



Out-of-School Time
Leadership Lab

How Local Philanthropy
Can Increase Out of
School Time Quality

FIELD-BUILDING IN THE DAN RIVER REGION

October 2025





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What is an OST program?

Out-of-School Time (OST) is a supervised program that young people regularly attend when school is not in session, per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This includes before- and after-school programs; specialty programs such as sports teams, STEM, arts enrichment; and multipurpose programs that provide an array of activities like Boys & Girls Clubs and YMCAs.

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The following case study is for funders looking for innovative ways to bring people together for shared learning.

It's for out-of-school time practitioners to help them realize that the field is large and everyone brings their own experiences to the table. And together, they are stronger.

It's for community members to help them understand that there are people committed to the growth, welfare, and care of their children.

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The Role of Out-of-School Time Regional Transformation

Learning happens inside the classroom. And outside of it too. Before kindergarten begins, during the afterschool hours, and throughout summer break, young people are growing, exploring, and building skills. Teachers come in many forms. Most of us can name a coach, counselor, librarian, scout leader, or neighbor who made a lasting impact.

The Opportunity to Meet

Across the Dan River Region, there is a strong commitment to children and families, and established interest in afterschool and summer programming. Providers bring great dedication to this work. There was high intent challenged by uneven capacity.

The opportunity was to close the gap between aspiration and practice by equipping leaders with the knowledge, skills, and tools to strengthen quality and build capacity across the field.

The Story That Follows

This case study describes how the Danville Regional Foundation and community partners responded to that opportunity.

Together, we worked to strengthen out-of-school time programs by equipping practitioners and began building a more coordinated and connected out-of-school time field. It also describes how this work fits into a larger vision: expanding access to high-quality learning as part of the region's long-term prosperity and economic transformation.



Introduction

At the end of 2022, the Danville Regional Foundation noted a post-Covid uptick in funding requests for afterschool programs. Community interest in supporting children and youth outside of school hours was rising. So was recognition of the role these programs can play in academic success, school attendance, and behavior.

While DRF continued to support program operations where possible, we also saw a deeper need: to build a shared understanding of what quality looks like. High-quality outcomes depend on more than just good intentions. They rest on the knowledge, skills, and capacity of the people delivering the programs every day.

Through subsequent months, the foundation explored, planned and implemented the Out-of-School Time Leadership Lab initiative. Community leaders were essential in each stage as informers, co-creators and participants.

The Leadership Lab launched the first cohort in January 2024, comprised of over 10 leaders from national nonprofits, local providers, public agencies and school districts. A second cohort kicked off in September 2025.

Expectations around afterschool and summer are shifting and a formal network has been established. Shared decision-making between the Foundation and community partners, who comprise the Advisory Committee, is central to how the Foundation implements strategic philanthropy and to the Leadership Lab's success.

Collaboration is in Our DNA

DRF exists to support the expansion of prosperity by investing in education, among other areas, to improve economic opportunities for all. For our region to do well, opportunities must be expanded.

In 2021, the foundation adopted a theory of change that centers the cultivation approach, where our leadership role becomes that of showing the possible, providing research and best practices and convening and facilitating conversations where everyone is contributing.

Our aspiration is to build a linked and layered network of community transformation, working towards the goal of a thriving Dan River Region.



Shared decision-making between the Foundation and community partners, who comprise the Advisory Committee, is central to how the Foundation implements strategic philanthropy and to the Leadership Lab's success.



