Investment in After-School & Summer Learning in Massachusetts: Current Funding & Unmet Need

By Colin Jones, Senior Policy Analyst

In recent years, Massachusetts has consistently led the country in promoting the well-being and educational success of children. According to national rankings developed annually in the Annie E. Casey Foundation's *KIDS COUNT Data Book*, our Commonwealth ranked second in the nation in overall child well-being in 2018, including the second highest ranking for the education our state provides to kids.¹ This education ranking includes an index of measures where Massachusetts performs ahead of national averages, including reading and math proficiency, preschool enrollment, and on-time high school graduation.²

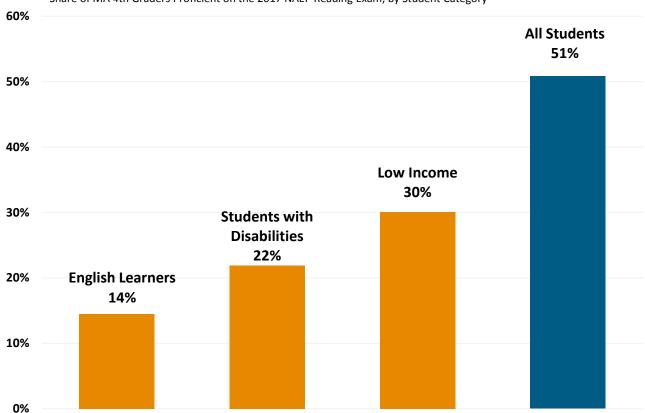
While Massachusetts as a whole is a leader in key education indicators, the same data showed that 49 percent of Massachusetts fourth graders were not proficient in reading, and 13 percent of our high schoolers failed to graduate on time.³

Our Commonwealth has not consistently supported all kids towards high levels of educational and life success. The 2017 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) showed only 28 percent of Massachusetts eighth graders from disadvantaged backgrounds scored at the proficient level in Math compared to 50 percent of eighth graders overall.⁴ This gap in Massachusetts was second largest among states, behind only New Jersey.

Our inability to effectively support all students with high-quality educational opportunities also harms younger children and other student groups in the Commonwealth. In the 2017 NAEP reading exam, Massachusetts fourth graders who were English Language Learners, students with disabilities, and those from low-income households all fared worse than the state average in reading.⁵

Despite our top rankings in NAEP overall and for disadvantaged youth, insufficient support for disadvantaged schools and kids has contributed to the fact that only half of all Massachusetts students attained the proficient level in the NAEP fourth grade reading exam (see chart below). That achievement level would signify students are able to effectively locate, integrate, and evaluate information within texts and literature. This is a national challenge, as no other state has even a slim majority of fourth graders at this benchmark. Across the nation, 37 percent of all fourth graders reached NAEP proficiency in 2017 compared to 51 percent in Massachusetts. For low-income fourth graders, only 22 percent reached proficiency across the country, compared to 30 percent in Massachusetts.⁶

Massachusetts Has Significant Achievement Gaps in 4th Grade Reading



Share of MA 4th Graders Proficient on the 2017 NAEP Reading Exam, by Student Category

After-school and out-of-school time programs (ASOST), structured initiatives taking place in the summer months or after the final bell at school, have been proven to increase achievement and improve educational, career, and life outcomes for young people.⁷ These supports can also play a vital role for parents, providing an enriching and safe learning environment for children while parents provide for their families. Our workforce and economy as a whole benefit when more children, particularly those most in need of additional support, receive additional opportunities in education leading to long-term success.

The research evidence supporting high-quality ASOST programs is compelling, demonstrating the ability of after-school to improve student academic achievement and other key social, health, and wellness indicators:

- One national review of quality after-school opportunities showed that elementary and middle school youth with daily access to ASOST made significant gains in math and reading achievement, positive work habits, and social skills. These services were effective in helping economically disadvantaged youth, students of color, and recent immigrants.⁸
- In a similar review, the Harvard Family Research Project found that several ASOST programs boosted social, health, and wellness outcomes, such as self-esteem and fitness, while reducing obesity and risk behaviors.⁹ Many after-school programs also promote child health, particularly

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 2017

for those in poverty, by providing healthy meals and snacks during out-of-school time. According to the Food and Research Action Center, more than 44,000 low-income kids participated in federal meals programs in 2016 while receiving ASOST services across Massachusetts.¹⁰ Children who have greater access to nutritious food are more likely to be healthy, active, engaged, and successful in school.¹¹

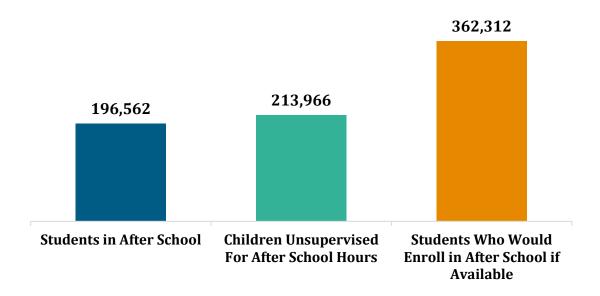
• Quality after-school programs have been shown to promote long-term success for young people and aid our society at large. Participants in one research-backed elementary ASOST program took more rigorous courses in middle school, had higher attendance rates and math scores, and were more likely to graduate from high school.¹² A cost-benefit study showed that by reducing juvenile delinquency alone, this program delivered \$2.50 in return for each dollar invested.¹³

The academic and social benefits of after-school depend on effective design and quality implementation. In one of the key national studies cited above, students benefited when they had at least four days a week of services and participated regularly.¹⁴ These providers featured quality components including supportive relationships between staff and students, rich academic support, diverse enrichment activities, and partnerships with schools and community organizations.¹⁵

All kids in Massachusetts can benefit from positive educational opportunities in and outside of school such as those available in quality after-school programs. Nevertheless, there is significant unmet demand for after-school in the Commonwealth (see chart below). According to an Afterschool Alliance survey of Massachusetts families in 2014, there were nearly 214,000 school-age youth in the state who were home alone and unsupervised during after-school hours.¹⁶ The same survey found there were nearly two kids waiting for an after-school spot for each child that obtained one.¹⁷ In other words, 362,000 kids in Massachusetts (38 percent of all enrolled schoolchildren in 2014) were waiting for an after-school opportunity, compared to 197,000 (21 percent of Massachusetts students) already participating.¹⁸ According to recent waitlists maintained by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care, there are more than 7,200 low-income kids over age five, who are eligible for ASOST services and are waiting for care.¹⁹

