



## Report of OST Director Engagement and Experience

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FINDINGS FROM 2018-19  
OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME (OST) DIRECTOR LEVEL SURVEY,  
INTERVIEWS, AND PARTICIPATION DATA



"AFCOST helps me to  
constantly reflect on myself  
as a leader, our organization,  
and the greater picture . . ."  
- OST Director

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# OST DIRECTOR ENGAGEMENT & EXPERIENCE 2018-19

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"Because of spaces that agenda hosts, . . . I understand the city's after school or out of school time ethos better. I have a better understanding of where we've been and where we want to go as a city. Making the time to get out of my building and be with peers has broadened my understanding and has made me more committed because I see there are places where I can contribute."

- OST Director

# OST DIRECTOR ENGAGEMENT & EXPERIENCE 2018-19

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Through the Agenda for Children Out-of-School Time (AFCOST), the Cambridge community intentionally invests resources to provide professional development, quality coaching, and peer learning and networking opportunities to increase the capacity of OST organizations to provide high quality, equitable, inclusive, accessible, and innovative programs to support positive outcomes for children and youth.

To determine the impact of the program areas and activities offered in 2018-19, AFCOST analyzed OST director participation data, survey data, and interviews conducted with a subset of directors who completed the survey. (pages 3 – 7)

**Key findings** are as follows, with details in pages 8 to 17:

- Directors value the AFCOST professional development activities provided for them and their teams. They report improving their skills & taking back helpful tools and activities.
- OST Directors report feeling connected to and supported by a well-facilitated peer learning community that helps them maintain commitment, purpose, and focus on aligning “bigger picture”, values-based leadership to improve equity, access, and quality to achieve positive outcomes for children and youth.
- In addition to cultural competence, and leadership & management skills, directors indicated that they would like AFCOST to solicit recommendations and provide continuous opportunities for higher level training for front line youth workers and OST directors.

**Recommendations** are as follows:

- Provide more advanced trainings for experienced OST staff who have completed the baseline trainings and solicit feedback from OST staff about relevant workshop topics from the field.
- Formalize existing and create more opportunities for experienced OST staff to develop strong facilitation skills and techniques to enable them to lead the field forward.
- Continue offering professional development planning workshops to maximize engagement.
- Facilitate deeper understanding about the relationship between professional development, staff performance and retention, and positive child and youth outcomes.
- Work with OST directors to develop evaluation strategy to measure the impact of quality OST programs on child and youth outcomes.
- Develop more targeted outreach strategies and meet with OST programs who are not currently benefitting from AFCOST activities to better understand barriers and needs.
- Explore partnerships and innovative recommendations from OST Directors to improve quality (i.e. Black Male Leadership Institute, identity-based affinity groups).

AFCOST developed a proposal for an expansion of professional development opportunities. Over the next three years, AFCOST will actively seek resources to continue to improve our capacity to support OST Programs. (more details on page 20)

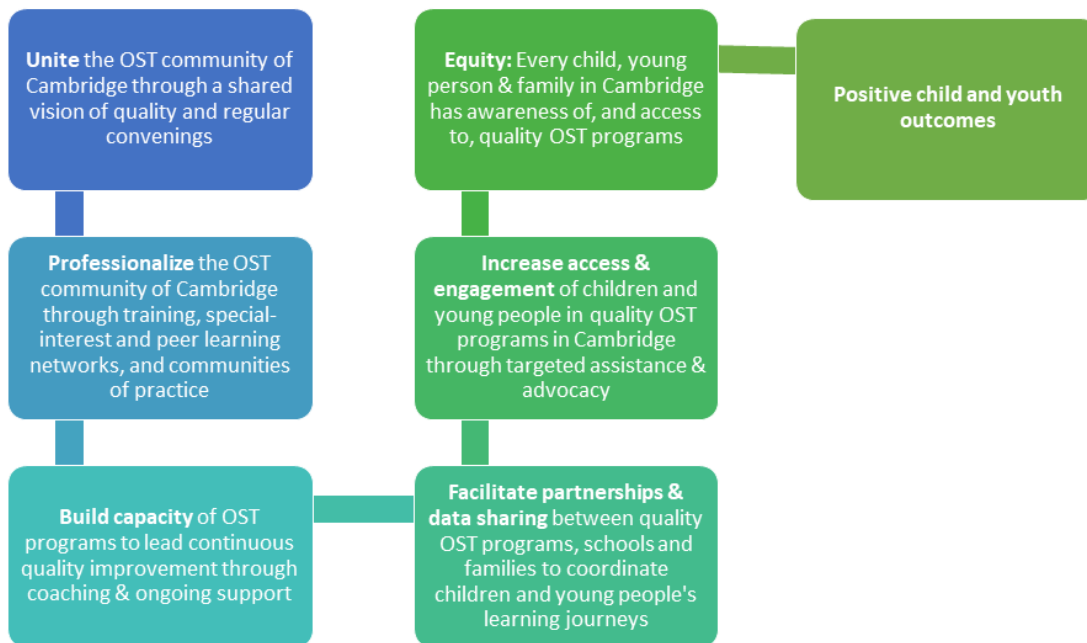
AFCOST acknowledges the many contributions and participation of OST directors to inform our collective work and we will continue to seek feedback to improve our capacity to support the Cambridge OST Community.

# OST DIRECTOR ENGAGEMENT & EXPERIENCE 2018-19

## INTRODUCTION

OST directors are a key lever in **AFCOSTs' theory of change** to achieve positive child and youth outcomes and, as such, the survey and follow up interviews are designed to answer the following question:

*To what extent does participation in AFCOST activities increase the capacity of out-of-school time directors to lead high quality OST programs?*



For this report, Agenda for Children Out-of-School Time (AFCOST) analyzed data from multiple sources.

- From July 2018 through June 2019, AFCOST continuously tracked OST director participation using **registration and attendance data**.
- In July 2019, AFCOST invited more than 100 out-of-school time (OST) directors<sup>1</sup> from 59 programs (25 community, and 24 city-run) to share their experiences of 2018-19 activities in an **anonymous survey**. Forty-seven (approximately 50%) OST directors responded to the survey. This is the third year of this survey, which asked OST directors to reflect on their experiences across the spectrum of AFCOST's activities, as well as specific activities (e.g. quality improvement system).
- Additionally, in November and December of 2019, AFCOST conducted **follow up interviews** with 11 Directors who completed the survey. The directors who agreed to be interviewed provided feedback by responding to a set of open-ended questions about their experiences participating in AFCOST activities.

<sup>1</sup> For this survey, upper level, executive level, and program directors were all considered director level.