Our Neck of the Woods: Understanding the Region

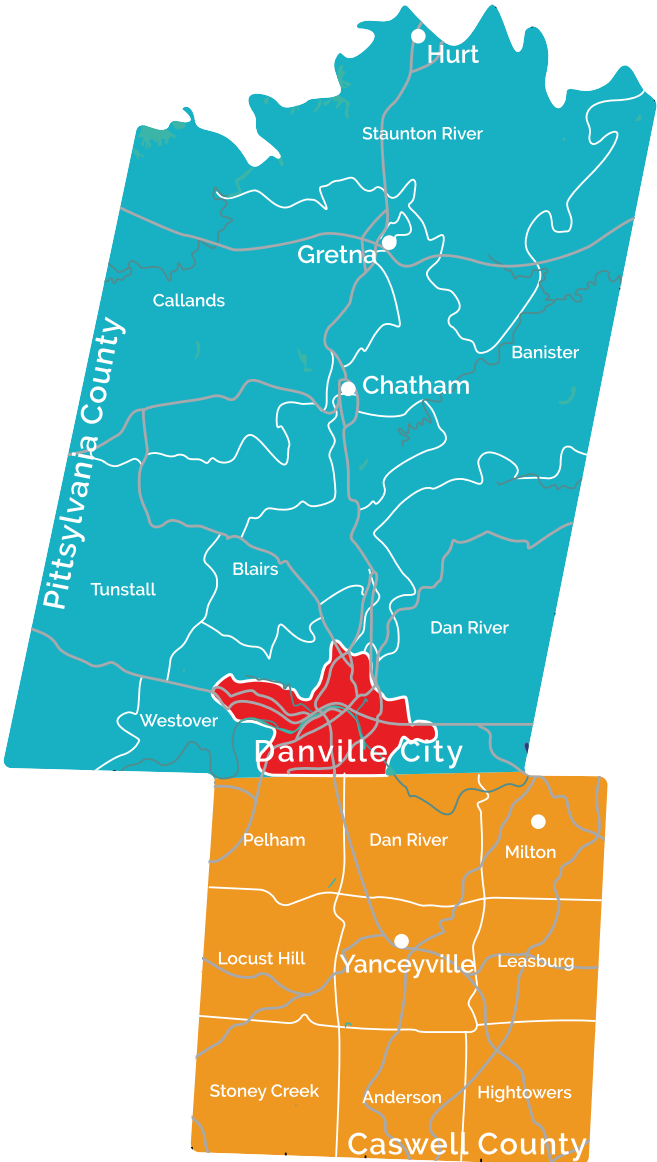
The Dan River Region bridges a state line. From the top at Pittsylvania County, Virginia, encompassing the City of Danville, and crossing over into North Carolina, spanning Caswell County the area is more diverse than it appears. As a small market town, Danville anchors the contiguous rural counties. Each entity has its own history, community and assets, even as they are linked economically.

Neck of the Woods	2020 Census	Area
Pittsylvania County, VA	60,501	978 sq. mi.
City of Danville, VA	42,590	43 sq. mi.
Caswell County, NC	22,736	428 sq. mi.
Dan River Region	125,827	1,449 sq. mi.

Two generations ago, textile and tobacco production were the main industries. Now, after years of diligence, economic transformation is ahead. Since 2018, there has been \$5.3 billion in investments announced and more than 3,000 new jobs.

The region must ask new questions: How do we grow wisely? What do we do about the challenges around education, and other areas?

Part of DRF’s work is moving forward to have these important conversations with our neighbors and get into action. The Out-of-School Time Leadership Lab is part of that response.



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Participating the OST Learning Lab has significantly broadened my perspective on collaboration with colleagues in the region. Even though I’m still in the early stages of developing my after-school program, the Learning Lab has connected me with a network of professionals who are already implementing similar programs. This has encouraged me to seek advice, share ideas, and explore potential partnerships. Moving forward, I plan to leverage these connections to create a stronger, more cohesive community of after-school programs in our region, ensuring we all benefit from shared experiences and resources.

Out-of-School Time Learning Lab Participant

Going Slow to Go Fast

The Danville Regional Foundation has a history of investing in learning, especially shared learning, through prior subject-specific experiences like Collaboration Lab and the flexible “See the Possible” Trip experiences. Since the Foundation was created 25 years ago, the region has moved out of economic crisis to the precipice of exponential growth. In the early years, DRF took on a crisis-response driver role. That posture has transitioned towards what Easterling describes as facilitative engagement.

Explore: Is There Any There There?

Recognizing that out-of-school time is part of every student’s success experience, DRF sought a consultant in **January 2023** via a nationwide request for proposal search. The request for proposal yielded responses from multiple experts to co-create a multi-month practitioner learning opportunity.

Staff invited Advisory Committee members in **March 2023** and convened the group the following month to review received proposals. The Advisory Committee consists of leaders across the Dan River Region from public agencies, like city parks and recreation; other local funders; school district administrators; and nonprofit leaders, like Boys & Girls Club, United Way and key local providers.