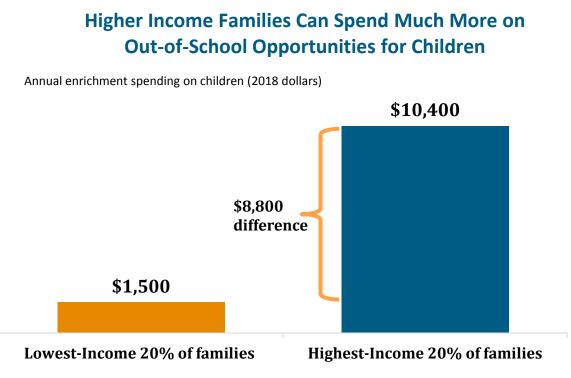
Most Students Lack After-School, Many More Would Enroll in Programs If Available

Population of Massachusetts kids in after-school, number of kids unsupervised during after-school hours, those that would enroll if an ASOST program was available, and all school children, 2014



Source: Afterschool Alliance

These opportunity gaps arise in part because not all communities and families have the resources to provide enrichment experiences to youth. Relevant research has revealed stark and growing differences in how much high and low-income families spend on out-of-school activities for their children. A 2011 study found that the highest income 20 percent of families spend nearly seven times as much on out-of-school opportunities than do the lowest income 20 percent (see chart below).²⁰

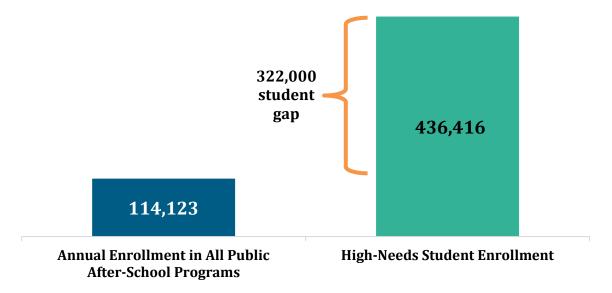


Source: Duncan and Murnane, 2011

In the 2016-2017 school year, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education classified 436,000 youth in our public schools as high-needs.²¹ This includes economically disadvantaged youth, English Language Learners, or students with disabilities. Statewide, 288,000 young people were identified as economically disadvantaged.²² Enrollment in statewide, publicly-funded ASOST programs is roughly 46,000 in core after-school programs and climbs to roughly 114,000 young people if you include all the agencies that run other structured out-of-school activities for children (see chart below). Many of those additional programs are part-time, but they also provide significant opportunities. This larger figure is still 174,000 below the number of kids in poverty and 322,000 below the enrollment of high-needs young people.

After-School Programs Leave Majority of High-Needs Students Unserved Across the State

Population of high-needs students in public schools 2016-2017, enrollment in after-school programs, in recent available year (2015 through 2017)



Making more after-school and summer learning opportunities available in Massachusetts could build on the diverse set of existing efforts already serving young people. These efforts have helped contribute to positive outcomes such as academic achievement, graduation, improved behavior, and engagement in school.²³ Public after-school initiatives have a variety of aims and program models and different target populations. They are executed by a range of state, federal, and local agencies, as well as numerous non-profit organizations. Existing ASOST programs also derive funding from a range of sources. It is important to understand the funding infrastructure of ASOST programs in the Commonwealth in order to have a realistic sense of how to reach thousands more young people and families with quality opportunities.

This report will examine various federal and state ASOST efforts to clarify the funding picture for afterschool and summer learning in Massachusetts. The report finds that in the recent 2016-2017 school year, over \$165 million (in current FY 2019 dollars) was appropriated to core after-school initiatives, including child care subsidies and education programs. This total rises to over \$207 million if you consider public libraries, mentoring programs, workforce development efforts, and health and safety initiatives. While this represents a detailed estimate for programs with public support at the state and federal level, it is not reflective of all efforts at the local level and those supported by the private sector.

Funding for Core After-School and Out-of-School Time Learning in Massachusetts^{*}

1) Income Eligible Child Care – estimated \$94 million dedicated to After-School in FY 2017 – 18,000 students served – 70% of funding provided by Federal Government

Income Eligible Child Care is the Commonwealth's largest child care program. Low-income working families with Income Eligible Child Care subsidies pay a portion of their child care costs on an incomebased sliding scale, with the remainder being publicly supported. Unlike the subsidies that support services in pre-kindergarten centers for our youngest children, school-age programs involve kids receiving traditional after-school support from ASOST providers. These programs are often located in or adjacent to the schools that children attend each day. Services typically include academic support, homework time, recreation, and enrichment. Income Eligible subsidies provide comprehensive out-of-school opportunities throughout the year, including after-school, over the summer, and during school vacation weeks.

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2017, \$264.5 million was allocated to Income Eligible Child Care. 52 percent of young people served through this program (18,000 out of 34,900) were school-aged kids receiving ASOST services.²⁴ Near the end of FY 2017 there were also more than 10,100 school-aged kids on waitlists for services within the EEC system, and additional families might have been discouraged by the extensive waitlist.²⁵

School-aged children who enroll in child care subsidies cost roughly half as much to serve than kids under the age of five.²⁶ Using the differing cost-rates for each age group developed by the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), we estimate that Income Eligible Child Care costs for school-aged kids in after-school were roughly \$94 million (about 36 percent) of the program's total public funding in FY 2017.²⁷ Public funding for each participating child was roughly \$5,200.

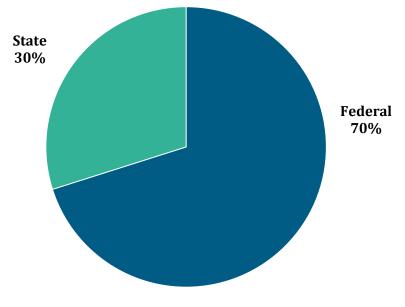
In order to enroll kids in these ASOST services, families have to contribute co-payment fees, which are based on their income. With family fees included, the total rate paid to centers for a full year of after-school and summer services in FY 2017 was between \$5,700 and \$6,300 (in FY 2017 dollars) depending on the operating costs in various regions of the state.²⁸

The federal government provides 70 percent of the funding for Income Eligible Child Care subsidies, with state matching and general funds accounting for 30 percent (see chart below).²⁹ In this calculation, specific revenues that are provided in federal grants to other agencies and are subsequently moved to support EEC programs are counted as federal dollars. For additional detail on the federal grants that support this program, see the endnote below.³⁰

^{*} All figures are inflation-adjusted to current state Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 dollars, unless otherwise noted. For upto-date FY 2019 funding information on all line items in the state budget see <u>MassBudget's Budget Browser</u>. Core after-school programs include child care subsidies and traditional after-school programs. For a complete list of all programs that serve children in out-of-school time, see the appendix on page 18.