## OST DIRECTOR ENGAGEMENT & EXPERIENCE 2018-19

### ABOUT AGENDA FOR CHILDREN OST: MISSION AND PROGRAM AREAS/ACTIVITIES

The mission of Agenda for Children Out-of-School Time (AFCOST) is: *to convene, catalyze and support the youth serving community in Cambridge for the shared purpose of increasing equity, access and innovation and sustaining the highest quality OST opportunities and experiences for all children, youth and families.*

To achieve this mission, AFCOST organizes its activities under the following Program Areas/Activities. All AFCOST opportunities are free and open to anyone working with Cambridge youth in OST.

**COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE (COPs):** provide a monthly time and place for front line youth workers, program directors, and executive level directors to gather with their peers, share their work, learn from each other and move their programs to new levels of quality.

**OST SYMPOSIUM:** an annual opportunity for OST Providers to present their passions, interests and best practices to peers in a week-long conference-style format, with large group events, break-out sessions, and networking opportunities.

**TRAINING:** a wide variety of competency-based training, including online video story-based curriculum. Participants are provided with active and engaging learning experiences to deepen their competencies in youth development work.

**QUALITY IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM(QIS):** is one of the most comprehensive quality improvement efforts in the out-of-school time (OST) field. At the program site, an AFCOST quality coach facilitates a process composed of three major elements: (1) Leadership Coaching, (2) Program Self-Assessment, and (3) Organizational Self-Study.

**MIDDLE SCHOOL NETWORK** advocates, mobilizes and connects young people, schools and out-of-school-time providers to ensure the broad participation of Cambridge middle school students in quality learning opportunities. The MSN convenes OST providers who serve middle school students, produces resource guides, facilitates planning workshops, and provides case management for middle school students to learn about opportunities that match their interests.

To assist directors, AFCOST provides Annual Professional Development Reports to organizations, and Transcripts and Certificates to individuals who have completed professional development activities.

## OST DIRECTOR ENGAGEMENT & EXPERIENCE 2018-19

During the follow up interviews, when asked “In a few words, how would you describe Agenda for Children Activities?” OST Directors’ descriptors reflected a variety of responses summarized in the following word graphic.



### ABOUT CAMBRIDGE OST DIRECTORS PARTICIPATION IN AFCOST ACTIVITIES

- In 2018-19, 130 OST directors, representing multi-level leadership in 56 programs, participated in a total of 1,957 hours of professional development activities facilitated by AFCOST
- In 2018-19, the average OST director participated in 15 hours of professional development, with a maximum of 56 hours and minimum of 1 hour. The following table provides a snapshot of the number of participants, and total hours spent, in AFCOST’s activities in 2018-19.

Role	Participants	Total PD Hours	Avg PD Hours <sup>2</sup>
Program Director	81	1,105	14
Executive Level	34	702	21
Upper Executive Level	15	150	10
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>1,957</b>	<b>15</b>

Source: (2018-19 Registration and Participation Data)

<sup>2</sup> Directors who agreed to be interviewed were more engaged in AFCOST Activities, averaging 23 PD hours compared with overall average of 15 PD hours in 2018-19.

## OST DIRECTOR ENGAGEMENT & EXPERIENCE 2018-19

### DATA SOURCES

- AFCOST analyzed participation and attendance data for 130 OST directors.
- Approximately 50% of the 100 directors who were asked, responded to the anonymous survey.<sup>3</sup>
- AFCOST interviewed eleven directors who indicated in the survey that they would be willing to answer follow up questions.

Description of Directors' Job Roles	# of Directors	# of Survey Respondents	# of Interviews
<b>Program Director</b> (have direct supervisory responsibilities for Front Line staff, and may also work directly with children and young people)	81 (62%)	27 (57%)	5 (46%)
<b>Executive Level</b> (have direct supervisory responsibilities for Program Directors)	34 (26%)	12 (26%)	3 (27%)
<b>Upper Executive Level</b> (have some direct supervisory responsibilities for Executive Level Staff)	15 (12%)	8 (17%)	3 (27%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>11</b>

### DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FROM SURVEYS AND INTERVIEWS

- Survey respondents were given the option to respond to a series of demographic questions. 37 of the respondents provided this information.
  - 73% (+1%)<sup>4</sup> of survey respondents identified as female
  - 80% (-6%) were under 44 years of age, and 40% (-14%) were under 34 years of age
  - 42% (-19%) identified as white/Caucasian and 42% (+17%) Black/African American, 3% (-10%) Hispanic/Latino, 6.5% (+3.5%) Asian/Pacific Islander, 0% (-3%) American Indian or Alaskan Native and 6.5% (+3.5%) multiple race/ethnicity.
- Follow up interviews were conducted in person with 11 OST Directors.
  - 73% of directors interviewed identified as female.
  - 45% identified as white/Caucasian and 27% Black/African American, 27% Hispanic/Latino

<sup>3</sup> A subset of 30 directors who were minimally engaged in AFCOST activities in 2018-19 were not sent the survey.

<sup>4</sup> (+/-) used to show difference between 2018-19 and 2017-18 director survey question results

