

Baltimore County After-School Opportunities Program

FY2004 Report

Prepared for the
Baltimore County Local Management Board

by

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Executive Summary

Background

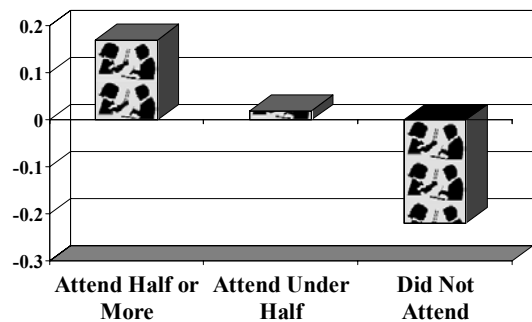
The Maryland After-School Opportunity Act of 1999 created a fund to assist parents by providing after-school programs for children. The Baltimore County Local Management Board (LMB) received its first grant award in FY2001 from the State of Maryland, Department of Human Resources, Child Care Administration, to develop and administer after-school programs in Baltimore County. The grant was subsequently renewed for FY2003 and FY2004, although with lower levels of funding. The LMB commissioned evaluations of the after-school program in all years. This report evaluates the FY2004 (academic year 2003-2004) programs.

The LMB funded after-school opportunities in FY2004 starting in September and October 2003 at six locations administered by two other county agencies and one nonprofit organization. The Baltimore County Public Library provided after-school opportunities at the Woodlawn Public Library for high school students. The YMCA of Central Maryland provided opportunities for youth at three middle schools: Loch Raven Academy, Southwest Academy, and Stemmers Run. The Baltimore County Department of Recreation and Parks provided after-school opportunities at Battle Monument School and Ridge Ruxton School for secondary school youth with special education needs.

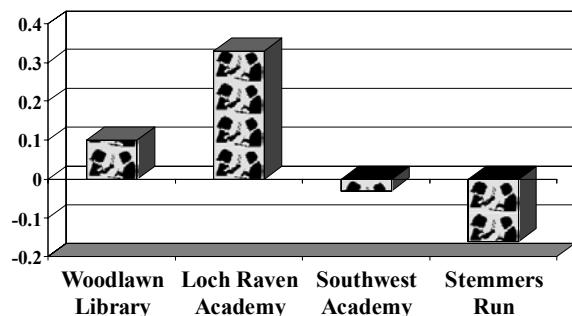
Outcomes

School grades for youth who participated in the programs for at least half the year increased about 0.20 grade points above what would be expected based on the previous years' grades. School grades remained as expected for students who participated less than half the time, and school grades declined for students who enrolled in the programs but never attended. These findings were more noticeable for boys than for girls. Students in the Woodlawn Library and Loch Raven programs made academic gains during the year while students in the Southwest and Stemmers Run programs did not do as well academically as would have been expected.

GPA Change Over Expected, by Attendance



GPA Change Over Expected, by Program Location



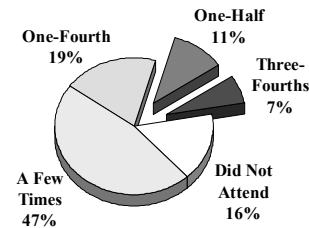
Baltimore County Public Library

The Woodlawn Public Library after-school program enrolled 118 youth during the 148 days the program was in session. It operated for three hours a day, five days per week, and had a daily capacity of 40 youth.

Findings:

- Youth achieved 0.10 grade points higher in FY2004 than would be expected based upon FY2003 grades and general decline in grades with age, meeting the target;
- Youth had more school absences in FY2004 than in FY2003, rather than fewer as targeted;
- Average of 26 youth each day was 66% of capacity, below the 75% target;
- It supervised 11,634 youth hours, 76% of the target and 84% of the FY2003 total;
- It had 13 or fewer youth per staff on 75% of the days, missing the target of 90%, but above the experience during FY2003;
- It retained 2 of its original 3 staff, below the target of 80% but the same as in FY2003.

