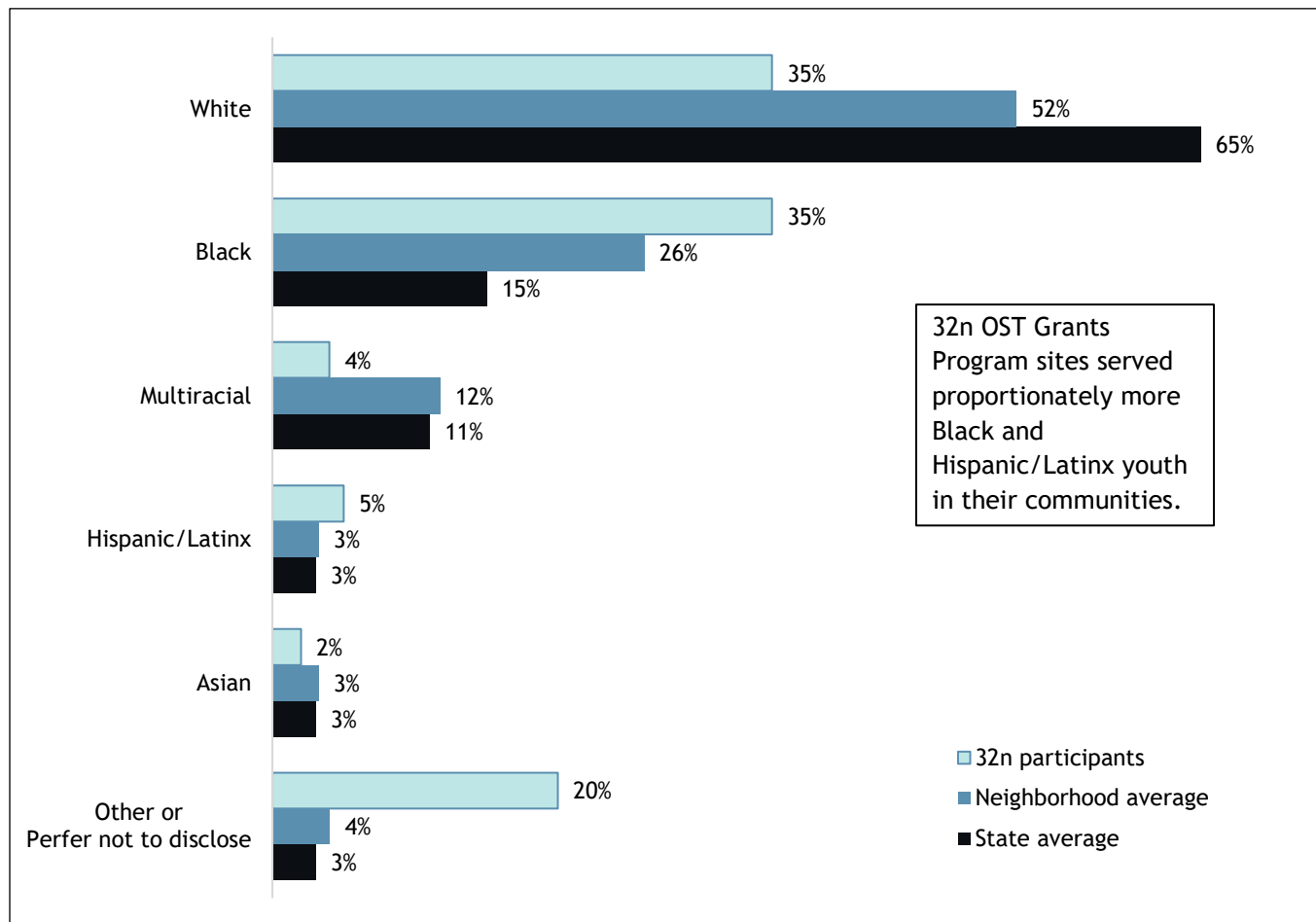
Youth participants were racially diverse, with about 35% of youth identifying themselves as Black or African American and 35% of youth as White. A notable portion of participants (17%) chose not to disclose their races, while all other racial and ethnic groups each represented 5% or less of the population, as shown in Figure 4.³

Figure 4. Proportion of Youth Served, by Race/Ethnicity

³ The analysis was based on data from 86,653 youth, including 76,419 participants reported through EZReports and 10,234 participants from two rollover grantees. One of the three rollover grantees did not report participant race/ethnicity data and was therefore excluded from race/ethnicity analyses.

To develop an approximate indicator of equitable access, researchers compared the racial/ethnic composition of 32n OST participants with the racial/ethnic composition of (a) the neighborhoods/ZIP codes where 32n OST funded programs were located, and (b) the statewide average. As shown in Figure 5, the proportion of Black youth participating at funded program sites exceeded their representation in the community, suggesting successful and intentional recruitment efforts reaching Black youth.

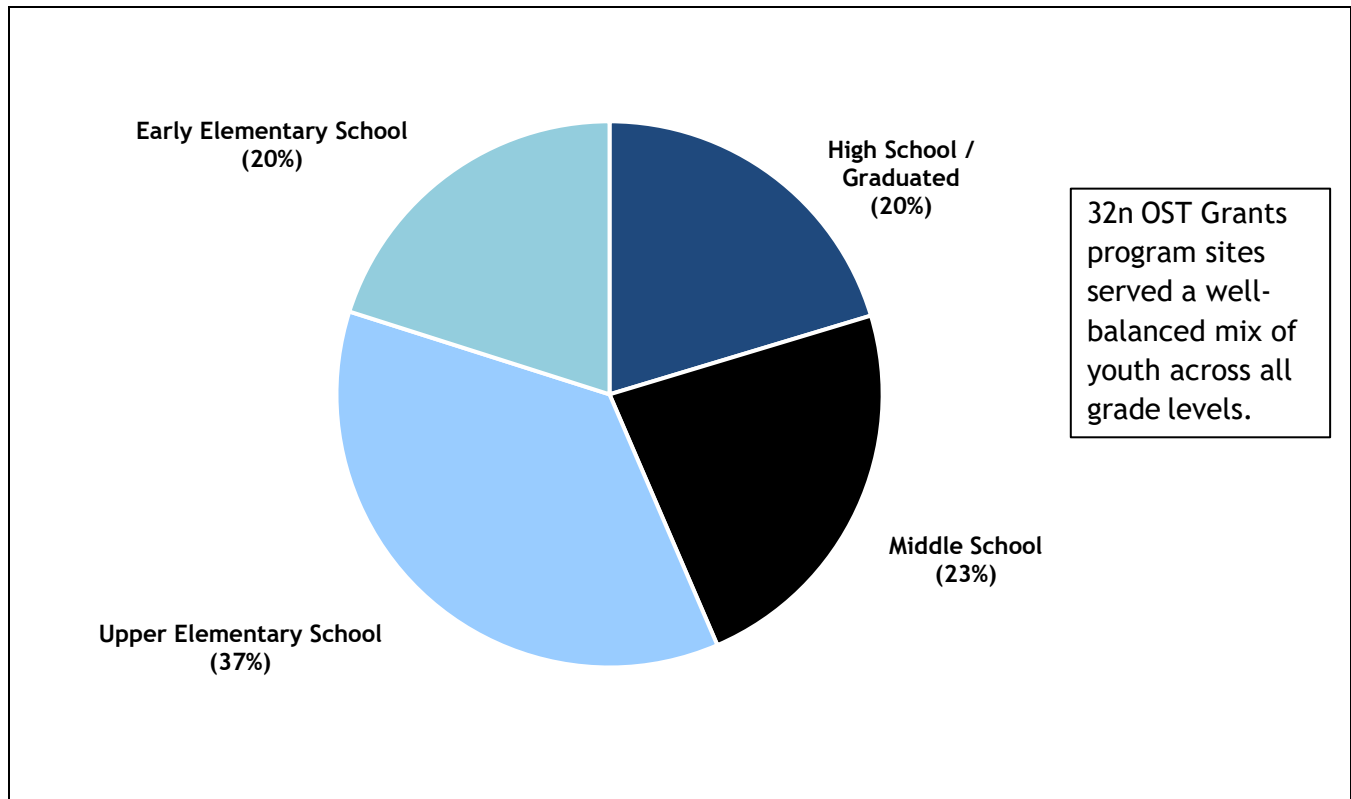
Figure 5. Race/Ethnicity of Youth in OST Grants Programs, ZIP Code Neighborhoods and Michigan



Neighborhood and state data were from the American Community Survey (Manson et al., 2024).

As illustrated in Figure 6, the smallest shares of participants (approximately 20% each) were from early elementary grades (K-2) and high school/graduated youth, while the largest share (about 37%) was from upper elementary grades (3-5).⁴

⁴ The analysis was based on data from 86,653 youth, including 76,419 participants reported through EZReports and 10,234 participants from two rollover grantees. One of the three rollover grantees did not report participant grade data and was therefore excluded from grade level analyses.