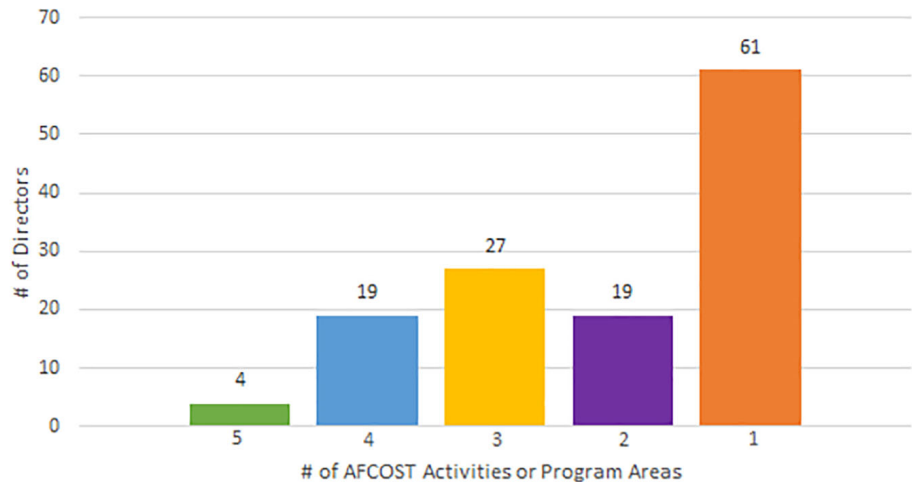


## OST DIRECTOR ENGAGEMENT & EXPERIENCE 2018-19

### OST DIRECTOR PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT

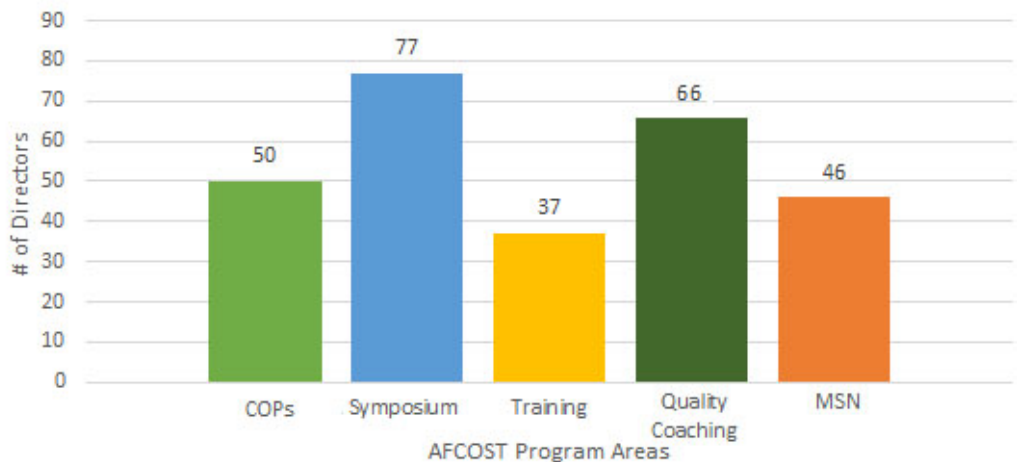
In 2018-19, 130 Directors from 56 OST Programs participated in AFCOST program areas/activities averaging 15 hours of participation in professional development.

- 69 directors (53%) participated in 2 or more program areas (COPs, Symposium, Training, Quality Coaching, MSN).



Source: (2018-19 Registration and Participation Data)

- 50 directors (38%) participated in COPs, 77 (59%) participated in Symposium, and 66 (50%) participated in Quality Coaching (QIS).
- Only 37 directors (28%) attended training workshops. This is not surprising because, apart from new workshops, much of the training offered is considered baseline level training for new hires.
- 46 directors (35%) who participated in MSN represent the subset of organizations which serve middle school students.



Comparisons of the survey data results and participation data indicate that, on average, directors who participated in more activities and completed more professional development hours in AFCOST activities were more likely to respond to the survey and agree to engage in follow up interviews.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Overall, a higher percentage of the directors who responded to the survey (75%) and who agreed to follow up interviews (81%) participated in 2 or more AFCOST activities. A higher percentage of directors responding to the survey participated in COPs (65%),



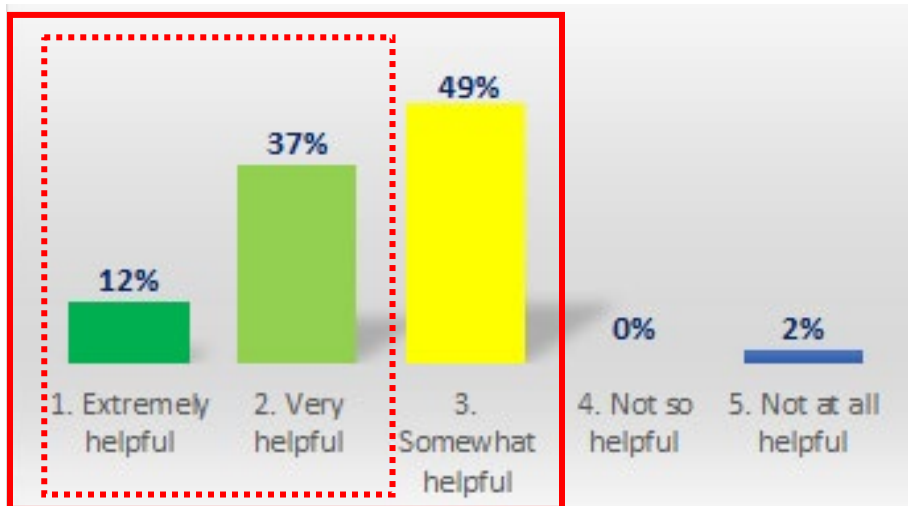
## OST DIRECTOR ENGAGEMENT & EXPERIENCE 2018-19

### SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

1. OST Directors value the AFCOST professional development activities provided for them and their teams. They report **improving their skills & taking back helpful tools and activities**.
2. OST Directors report feeling **connected** to and supported by a **well-facilitated peer learning community** that helps them maintain **commitment, purpose, and focus** on aligning “**bigger picture**”, **values-based leadership** to improve **equity, access, and quality to achieve positive outcomes for children and youth**.
3. In addition to **cultural competence, and leadership & management skills**, directors indicated that they would like AFCOST to **solicit recommendations** and provide **continuous opportunities for higher level training** for front line youth workers and OST directors. They identified: youth development, family engagement, healthy professional boundaries, and other topic areas to **improve program quality**.

### KEY FINDINGS: LEADERSHIP, EQUITY & ACCESS, AND INCREASING QUALITY

**OST LEADERSHIP:** Most directors responding to the survey, **98%** (+4%), said participating in 2018-19 AFCOST program areas/activities helped support their professional development as a leader of out- of-school time programs. And nearly 1 in 2 (49%) said activities very helpful or extremely helpful.



*“As a leader, my ability to question things, be curious, and come to work with new best practices and skills sets, trickles down to effect my staff, the youth, and their families.”*  
– OST Director

In interviews, all directors mentioned that participating in AFCOST activities helps them to understand the “bigger picture” of the importance of the out-of-school time field, helps them connect with peers, keeps their commitment level high, and helps them focus on equity and quality.

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Symposium (70%), and Training (68%). A lower percentage of directors participating in QIS (35%) and MSN (28%) responded to the survey.