Federal Government Provides the Majority of Funding for Income Eligible Child Care Subsidies

Portion of Income Eligible Child Care subsidies supported by federal and state sources, FY 2017



Source: Department of Early Education and Care

2) Supportive and TANF Child Care - estimated \$51 million dedicated to After-School in FY 2017 - 7,300 students served - 88% of funding provided by Federal Government

Supportive and TANF Child Care is the state's other main child care line-item. This program also draws on both federal and state funds and supports kids in ASOST. In FY 2017, Massachusetts allocated \$229.9 million to child care for children in the care of the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and those enrolled in the Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF - for additional details on the TANF, see the endnote below).³¹ Supportive and TANF Child Care also provides comprehensive out-of-school time services throughout the year for participating school-aged children. Additionally, this program includes extra social support programs tailored to the specific needs of kids and families participating in limited cash assistance or who are engaged with DCF child protective services.

According to EEC, 36 percent of kids (7,300 out of 20,500) receiving Supportive and TANF Child Care were school-aged youth receiving ASOST services.³²

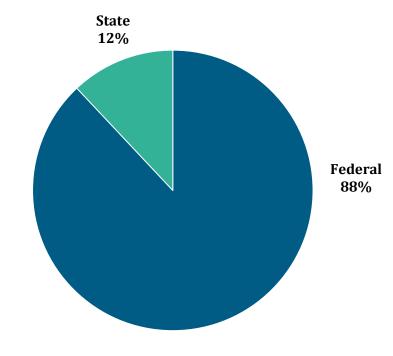
As mentioned above, school-aged children cost less to educate than younger peers. Using the differences in cost rates for each age group from EEC, we can estimate that Supportive and TANF Child Care costs for school-aged kids in ASOST were roughly \$51 million in FY 2017 (around 22 percent of the entire program). There is a greater allotment of \$7,000 in public funds for each student

participating in Supportive and TANF Child Care.³³ This includes both the cost of ASOST care as well as additional supportive services tailored to these particularly disadvantaged youth and families.

In order to enroll kids in Supportive and TANF Child Care services, some families have to contribute co-payment fees based on their income. There are specific circumstances under which the state waives these fees.³⁴ With fees included, the total rate paid to centers for a full year of services in FY 2017 was between \$10,200 and \$10,800 (in FY 2017 dollars), depending on region.³⁵

As mentioned above, the cost of these child care subsidies is shared between the federal government and the Commonwealth. According to EEC figures, 88 percent of Supportive and TANF Child Care funding is based on federal grants (to EEC and other agencies), while 12 percent is funded by Massachusetts.³⁶ Most state funding is the matching dollars required to be eligible for the federal support (see chart below).

The Federal Government Provides Vast Majority of Funding for Supportive & TANF Child Care Subsidies



Portion of Supportive and TANF Child Care subsidies supported by federal and state sources, FY 2017

Source: Department of Early Education and Care

3) 21st Century Community Learning Centers - \$17.6 million in FY 2017 – 9,300 students served in ASOST, 18,700 served in total

The **21**st **Century Community Learning Centers (21**st **CCLC) Program** is a federal funding source that exclusively supports after-school and summer programs for K-12 youth. In Massachusetts, our Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) oversees the 21st CCLC and provides

grants throughout the state. These 21st CCLC grantees are primarily running ASOST programs in schools, though some community-based organizations also receive the grants.³⁷ The students participating in these programs are primarily those identified as being behind in school, low-income, special needs, or English Language Learners (ELL). While middle and high school students represent a sizeable share of total enrollment, the majority of 21st CCLC programs support elementary students.³⁸

21st CCLC programs are designed locally by school districts and community-based organizations to best fit local conditions. Overall, these sites are required to provide 400 hours of ASOST programming over the course of the year and must have regular attendance for children.³⁹ Most of that time is throughout the school year.⁴⁰ There is a focused academic support component, such as homework time, along with a range of arts, character building, and enrichment programming.

In the 2016-2017 school year, Massachusetts received \$17.6 million in federal 21st CCLC grants.⁴¹ These grants supported ASOST programs for 9,300 kids in regular after-school programs, with 5,000 children receiving support in the summer.⁴² As part of the same program, 9,900 kids were in 21st CCLC during an extended school day. There is some overlap of kids served by the various types of 21st CCLC programs, however data are not available to identify the number of students who may be participating in a combination of after-school, summer, and extended day 21st CCLC programs. Grants provided \$944 for each participant overall in FY 2017, the most recent year with complete data.⁴³ In practice, 21st CCLC grant amounts vary between sites. For example, new schools sometimes receive more funds to start up sites, with decreasing funding over time to allow improvement and sustainability without grants.⁴⁴ Additionally, 21st CCLC sites often use funds from other federal, state, and local sources to provide the full array of services.

4) After-School and Out of School Time Grants - \$2.3 million in FY 2017 – 10,000 students served

Massachusetts implements **After-School and Out of School Time Grants (ASOST Grants)** to support ASOST programs that promote a range of positive outcomes including academic growth, health, wellness, and civic engagement. State ASOST grants provide funding to enhance or improve existing programs through curriculum improvement, professional development, and convening experts in the ASOST field. ASOST Grants have directly supported programming in the past. Sometimes ASOST providers are able to enrich their offerings by adding staff dedicated to quality improvement efforts, including training and family outreach.

The after-school providers and school districts that receive ASOST Grants have a range of offerings, including academic support programs and tutoring, exercise and fitness, arts, enrichment, and community service.⁴⁵ These grants are targeted to young people who are in schools with low achievement levels, in poverty, with disabilities, and who need to enhance their English language skills.

In the 2016-2017 school year, the ASOST Grant line item received \$2.3 million in the state budget. This funding supported program improvements to 93 grantees that serve roughly 10,000 kids across the state (roughly \$235 per student involved).⁴⁶ Some of the grant is used to support the professional development of educators, with these activities reaching 1,000 professionals in the 2016-2017 year. There was significant unmet need for additional ASOST grants, with roughly 70 providers applying for funding but unable to secure grants.⁴⁷

5) Programs for ELL Students in Gateway Cities – \$1.3 million in support in FY 2016 – 700 students served

A specific summer program to support English Language Learner (ELL) teenagers, **Programs for ELL Students in Gateway Cities** is another option for ASOST programming supported in the state budget. ELL students, particularly teenagers, face significant challenges in getting up to speed in English and other academic skills. Additional after-school and summer programs are a key part of helping these young people accelerate their academic growth.