Out-of-School Time Learning Lab Advisory Committee:

- City of Danville, Parks and Recreation
- American National Bank
- Caswell County Schools
- Project Imagine, City of Danville
- Danville Church & Community Tutorial Program
- Danville Public Schools
- Boys & Girls Club of the Danville Area
- Cool Beans

In **April 2023**, they narrowed the RFPs and decided more information was needed before a final decision, proceeding to reference checks, instructing staff to conduct those and return with a report and recommendation. Those steps were completed and the committee chose the Smarter Learning Group as their external subject-matter expert.

Our History At-A-Glance

- January 2023** — RFPs requested to co-create a practitioner learning opportunity
- March 2023** — Received proposals reviewed
- April 2023** — Smarter Learning Group chosen as the external subject-matter expert
- May 2023** — The Smarter Learning Group met with the Advisory Committee
- June 2023** — OST Leadership Lab draft design reviewed by the Advisory Committee
- July 2023** — More school district administrators included in Advisory Committee
- August 2023** — Planning phase concluded
- September and October 2023** — Development of curriculum, calendar, and application
- December 2023** — Applications opened
- February 2024** — Inaugural OST Leadership Lab launched

Plan: Blending Experience and Expertise

In **May 2023**, the Smarter Learning Group held an in-person design session with the Advisory Committee to solicit their hopes and aspirations. They discussed three questions:

- What do you imagine the Out-of-School Time Leadership Lab would look like? What would you want it to accomplish?
- There are different program types in the region. What activities could best build capacity across those types?
- What would the ideal outcomes be?

Committee members said they would want to visit high-quality programs that help children and youth succeed, especially those that use enrichment and youth voice and choice as a “hook,” while supporting schoolwork completion.

The activities they believed would best build capacity included reciprocal learning, resource-sharing and problem-solving together, and learning quality characteristics.

Ideal outcomes included increased collaboration and partnership, inclusive of a regional, networked vision. The committee wanted to create connections in the field and foster a shared knowledge of the landscape.

The broad vision was learning together to get in action together. A successful OST Leadership Lab learning experience would result in more partnerships, best practice awareness and implementation knowledge, along with a clear understanding of K-5 development and education standards.

In addition to meeting with the Advisory Committee, SLG conducted informational interviews with practitioners, other funders, and multiple DRF staff.

In **June 2023**, the Advisory Committee reviewed SLG’s draft design of the Out-of-School Time Leadership Lab and provided feedback. While they liked the idea of a retreat and a trip to observe programs in action, the consensus was that it was too much time away. A second recommendation was to broaden the Advisory Committee membership to include more school district administrators and principals, which the DRF Board also endorsed in **July 2023**.

The planning phase concluded in **August 2023**. To preserve the value of a retreat and program visits, the design collapsed both activities into a single excursion, positioning it as a launch event at the beginning of the multi-month learning period.

A “See the Possible” Trip is DRF’s time-tested, shared learning experience where multiple partners visit another community that has had success implementing innovative models that have created positive impact. These trips offer opportunities for in-depth dialogue and face-to-face strategizing, benefiting both the travelers and the hosts. The goal is to expand the imagination and provide inspiration to a diverse group of community members as they work towards the economic transformation of the Dan River Region.

The OST LL's goals are:

- Provide impactful practitioner development covering education, youth development, program and health and safety components to out-of-school time providers in the Dan River Region.
- Support and activate ideas that lead to impact.
- Shared learning so that the local field has the knowledge and skills to constructively engage and collectively act.

SLG leadership presented the evidence base for afterschool and summer learning to the Dan River Region Funders Forum. The group discussed potential funder roles: convener for shared learning, investor in program quality, partnership accelerator and systems builder.

Implementation: Going Fast

With the design period complete, tasks pivoted to execution in **September and October 2023** with the development of curriculum, calendar and application. The advisory committee reviewed the selection process, including a timeline, application and review matrix. Their edits were incorporated and the application opened in early **December 2023**.

The power of co-creation and shared vision resulted in a robust response—applicants knew the Out-of-School Time Leadership Lab was designed with them in mind.

The Advisory Committee reviewed the 16 applications representing 11 organizations and extended invitations to join to 14. The inaugural Out-of-School Time Leadership Lab cohort launched in **February 2024**.

Power of Field Voice

Absent robust community engagement, staff and external advisors would have spent at least three months developing the leadership lab and a similar amount of time promoting it, convincing leaders that it was beneficial to them and to their staff. Instead, the OST practitioners knew this was a learning opportunity designed for them by their peers and that it was responsive to their assets, time availability and challenges.