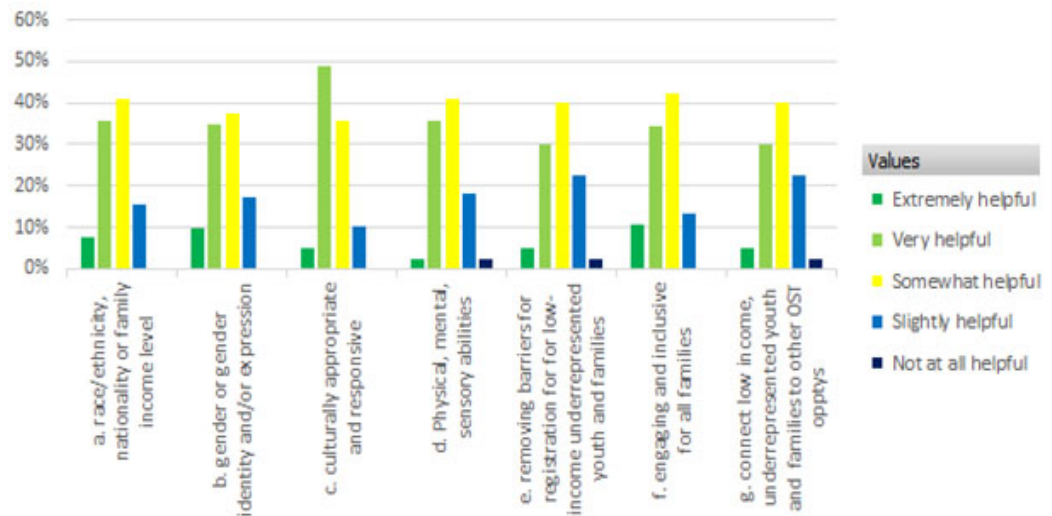
## OST DIRECTOR ENGAGEMENT & EXPERIENCE 2018-19

### EQUITY & ACCESS:

In order to ensure that all respondents were using a common definition of equity, AFCOST reframed the way we asked the Equity and Access question in the 2018-19 survey.

So that we could compare responses from the 2017-18 and the 2018-19 survey, we averaged the

responses across the different parts of the question. Most directors, 99% (+7%) said Agenda for Children's 2018-19 activities helped support their efforts to make OST more accessible & equitable for children. And 43% said activities were very helpful or extremely helpful.



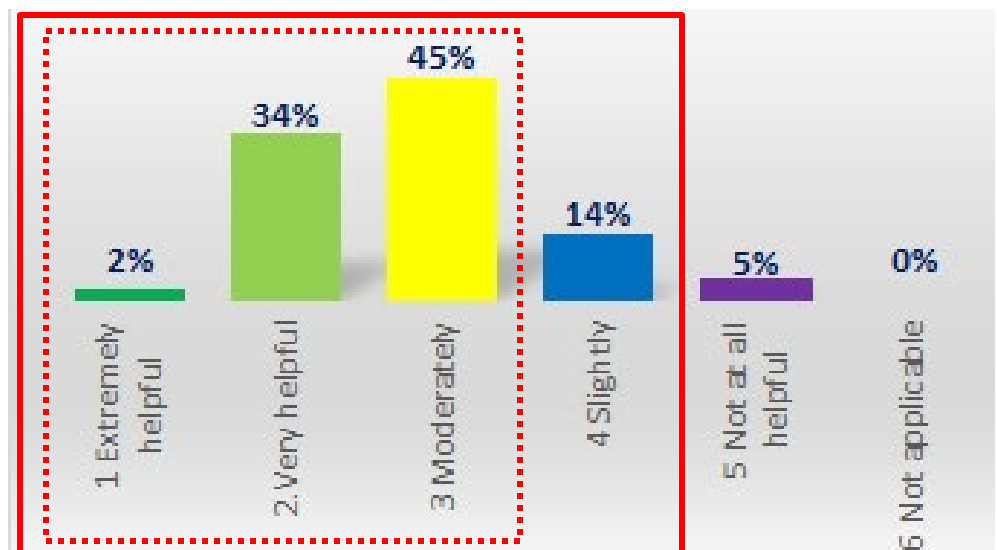
Source: 2018-19 Director Level Survey

*"Through these trainings, our staff have more experience providing a more inclusive learning environment. This helps youth to be more comfortable and more willing to take positive risks."*  
- OST Director

In interviews, a few directors expressed appreciation for AFCOST explicitly naming "racial equity" as a focus area. They said they felt supported in making changes to increase equity in programs, especially when experiencing push back from the community.

### INCREASING QUALITY:

In the survey, most directors, 95% (+10%) said Agenda for Children's 2018-19 activities increased their capacity to offer high quality programs for children & young people. And 81% said activities were moderately, very or extremely helpful.



## OST DIRECTOR ENGAGEMENT & EXPERIENCE 2018-19

In the survey, 62%, (-2%) of directors who responded, provided examples of how AFCOST increased Directors' capacity to offer high quality programs for children and youth, and 62% (+6%) explicitly named 'students' or 'children/youth' in their answers. This may indicate some improvement in how AFCOST is helping directors link their professional development to benefits for children and youth outcomes.

Several of these examples are included throughout this report. We have also provided a sample of 12 responses below

### Examples of increased capacity to offer high quality programs for children and youth.

- ✓ Networking with other organizations allowed me to better communicate across programs to ensure all students were being served.
- ✓ I have been able to increase my social emotional learning abilities to support more of the students I service.
- ✓ I have more parents calling me or email about getting their son or daughter into the program, therefore there are more young people attending the activities.
- ✓ [Our program] implemented an outreach plan that increased the number of underserved youths in sites that were not attracting this population.
- ✓ I have learned new ways to create and present activities that interest the entire class.
- ✓ I make sure all my parents were very happy with all the care of their kids.
- ✓ Supportive in building confidence in children.
- ✓ We continue to reassess our program offerings to include more youth voice.
- ✓ The CoP meetings have allowed me to continue to connect with other programs and see more ways of being in programs to increase positive outcomes. For example, I heard from another program about letting the children rate the classes. We created a mini version about our program for a select group of children and let them share out their ideas about how we were doing. We were able to get insights about the relationships staff were building, what it felt like in our rooms, as well as what activities the kids thought were fun and what was "lame". As we are working towards a new school year, we are using their responses as a guide to make their experience better. It is a work in progress, but it seems for the better.
- ✓ I have been able to provide young people with project focused curriculum.
- ✓ It's allowed me to come up with more engaging ways to speak with the students, particularly in ways of self-regulation and approaching difficult problems.
- ✓ Insight to how different organizations recruit staff, outreach for participants.