ELL Students in Gateway Cities has provided grants to create new summer academies focused on the challenges faced in Gateway City schools. These academies have been primarily run by local school districts over the summer in collaboration with community partners. These summer programs have a focus on promoting English skills, but also include enrichment elements such as field trips, college access activities, and service learning.⁴⁸

These ELL programs showed some encouraging initial results. A number of participants improved English proficiency, while schools engaged in meaningful collaboration with community organizations to create positive environments for youth.⁴⁹ There were also challenges with the program. The fact that each school district created and operated their own program may have prevented collaboration across cities and the development of a unified system of evaluation to ensure efforts were on track.

Funding for ELL Students in Gateway Cities dipped over time. It began with \$3.3 million in FY 2013, before dropping to \$1.3 million in FY 2016. It was subsequently eliminated in a mid-year cut in FY 2017, before returning with a small amount of funding in the FY 2018 budget.

Enrollment data is incomplete for the first year of the program. The nine programs that did report data served 1,270 students with \$2.6 million in grants.⁵⁰ This suggests a grant of \$2,055 per student that year. Funding levels declined somewhat from there. In FY 2014, there were 1,700 students served, only about 30 percent of eligible teens in these cities.⁵¹ Total funding that year of \$3.2 million meant the allocation had dropped to \$1,899 per student. This trend continued in the most recent year with complete enrollment data, FY 2016, where 702 students were served with \$1.3 million, an allocation of \$1,824 per-student.⁵²

Private Funding for After-School and Out-of-School Time

Though there is a variety of public funding for ASOST programs, there are also numerous private providers of after-school and summer learning that serve many young people in our state. A full accounting of the efforts of private ASOST provider is beyond the scope of the current study. Examining the two largest private organizations in the field, and their role in supporting youth through ASOST, however, is helpful to create a more accurate picture of after-school funding in the Commonwealth.

1) Massachusetts YMCAs

The largest private provider of ASOST programs in Massachusetts is the YMCA. YMCA youth programs are part of the larger YMCA social mission that includes healthy living and social

responsibility programs that serve people of all ages. Massachusetts YMCA is an alliance of 30 individual associations, which in turn operate over 400 locations in the state.⁵³ More than 500,000 young people engage with YMCA services annually, however a smaller number engage in full-scale after-school programs.

When it comes to youth after-school and summer programs, the Massachusetts YMCAs serve roughly 200,000 school-aged youth in a variety of structured programs. These include traditional after-school programs, sports activities, and summer camps.⁵⁴ Individual YMCA sites have the ability to set the curriculum and approach for ASOST and summer programs. Kids in YMCA after-school are typically provided academic time, healthy meals, enrichment, and physical fitness activities. Different YMCAs employ their own enrichment components, such as civic engagement and science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

Some youth may participate in multiple YMCA programs. Roughly 70,000 youth statewide attend YMCA summer camps.⁵⁵ While each branch of the organization has autonomy on the specifics of its own summer camps, branches tend to include physical activities, nutrition, social and emotional development, and some components connected to academic skills, such as literacy or STEM programs.⁵⁶

According to the most recent YMCA data, private funds directed through Massachusetts YMCAs (derived from user-fees, donations, grants etc.) provide \$32 million in scholarship support to children across the YMCA network.⁵⁷ This total reflects kids of all ages in all programs, including pre-K, after-school, summer programs, and athletics. The YMCAs also receive several of the public grants and programs discussed in the rest of this report, including Youth-at-Risk Grants and Early Education and Care subsidies, which means students served by the YMCA may also be included in counts of students in state programs.⁵⁸

2) Massachusetts Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs

Collectively, Boys & Girls Clubs are the second largest private provider of ASOST programs across the Commonwealth. Unlike the YMCA, Boys & Girls Clubs exclusively serve youth and all of their activities can be classified as after-school and out-of-school time.

The Massachusetts Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs is composed of a number of branches that operate 83 locations in Massachusetts.⁵⁹ In 2017, the organization served a total of roughly 164,000 youth, 69,000 of whom were registered members of a club, and 95,000 who were involved, but had less regular engagement with a local club. Children served by the Boys and Girls Clubs are roughly half low-income and students of color, and many live in single-parent households.⁶⁰

While attending programs at Boys & Girls Clubs, youth participate in a range of academic, enrichment, and fitness activities. These include homework time, science projects, sports, as well as community volunteering and leadership programs. Each of these components is facilitated by adult staff and volunteers. Boys & Girls Clubs primarily operate on a drop-in basis where kids and families can decide how much programming to attend. There are programs throughout the school year and summer.⁶¹ Regular members of the Boys and Girls Clubs, who likely have greater engagement, have been shown to have high academic aspirations, deep community engagement, and frequent participation in physical activities.⁶²

Some clubs also operate more comprehensive ASOST programs licensed by the Department of Early Education and Care and funded through early education subsidies (for full detail, see pages 7-9 above). Boys & Girls Clubs also receive funding to implement several of the state grant programs discussed throughout this report including ASOST Grants (see page 10 for detail), the Safe and Successful Youth Initiative (see page 21), Youth Violence Prevention and Youth-At-Risk Grants (see page 22), as well as Shannon Grants (see page 23).

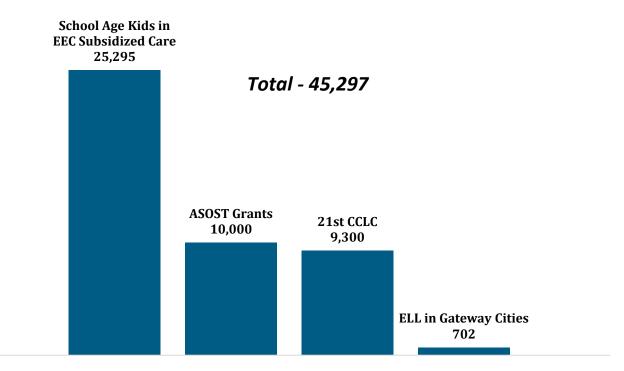
According to the most recent data from the Massachusetts Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs, their statewide operations cost \$90.0 million (the 2015 total adjusted for inflation). That year, clubs served 164,700 students, suggesting per-student costs of \$547 for each participant.⁶³ This includes the more highly involved members and those who drop into a local club for some activities. The majority of Boys & Girls Clubs funding is raised privately and through grants, with only negligible fees paid by participating families. These enrollment figures also include students served by the Boys & Girls Clubs through state funding, meaning there is some overlap between Boys & Girls Club totals and figures reported by specific state ASOST initiatives.