This school-aged youth development learning experience will:

- Strengthen knowledge and utilization of a shared set of evidence-based strategies for high-quality afterschool and summer learning programs that improve student outcomes.

Out-of-School Time Leadership Lab Inaugural Cohort:

- Boys & Girls Clubs of the Danville Area
 - Cool Beans Afterschool Program
 - Danville Church & Community Tutorial Program
 - Danville Parks & Recreation
 - Danville Public Schools
 - Institute for Advanced Learning & Research, Advanced Learning Division
 - Pittsylvania County Parks and Recreation
 - Pittsylvania County Schools
-

- Improve collaboration and create more partnerships.
- Build new relationships and deepen networks and connections.
- Shift the culture and mindset about afterschool and summer programs.

Learning & Impact

Build knowledge and understanding about the critical elements of evidence-based afterschool and summer learning programs:

1. Active, hands-on learning,
2. Opportunities for student autonomy and choice,
3. Student engagement & enjoyment, and
4. Positive social relationships.

Those elements were modeled in the Leadership Lab's design.

Active, Hands-On Learning

During the "See the Possible" Trip, participants learned from guest faculty in a morning classroom setting, followed by afternoons observing programs in action and meeting with site supervisors.

They observed and assessed program quality in a range of afterschool programs designed for various demographics. Post-visit, participants discussed what they noticed, and how their observations could be applied to drive quality improvement in the Dan River Region.



Opportunities for Autonomy & Choice

Each participant designed a project to start applying their knowledge. The task was to identify an element of their program they are already trying to improve and then apply frameworks from the Leadership Lab.

Some projects were team efforts in a single organization, such as Danville Public Schools, others were joint organizational undertakings, like Pittsylvania County Schools and Pittsylvania County Parks & Recreation. There were also single organizational efforts, informed by their colleagues in the Leadership Lab.

The projects each addressed one of the following questions:

- What is high-quality evidence-based programming?
- How should we equip and develop staff to deliver high-quality programming?
- How can we strengthen parent engagement and partnerships to support high-quality programming?

“
 This experience opened my perspective to the benefits of collective networking and work. I don't have to tackle every problem individually.
 ”



Student Engagement & Enjoyment

The Leadership Lab syllabus delivered planning frameworks, site observation tools and research-based high-quality practices. It balanced immediate, short-term and long-term approaches. Each action session included peer sharing to reinforce what we've each done and explore what we could do together.

Positive Social Relationships

Learning is cognitive, social and emotional. Situating the trip to Greenville towards the start of the learning lab created valuable time for participants to get to know each other and engage in shared learning that they reflected on and referred to over subsequent months.

Each of the monthly action sessions also included lunch; intentional time together over a meal prioritized informal sharing, leading to meaningful connections.

Reflections & Lessons Learned

The Advisory Committee convened in November 2024 to confer on progress observed. They were encouraged by what participants were experiencing and also felt it was too soon to make a recommendation on repeating the Leadership Lab.

In January 2025, after attending the December 2024 culminating presentations, the committee was in strong agreement that there were more OST practitioners who had expressed interest in and would benefit from the Leadership Lab.

They recommended two changes:

- First, shift the start and end dates from a calendar year to a school year. Operate the application process to issue invitations by May 2025.
- Second, be more proactive in arranging intra-program site visits.

The "See the Possible" trip, expert instruction and structured learning from and with peers were elements to retain and reinforce.

The second Out-of-School Time Leadership Lab cohort applied in May 2025. These 18 leaders kicked off in September 2025 and will conclude in April 2026 with their project presentations.

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[Looking ahead.] I believe the most important component to keep would be the interactive and collaborative learning environment. The environment to engage with peers, share experiences, and receive direct feedback from others in the field has been invaluable.

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I speak more on a regular basis with fellow colleagues. This helps keep me current on what is happening in our community.

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What's Ahead

Structure building is the path to impact.

There's no pre-determined decision to perennially operate the Leadership Lab. Foundation staff and leadership will remain in consultation with the Advisory Committee and the regional field about how to evolve and when to consider sunseting.

One request that came from the conclusion of the first cohort was a desire to stay in contact, learning from each other. To that end, in partnership with the United Way of Danville-Pittsylvania County the Dan River Region Out-of-School Time Network launched in September 2025. Open to all regional providers, the network will in seeing the possible, pursuing quality, and lifting up bright spots, sharing the stories of the people and organizations leading change.

