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What We're Learning about What Kids Are Learning:
Research & Evaluation in Out-of-School Time

May 19, 2011

Web seminar presented by

Grantmakers for Education's
Out-of-School Time Funder Network

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Chris Tebben

Executive Director

Grantmakers for Education

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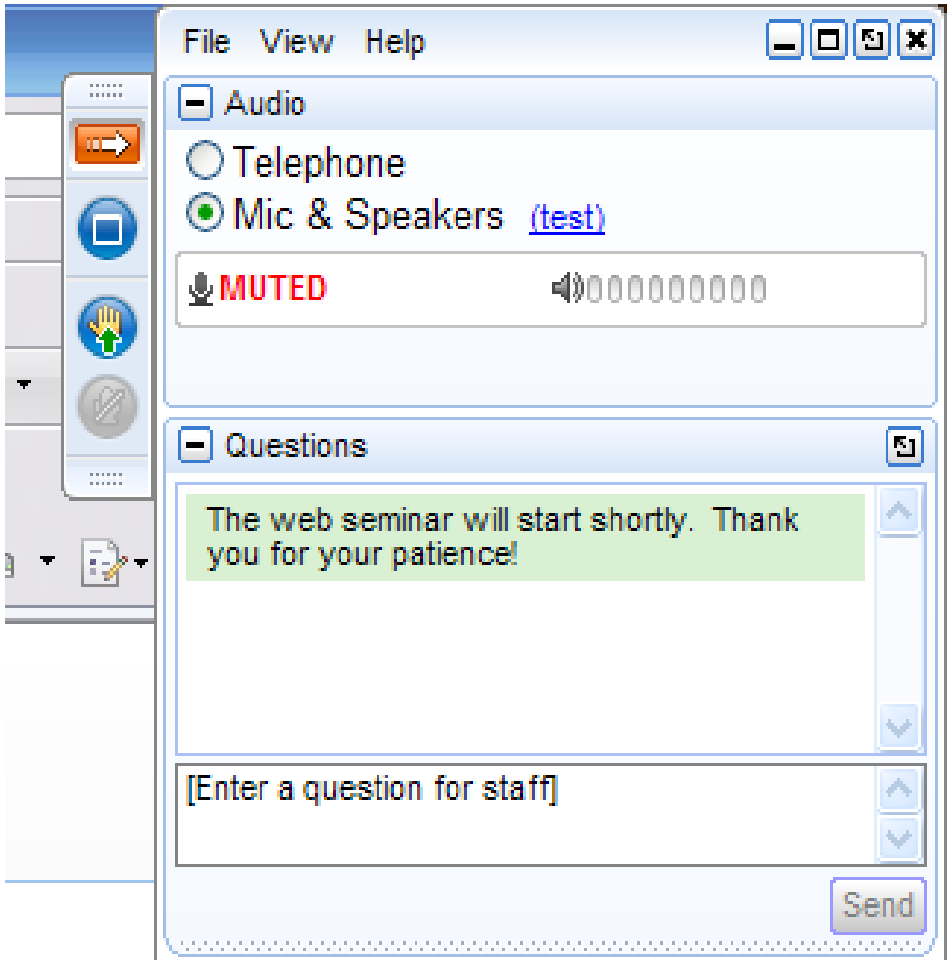
The GFE Out-of-School Time Funder Network

builds knowledge, shares effective practices, and forges collaborations among grantmakers in order to increase access to high-quality OST experiences for young people and create systemic supports to sustain the field.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Questions
The web seminar will start shortly. Thank you for your patience!
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Arron Jiron

Program Officer

Children, Families and Communities

The David and Lucile Packard Foundation

Goals of Today's Web Seminar

1. Share evaluation results showing impact of out-of-school time programs on children's developmental and learning outcomes.
2. Identify essential components of quality at the program and systems levels.
3. Connect evaluation results to impacts in the program, system and policy arenas.
4. Address how funders can avoid common pitfalls in supporting out-of-school time evaluation efforts.

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Elizabeth Reisner
Principal

Policy Studies Associates, Inc.

Findings on OST Program Quality

Shared features of programs achieving high levels of youth participation and benefit:

- High enrollment and attendance by youth
- Enrollment of a cross-section of eligible youth
- Sustained youth attendance over two or more years plus summer months
- Ongoing program communication with the school
- Ongoing program communication with families, preferably involving parent liaisons

Program Quality (continued)

- Involvement of a master teacher or educational specialist
- Planning and sequencing of activities to address learning objectives
- Hands-on, practical application of academic skills
- Youth exposure to new experiences
- Skill-building for positive relationships with peers and adults
- For older youth, opportunities for choice, leadership, and service

(Drawn from OST evaluations conducted for New York City Department of Youth and Community Development and other sources)

Findings on OST System Quality

Shared features of OST systems that support high-quality programs:

- Focus on specific youth-development objectives
- Targeting to ensure program access by disadvantaged youth
- Systems that track enrollment and attendance over time at the youth level
- Monitoring and feedback to programs on enrollment and attendance
- Quality standards, monitoring, and feedback to programs

System Quality (continued)

- Facilitation of communication between education sector and OST
- Ongoing staff training and development
- Career ladders to promote staff professionalism
- Information sharing with the public and local leaders