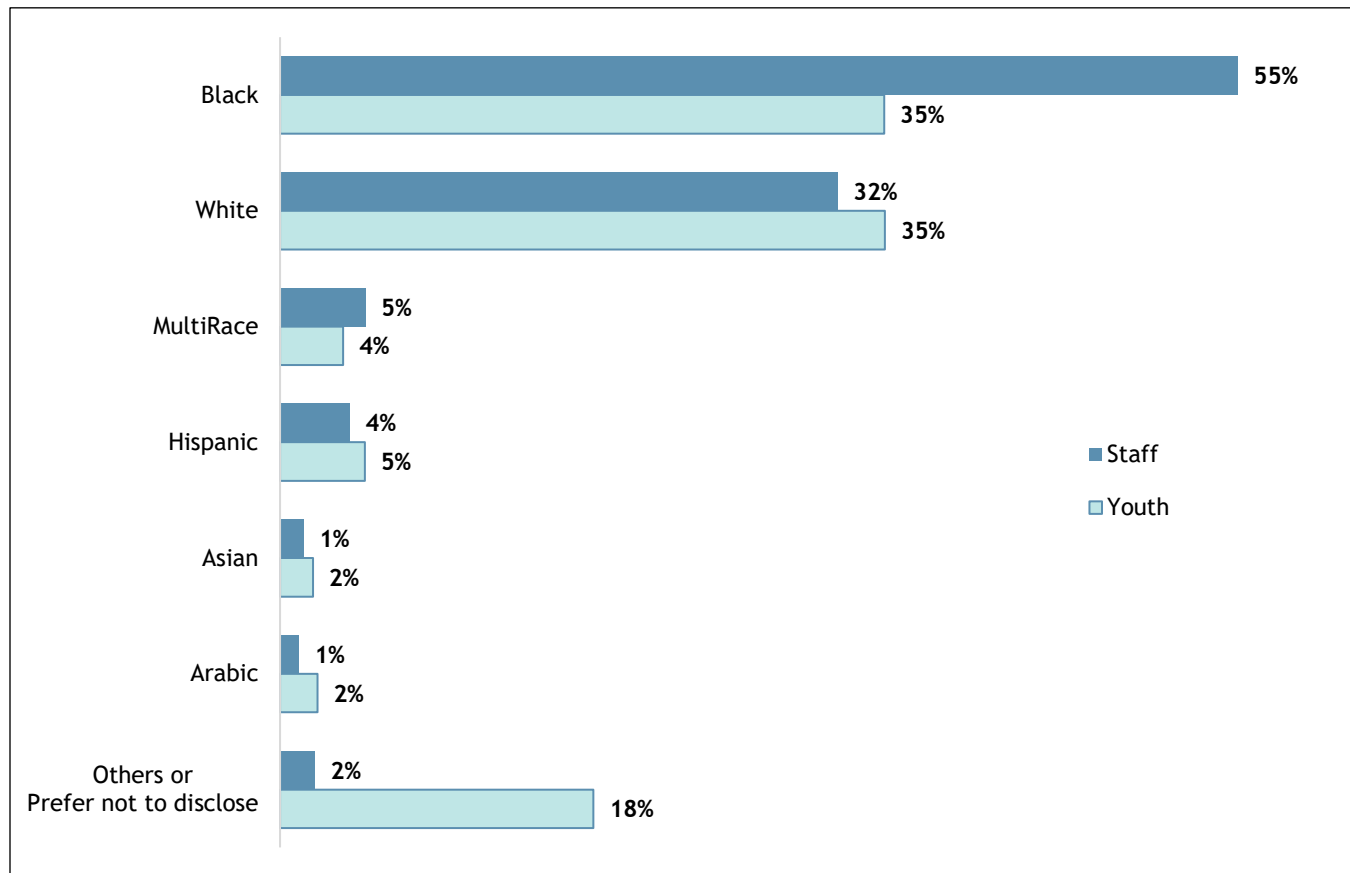
Figure 6. Proportion of Youth Served, by Grade Level

Early elementary school: grades K-2, upper elementary school: grades 3-5, middle school: grades 6-8, high school: grades 9-12.

Staff Demographics

The site manager survey responses enabled estimates of the number of staff working at the programs and their racial/ethnic backgrounds. During the school year, on average, 32n OST funded programs had 21 staff, with a reported range of two to 534 people (site manager survey respondents for school year N=587; response rate=91%). The average number of staff employed at the summer 32n OST Grants Programs was 22, with a range of one to 215 people (site manager survey respondents for summer N=694; response rate=92%). Combining these numbers with the reported youth count data yields average youth-staff ratios of 13:1 during the school year and 12:1 during the summer. These ratios align with recommended best-practice ranges outlined in the Michigan Out-of-School Time (MOST) Standards of Quality (10:1 for grades K-3 and 15:1 for grades 4-12) and remain well below Michigan's regulatory maximums of 20:1 (K-3) and 25:1 (grades 4-8) (Michigan Legislature, n.d.; Michigan Department of Education, 2021).

Overall, staff demographics were generally similar to youth demographics across several racial/ethnic categories, though Black staff were represented at a higher rate than Black youth, and a notably larger share of youth fell into "Other/Prefer not to disclose," suggesting incomplete or less specific reporting for youth race/ethnicity (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Distribution of 32n OST Grants Program Staff and Youth, by Race/Ethnicity

Program Offerings

Table 1 shows program activities site managers reported having offered and prioritized. During the school year, the most commonly offered areas were hands-on educational programming in reading/literacy (85%), mathematics (81%), soft skills development (81%), physical fitness (80%), and STEM (76%). These same topics also rise to the top when managers name priorities, particularly hands-on reading/literacy (58%), soft skills development (54%), STEM (50%), mathematics (42%), and physical fitness (40%).

Summer programming shows a similar but slightly narrower pattern: managers most often offer hands-on reading/literacy (67%), mathematics (61%), soft skills development (62%), recreation (61%), and STEM (64%). Priorities in summer again concentrate on core academic enrichment and social-emotional growth, led by hands-on reading/literacy (40%), STEM (30%), mathematics (29%), and soft skills development (28%).

Overall, topics such as community engagement, health and wellness, leadership, and recreation are widely offered in both seasons but are less frequently identified as top priorities, while agriculture, financial literacy, and 21st-century skills appear at comparatively lower levels of both offering and prioritization.

Table 1. 32n OST Grants Program Topics Offered and Prioritized, School Year and Summer

Topic	School Year		Summer	
	Offered	Prioritized	Offered	Prioritized
Agriculture	30%	7%	29%	5%
Career & College Exploration	39%	16%	31%	9%
Community Engagement	66%	20%	56%	14%
Cultural Engagement Programming	44%	10%	38%	6%
Financial Literacy	36%	9%	29%	5%
Hands-On Educational Programming in Mathematics	81%	42%	61%	29%
Hands-On Educational Programming in Reading/Literacy	85%	58%	67%	40%
Hands-On Educational Programming in Science	70%	26%	59%	21%
Health & Wellness	68%	24%	56%	15%
Leadership	63%	22%	50%	14%
Mentoring	63%	22%	47%	10%
Physical Fitness	80%	40%	58%	14%
Recreation	69%	27%	61%	19%
Soft Skills Development	81%	54%	62%	28%
STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics)	76%	50%	64%	30%
Visual & Performing Arts	51%	18%	43%	10%
Youth Voice	53%	16%	36%	5%
21st Century Skills	38%	7%	30%	5%
Others	13%	3%	4%	1%

Source: 2024-25 32n OST Grants Program site manager survey (School year: N = 454; summer: N = 585)

32n OST GRANTS PROGRAM ACCESSIBILITY

The evaluation measures accessibility by examining how 32n OST Grants Program funds were distributed. MiLEAP received 332 completed grant applications to fund 1,251 32n OST program sites across 72% of all Michigan counties. All applications were peer-reviewed for alignment with the grant priorities. MiLEAP was able to fund about half (54%) of the program sites. Appendix A shows the distribution of funded programs across Michigan counties.

Funded Programs

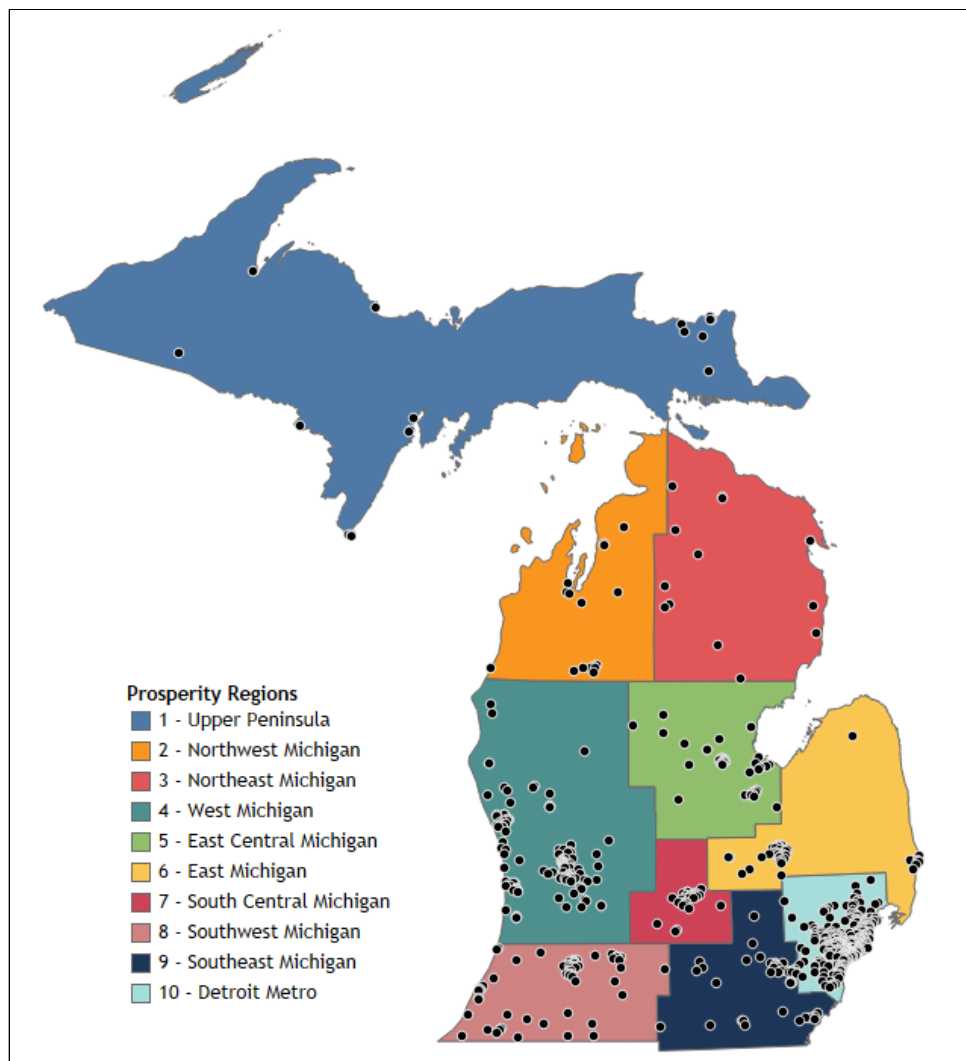
In 2024-25, MiLEAP distributed \$55.86 million to 168 grantees serving 681 sites plus \$4.5 million from fiscal year 2023-24 to extend 3 additional grantees serving 101 sites, totaling \$60.36 million in OST funding to 171 grantees and 782 sites. Figure 8 shows a map of program sites by prosperity region. About 48% of the funding went to the Detroit Metro region.