Where We Stand with ASOST in Massachusetts

The agencies implementing core after-school services in the Commonwealth serve a total of 45,000 children in publicly-funded ASOST, according to the most recent available data (see chart below). Enrollment in private programs, some of which receive public support, also plays a significant role in providing opportunities to children in Massachusetts.

Core Public After-School Programs Serve 45K Students in Massachustets

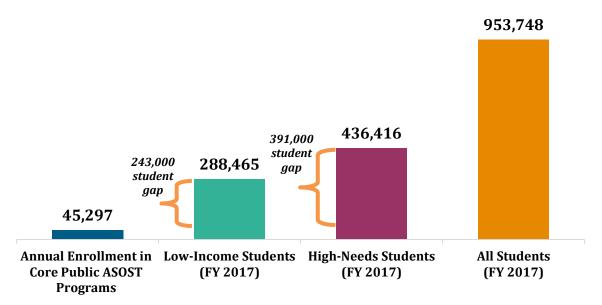
Enrollment in various ASOST programs, most recent available year (FY 2016 & FY 2017)



Despite the efforts that provide structured programming in out-of-school time, this estimate of kids served is well below the number who could benefit the most from after-school (see chart below). This includes a total of 436,000 low-income students, English Language Learners, and students with disabilities, which together fit the state's definition of high-needs.⁶⁴ Within that group there are 288,000 low-income kids who, for economic reasons, may not be able to benefit from consistent educational programming outside of school that could increase opportunity and achievement.⁶⁵ Though some high-needs students may benefit from a local or privately-funded after-school effort, hundreds of thousands of students lack consistent publicly-supported ASOST.

Core After-School Programs Leave Majority of High-Needs Students Unserved Across the State

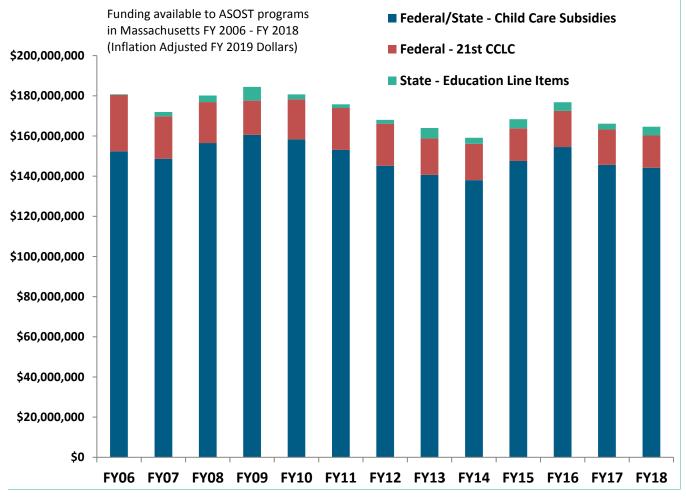
Population of all, high-needs, and low-income students in public schools 2016-2017, enrollment in core ASOST programs, in recent available year (FY 2016-FY 2017)



Though existing public ASOST efforts do not reach all of the young people who could most benefit, they do have moderate resources in the state budget. This funding, however, has been inconsistent, and declined over the past decade. As of FY 2017, the core ASOST line items discussed above amounted to \$165.6 million in the state budget (in current inflation-adjusted dollars).[†] This amount has remained relatively flat over the past five years (see chart below). Current state funding for core ASOST programs is down roughly 10 percent from a peak of roughly \$184 million in FY 2009, around the beginning of the state's last major recession. Since that time, total state funding has been inconsistent and has never risen above FY 2009 levels.

⁺ The funding estimates for child care subsidies, here and in the appendix on page 26, assume that in FY 2006 through FY 2016, school-age children composed 35.7 percent of total funding for Income Eligible Child Care and 22.3 percent of total funding for Supportive and TANF Child Care. This is the share of funding that we estimate for FY 2017 using administrative data from the Department of Early Education and Care. We simplify the analysis by applying these ratios to prior year data. It is possible that a full analysis of administrative data from FY 2006 through FY 2016 would show somewhat different shares of school-age spending.

Three Funding Streams, Mostly Federal Dollars, Support Core After-School Programs in Massachusetts

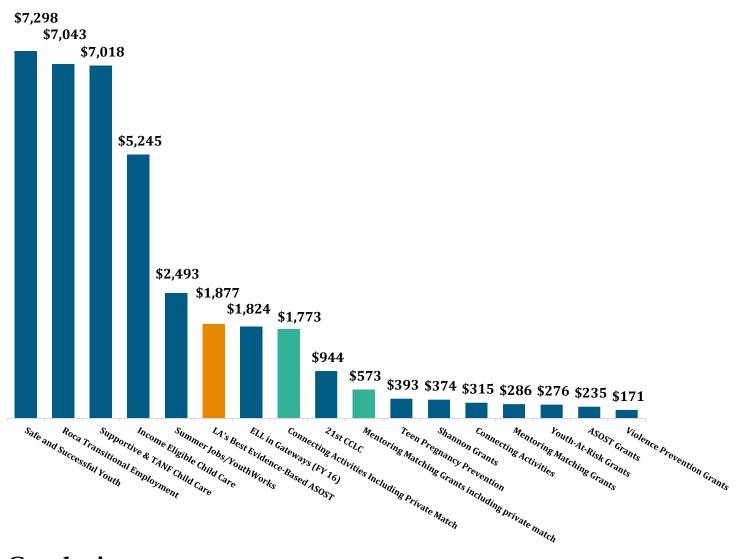


While total funding for ASOST in the state budget is significant, individual out-of-school time programs do not consistently have levels of funding for each student equal to that of high-quality ASOST programs shown to improve long-term life outcomes. For example, among the several state grant programs discussed above, and in the appendix below, only one violence prevention program (Safe and Successful Youth), the two child care subsidies (Income Eligible and Supportive and TANF Childcare) and two workforce initiatives (YouthWorks and Roca Transitional Employment) have consistent public funding levels equal to a research-backed elementary ASOST program in California (see chart below).

This program in California has increased achievement scores, social indicators, and graduation rates, while boosting long-term outcomes for student participants and society at large.⁶⁶ Some existing public programs in Massachusetts, however, may have private or other support that brings them further towards the resources levels of evidence-based ASOST programs.

Public ASOST Programs in Mass. Have Wide Range of Funding, Most Below Evidence-Based Programs

Annual per-student funding of various ASOST programs, inflation adjusted FY 2019 dollars.