(Drawn from CBASS [Collaborative for Building After School Systems], RAND studies for Wallace Foundation, and other sources)

Implications for Public Policy

Public policy should reflect the following:

- Balanced development of OST scale and quality
- Balanced development of OST programs and system(s)
- System accountability that is aligned with
  - Expectations for scale
  - Expectations for quality
  - Developmental objectives for youth
- Ongoing collaboration between education sector and OST
- Equitable OST access for disadvantaged youth

Implications for Philanthropy

Funders of OST programs and systems should consider needs for:

- Assessment of OST availability and quality, in light of population patterns
- Input from local leaders and constituencies, through advisory councils and other mechanisms
- Public communication and advocacy regarding OST
- Knowledge about OST accomplishments and challenges in other communities

Implications for Philanthropy (continued)

- Understanding of the elapsed time required for OST success
  - First year: focused on program start-up
  - Second year: focused on achieving high participation and service quality
  - Third year: earliest stage to expect improved youth outcomes
- External evaluation and feedback

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Deborah Lowe Vandell

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Afterschool Research in 2011: Implications for Policy and Practice

Deborah Lowe Vandell

University of California, Irvine

Three Notable Advances

- Development of reliable and valid measurement tools
- Afterschool meta-analyses
- Evidence of both general AND specific program effects

Battery of Reliable and Valid Measures

- Program quality
- Program attendance
- Staff beliefs & attitudes
- Staff education & training
- Staffing patterns & retention

- Student academic achievement
- Student academic performance
- Student skill development
- Student behavior change
- Specific skills & domains

Implications for Policy and Practice

- Don't need to spend a lot of time creating new measures
- Easier to implement ongoing quality improvement
- Set the stage for longitudinal data systems
  - Track program indicators over time
  - Track program staff indicators over time
  - Track individual student indicators over time
- Can combine and compare findings across programs!

California Afterschool Outcome Measures Project Field Test (2010-2011)

- Participation open to all ASES programs in the state
- Technical assistance provided to programs
  - Email and telephone help during fall and spring survey administrations & help interpreting scores at the end of Field Test
- Web-based surveys of student performance collected from students, program staff, & classroom teachers in fall 2010 and spring 2011
- Confidential summary report of survey results
  - Programs receive scores of positive behavior change and skill development for their site and across all sites

Afterschool Meta-Analyses

- Meta-analysis is a statistical technique that combines results of several studies. Each study provides a data point, and studies are weighted by their sample size.
  - Enable us to look at the weight of the evidence across studies
  - Offset the likelihood of a single study having undue influence
  - Can help to provide more generalizable evidence
  - CAVEAT: "garbage in, garbage out"

Effect Size

- An effect size measures the magnitude of a program impact on a particular outcome.

- Effect sizes provide a standard metric (the proportion of a standard deviation) that can be benchmarked against those reported in other studies.

  - Aspirin on heart disease d = .03

  - Class size reductions on math achievement d = .23

  - School-based substance abuse prevention programs on drug & alcohol use d = .09

A Recent Meta-Analyses

- Durlak, J. A., & Weissberg, R. P. (2010).
  - 75 reports evaluating 68 programs with post-program data
  - Evaluated studies for evidence that programs offered Sequential and Active activities with Focused and Explicit content - SAFE

Durlak & Weissberg Meta-Analysis

Outcomes	# of Studies	Overall Effect Size	Met SAFE Criteria	Did not meet SAFE criteria
Self-perceptions	23	.34*	.37*	.13
School bonding	28	.14	.25*	.03
Positive social behaviors	36	.19*	.29*	.06
Problem behaviors	43	.19*	.30*	.08
Drug use	28	.10	.16*	.03
Achievement test scores	20	.17*	.20*	.02
Grades	25	.12*	.22*	.05
School Attendance	21	.10	.14**	.07

General and Specific Program Effects Reported in My Research Over 20 Years

- General effects of high-quality programs (programs w/ supportive staff, positive peer relations, high student engagement)
  - Improved work habits
  - Reduced misconduct
  - Improved math achievement
- Additional specific effects of particular programs
  - Tiger Woods Learning Center Evaluation – interest in math & science
  - Safe Haven Program Evaluation – changes in conflict resolution strategies

Implications for Policy and Practice

- Strong evidence of effects of high quality programs with sufficient dosage
- Some effects are found across a variety of programs; others may be program-specific

Next Steps: Integration and Alignment

- Afterschool, summer, early childhood, supplemental educational services -- all support children's academic, cognitive, and social functioning
- When are particular models of integration & alignment effective?
  - Reinforce
  - Complement
  - Augment
- Evaluation challenges
  - in one district: ST Math; Pathways Writing; afterschool & summer programs; early childhood literacy; health services; family outreach

Conclusions and Next Steps

- We need longitudinal coordinated data systems
- These systems should accommodate common core measures of programs and students supplemented by program specific measures
- Effective use of these systems requires training (pre-service and in-service) of program staff & directors and classroom teachers & principals in applied evaluation

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Discussion

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Out-of-School Time Funder Network

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Upcoming GFE Events

Assessment 2.0

Using technology to create authentic assessments of student learning

GFE OST Funder Network

Pre-Conference Convening

Sunday, October 2,

2:30PM – 5:30PM

Los Angeles, CA

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Your thoughts improve our programs!

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Thank you for participating!