*"The Agenda ensures that the conversations about quality and young people remain central."*

*– OST Director*



## OST DIRECTOR ENGAGEMENT & EXPERIENCE 2018-19

*"Being able to learn from my peers means a bottomless well of best practices, program ideas and tips and tricks is always available. Because I feel so confident in my team's ability to deliver a high quality program, we have been able to challenge ourselves to engage more with the families we serve. We are collaborating more with parents and guardians and the inclusion of their ideas, skills, and hopes and dreams for their children. Making the guardians part of our team has created an extra layer of trust, love and appreciation for everyone in our little community. I am excited to see how far we will take this in the upcoming school year." – OST Director*

– OST Director

### KEY FINDINGS: AFCOST PROGRAM AREAS AND ACTIVITIES

#### SYMPOSIUM, TRAINING & COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

Q: Did you participate in Communities of Practice (CoP), Symposium and/or Training this year (July 2018-June 2019)?	# of Directors	# of Survey Respondents	# of Interviews
Yes	50 (38%)	30 (73%)	11 (100%)
No	80 (62%)	11 (27%)	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>11</b>

*"I love Symposium week. I love the opportunity to learn from peers and also to teach to my peers as well. It feels like a great collective community event where I get to see people from all different places in Cambridge . . . It's like minded people coming together. We all have the same passions learning together. It just feels really beautiful."*

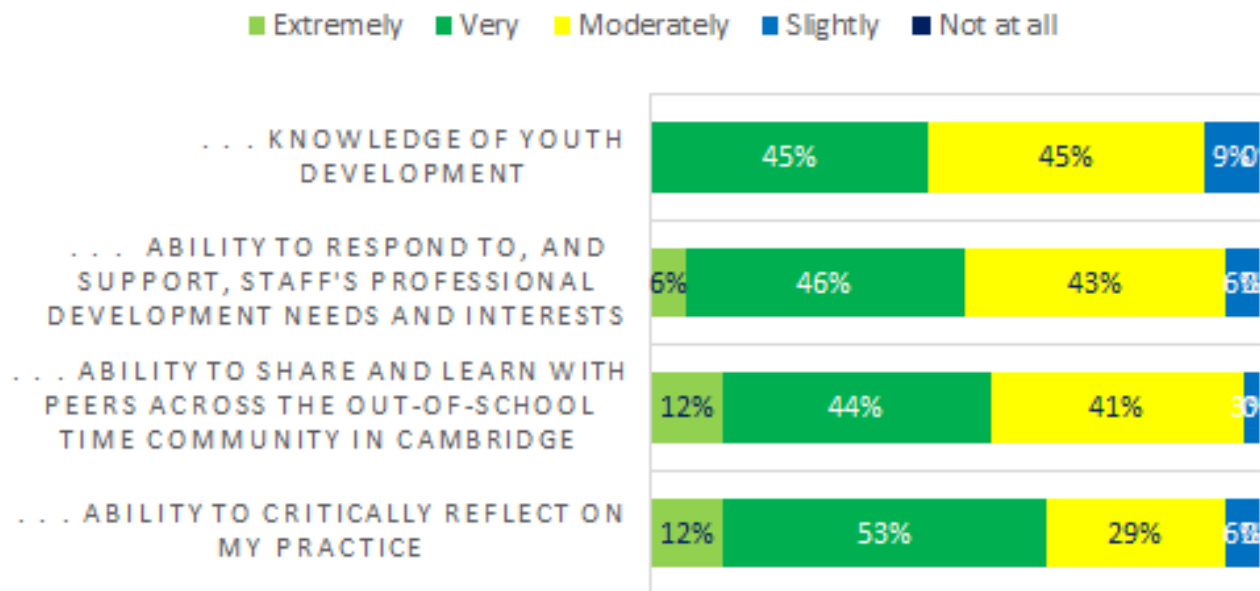
– OST Director

In interviews, eight of the directors also mentioned Symposium as another impactful professional development opportunity. Three people discussed how reflecting, preparing, working with a coach facilitating workshops at the Symposium helped them to develop professionally. They spoke about the value of peer led learning and teaching and the positive impact of bringing like-minded people together to learn from one another about how to support staff, engage with families, and improve youth experiences.

## OST DIRECTOR ENGAGEMENT & EXPERIENCE 2018-19

One person recommended that planning for Symposium begin earlier so that more facilitators would feel they had the time to plan and prepare. Other directors mentioned that the intensity of the offerings during a small window of time made it difficult to fully participate. They recommended offering additional mini-Symposia and repeating Symposium workshops throughout the year.

Overall, most directors, 94% (+11%), who participated in the COPs, Symposium, and/or Training in the past year, said these activities helped to increase their . . . **Skills and abilities**



And...1 in 2 (54%) said activities very helpful or extremely helpful.

In interviews, two directors expressed appreciation for the youth development trainings. One director indicated that these trainings filled professional gaps and another director appreciated the alignment with what AFCOST trainings offered and what s/he is working on with staff on site. S/he attended trainings to model participation for his/her staff and was able to continue to engage staff about what they were learning in one-on-one and staff meetings. One director indicated the improving participation in base-line trainings is a goal. However, because of turnover, it has been difficult for them to track which training their staff have attended and which trainings they need to attend.

Several OST directors suggested that AFCOST work with them to provide follow up support for youth workers after they attend workshops, especially workshops about challenging topics, like healthy body, and sex education, and family partnership. Directors also recommended that AFCOST offer workshops that would help part-time out-of-school time staff to successfully map their future career pathways.

*"My coach was able to show me things from different angles, and how to put myself in the staff shoes and it changed how I approached one on one meetings with staff. I know how it feels to be in their position and am more sympathetic in how I approach supervision." - OST Director*



## OST DIRECTOR ENGAGEMENT & EXPERIENCE 2018-19

All directors who were interviewed specifically mentioned the importance of the Communities of Practice (several specifically mentioned Quality Stewards COP) for their professional development. Two directors participated in the Executive Director Learning Space. They all talked about the effectiveness of having a well-facilitated, peer learning network to which they felt connected. Many of them mentioned how important it was for them to participate in an open, safe space where they could be vulnerable and present their challenges to a group that was experiencing similar things and the valuable recommendations, tools, and strategies that they were able to immediately apply and implement. Directors also highlighted how facilitators also modeled self-care and helped them to prioritize this for themselves and incorporate this value more intentionally with their staff.

*"I'm the quality steward for my organization . . . and because of the Quality Stewards COP, I feel much more ready and self-assured. I get the support from my community when I've gone with issues to them."*

*- OST Director*

One director requested that AFCOST capture and send notes from the training workshops and COPs to support different learning styles. For Executive Director Learning Space, ask for a specific level of commitment to help build trust and consistency.