The amount of funding awarded was determined primarily by the number of children to be served by each site and by the length of program period: school year, summer, or both. The mean funding amount per site was \$77,139. The largest amount of funding per site was \$764,180 and the smallest, \$7,126.

Half (50%) of grantees operated only one site; 39% operated two to five sites. One grantee operated over 100 sites, accounting for 21% of all 32n OST funded sites. The largest number of sites operated by a single grantee was 161, accounting for 21% of all 32n OST program sites. The largest amount awarded to a single grantee was \$12 million; the smallest amount was \$14,400. The mean amount of funding per grantee was \$352,765.

To assess the extent to which 32n OST Grants Program funding is accomplishing its goal of expanding access to OST programming in underserved communities, state evaluators used the Child Opportunity Index created by Brandeis University (Diversity Data Kids, 2024). The Child Opportunity Index (COI 3.0; released in 2024) comprises 44 indicators organized into three domains, “education,” “health and environment,” and “social and economic” conditions, offering a comprehensive assessment of neighborhood conditions that influence child development. Researchers used COI data to estimate the opportunities and resources available to children in all areas across Michigan. ZIP code areas ranked *very high* or *high* have a greater concentration of educational, socioeconomic, and health/environmental resources that promote child well-being than those ranked low or very low. COI is different from the federal “Opportunity Zones” initiative established under the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act where “Opportunity Zones” are economically distressed communities eligible for preferential tax treatment. Among 32n OST Grants Program sites funded in 2024-25, 59% were in ZIP codes classified as low or very low, according to COI, 27% were in ZIP codes classed as *high* or *very high*, and 14% were in ZIP codes designated as *moderate*.

Figure 8. 32n OST Grants Program Sites, by Michigan Prosperity Region



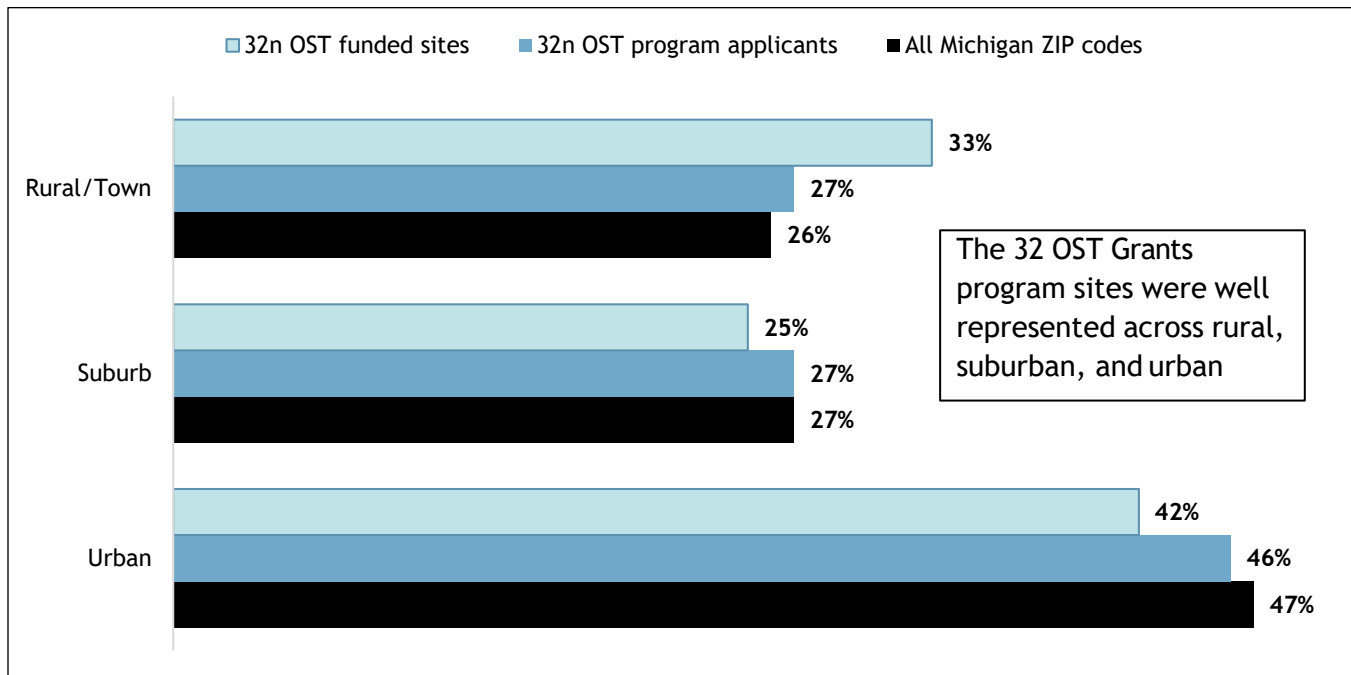
Source: MiLEAP 2024-25 32n OST Grants Program funding allocation

Comparison of Funded Sites and Applicant Sites

Applicants requested over \$122 million while the available budget was \$55.86 million, leaving a \$66.14 million gap. The figures below compare the characteristics of funded programs to those of the overall applicant pool and to Michigan statewide data by locale type (Figure 9) and Child Opportunity Index ratings (Figure 10). Characteristics of funded programs mostly matched those of all 32n OST Grants Program applicants.

32n OST Grants Program applicants and funded sites were evenly distributed across rural/town, suburban, and urban locales (Figure 9). Urban areas accounted for 47% of Michigan ZIP codes and over 40% of the 32n OST Grants Program applicants and funded sites. By contrast, 26% of Michigan ZIP codes are in rural/town areas, which accounted for about 30% of applicants and funded sites. Overall, the data suggests that 32n OST Grants Program has good representation across rural/town, suburban, and urban locales.

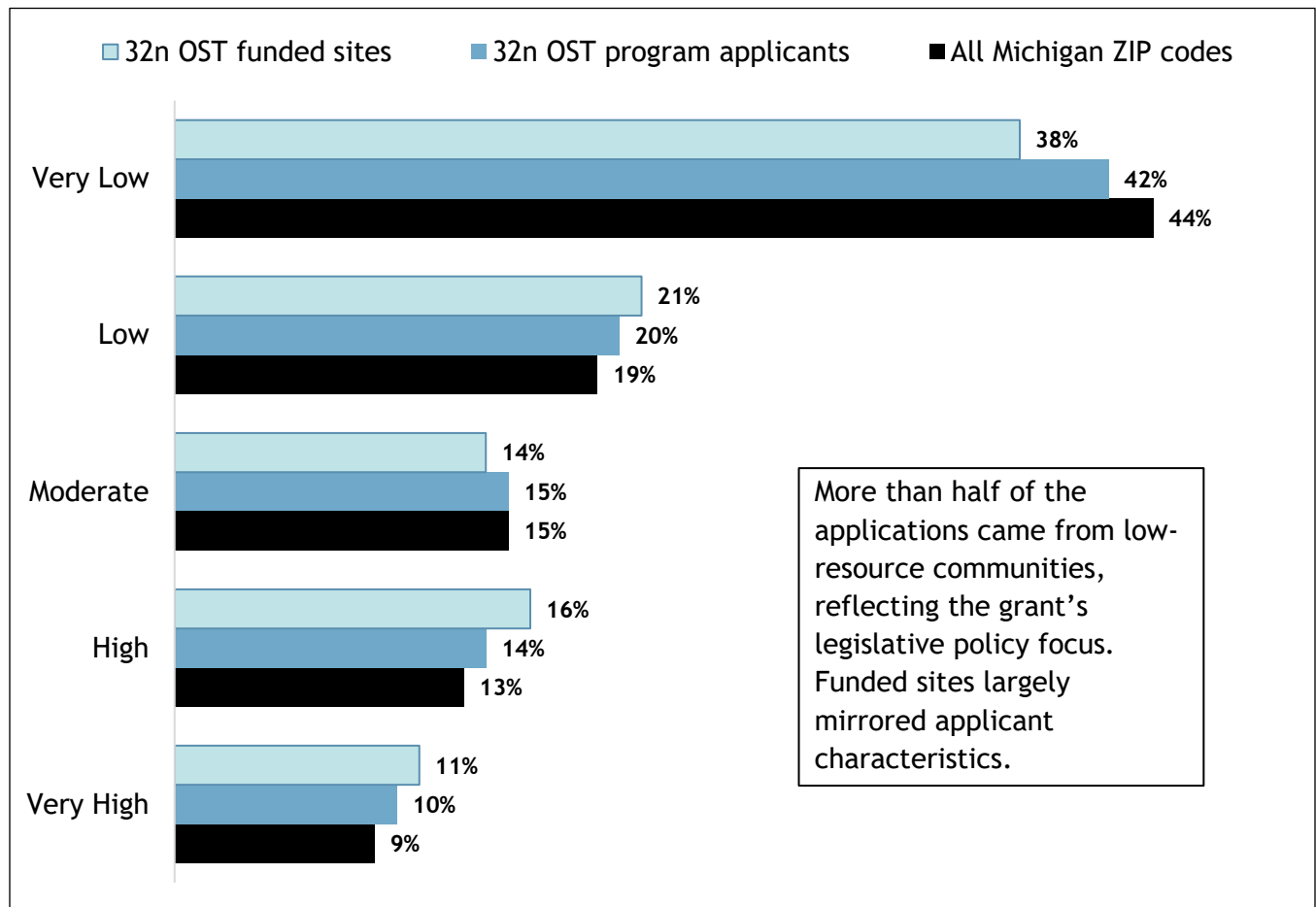
Figure 9. Distribution of Funded Sites, Applicants, and Michigan ZIP Codes, by Locale Type



Funded sites: N = 782; applicants: N = 1,069; Michigan ZIP codes: N = 1,311

Source: 2024-25 32n OST Grants Program funding distribution, National Center for Education Statistics (2021)

The distribution of funding to sites in communities with low or very low resources (as indicated by the Child Opportunity Index levels) reflects the grant's focus on supporting low-income families in under-resourced communities (Figure 10). Future access to youth free or reduced-price lunch status data, if granted, would allow for further examination of the extent to which programs funded in high- and very high-resource communities intentionally recruited and supported lower-resourced youth and families.

