



Texas Education Grantmakers Advocacy Consortium

Why did the Consortium commission a study of business perspectives on after-school and summer learning?

In 2013 the Texas Legislature created the Expanded Learning Opportunities Council at the Texas Education Agency to examine strategies for expanding access to after-school and summer programs and longer school days and years. Senate Bill 503 (West) not only created the Council, it also required the Council to examine strategies for engaging business. The Consortium supported this research to assist the Council in its efforts.

What did the Bush School at Texas A&M University discover in its interviews and research?

- Business recognizes that small-scale programmatic solutions are unsustainable and prefers systems change that recognizes the conflict between work and parenting.
- Every Texas business interviewed for the study cited a keen interest in developing a family friendly workplace, yet actual support for OST programming for working parents is almost non-existent. Interviews highlighted the fact that specific logistical challenges of working parents negotiating OST is almost completely absent from the radar of company leadership across the state.
- Flex-time is the most commonly cited solution by corporate leaders, described as an effective and sustainable support for working parents grappling with OST challenges. The majority of employers noted that working parent productivity is not notably different after school and in the summer.
- Over half of all HR managers interviewed reported an unwillingness to provide financial subsidies or other support to working parents for OST programming, citing concerns about perceptions of unfairness by workers without children.

How can the Texas Legislature best partner with business to expand access to quality afterschool and summer learning?

- Establish a statewide grant competition to incentivize cross-sector collaborations between a broader range of private and public stakeholders, to support innovative OST programming.
- Create a workforce award (e.g. through Workforce Commission) for those companies leading in implementation of most family-friendly workforce/workplace policies
- Establish regional or statewide coordinators to: build a database of best practice models; disseminate information and education about OST programs to working parents and companies; lead the OST program evaluation process; build new networks of stakeholders through provision of networking events across local communities and regions.