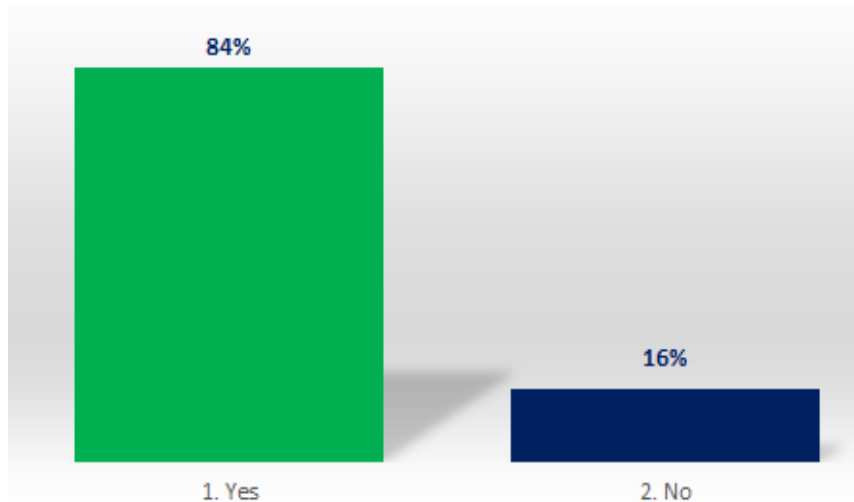
During interviews, several directors offered suggestions to expand the peer learning spaces to address a need for leaders to convene in groups based on identity.

Several directors suggested that AFCOST offer affinity groups based on racial and gender identity. One director mentioned an interest in partnering with AFCOST to develop a Black Male Leadership Institute.

One person specifically mentioned that a “white” affinity group could help staff figure out how racial identity impacts the learning community. This director was interested in exploring the following questions: “What does it mean to be a straight, white, male, able-bodied, cisgendered in leadership in an organization that values equity and diversity? What does that look like? What is the power dynamic set up by skin and gender? How can one learn how to kindly leverage one’s power rather than experiencing conflict internally all the time?”

## OST DIRECTOR ENGAGEMENT & EXPERIENCE 2018-19

**Taking it back:** 84% (+2%) of Directors said “Yes” to the question: Have you “taken back” and applied any activity ideas, content and knowledge to your practice or program?



*“Especially after COPs, I always find myself taking something back to use if not that day, that week. And definitely within that month. Whether it is a journal question, a new way to facilitate, or an activity to do with my staff. I always find myself leaving COP excited to try something new.”*

*– OST Director*

**Examples** of activity ideas, content and knowledge that was “taken back”:

- ✓ I have shared statistics around boys of color with both boys and girls in my program.
- ✓ Loved the “ticket” idea at the symposium as a way of being able to provide positive feedback to people immediately. I have used that idea several times this year.
- ✓ How to make community agreements, manage conflict, and effectively manage staff.
- ✓ Team building games. Ice breakers, reflection exercises
- ✓ Staff meeting engagement activities & activities to do with the kids. New gym games
- ✓ S.P.I.C.E. is a very effective way to frame content planning. If one piece of S.P.I.C.E. isn't present, then it's not going to be a lesson that the students really learn from.
- ✓ I bring back many of the resources that [facilitators] share.
- ✓ Every opening activity [my COP facilitator] brings, I take back!
- ✓ [COP Facilitator’s] practices and suggestions of building community of staff through every day interactions.
- ✓ More intentional action planning with sites
- ✓ We had the staff imagine a child and many possible situations they may be dealing with and how we might respond during the program.
- ✓ We reused several activities with internal staff trainings.

*“I have really benefited professionally from peer-based learning. In this field in particular, it is best to learn from people who are doing the work as much as you can.”*

*– OST Director*



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In interviews, several directors also referenced the trainings and videos on Partnering with Families as helpful for themselves and their staff and their efforts to improve family engagement. One director mentioned that a program director had used the videos as a training tool during regular staff meetings. The directors interviewed said that they were not aware of the **Keeping It Real in Family Partnership Facilitators' Guide** AFCOST created to support staff led professional development using the videos.

### QUALITY IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM

Q: Did you participate in the Quality Improvement System (QIS) this year (July 2018-June 2019)?	# of Directors	# of Survey Respondents	# of Interviews
Yes	66 (51%)	15 (37%)	8 (73%)
No	64 (49%)	26 (63%)	3 (27%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>11</b>

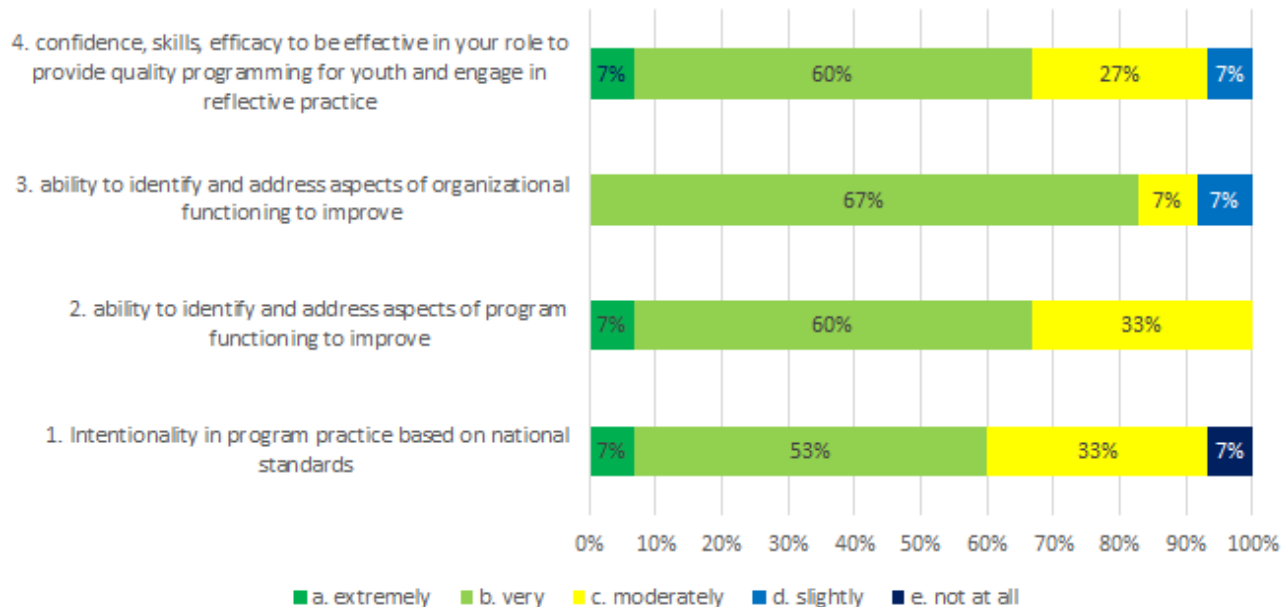
Sixty-six directors from 25 programs participated in the Quality Improvement System activities. The number of QIS coaching hours ranged from 1.5 to 34.5 hours, with an average of 12 hours. Fifteen directors who participated in quality coaching responded to the survey. Of those, 8 (more than half) agreed to participate in follow up interviews.