Conclusion

When all of our children have the opportunity to reach their full potential, we can build a more equitable society and a stronger, more vibrant economy. High-quality public education is central to making that possible. But it's not all we need. Many young people need a wide variety of supports to prosper. This report has shown compelling evidence that high-quality after-school and out-of-school time programs can have a substantial positive effect on the lives of young people. It is important that the programs be well implemented, because when they are, ASOST initiatives have been proven to increase student achievement, promote health and wellness, and contribute to long-term life success.

While the Commonwealth has examples of high-quality and effective ASOST programs, we are falling fall short of providing these types of programs to all of the young people who would most benefit. As it MASSACHUSETTS BUDGET AND POLICY CENTER • <u>WWW.MASSBUDGET.ORG</u> 17 stands, around 200,000 disadvantaged young people are not yet benefiting from publicly-supported ASOST opportunities, while others are in programs that may be less robust those with proven success. These findings can serve as a resource for all those who want to explore the role that expanded access to high-quality ASOST programs can play in helping all of our children thrive, and particularly those who face difficult life challenges.

Appendices:

I - Other Youth Serving Programs in Out of School Time

Core ASOST services, including child care subsidies and traditional after-school programs, serve many of the young people who have public support in ASOST. However, there are also a range of other initiatives that include structured programming for children in after-school, summer, and out-of-school time. These include mentoring programs, workforce development initiatives, services at public libraries, as well as a range of specific intervention programs for highly at-risk youth in the Commonwealth.

Collectively, this set of programs serve a somewhat larger number of students in Massachusetts than core after-school programs, but do not have large amounts of funding compared to core programs. These initiatives can be included in a broader definition of ASOST in the Commonwealth. The sections below detail several of these programs and their impact on the after-school picture in our state.

A. Mentoring Programs - Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

1) Mentoring Matching Grants - \$524,000 in support in FY 2017 – 1,900 students served in FY 2016

ASOST services can also often involve empowering young people by increasing their connection with caring adult mentors. One education line item in the state budget, **Mentoring Matching Grants**, is specifically designed to increase quality mentorship opportunities.⁶⁷ Grants are provided through DESE to programs across the state to support and expand existing mentorship activities. Though DESE is the lead state agency for the program, mentoring grants are administered by the non-profit Mass Mentoring Partnership. There are a range of objectives and program models in the field, including academic support, character and self-esteem, and workforce preparation.

In FY 2017, Mentoring Matching Grants received \$524,000 in support through the state budget. There is also a required 1-to-1 match with private funds, which brings the total to over \$1.0 million. The most recent year with enrollment data, FY 2016, showed that 1,863 kids were provided mentors through the \$534,000 state allocation, suggesting per-student costs of \$286.⁶⁸ Including private matching funds doubles the figure available to each participating youth. Even with this support, participating mentorship organizations reported nearly 1,500 kids waiting to be matched with mentors in FY 2016.⁶⁹

B. Library Programs (Board of Library Commissioners) – estimated \$5.9 million in state library aid dedicated to ASOST out of total library funding in FY 2017.

Public libraries across the state are critical players in providing opportunities for young people outside of school hours and over the summer. Within the wide range of programs offered by town and regional libraries, ASOST programming is among the most active. The state library agency reports that 400,000 children and youth in the Commonwealth participate in summer reading programs.⁷⁰ In these programs, participants attend special kickoff meetings at local libraries to create excitement around summer reading goals that are tracked and recorded throughout the summer. While they have large numbers of participants, because they have only a handful of direct service events, they are different than a quality ASOST program with daily attendance.

While summer reading is by far the largest ASOST library program, it is only one of the varied library offerings for children. For example, as part of a statewide initiative, the Newton Public Library is operating a technology program called Code Newton which teaches robotics and coding primarily to young people.⁷¹ In another initiative, three South Coast public libraries (Marion, Rochester, and Mattapoisett) created the My Own BackYard program, where kids check out backpacks with science equipment.⁷² This allows kids and families to explore ocean and plant life, and document discoveries about local ecosystems.

The financial support for the Massachusetts library system is a partnership between the statewide Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) and cities and towns, which provide the majority of funding. In FY 2016, the MBLC had \$27.0 million in funding to support aid to local and regional libraries, specific technology and logistical programs, and some special initiatives. This amount was much less than the \$284.2 million that local cities and towns allocated to their libraries.⁷³

Only a portion of library funding supports children and youth services. According to MBLC statistics 22.5 percent of all hours worked by library employees in 2016 were dedicated to services for kids.⁷⁴ Using this as a reasonable proxy for the share of library resources dedicated to ASOST services would suggest that \$5.9 million in state library aid supported youth programs in FY 2017. Though the exact share of library hours spent on children's services has likely fluctuated slightly over time, the calculation of state library children services funding included on page 26 holds this ratio constant back to FY 2006.

C. Workforce Training & Economic Development Programs (Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Department of Children and Families)

Supporting workplace readiness for youth and providing career learning opportunities can be considered part of a broad definition of ASOST opportunities. Given the particular developmental needs of teenagers, it is reasonable to consider work-based programs as part of the overall ASOST landscape.

1) YouthWorks - \$10.5 million in FY 2017 - 5,000 youth served in FY 2016

The **YouthWorks** program, known in prior years as Summer Jobs for at Risk Youth, is one of the main youth employment programs supported through the state budget. YouthWorks is administered by the Commonwealth Corporation within the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development. YouthWorks directly funds summer jobs (and some throughout the year) for teens and young adults, typically up to 30 hours per week for at least six weeks.⁷⁵ These opportunities are supported by regional Workforce Development Boards (WDB) across the state, which find local employers including businesses, non-profits, and government agencies, to hire young people. YouthWorks also offers a workforce development curriculum to help participants be successful throughout their careers.⁷⁶ Training is focused on professional behaviors and skills that help young people positively relate to peers and managers in the workplace.

Overall, YouthWorks job placements and support are targeted at young people who face significant barriers to success. Grants are limited to the cities with the largest concentrations of low-income youth and applicants must themselves be low-income.⁷⁷ There are also specific goals to serve particularly high-needs youth, including those facing academic challenges, youth involved with the court system, those experiencing homelessness, and foster kids.⁷⁸

In the FY 2017 budget, YouthWorks received \$10.5 million in support. In FY 2016, YouthWorks received \$12.5 million, and 5,008 youth participated.⁷⁹ This suggests robust per-student funding of nearly \$2,500. Matching funds from employers also help to support additional job and training activities.