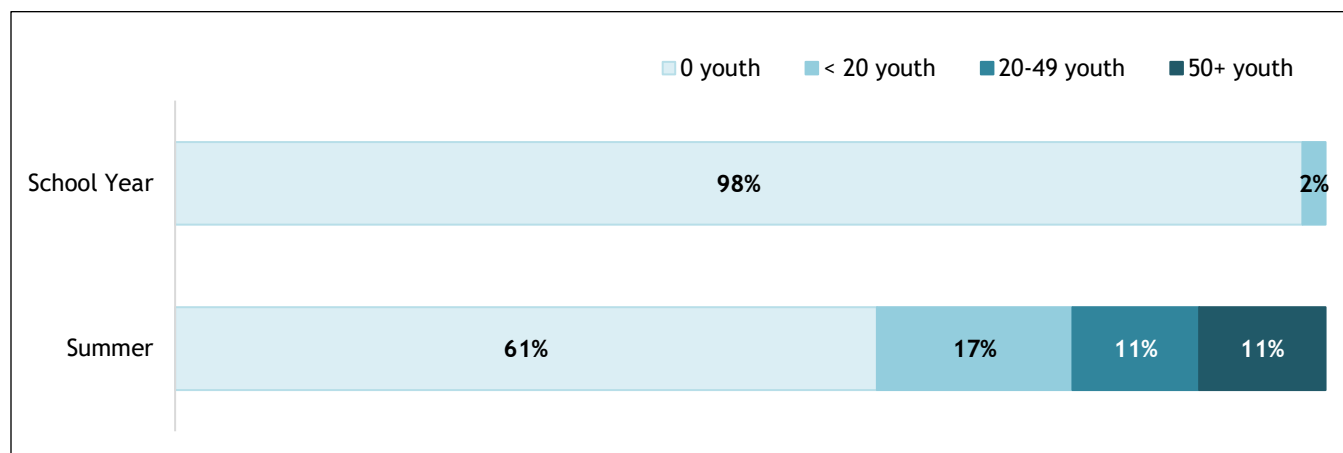
Figure 10. Funded Sites, Applicants, and Michigan ZIP Codes by Community Resource Level

Funded sites N = 782; applicants N = 1,069; Michigan ZIP codes N = 1,311

Source: MiLEAP 2024-25 32n OST Grants Program funding allocation; community resource level was based on Child Opportunity Index (3.0) data from diversitydatakids.org (2024)

Waitlists

Site managers reported on the number of youth for whom they did not have seats, another measure of access. Figure 11 shows that 98% of school-year programs did not need to place youth on waitlists, compared with 61% of summer programs. Only nine school-year programs (2%) reported waitlists, each involving fewer than 20 children and youth. By contrast, 131 summer programs (22%) reported waitlists of at least 20 youth, and about half of these had waitlists of 50 youth or more.

Figure 11. Distribution of 32n OST Grants Program Sites by Waitlist Size in School Year and Summer

Source: 2024-25 32n OST Grants Program site manager survey (School year: N = 449; summer: N = 586)

32n OST GRANTS PROGRAM QUALITY

Although many site managers reported having been engaged in program quality assessments, results of those assessments were not available to state evaluators. For this report, 32n OST Grants Program quality was assessed primarily through two surveys designed by the state evaluator in collaboration with MiLEAP and MASP. Youth and family surveys were sent to funded grantees to disseminate to program participants and their families. Both surveys, fielded from April to September 2025, asked respondents to rate statements about their 32n OST Grants Program sites on a scale from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. For the youth survey, 474 participating sites yielded 10,990 usable responses.⁵ For the family survey, 475 sites participated, providing 8,082 usable responses.⁶

Youth Perceptions of Program Quality

The youth survey included demographic questions. Respondents primarily identified themselves as female (44%) or male (46%); a few did not wish to disclose their gender (10%). In terms of race and ethnicity, 44% of respondents identified themselves as Black or African American, and 23% as White. Smaller proportions of responding youth identified themselves as multiracial (9%), Hispanic/Latinx (6%), American Indian or Alaska Native (3%), Arabic (3%), Asian (2%), or Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (less than 1%), and 11% of respondents preferred not to disclose their race or ethnicity.

Survey respondents included a higher proportion of Black or African American youth compared to the overall racial/ethnic composition of 32n OST Grants Program participants. Although some differences were observed, the survey sample broadly aligned with the population served which helps explain the higher proportion of Black youth in the sample relative to the overall population breakdown.

⁵ A total of 12,803 participant surveys were collected. Of those, 10,990 were defined as usable because they could be associated with a specific site. Questions left blank in the useable surveys were removed for analysis.

⁶ Of the 9,088 family surveys collected, 8,082 were defined as usable because they could be associated with a specific site. Questions left blank in the useable surveys were removed for analysis.

Usable responses came from youth attending various school grade levels, with 38% coming from elementary school students (grades K-5); 34%, from middle school students (grades 6-8); and 28%, from high school students (grades 9-12). The grade-level distribution of survey respondents generally follows the distribution of youth served by the program, indicating that the survey sample is broadly representative across age groups.

Survey respondents attended their 32n OST Grants Program frequently: 62% reported they came almost every day, and 26% said they attended two or three times a week. Only 6% reported attending once a week; 2%, about once every two weeks; and 4%, about once a month.

As a whole, participants reported highly positive experiences across all program quality domains, as shown in Figure 12, which presents the average percentage of *Agree* and *Strongly Agree* responses by category. High levels of agreement were observed for program satisfaction, growth mindset, positive climate, healthy living, school connection, identity development, youth voice, and collaboration, indicating strong performance across key developmental and environmental indicators. Notably, about 22% of respondents agreed with negative statements such as “kids get bullied here” or “we wait around a lot here,” suggesting room for managerial improvement to ensure a safe and supportive environment for all youth (Table 2).

Figure 12. Youth Agreement with Themes Related to Program Quality

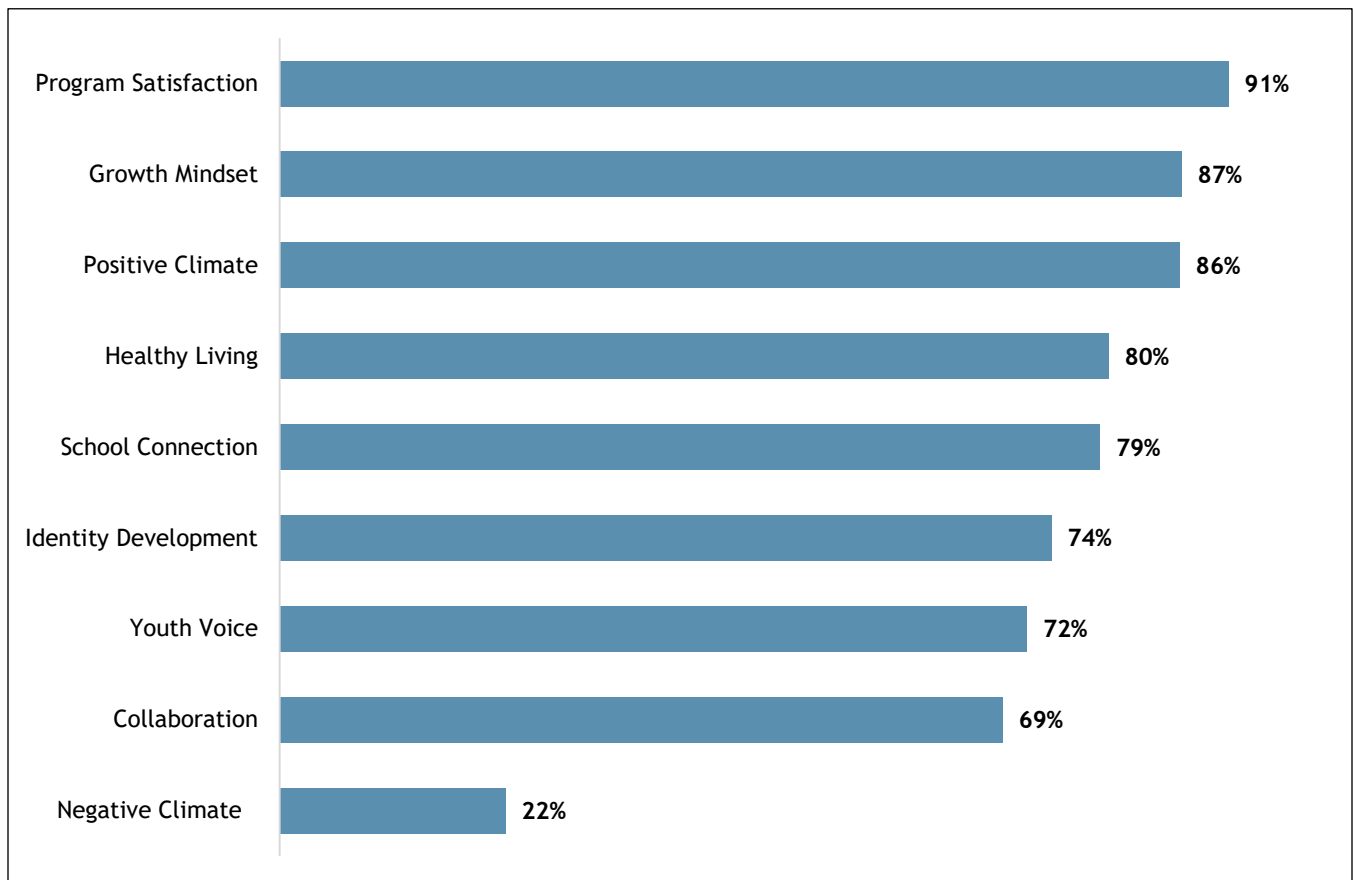


Table 2. Youth Agreement with Statements about Program Quality

Survey Item	Agree or Strongly Agree
Positive Climate	
Adults here care about me.	92%
I can tell the adults here about my problems.	84%
This program helps me make new friends.	83%
Negative Climate	
Kids get bullied here.	24%
Adults get mad a lot at this program.	17%
We wait around a lot here.	24%
Youth Voice	
I get to choose my activities here.	71%
I get to help plan activities, projects or events here.	64%
Adults ask what we think about activities here.	80%
Collaboration	
I get to lead activities here (example: planning, meetings).	50%
I get to help other kids here (example: homework, projects).	75%
At this program, we learn how to deal with a conflict without fighting.	83%
Growth Mindset	
This program encourages me to be the best I can be.	84%
This program teaches me that mistakes or failure are just part of learning.	89%
Identity Development	
At this program, I learn about my feelings.	72%
This program takes time helping me understand my identities (race, social class, etc.).	73%
I feel comfortable expressing all of my identities in this program.	77%
School Connection	
The activities here help me do better at school.	77%
I can use the things I do here during my school day.	79%
This program helps me think about my education or future career.	80%
Healthy Living	
This program offers me fruits and vegetables every day.	78%
This program helps me get up and play for at least 60 minutes a day.	81%
Program Satisfaction	
I like coming to this program.	91%