*"QIS is a specific very concrete way to change something that we're doing in our program, how our program looks, or the way we approach our work through observation, analysis, making a plan, and testing it and reflecting on it. We'll pick one area, make a plan and be able to monitor for next 4 months until we do QIS again. The idea of having a coach or outside expert come in and guide a process really adds credence to it. Even if a program director can do it in their sleep, having that partnership really lends gravity for the folks who are doing it." - OST Director*

Five of the directors interviewed discussed their experiences (past and present) working with QIS Coaches and the importance of continuous quality improvement in their work with staff. They talked about the support coaches provided to not only improve program quality, but also to support transformational changes in their strategic approaches to leadership. Only one person indicated that working with the QIS process didn't align with his/her challenges and s/he was able to obtain the support needed in COPs instead.

## OST DIRECTOR ENGAGEMENT & EXPERIENCE 2018-19

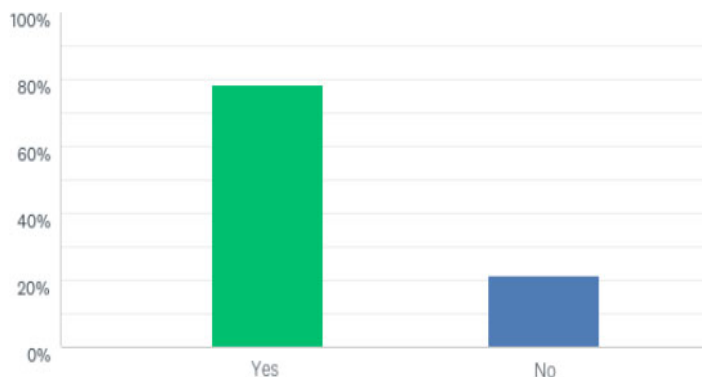
Overall, in the survey, most directors, 98% (+1%), who participated in QIS said quality coaching helped increase efforts to improve quality programs for children and youth. Approximately 2 out of 3 respondents or 66% (+4%) responded that as a result of participation in QIS, they extremely or very much increased their . . . **confidence, skills, and abilities:**



### Q12: Did you have an action plan, with a clear program change or improvement area, this year?

In the survey, 11 directors (79%) indicated that their quality coaches had worked with them to develop an action plan, with a clear program change or improvement area in 2018-19.

Survey respondents identified a sample of program change or improvement areas listed below.



#### Sample Program Change or Improvement Areas

- ✓ Incorporating more youth voice and youth feedback
- ✓ Transitions and communication
- ✓ Quickly gain youth attention and cooperation
- ✓ Modifying home work spaces to accommodate different learning styles
- ✓ Programming/choice variations/timing of activities
- ✓ Organization and nature of activities



## OST DIRECTOR ENGAGEMENT & EXPERIENCE 2018-19

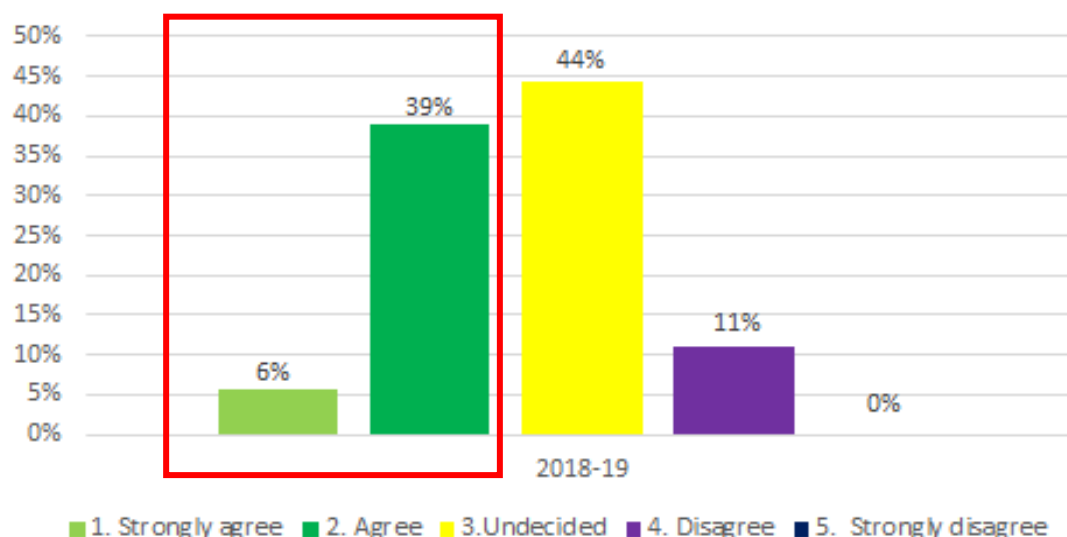
During interviews, several directors recommended that AFCOST consider creating a QIS Lite option which helps organizations and programs who do not currently have a coach to assist them to continue that work until it is possible to obtain a QIS Coach. They also suggested that AFCOST offer group coaching for organizations engaged in a QIS Lite option. Two directors asked if quality coaching could be extended to leaders of teen programs. They suggested that this could support AFCOST in tracking of longitudinal youth outcomes through high school and post-secondary success.

### MIDDLE SCHOOL NETWORK

The MSN targets programs serving middle school students. This represents a smaller pool of programs and a smaller subset of directors.

Q: Did you participate in the Middle School Network this year (July 2018-June 2019)?	# of Directors	# of Survey Respondents	# of Interviews
Yes	46 (35%)	13 (32%)	3 (27%)
No	84 (65%)	28 (68%)	8 (73%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>11</b>

**Equity, Access & Engagement:** In the survey, nearly half, or 45% (-12%) strongly agree or agree that as a result of their participation in MSN over the past year, they have implemented new practices to increase the access, equity and engagement of middle school youth from low-income families and communities of color in out-of-school time opportunities. This is the only survey question in which “undecided” was an option. In other similar questions, respondents were given the choice to select “moderately.” As a result, this question is more challenging to interpret.



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In interviews, directors expressed positive feedback about their experiences and provided examples of how participation in MSN helped them to develop new practices to increase the access, equity and engagement of middle school youth:

- “I participate in the Middle School Network and I like it . . . I’ve built a strong community with other Directors in that group. Participating has helped keep me focused on trying to figure out how to build a strong learning community for that [age] group.”
- “We sat down with them [Middle School students] and ask them what they want to see and what they want to do. We brainstormed cool activities, field trips, and good ideas. We told them that we want to bring them into the planning process and we’re going to try to follow up and they responded by saying, “Thank you! Finally, people are listening to us.”
- “I participated in meetings when OST providers were invited to speak with Dr. Salim about extending the school day. I felt connected to community and out of school time community. Some meetings were done with Dr. Darnisa Amante and DEEP [Disruptive Equity Education Project]. I was able to bring that info back to the Middle School Network, which I think was helpful.”