Through monthly virtual meetings, shared learning and participation in state and nationwide calls to attention, the Network will increase information sharing and cooperation for defined activities or projects.

Moving from co-existence to communication and coordination will allow providers to develop relationships with their peers and put faces with program names. It will also professionalize the regional OST field, affirming providers' shared purpose and passion: equipping children and youth to accomplish the tasks of today and conquer the challenges of tomorrow.

The bottom line is that continuing to expand access to well-designed, high-quality afterschool and summer enrichment will make a positive difference in student learning, growth and development.

We remain committed to listening, learning and leading together.



“The program was thoughtfully designed and provided a well-rounded experience, from the informative sessions to the valuable site visits in Greenville, SC.”

“I have enjoyed my time with my OST fellows. I have gained valuable knowledge, I would absolutely recommend OST to anyone who would care to sign up.”

Acknowledgments and Gratitude

The Danville Regional Foundation is grateful to partners and colleagues who have made this effort possible and strengthened it at every inflection point.

First and foremost, this initiative would not have been possible without the generosity of the Out-of-School Time Leadership Lab Advisory Committee members.

We also extend deep appreciation to the Smarter Learning Group, especially Ron Fairchild and Jenny Atkinson for their commitment to quality and willingness to iterate.

Our local leaders in the 50 State Afterschool Network; Blaire Denson, Virginia Partnership for Out-of-School Time, and Elizabeth Anderson, North Carolina Center for Afterschool Programs, provided helpful perspectives and guidance.

We also acknowledge the field-builders, especially researchers, for determining not only if, but how out-of-school time programs benefit children, youth, families, neighborhoods, communities and regions.

We look forward to continuing this work in partnership with those committed to building opportunity for every child in the Dan River Region.

Appendices

Appendix A: Logic Model

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Appendix B: Promotional Fliers

Pages 13-14

Appendix C: Commitment Agreement

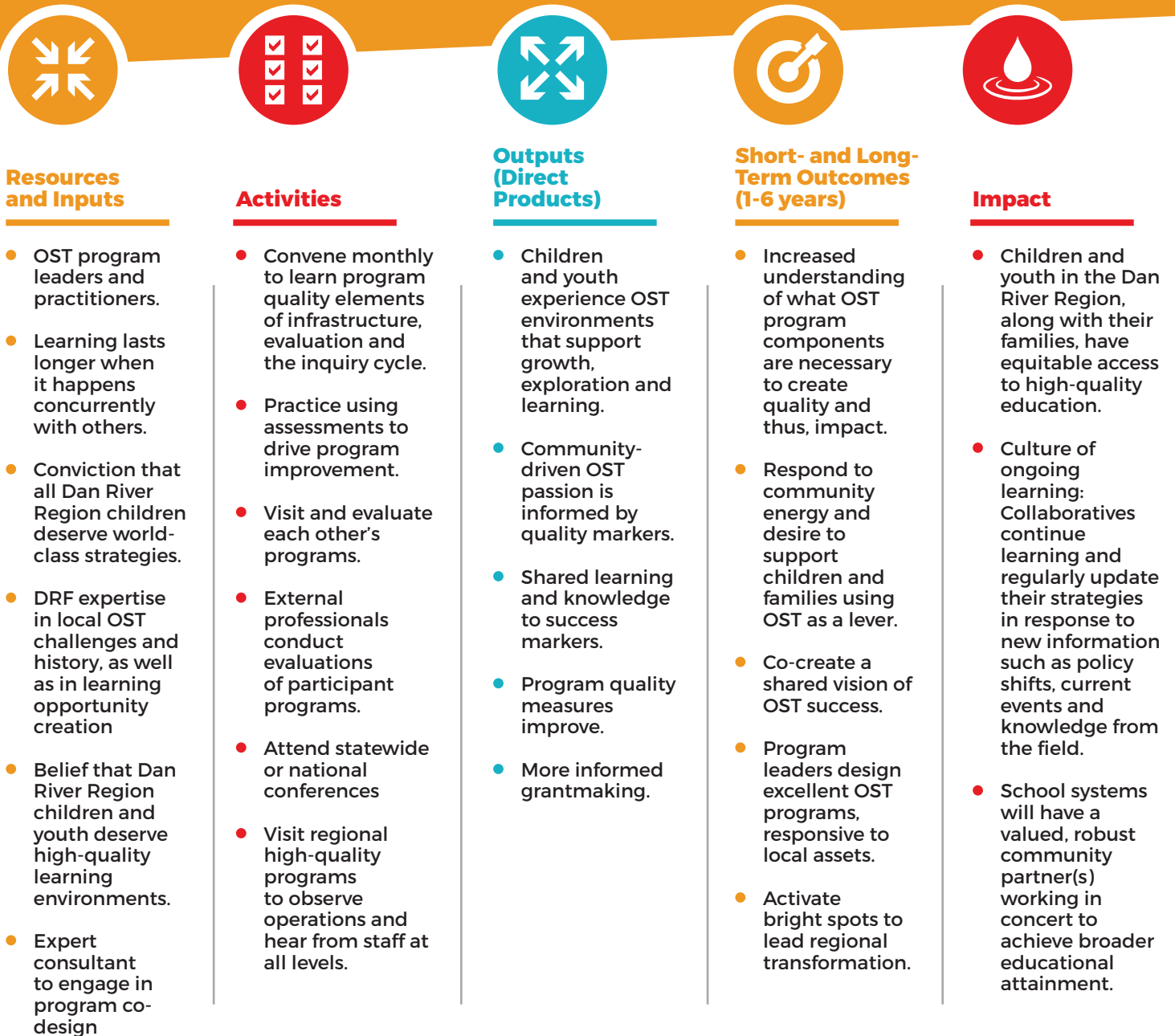
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Advisory Committee Members:

- Dr. Takiwi Babalola, Chief Academic Officer, Danville Public Schools
- Jason Bookheimer, Division Director of Community Recreation, Danville Parks and Recreation
- Debra Carlson, Trust Executive Director, Atlantic Union Bank
- Shakeva Frazier, Executive Director, Third Chance Housing
- Cathy Gore, CEO, United Way of Danville-Pittsylvania County
- Robin Haymore, Assistant Superintendent for Support Services, Pittsylvania County Schools
- Dr. Hilary Moore, Principal, Stoney Creek Elementary School, Caswell County Schools
- Kenny Lewis, Executive Director, Danville Church & Community Tutorial Program
- Justin Price, Director of Parks & Recreation, Pittsylvania County
- Dana Silicki, Director, STEM, Service and Lifelong Learning, Institute for Advanced Learning and Research
- Gary Terry, CEO, Boys & Girls Club of the Danville Area
- Selena Thornton, Executive Director, Cool Beans
- Kin Watlington, Caswell County Schools (retired)

Appendix A: Logic Model

This diagram helped balance the big picture and the component parts, and most crucially, informed communication with various stakeholders – the DRF Board, the Advisory Committee, and external experts.



Appendix B: Promotional Fliers

The fliers from both the first cohort, which occurred in 2024, and the second cohort, which will follow the school year calendar and launch in September 2025, illustrate how the program was described to applicants.



OST
Out of School Time
Learning Lab

Expanding afterschool and summer learning program impact in the Dan River Region

February 21, 2024 - December 4, 2024
10:30am - 1:00pm

What is an OST program?

“Out of School Time (OST) is a supervised program that young people regularly attend when school is not in session, per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This includes before- and after- school programs; specialty programs such as sports teams, STEM, arts enrichment; and multipurpose programs that provide an array of activities like Boys & Girls Clubs and YMCAs.”

2024



Introduction

The Out of School Time Learning Lab, provided by the Danville Regional Foundation in partnership with the Smarter Learning Group, is a ten-month leadership development experience, that will operate from February 2024 - December 2024.

The benefits of high-quality afterschool and summer learning programs are well-documented. Young people who participate consistently in out-of-school time programs have better educational and developmental outcomes than those who do not. Dozens of studies conducted over the past three decades provide the footnotes for the commonsense idea that if young people spend more time engaging in constructive activities and developing positive relationships with peers and adults beyond their schools and homes, they will be more well-prepared for success in school, careers, and life.

The focus of the Lab is strengthening quality, access and sustainability among programs that operate beyond the regular school day and year. These programs provide critical services and support for young people and their families.

Adults working in OST programs in the City of Danville: Pittsylvania County, Va.; and Caswell County, N.C. will be the participants. These leaders include:

- 1) staff who work directly with young people in programs.
- 2) those in management and leadership roles, and
- 3) those in positions that influence program funding and policy-related decisions.