In addition to strengthening **management practices** to ensure a safe and supportive environment, programs could focus on taking **youth voice** and **collaboration** to the next level. Specifically, while youth reported learning how to work with others and being asked for input by adults, fewer indicated that they “**get to lead activities**” (50%) or “**plan projects**” (64%). Youth shared a wide range of favorite aspects of the program, with recreational activities emerging as the most frequently mentioned.

While fun and active experiences were highly visible, responses also highlight deeper impacts. Youth valued the program’s sense of community, academic support, social connections, creative

opportunities, and personal growth, showing that the program supports both enjoyment and meaningful development.

Key Themes and Illustrative Quotes from Youth Survey

1. Academic Support and Learning

Youth valued time and support for schoolwork, skill-building, and new learning opportunities.

- *“Making friendships with others, being a good and helpful person, and getting work done to be successful in school.”*
- *“My favorite part of the program is us having time to be able to practice and after practice we go to study hall. They help us on our grades so we don’t fall behind and team building”*

2. Recreational Activities

Youth most often highlighted active and fun components such as sports, games, and special activities.

- *“I like to play soccer with my friends and Mrs. Ana playing with us. I like when they give us arts and crafts and when we do icebreakers with the people that work there.”*
- *“Playing dodgeball and playing freeze dance. I also like to play keyboard and drums”*

3. Sense of Belonging and Community

Many described the program as a welcoming, family-like space that supports connection and well-being.

- *“My favorite part of Mosaic is being there. Everything about it. The building the people, the youth artist, the teaching artist, the learning, the growing, even the stairs. Mosaic heals me no matter what and I never dread going, I never want to skip, I never would rather not.”*
- *“My favorite part of the program is the collaboration and unity as well as community that all comes with coming to the program. I love the opportunity to be able to learn and be great in my own way and get my work done and have allies there to help and assist on what I need.”*

4. Friendship and Social Connection

Spending time with friends and building relationships made the program enjoyable and meaningful.

- *“Most likely spending time with my friends and getting to know new people. Observing my classmates act out their lines and moving the set pieces around were very fun.”*
- *“I like the volunteering event that I am able to go on and how I’m able to hang out with friends and communicate with new people”*

5. Arts and Creative Enrichment

Creative activities allowed youth to express themselves and learn in hands-on ways.

- *“Being here to have fun and learning different things about working at camp”*
- *“Tea parties and learning etiquette”*

6. Personal Growth and Empowerment

Some youth reflected on deeper impacts related to confidence, safety, culture, and life skills.

- *“I enjoyed creating strong bonds with my sisters I see at the club. As the only girl it’s kind of hard to have a connection but with my group their actions not only dismissed my fears they’ve helped them. Another thing I enjoy is learning more about myself and how to stay protected. As a young black woman who’s constantly facing challenges due to my skin. It’s important to know how the world works so I won’t be oblivious towards things. In my program we’ve learned how to defend ourselves specifically against predators and how to be more self-aware. And not become a target which is important as a young lady that’s vulnerable to these things. I also learned about finance with Janelle Jones she has helped inspire me in such a way that I’ve never thought. It even taught me to avoid generational poverty in a society where I could be judged for so having her give me a sense of financial independence is so important towards myself and my future.”*
- *“The community built with the care and trust of those around me. It feels like a family, a safe space but also a learning environment where I can better myself and the people around me while learning to be more creative, cooperative, confident, and professional.”*

Family Member Perceptions of Program Quality

Family surveys were distributed to participants’ caregivers by their 32n OST Grants Programs; 8,082 usable surveys were received. Most respondents (77%) were mothers, including stepmothers and foster mothers. Fathers, including stepfathers and foster fathers, constituted 14% of respondents; grandparents, 7%; and other or multiple caregivers, 2%.

The racial and ethnic identities of family survey respondents reflected a diverse population. The largest shares identified themselves as Black or African American (41%) and White (39%). Smaller proportions of respondents self-identified as Hispanic/Latinx (6%), multiracial (5%), Asian (2%), Arabic (2%), or American Indian or Alaska Native (1%), while fewer than 1% identified as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. An additional 5% of respondents preferred not to disclose their race or ethnicity. The racial and ethnic distribution of family survey respondents closely aligns with the demographics of the youth served by the program, suggesting that family feedback is broadly representative of the communities reached.

It is worth noting that the percentage of White family survey respondents (39%) differed substantially from that of White youth survey respondents (23%). In addition, fewer family survey respondents (5%) declined to report their racial/ethnic background, compared to 11% of youth respondents. The distribution across the remaining racial and ethnic categories was similar between youth and family respondents. Over half of family respondents (61%) said their child participants were in elementary school, 23% said their participating child was in middle school, and 16% had high school youth in the program. These characteristics suggested that the family survey responses represent the broader population served by the 32n OST Grants Program.

Families’ responses about their children’s program attendance were very similar to the youth survey responses, and overall participant attendance reported in EZReports: 64% of family respondents said

their child attended almost every day, 26% indicated two or three times a week; 5%, about once a week; 1%, about once every two weeks; and 4%, about once a month.

Overall, families reported very positive perceptions of program quality and benefits for their children, as shown in Table 3. Large majorities indicated that youth participation helped “somewhat or to a great extent” across all benefit items, including being physically active (96% of responding families), avoiding excessive screen time (95%), making good friends (96%), having adult support (95%), and being safe and staying out of trouble (94%). Ratings were still strong but comparatively lower for healthy eating (83%) and keeping up with schoolwork (83%).

Families also expressed high levels of family engagement: nearly all agreed that their programs make them feel supported and welcomed (97%), that staff partnered with them to support their children (97%), and that they felt well informed about what their children were doing in the program (91%). These findings reflect the intentional efforts of programs to achieve the 32n OST Grant’s family engagement goal.

Beyond the care and growth opportunities these programs provided for children, families also reported economic benefits associated with 32n OST program participation. Over half of families (53%) said they would need to pay for other services or programs if the program became unavailable, while 30% reported they would have to reduce their work hours and 17% said they would stop working or find another job.

Table 3. Family Responses to 32n OST Grants Program Quality Statements

Survey Item	Somewhat or To a Great Extent
Benefits of Youth Participation	
Being safe and staying out of trouble	94%
Eating healthy	83%
Being physically active	96%
Avoiding excessive screen time	95%
Keeping up with schoolwork	83%
Having adult support	95%
Making good friends	96%
Survey Item	Agree or Strongly Agree
Family Engagement	
This program makes me feel supported and welcomed.	97%
I am well informed about what my child is doing at the program.	91%
The staff here are my partners to support my child.	97%
Survey Item	Yes
Family Impact	
We would have to reduce work hours	30%
We would have to stop working or find another job	17%
We would have to pay for other services or programs	53%

Key Themes and Illustrative Quotes from Family Survey

Families shared powerful stories about the positive impact of the OST programs on their children and their households. The most frequently cited theme was child growth and development, with parents describing gains in confidence, friendships, routines, and social and academic skills. Family support and financial relief was another major theme, as affordable, reliable care allowed parents to maintain employment and manage work responsibilities. Families also emphasized safety and stability, noting the program's secure and nurturing environment, and staff and relationships, highlighting the dedication of trusted staff who fostered strong connections and community. A smaller but meaningful set of responses focused on support for special needs, where inclusive practices and accommodations were described as transformative for children and families.

1. Child Growth and Development

Parents shared how the program helped their children build confidence, social skills, independence, and academic success.

- *"BMEA has helped my son learn how to make great choices in making friends. They've helped him learn to be more independent and outgoing and a great communicator! This program helps pay for groceries in our household and helps my son with clothing. My son is learning his purpose and strength! Before attending BMEA he did not look forward to attending school and making the best of it! His educators love having him in the class, they say he's well-mannered and loves assisting the teacher when students are struggling, he helps the child understand the lesson! My son loves everything about the program from the men he works with, the children he mentors, the pow-wow meetings, the college tours, and traveling out of town. I could barely get him to leave the house for school now he has perfect attendance! He's so responsible that I never have to ask him to do any of his chores. This is a HUGE thanks to BMEA for making him a young, responsible, educated man!"*
- *"My daughter was struggling with depression and really sad at times. Teen space has helped her keep her mind off things and has shown her how to do many things, from making soap to performing on a stage. She is an all around happy kid most days now. We are forever grateful for teen space and will forever support it."*

2. Family Support and Financial Relief

Families emphasized the program's role in making full-time work possible and easing financial and childcare burdens.