One survey respondent recommended that AFCOST develop an **Elementary School Network**.

- “I am unsure how [MSN] can be beneficial for the school-age programs, especially for K-2 groups. Possibly similar engagement opportunity can be created for the school-age group.”

Building and expanding on the successes of the MSN, AFCOST is currently in the first phase of establishing an Elementary School Network for K-5 students. AFCOST will be consulting with schools and OST programs working with elementary school students as we prepare to launch this new network.

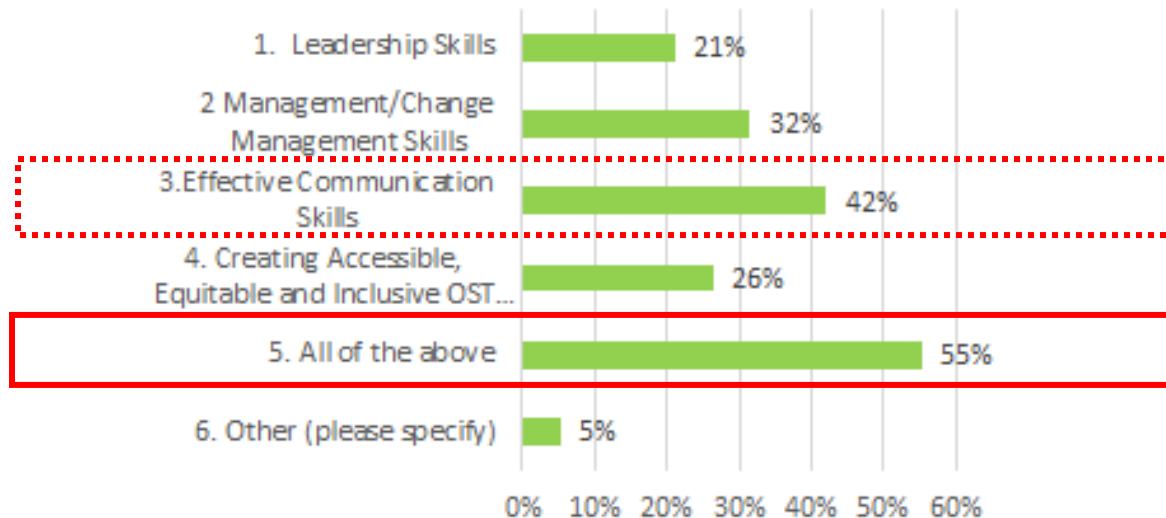
*“I am more definitively now leading an organization that is more focused on student voice and student needs and more focused on equity, and especially inclusion and belonging.”- OST Director*

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### NEW QUESTIONS ASSESSING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

Four new questions were added to the Director Level Survey to assess what additional professional development would be helpful to OST Directors and their staff members.

**SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE:** More than 1 in 2 directors (55%) indicated “**All of the above**” responding to the question: “**Are there skills/knowledge in the areas below that would be beneficial for your staff?**” 42% of directors selected “**Effective Communication Skills**”



In a series of follow up survey questions, OST directors were asked to check 2 of the following to indicate which **LEADERSHIP SKILLS, MANAGEMENT SKILLS, AND COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS** would be most beneficial for their staff members.

**LEADERSHIP SKILLS:** 63% of directors chose: **Knowledge and skills related to using productive feedback from supervisor, team and/or peers.** 61% of directors selected: **Knowledge about how personal attitudes, beliefs and experiences (successes and failures) influences your leadership style.** 47% of directors selected: **Knowledge and skills in being a culturally proficient leader.**

**MANAGEMENT SKILLS:** Most directors (61%) selected: **Managing relationships with supervisor/peers/families and Managing teams to increase buy-in, frame and solve problems, and keep team members engaged.**

**COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS:** More than 1 in 2 directors (55%) selected: **Skills in using self-reflection techniques to enhance interpersonal relationships and program quality.** 50% of directors chose: **Active listening to improve communication impact.** Finally, 37% of respondents chose: **Managing emotions and communications under pressure.**



## OST DIRECTOR ENGAGEMENT & EXPERIENCE 2018-19

### RECOMMENDATIONS

In addition to the build out of the Elementary School Network, which is in the early stages of development, several additional themes emerged as central for AFCOST to consider as we move forward:

- Provide more advanced trainings for experienced OST staff who have completed the baseline trainings and solicit feedback from OST staff about relevant workshop topics from the field.
- Formalize existing and create more opportunities for experienced OST staff to develop strong facilitation skills and techniques to enable them to lead the field forward.
- Continue offering professional development planning workshops to maximize engagement.
- Facilitate deeper understanding about the relationship between professional development, staff performance and retention, and positive child and youth outcomes.
- Work with OST directors to develop evaluation strategy to measure the impact of quality OST programs on child and youth outcomes.
- Develop more targeted outreach strategies and meet with OST programs who are not currently benefitting from AFCOST activities to better understand barriers and needs.
- Explore partnerships and innovative recommendations from OST Directors (i.e. Black Male Leadership Institute, identity-based affinity groups).

### AFCOST PROPOSED 3 YEAR PROGRAM AREA EXPANSION (FY 2021-2023)

AFCOST has developed a proposal for an expansion of professional development opportunities. Over the next three years, AFCOST will actively seek resources to continue to improve our capacity to support OST Programs.

**Phase 1:** Create a new brand, organizing current activities (Training, OST Symposium, COPs) under a unified umbrella known as the **Cambridge OST Learning Institute**. Form an advisory body to provide guidance

**Phase 2:** Add intermediate and advanced, competency-based, skill development training. Add a Leadership Development Training Series and develop a Leadership Certificate to compliment quality coaching, executive level communities of practice, and peer leadership opportunities in all other AFCOST program areas.

**Phase 3:** Add online training and opportunities for follow up support for ongoing learning.

In closing, AFCOST acknowledges the many contributions and participation of OST directors to inform our collective work and we will continue to seek feedback to improve our capacity to support the Cambridge OST Community.

*"Changes are sustainable when [they] become part of our culture and we're looking at the next thing to improve." - OST Director*

## OST DIRECTOR ENGAGEMENT & EXPERIENCE 2018-19

## NOTES

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