2) Connecting Activities - \$3.1 million in FY 2017 - 10,300 students served in FY 2016

The **Connecting Activities** program is another large state initiative for high school youth to gain workplace experience, skills, and training. In the program, DESE funds Workforce Development Boards (WDB) across the state who collaborate with high schools to develop work-based learning opportunities, including internships and career exploration.⁸⁰ Connecting Activities allows the 16 WDB organizations to hire staff to serve as intermediaries between high schools and local employers.⁸¹ Each WDB ensures that schools are involved, employers are recruited to hire student workers, and young people receive training and enrichment activities related to their career paths.

Young people in Connecting Activities undertake a wide variety of internships and jobs outside of school hours. Examples include serving as summer camp counselors, apprentices at information technology companies, interns at local newspapers, and hired hands working with local craftsmen over the summer.⁸²

Connecting Activities served nearly 10,300 students across the state and worked with 3,700 employers in FY 2016.⁸³ State funding of Connecting Activities that year was \$3.2 million. In addition to state funding, employers provided \$15.0 million in matching funds.⁸⁴ The state expenditure reflects \$315 dollars per student served. Including private matching funds brings this total up dramatically to \$1,773 for each student in a Connecting Activities internship in FY 2016.

3) Roca Transitional Employment Program - \$2.1 million in FY 2017 – 300 youth served in FY 2016

The **Roca Transitional Employment Program** is another employment and job readiness initiative that receives dedicated funding in the state budget.

This specific program, like the overall Roca intervention approach, works with highly at-risk youth, including those involved in the criminal justice system, or directly transitioning from incarceration.⁸⁵ There is significant community outreach to engage and gain the buy-in of young people to participate in Roca.⁸⁶ Once involved, youth are provided workforce readiness training that provides them with the skills necessary to succeed in employment.⁸⁷ Roca also works with partner organizations, including private, non-profit, and government agencies, to place young people directly in jobs.

In FY 2016, Roca served 270 young men and 33 young mothers, in its transitional employment program.⁸⁸ That same year, the state line item within the Department of Children and Families that supported Roca, received \$2.1 million. This would imply \$7,043 in state support for each youth participant in Roca Transitional Employment. This large amount of support may reflect the intensity of the program. It is worth noting that participation in Roca has shown promise in preventing off-track outcomes that entail greater costs, including arrests and incarceration.⁸⁹ State funding is only part of Roca's overall support, including grants, contracts, and other revenue streams totaling \$14.9 million in FY 2016.⁹⁰

D. Health & Safety Programs (Department of Public Health, Executive Office of Health and Human Services, Executive Office of Law and Public Safety)

Massachusetts has several of out-of-school time programs housed in our health and public safety agencies. These initiatives that support some of the most at-risk young people in the Commonwealth, usually operate in our most under-resourced communities, and aim to provide intensive services that can help prevent major life roadblocks, such as teen pregnancy, court involvement, and violence.

1) Teen Pregnancy Prevention/Adolescent Sexuality Education - \$2.5 million in FY 2017 - 6,900 youth served in FY 2016

The Department of Public Health's **Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program** (recently rebranded as Adolescent Sexuality Education or ASE) promotes healthy behavior, positive life choices, and increased opportunities for young people in the communities most affected by high teen birth rates.⁹¹ Accordingly, the program aims to reduce high-risk behavior, teen pregnancies, and other health challenges. Individual sites in the Teen Pregnancy Prevention program are operated by a range of non-profit organizations across the state that implement research-based prevention programs.⁹²

This program supported 6,900 young people and received \$2.7 million in state appropriations on average between FY 2014 and FY 2016.⁹³ That suggests \$393 in funding for each young person served.

2) Safe and Successful Youth - \$6.8 million in FY 2017 – 900 youth served in FY 2014

The **Safe and Successful Youth Initiative (SSYI)** is another program aimed at high-risk teens and youth. SSYI works to intervene in the lives of youth (ages 17-24) who have already interacted with the criminal justice system and have the highest risk of future involvement in violence. The program is overseen by the Executive Office of Health and Human Services.⁹⁴ Through SSYI, young people are contacted by outreach workers who offer supportive services. Participants who are engaged through community outreach then receive comprehensive case management, providing them a range of services while monitoring their engagement and outcomes.⁹⁵ A variety of partners, including non-profit organizations, employers, public health agencies, and law enforcement, participate in SSYI.⁹⁶

This initiative is limited to 11 communities across the state that are threatened with the highest levels of youth violence. Initial research on the SSYI showed that young people who receive services are significantly less likely to enter prison, and overall that the communities with SSYI grants experienced reduced levels of violence.⁹⁷

In FY 2017, SSYI programs received \$6.8 million in the state budget. That same year, the program served 933 young people.⁹⁸ This suggests extensive support of nearly \$7,300 per student. Similar to the Roca program discussed above, this funding level is likely reflective of the intensity of the services offered to some of our most at-risk kids.

3) Youth at-Risk Matching Grants - \$2.2 million in FY 2017 – 15,200 youth directly served in FY 2016

Youth at-Risk Matching Grants, overseen by the Department of Public Health, focus on reducing violence for some of the highest risk youth in Massachusetts by providing evidence-based positive youth development. These programs divert kids from gang activity and violence, promote healthy lifestyle choices, and provide job and financial literacy skills, mentorship, and other opportunities.⁹⁹

Several of the largest private ASOST providers in the state, the Massachusetts Boys & Girls Clubs and YMCAs and YWCAs, receive the majority of Youth at-Risk grants to implement positive teen and youth empowerment programs across the state.¹⁰⁰

In FY 2016, Youth at-Risk matching grants served 15,200 youth in direct service programs with \$4.2 million in appropriations.¹⁰¹ This works out to \$276 per student. A larger group of 175,000 youth, however, was also reached indirectly through Youth-at-Risk programming in FY 2016.

4) Youth Violence Prevention Grants - \$1.4 million in FY 2017 – 8,300 youth served in FY 2016

Youth Violence Prevention Grants, also overseen by the Department of Public Health, have a similar aim of preventing youth violence, but they work with high-risk kids before problems occur. The goal is to provide traditional after-school activities (e.g. community engagement, mentorship, career and academic support), to put kids on a positive trajectory and avoid involvement in violence.¹⁰²

Youth facing greater challenges participate in gang intervention programs, receive support such as career skills, leadership training, financial literacy, and mentorship.¹⁰³ Kids in the "upstream"

programs work with a host of non-profit afterschool programs that serve disadvantaged young people in cities across the state.¹⁰⁴

In FY 2016, Youth Violence Prevention Grants served 8,300 young people with \$1.4 million in appropriations. ¹⁰⁵ This amounts to \$171 for each youth. A larger group of 30,000 young people were reached indirectly through Youth Violence Prevention Grants in FY 2016.