- *"It has made a world of difference to my ability as a single mom to get my work done while knowing my kid is safe and engaged and happy every afternoon. The alternative would be scrambling for childcare or picking her up after school and plugging her into an iPad while I try to finish my work at home. Because she never wants to leave until the program closes at 6, when I pick her up then I can more fully turn my attention to her because I have had a full work day."*
- *"This out-of-school time has helped my family by allowing me to be able to work my full workday and not have to worry about my son waiting around outside somewhere waiting to be"*

picked up. Although often there is an alternative which is why I chose the drop in option. However, having that option makes me feel better knowing he has somewhere safe to go when no one can get to him on time."

3. Safety and Stability

Parents praised the safe, structured environment that gave them peace of mind and provided consistency for their children.

- *"This program is one of my child's favorite parts of their day. Before care helps to get him excited to get to school on time in the mornings and he loves having some downtime to play with his friends after school. Our son has found a sense of community with kids of different grade levels and interests at his school through this program. For us, as parents, this program has been a gamechanger with allowing us to get to and from work and knowing our child is well taken care of. Having the program be at the school without requiring separate transportation is hugely helpful."*
- *"This program has helped me and my child in more ways than one. My child feels safe and secure. Love is love here. I appreciate the effort, transparency and supportive teachings. Children can be children in an environment that offers a safe place and space. Not only to embrace self development but to understand humanity, fairness, kindness. consideration and unconditional love. The energy feels like home. I have no worries when I drop my baby off, I know she is safe, respected and well taken care of. Grateful."*

4. Staff and Relationships

Families highlighted the dedication of caring, professional staff who built strong connections and created a welcoming community.

- *"I have three elementary-aged children in Ann Arbor and we've leveraged many different types of child care over the past 10 years from short-term at the gym, long term facilities (two), after school programs, babysitters, family and neighbors. Kids Club is the most engaging, fun, active program we've found. I am in awe of the staff - they are so dedicated to the kids, so professional and engaging. I've never seen them on their phones, or looking bored. They are miracle workers. I also care deeply about our community, and the fact that CDC makes child care (and camp!) available to families of different economic means is extremely important for our community (and my own values). I can't say enough positive things about CDC!!"*
- *"One of the few spaces my teen feels safe in, and also the art they create is work they are proud of. They have especially connected with Miranda. I'm super grateful for this program. With my teen's mental health status, it feels like a downright miracle that they want to participate in CW!!!"*

5. Support for Special Needs

Parents of children with unique needs valued the program's accommodations and inclusive practices that enabled growth and belonging.

- *“This program has supported my family in so many different ways. My son is on the autism spectrum, and the staff have been very accommodating to his needs over the last few years.”*
- *“This program has helped my child who is on the spectrum build upon his social skills in a safe, professional setting. We have been able to fine tune and apply the skills he works on in other clinical settings. This program also helped us identify whether specific behaviors are based on sensory issues or personal preferences. Ex) my child does not tolerate applause in school settings and other settings. In this group, my child has tolerated applause well. Like did not react at all! This was news to us, because my child has always claimed it hurts the ears. Thank you so much for this program.”*

32n OST GRANTS PROGRAM OUTCOMES

The main goals of the 32n OST Grants Program are to “*improve school attendance, academic outcomes, positive behaviors, and skill acquisition*” for Michigan children in grades K-12 (Public Act 103 of 2023, p. 71). To show the program’s alignment with these goals, families were asked how much they had observed improvements in their children’s behaviors. The questions were grouped into two themes:

- **School behaviors:** Attending class/school regularly, actively engaging in school-day activities, completing homework on time, actively engaging in school-day activities, and getting better grades.
- **Soft skills development:** Believing that abilities can be improved through effort, effectively regulating emotions, willingness to learn about others' perspectives, developing healthy friendships, and wanting to be helpful to others.

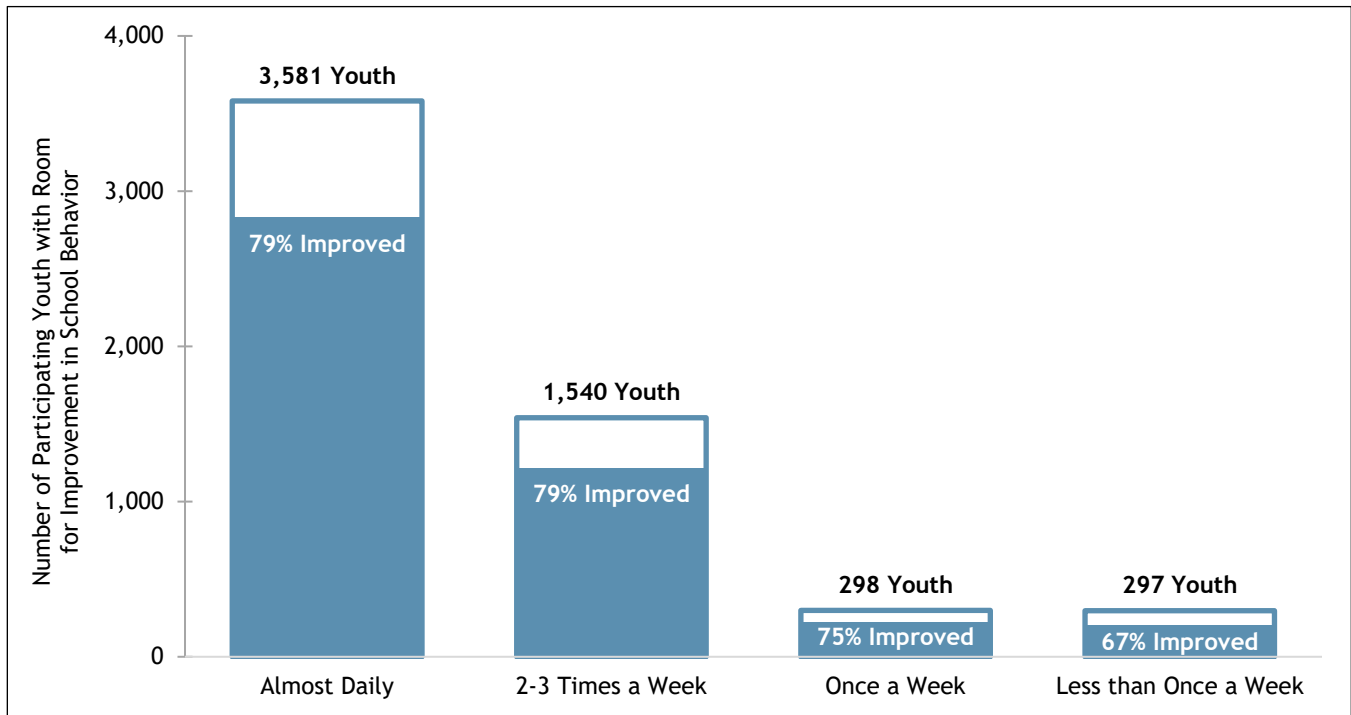
Statewide data indicate that youth who attended 32n OST Grants Programs more frequently demonstrated greater improvements in school behaviors and soft skills, as reported by their families.

Figure 13 and Figure 14 below illustrate differences in improvements by frequency of attendance. Data exclude families who reported “My child does not need to improve” or “I don’t know,” as well as families from one grantee whose data were not available. This resulted in a total sample size of 5,716 for the school behavior outcome and 5,725 for the soft skills outcomes.



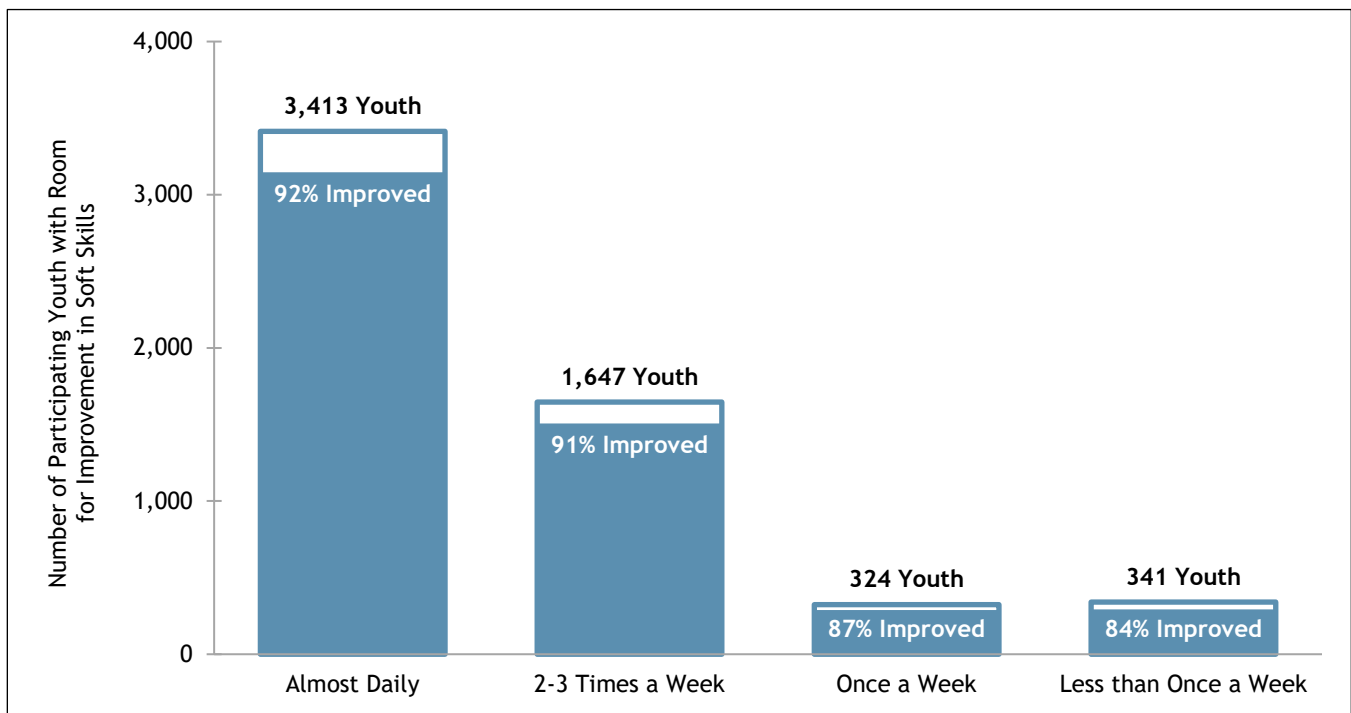
Picture credit: stockcake.com

Figure 13. Youth Needing and Showing Improvement in School Behavior, by Frequency of Attendance in 32n OST Grants Program