Percent of Students by Attendance:
Woodlawn Library Program



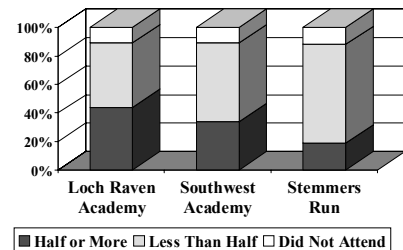
YMCA of Central Maryland

The YMCA enrolled 225 youth during the 97-102 days the programs were in session at Loch Raven Academy, Southwest Academy, and Stemmers Run middle schools. Each location operated three hours per day, three days per week and had a daily capacity of 40 youth.

Findings:

- Youth achieved 0.02 grade points higher in FY2004 than would be expected based upon FY2003 grades and general decline in grades with age, meeting the target. The increase in grades, however, only occurred among Loch Raven students;
- Youth at all three programs had more school absences in FY2004 than in FY2003, rather than fewer as targeted;
- Average of 79 youth each day was 66% of capacity, and all locations missed the 75% target;
- It supervised 23,631 youth hours, 88% of the target, with Stemmers Run contributing most to the under-run;
- It had 13 or fewer youth per staff on all of the days, exceeding the target of 90%;
- It retained 53% of its original staff, below the target of 80%, with complete staff turnover at Southwest and 71-75% retention at the other two locations.

Percent of Students by Attendance:
YMCA Programs

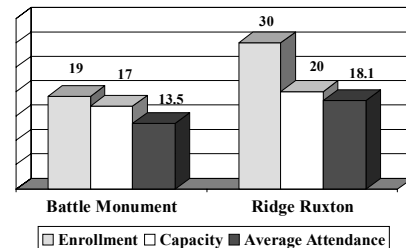


The Battle Monument School after-school program enrolled 19 youth and the Ridge Ruxton School program enrolled 30 youth during 110-114 days their programs were in session. The programs operated 2.5 hours per day, four days a week, and had a capacity of 17 youth at Battle Monument and 20 youth at Ridge Ruxton. The Ridge Ruxton program had some youth who alternated the days they attended.

Findings:

- Average of 32 youth each day, 85% of capacity, with both locations over the 75% target;
- It supervised 8,820 youth hours, 79% of the target, with both locations under target;
- It had 5 or fewer youth per staff on all but one day, exceeding the target of 90%;
- It retained 93% of its original staff, exceeding the target of 80%.

Enrollment and Average Attendance:
Recreation and Park



Summary and Recommendations

The 2004 after school opportunities of the Baltimore County Local Management Board:

- Enrolled 392 youth during the year for its planned 197-youth capacity;
- Supervised an average of 137 youth each day, 70% of the planned capacity;
- Supervised 44,085 hours of youth time, 83% of the target;
- Helped youth who attended regularly make academic gains
- Helped youth develop a more ethical standard for making decisions on actions.

Program recommendations based upon the evaluation are as follows:

1. Establish program sites and gear up for the programs as early as possible to aid recruitment of staff and youth;
2. Identify goals and target measures based upon the focus of the programs and what they expect to accomplish, involving as many stakeholders as possible;
3. Develop a shorter survey instrument to be completed by the majority of the regular school youth soon after they start the programs and again near the end of the programs;
4. Attempt to collect some information from or about youth who drop out of the program to provide information for potential program enhancement;
5. Provide evaluation feedback to program staff during the program to assist them in managing the program and suggest potential enhancements;
6. Explore the possibility of a comparison group for greater confidence in outcome results.

The dependency on state funds allocated on a year-to-year basis has led to delays, expansion, contraction, and discontinuities in the opportunities over the years. The FY2004 opportunities capitalized on things learned in earlier years, but did not overcome all the program funding issues and had to offer fewer programs and sites than in previous years.