

ACTION REPORT

OUT OF SCHOOL TIME COLLABORATIVE

25
26

The Out of School Time (OST) Collaborative continued to serve as a cross-sector network of Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS), nonprofit organizations, public agencies, and community partners working to strengthen access to high-quality out-of-school time programming for Nashville youth. Functioning as a community of practice, the Collaborative focused on building stronger coordination across organizations, addressing service and equity gaps, increasing provider capacity, and improving alignment between schools and OST partners.



During the 2025–2026 school year, the Collaborative shifted toward a focus on capacity-building. Meetings centered on key system-level topics including funding sustainability, program quality, curriculum development, partner coordination, transportation barriers, family engagement, and workforce challenges. The Collaborative intentionally created more opportunities for partners to share strategies, identify overlapping services, and collaborate around shared challenges rather than operating in isolation.



**Snapshots from
the fall 2025
collaborative meeting**

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**25-26
OUTCOMES**

KEY FINDINGS

- OST providers are experiencing increasing financial and operational strain due to flat or reduced funding and the end of pandemic-era supports.
- Transportation and food access continue to be major barriers impacting youth participation in OST programming.
- Partners want stronger systems for collaboration, communication, and coordination across organizations and schools.
- Providers are seeking more support around nonprofit operations, fundraising, staffing, and organizational sustainability.

A major focus of the year involved helping providers navigate significant uncertainty across the OST landscape. Collaborative discussions highlighted concerns related to shrinking funding streams, the end of pandemic-era supports, staffing shortages, transportation barriers, food insecurity, and increasing operational pressures on youth-serving organizations. At the same time, partners identified opportunities for deeper collaboration, stronger advocacy, and more coordinated systems of support for youth and families.

The Collaborative also emphasized practical systems improvements and partner coordination. Discussions throughout the year reinforced the need for:

- Greater inclusion of OST providers within school-level planning and communication structures
- Improved consistency in partner and cluster meetings across schools
- Shared approaches to curriculum development and program quality
- Cross-organization collaboration to reduce duplication and improve service alignment
- Increased support around nonprofit leadership, fundraising, and organizational sustainability
- More intentional outreach to immigrant, refugee, and historically underserved families

The OST Collaborative additionally explored strategies for strengthening the youth workforce pipeline, including discussion of collaborative hiring approaches, workforce credentialing systems, and partnerships with employers, universities, and community organizations.



Brandon White, Director of Education for the United Way of Greater Nashville, gives a presentation on the Tennessee After School Network to the collaborative

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25-26 OUTCOMES

KEY FINDINGS

- Family engagement remains a major strength and opportunity area for OST programs.
- Providers identified growing need for inclusive programming strategies that better support youth with disabilities and exceptional needs.
- Workforce shortages remain a major challenge across the OST ecosystem.
- Participants emphasized the importance of youth-centered, relationship-driven, and culturally responsive programming.
- Collaboration, advocacy, and coordinated messaging were consistently identified as critical strategies for strengthening Nashville's OST ecosystem.

2025-2026 outcomes included:

- Facilitated “The State of OST in Nashville” panel discussion focused on funding shifts, emerging youth needs, provider sustainability, transportation equity, and legislative impacts affecting OST programming
- Elevated provider concerns related to transportation access, food insecurity, staffing shortages, and the loss of pandemic-era funding supports
- Strengthened conversations around cross-partner collaboration, asset mapping, and reducing duplication of services across schools and communities
- Provided training and shared learning opportunities related to OST curriculum selection, youth engagement, program design, and participant-centered approaches
- Increased focus on improving coordination between OST providers and schools, including stronger inclusion in family engagement planning, school meetings, and data-sharing conversations
- Identified opportunities for more collaborative approaches to workforce recruitment, including discussion of a citywide OST hiring fair
- Expanded conversations around inclusive programming, accessibility for youth with disabilities, and culturally responsive family engagement strategies
- Continued promoting networking, resource sharing, and cross-sector relationship building among OST providers and community partners

Students complete an art project through Backfield in Motion at Dupont Hadley Middle School



Students learn about reptiles through Moves and Grooves at JFK Middle School

OUT OF SCHOOL TIME COLLABORATIVE

LEADERSHIP & ROSTER

25-26 LEADERSHIP

Tiffany E. Carter (MNPS)
Melissa Cornejo-Nell (MNPS)
Anna Harutyunyan (Nashville After Zone Alliance)

25-26 ALIGNMENT STAFF

Robert Robinson (Alignment Nashville)
Nathan Shulman (Alignment Nashville)

25-26 MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Aspiring Youth Encouragement
Backfield in Motion
Be Natural Company
Belmont Fast Forward
Bethlehem Centers
Beyond the Natural Foundation
Blacks in Technology
Boys and Girls Club of Middle Tennessee
Cafe Momentum
Catholic Charities of TN
CodeX Academy
Community Achieves
Conexion Americas
Corner to Corner
DYMON in the Rough (Dynamic Young
Minorities of Nashville)
Elijah's Heart
Elmington Elevates Extended Care
Empowerment Inc.

Free Hearts
Girls Write Nashville
Global Outreach Developments Int'l
Harmony CORE-alition
Homework Help Online
Huggs
In Full Motion
Juvenile Court
Martha O'Bryan Center
Mayor's Office
Mentor A Kid
Midtown Fellowship
MNPS
Moves and Grooves
Nashville After Zone Alliance
Nashville Children's Theater
Nashville Gov
Nashville Public Library
Nations Ministry Center

Oasis Center
Park Community Center
Persist Nashville
Preston Taylor Ministries
Project for Neighborhood Care
Project Transformation
RocketTown
Salama Urban Ministries
Small World Yoga
Southern Word
The F.I.N.D. Design
Transformation Life Center
United Way of Greater Nashville
United Ways of Tennessee
YMCA of Middle Tennessee
Young Life
Youth Encouragement Services
Youth for Christ Nashville
YWCA of Nashville and Middle TN