Source: 2024-25 32n OST Grants Program participant's family survey (N = 5,716)

Figure 14. Participating Youth Needing and Achieving Improvement in Soft Skills, by Frequency of Attendance in 32n OST Grants Program



Source: 2024-25 32n OST Grants Program participant's family survey (N = 5,725)

32n OST GRANTS PROGRAM CHALLENGES

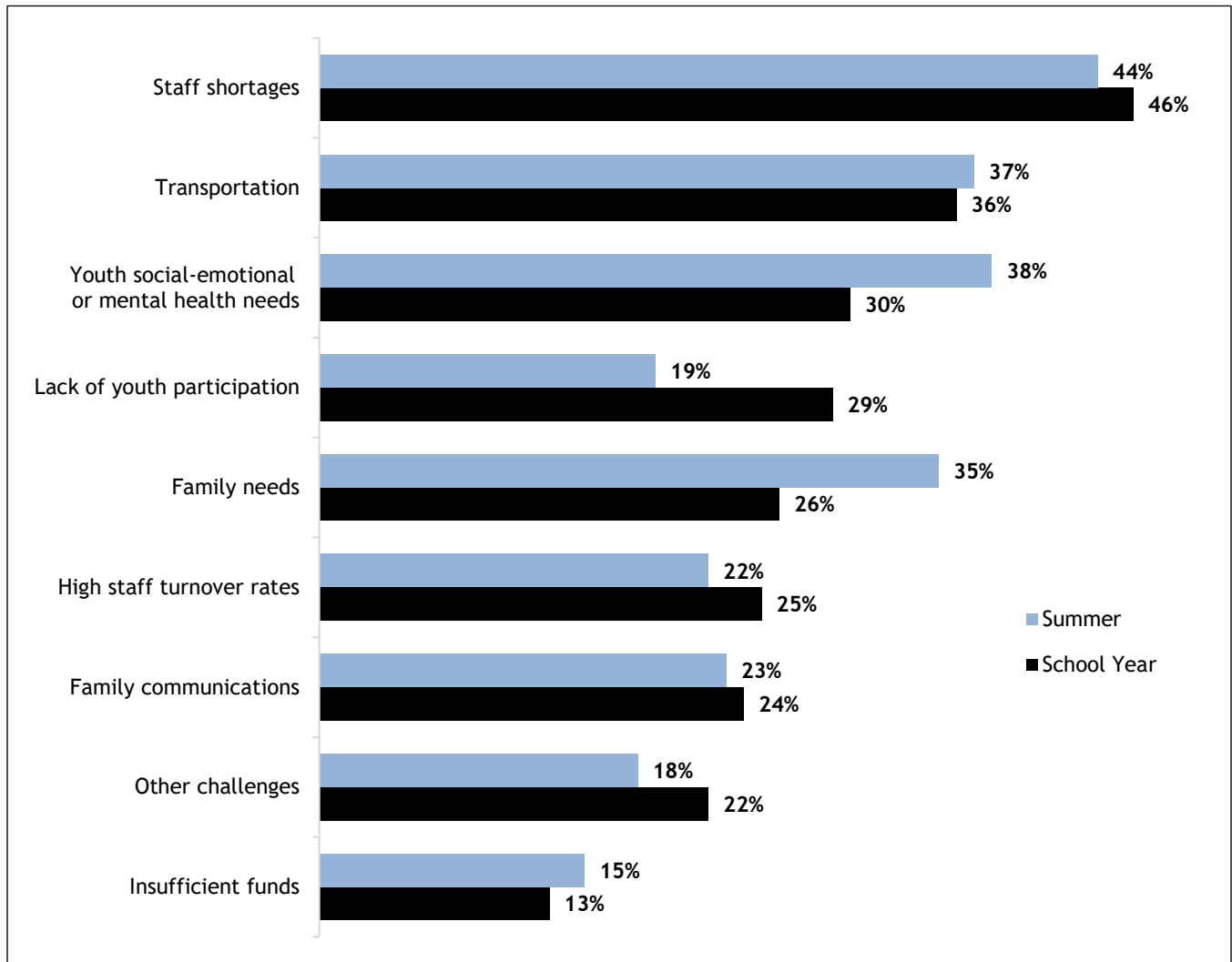
The site manager survey gave 32n OST Grants Program administrators the opportunity to describe what was working so far and what was challenging at their locations. Many site managers expressed gratitude for the 32n OST Grants Program and opportunity it provides to serve more youth. One site manager explained:

- "For 35 years, our out-of-school time and summer day camp programs have provided safe, engaging, and transformative experiences for hundreds of youth. Ongoing support and targeted funding have been foundational to our success, allowing us to expand opportunities, maintain high-quality staffing, and tailor activities to the needs of our community. This past year has superseded our expectations. The additional funding has enabled program expansion, enhanced staffing, improved safety measures, and broadened access to activities. Our long-term vision is to aim to build a sustainable model that continues to prioritize equity, accessibility, and high-quality programming for all participants. This past year has been the best program we have had."*

Implementation

When asked to select from a list of common 32n OST implementation challenges (Figure 15), almost half of site managers identified staffing shortages, with similar shares of respondents in summer (44%) and the school year (46%). Transportation was also frequently cited in both seasons (37% summer; 36% school year), as were challenges meeting youth social-emotional or mental health needs, which were more prominent in summer programs. Meeting families' needs was another leading concern, again higher in summer than during the school year (35% vs. 26%). In contrast, lack of youth participation was more often reported during the school year (29% vs. 19%). Small proportions of managers pointed to insufficient funds (15% summer vs. 13% school year).



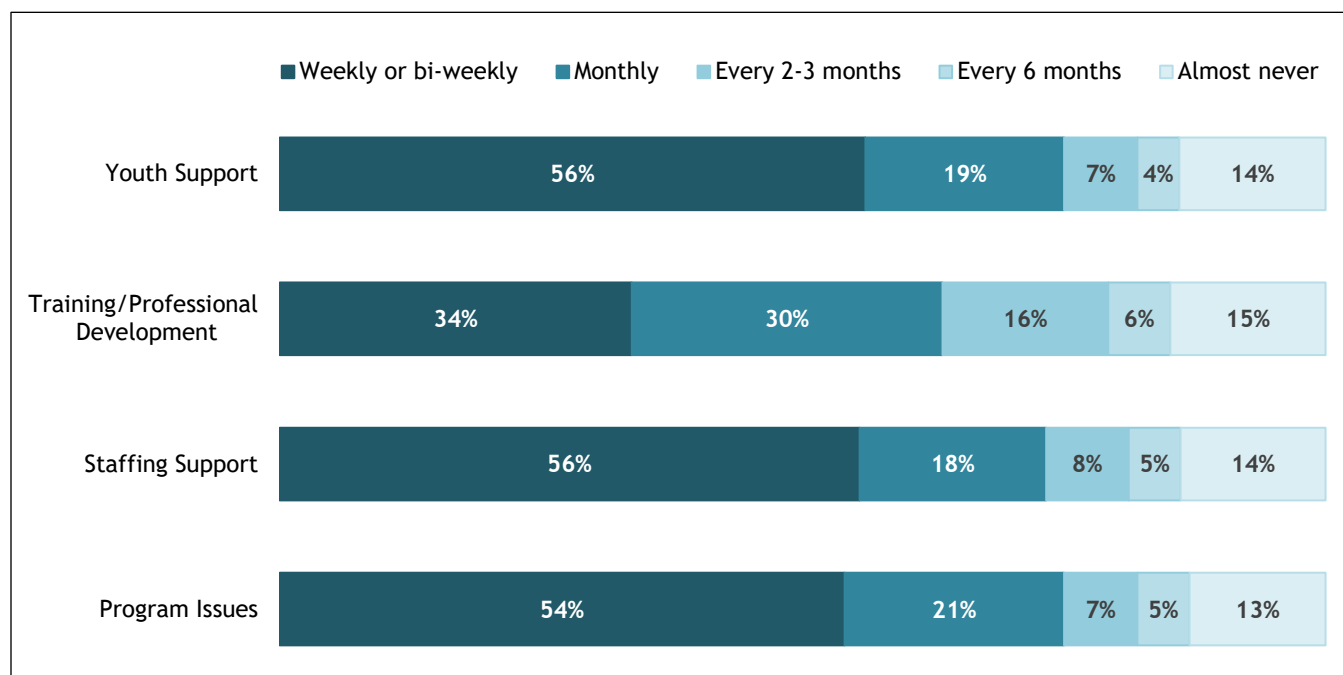
Figure 15. Challenges Faced by OST Site Managers, School Year and Summer

Source: 2024-25 32n OST Grants Program site manager survey (School year: N = 400; summer: N = 486).

Communication Between Sites and Grantees

Results from the site manager survey regarding meetings with their managers are presented in Figure 16. Discussions were frequent across all four topic areas. Youth support, staffing support, and program issues were addressed most often, with approximately three-quarters of site managers reporting that these topics were discussed at least monthly and a majority indicating weekly or bi-weekly conversations. Training and professional development was discussed somewhat less frequently but remained a regular topic, with nearly two-thirds of respondents reporting monthly or more frequent discussions. Only a small proportion of site managers (approximately 13-15%) reported that they “almost never” discussed any of the topics, indicating that the vast majority communicated with grant managers on all topics at least occasionally.

Figure 16. Frequency of Communication Between Site Managers and Grantee Managers About Specific Concerns



Source: 2024-25 32n OST Grants Program site manager survey (N =591)

During the school year, about two-thirds of site managers reported that their grant manager met with them in person (66%) or virtually (63%) at least monthly. During the summer, monthly in-person visits were reported more frequently (71%), while fewer site managers reported meeting virtually (56%). Notably, 16% of site managers reported that their grant managers almost never conducted site visits during either period, while 19% reported almost never having virtual meetings during the school year and 31% reported almost never meeting virtually during the summer.