5) Gang Violence Prevention (Shannon Grants) – \$6.3 million in FY 2017 - 20,000 youth served in FY 2016

The third major violence prevention program supported in the state budget are **Shannon Grants (Gang Violence Prevention)** within the Executive Office of Public Safety. Shannon Grants focus specifically on addressing gang violence across the Commonwealth by using a specific research-based approach called the Comprehensive Gang Model.¹⁰⁶ This approach includes unifying multiple agencies and community organizations, offering education training and employment to at-risk youth, providing intensive supervision of gang-involved youth, and realigning policies to use resources more effectively. This contrasts with other approaches that are only focused on the law enforcement components of dealing with gang activity.

After-school programs and support are the most common activity among Shannon Grant recipients.¹⁰⁷ Other activities include street outreach to engage young people, job training or placement programs, and capacity building that allows existing non-profits to offer a wider array of services.¹⁰⁸ Shannon Grants also support law enforcement activities, sometimes integrated with the broader goals of the program, but with some supporting traditional policing strategies.

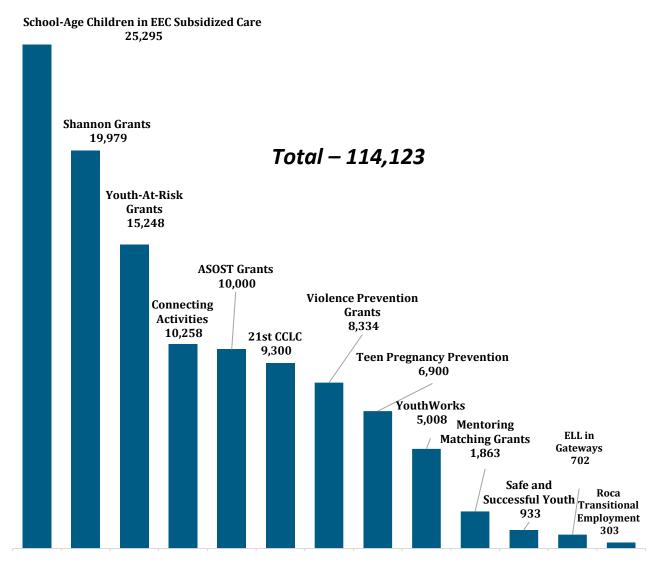
In FY 2016, nearly 20,000 kids participated in programs supported by Shannon Grants.¹⁰⁹ The total allocation of \$7.5 million that year amounts to \$374 per participant. Specific education and youth development programs within Shannon Grants provided greater support for each young person involved.¹¹⁰

II - Summary Data Including All Programs

Including this broader range of out-of-school time initiatives brings the total of children participating in publicly funded ASOST to 114,100 (see chart below). That figure is the largest possible estimate based on the current data sources, because it assumes no student participates in multiple initiatives. There is likely some crossover between the different ASOST programs, making the actual number of kids served slightly less, however no data is available to quantify this crossover.

Public ASOST Programs Serve 114K Students in Massachusetts

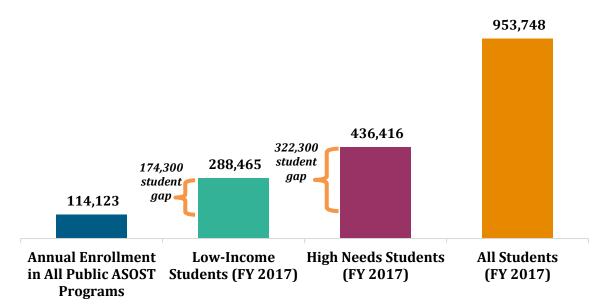
Enrollment in various ASOST programs, recent available year (FY 2016-FY 2017)



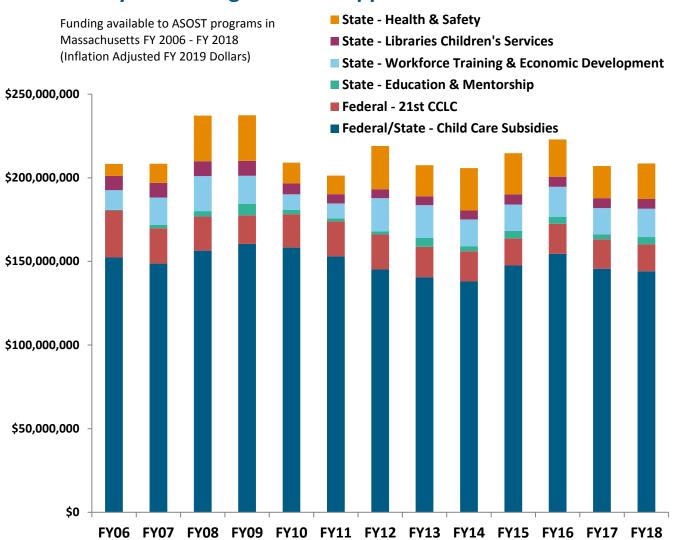
Despite the many efforts that provide structured programming in out-of-school time, even the largest estimate of the number of kids served, including all of the various agencies and programs, is well below the number who could benefit the most from after-school (see chart below). This includes a total of 436,400 low-income students, English Language Learners, and students with disabilities, the state's definition of high-needs. Within that group there are 288,500 low-income kids who, for economic reasons, may not be able to benefit from consistent educational programming outside of school that could increase opportunity and achievement. Though some high-needs students may benefit from a local or privately-funded after-school effort, hundreds of thousands of students lack consistent publicly supported ASOST.

After-School Programs Leave Majority of High-Needs Students Unserved Across the State

Population of all, high-needs, and low-income students in public schools 2016-2017, enrollment in all public ASOST programs, recent available year (FY 2016-FY 2017)



Though existing public ASOST efforts do not reach all of the young people who could most benefit, they do have moderate resources in the state budget. This funding, however, has been inconsistent, and declined over the past decade. As of FY 2017, the variety of ASOST line items discussed in this report amounted to \$207.1 million in the state budget (in current inflation adjusted dollars). This amount has remained relatively flat over the past five years (see chart below). Current state funding for ASOST is down from a peak of roughly \$237 million in FY 2009, around the beginning of the state's last major recession. Since that time, total state ASOST funding has been inconsistent and has never risen above FY 2009 levels.



Variety of Funding Streams Support Afterschool in MA

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Despite these trends, TANF remains a very significant source of federal revenue supporting child care, including ASOST services in the Commonwealth. States have wide flexibility in how to use TANF funds, with child care and enrichment services outside of the normal school day considered acceptable under federal guidelines.

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