Key Themes and Illustrative Quotes from Site Manager Survey

Responses to the open-ended survey question regarding additional support needs revealed several consistent themes related to funding, administrative processes, family engagement, and staff capacity. Responses suggest that while staff are committed to serving youth and communities, additional support is needed to ensure program sustainability and effectiveness. Clearer alignment between funding levels and expectations, improved administrative guidance, enhanced family engagement resources, and attention to staff capacity were consistently identified as areas for improvement.

1. Funding and Resource Constraints

The most common theme in open-ended comments was centered on the need for increased or more consistent funding. Respondents described challenges associated with delivering expected services when funding requests were only partially approved, noting that this created strain on program operations and staffing capacity.

- *“Clarity from the start on how expectations and outcomes need to shift when our funding request is not fully granted, but we are still expected to deliver the same services we applied for.”*
- *“I would have loved to have had a budget for more transportation.”*

2. Administrative and Reporting Support

Many respondents highlighted the need for clearer guidance and improved support related to reporting systems and grant requirements, particularly EZ Reports. While some noted growing familiarity over time, others emphasized ongoing confusion and administrative burden.

- *“EZ Reports—it was confusing at first, but staff better understands the process.”*
- *“More clarification around specifics needed to meet all grant goals.”*

3. Family Engagement Support

Another recurring theme focused on the need for tools and strategies to strengthen family engagement. Respondents expressed interest in practical resources, such as communication templates and ideas for family events, to better involve caregivers in program activities.

- *“More support or strategies for engaging families would be great—things like ideas for family nights or communication templates.”*
- *“How to get parents more engaged and provide more opportunities that model engagement to parents?”*

4. Staff Capacity and Communication

Some responses reflected broader concerns about staff capacity, communication, and decision-making structures. Respondents noted that expectations were often communicated top-down, with limited flexibility at the site level.

- *“Site coordinators only receive a list from upper management of things to do from grants.”*
- *“Youth need more support than we can provide.”*

CONCLUSION

The 2024-25 evaluation findings indicate that Michigan’s 32n OST Grants Program continues to play a critical role in expanding equitable access to out-of-school time programming and strengthening supports for youth and families statewide. In its fourth year of implementation, the grant supported 171 grantees operating 782 sites and served nearly 90,000 youth. Programs served proportionately more Black and Hispanic/Latinx youth relative to their surrounding communities, suggesting strong reach among priority populations. In addition, the program maintained a well-balanced geographic distribution across rural, suburban, and urban areas and served a strong mix of youth across all grade levels. Overall, this reflects both strong demand and meaningful statewide reach.

Program quality results were consistently positive, with youth and families reporting high satisfaction, strong relationships with caring adults, and supportive environments that promote growth mindset, school connection, and soft skills development. Programs most commonly prioritized literacy, soft skills development, STEM, and math, reflecting an emphasis on both academic and developmental supports. Families also highlighted the broader value of the programs, including improved child behaviors and economic benefits that support caregivers' ability to work. At the same time, site managers identified persistent challenges—especially staffing shortages, transportation barriers (especially during summer), and high levels of youth and family needs that exceeded program capacity—suggesting that continued investment and coordinated supports are necessary to sustain and strengthen implementation. Overall, the 32n OST Grants Program remains a vital strategy for ensuring Michigan youth have safe, enriching, and developmentally supportive learning opportunities beyond the school day and during the summer.

RECOMENDATION

Based on the statewide findings, the 32n OST Grants Program should continue strengthening access to high-quality out-of-school time programming while addressing persistent implementation barriers.

First, to sustain and expand equitable access, Michigan should prioritize continued investment in under-resourced communities and maintain year-round programming capacity, especially given the high demand for services and the presence of summer waitlists. Currently, only slightly over half of program sites (53%) operate year-round. Demand for programming appears especially high during the summer, as reflected by substantial waitlist numbers.

Second, programs should strengthen staffing support by expanding recruitment pipelines, improving compensation strategies where possible, and increasing professional development opportunities, as staffing shortages remain one of the most common challenges reported by site managers.

Third, to further enhance program quality and youth development outcomes, OST providers should strengthen management practices that reduce negative experiences such as bullying and excessive waiting time, while also deepening practices that elevate youth voice, leadership, and meaningful decision-making opportunities.



Picture credit: canva.com

Finally, while most programs reported regular communication between grantees and sites, approximately 15%-20% of sites indicated they “almost never” discussed operational concerns or met with their grant managers. This suggests uneven communication structures and potential gaps in monitoring and support. MiLEAP, MASP, and partners should encourage consistent grantee-site communication to ensure that all sites receive regular monitoring, coaching, and improvement support.

WORKS CITED

- Afterschool Alliance. (2019, June). This is afterschool: Inspiring learning, providing safety, promoting smart choices, and supporting working parents. <https://afterschoolalliance.org/documents/This-is-Afterschool-National-One-Pager.pdf>
- Afterschool Alliance. (2022, August). Access to afterschool programs remains a challenge for many families. Issue Briefs. <https://afterschoolalliance.org/documents/Afterschool-COVID-19-Parent-Survey-2022-Brief.pdf>
- Afterschool Alliance. (2024, August). Increased state-level funding for afterschool and summer programs helps students succeed. https://www.afterschoolalliance.org/afterschoolsnack/Increased-state-level-funding-for-afterschool-and-summer_08-20-2024.cfm
- Covay, E. & Carbonaro, W. (2010). After the bell: Participation in extracurricular activities, classroom behavior, and academic achievement: participation in extracurricular activities, classroom behavior, and academic achievement. *Sociology of Education*, 83(1), 20-45. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038040709356565>
- Diversity Data Kids. (2024). *Child Opportunity Index (COI)*. <https://www.diversitydatakids.org/about-us/news/bostons-high-overall-child-opportunity-score-obscures-racial-inequities>
- Heath, R. D., Anderson, C., Turner, A. C., & Payne, C. M. (2022). Extracurricular activities and disadvantaged youth: A complicated - but promising - story. *Urban Education*, 57(8), 1415-1449. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085918805797>
- Jenson, J. M., Veeh, C., Anyon, Y., St. Mary, J., Calhoun, M., Tejada, J., & Lechuga-Peña, S. (2018). Effects of an afterschool program on the academic outcomes of children and youth residing in public housing neighborhoods: A quasi-experimental study. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 88, 211-217. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2018.03.014>
- Krajewski, F. (1997). Community education: A national resource contemplates its future. In F. Krajewski & V. Osowski (Eds.), *The National Center for Community Education: On the threshold of a new age*. (pp. 6- 13). *Mott Exchange*.
- Manson, S., Schroeder, J., Van Riper, D., Knowles, K., Kugler, T., Roberts, F., & Ruggles, S. (2024). *IPUMS National Historical Geographic Information System: Version 19.0* [2023 American Community Survey, 5-year data, 2019-2023, tracts and larger areas] [Data set]. IPUMS. <https://doi.org/10.18128/D050.V19.0>
- Michigan Department of Education. *Michigan Out-of-School Time (MOST) Standards of Quality*. 4th ed., 2021, Michigan.gov, https://www.michigan.gov/mileap/-/media/Project/Websites/mileap/Documents/Education-Partnerships/21stcccl/MDE_MOST_SBE_FINAL_2.pdf
- Michigan Department of Education. (2023, February). 2022-2023 out-of-school time (OST) grants. Grant award approval form. <https://michigan.gov/mde/->

/media/Project/Websites/mde/OFM/Grants/Grant- Award-Packets---February-2023-SBE-Agenda/2022-2023-Out-of-School-Time-OST-Grants.pdf

Michigan Legislature. *Revised School Code (Act 451 of 1976), § 380.1285a*. Michigan Legislature, n.d., <https://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/mcl/pdf/MCL-380-1285A.pdf>

Morris, D. S. (2015). Actively closing the gap? Social class, organized activities, and academic achievement in high school. *Youth & Society*, 47(2), 267-290. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0044118X12461159>

National Center for Education Statistics. (2021). Education Demographic and Geographic Estimates Program (EDGE): Locale boundaries. <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/edge/Geographic/LocaleBoundaries>

Passantino, R. J. (1975). Community/school facilities: The schoolhouse of the future. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 56 (5), 306-309. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20297909>

Public Act 3 of 2021, Mich. Comp. Laws § 23e. (2021). <https://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/2021-2022/publicact/htm/2021-PA-0003.htm>

Public Act 87 of 2021, Mich. Comp. Laws § 1001. (2021). <https://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/2021-2022/publicact/htm/2021-PA-0087.htm>

Public Act 144 of 2022, Mich. Comp. Laws § 32n. (2022). <https://legislature.mich.gov/documents/2021-2022/publicact/htm/2022-PA-0144.htm>

Public Act 103 of 2023, Mich. Comp. Laws § 32n (2023). <https://michigan.gov/mileap/-/media/Project/Websites/mileap/Documents/Education-Partnerships/OST/2023-PA-0103.pdf>

Reed, C. S., Bates, L. V., Van Egeren, L. A., Baker, D., Dunbar, C., Smith, B., Villarruel, F., Donohue, T., Smith, A., & Hahn, A. (2003). 21st Century Community Learning Centers state evaluation implementation report (January-June 2003). Michigan State University. https://cep.msu.edu/upload/documents/21stCentury_2003.pdf

Seitz, S., Khatib, N., Guessous, O., & Kuperminc, G. (2022). Academic outcomes in a national afterschool program: The role of program experiences and youth sustained engagement. *Applied Developmental Science*, 26(4), 766-784. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10888691.2021.1993855>

U.S. Department of Education. (2003). 21st Century Community Learning Centers: Non-regulatory guidance. https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/mileap/Documents/Education-Partnerships/21stccllc/21st_ccllc_nonregulatory_guidance.pdf

APPENDIX A. Number of 32n OST Grants Programs in Michigan Counties in 2024-25