Monthly Action Sessions will be held at DRF Offices, 512 Bridge St. in Danville. Plentiful parking available.

2024 Schedule

- January 19 Applications Due
- February 21
- March 5-8 Greenville, SC Trip
- April 3
- May 1
- June 12
- July 10
- No August Session
- September 4
- October 2
- November 6
- December 4 Project

Participants will:

Attend a “See the Possible” Learning Journey and retreat in Greenville/Spartanburg, SC on March 5-8, 2024, to observe afterschool programs in action and learn principles of evidence-based programming.

Design and implement a 10-month collaborative project with at least one other Learning Lab participant. Projects will focus on improving one or more aspects of the program through collaboration and partnership.

Participate in monthly OST Learning Lab Action sessions designed to provide ongoing, personalized support and meaningful leadership partnership development opportunities.

Engage in programs in the Danville region operated by members of the cohort and host a local Peer Exchange program for presentations and reviews.

Participants’ program will receive a stipend to support their participation, associated with covering time away from work, or costs associated with their project.

Present what they did, accomplished, and learned through their OST Learning Lab projects to funders and other regional leaders.

Learning Objectives:

- **Strengthen knowledge and utilization of a shared set of evidence-based strategies for high-quality OST programs that improve student outcomes.** Participants will learn how to observe, assess, and improve programs using a common set of tools program quality. Everyone will know what quality programming looks and sounds like and how to move the needle on quality in programs.
- **Improving collaboration and creating more partnerships.** Participants will plan and implement a collaborative project focused on at least one of the following domains: Improving program quality, expanding access to reach more young people, and/or strengthening sustainability and funding. Everyone involved will have a concrete experience working with at least one other partner.
- **Building new relationships and deepening networks and connections.** Participants will work with each other, guest faculty, and leaders from both within and outside the region to implement their collaborative projects. Everyone will be connected to a network of OST leaders and have more and better contacts and resources they can draw on for future assistance.
- **Shifting the culture and mindset about afterschool and summer programs.** Participants will view the OST Learning Lab as a vehicle for expanding and improving their respective programs and for reducing isolation and competition between and among programs. Everyone involved in the OST Learning Lab will experience the tangible benefits that come from aligning efforts and having a more consistent, coordinated message and approach across the region.

Applications due Friday, January 19, 2024.

Questions?
Email Susanne Bell at
sbell@drfonline.org

Appendix B: Promotional Fliers (continued)



Expanding afterschool and summer learning program impact in the Dan River Region
September 3, 2025 – April 1, 2026
10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Introduction

The Out-of-School Time Leadership Lab, provided by the Danville Regional Foundation in partnership with the Smarter Learning Group, is a leadership development experience for professionals.

The focus of the Lab is strengthening quality, access and sustainability among programs that operate beyond the regular school day and year. These programs provide critical services and support for young people and their families.

Out-of-School Time Leadership Lab participants get to:

- See exemplary programs in action
- Build relationships with colleagues throughout the region
- Learn broad best practices and immediate tactical tips from national experts
- Develop a plan, complete with support, to take your practice to the next level



What is an OST program?

“An Out-of-School Time (OST) program is one that young people regularly attend when school is not in session, per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This includes before- and after- school programs; specialty programs such as sports teams, STEM, arts enrichment; and multipurpose programs that provide an array of activities like Boys & Girls Clubs and YMCAs.”

Adults working in OST programs in the City of Danville: Pittsylvania County, Va.; and Caswell County, N.C. will be the participants. These leaders include:

1. staff who work directly with young people in programs,
2. those in management and leadership roles, and
3. those in positions that influence program funding and policy-related decisions.

Action Sessions will be held at DRF Offices, 512 Bridge St. in Danville. Plentiful parking available.

2025-2026 Schedule

- **September 3, 2025**
Action Session
- **October 13-15, 2025**
“See the Possible” Trip
- **November 5, 2025**
Action Session
- **December 3, 2025**
Action Session
- **January 7, 2026**
Action Session
- **February 4, 2026**
Action Session
- **March 4, 2026**
Action Session
- **April 1, 2026**
Presentation &

Applications due Monday, May 5, 2025.

Participants will receive a stipend to support their participation, associated with covering time away from work, or costs associated with their project.

Questions?

Email Susanne Bell at sbell@drfonline.org

2025-2026



Expanding afterschool and summer learning program impact in the Dan River Region
September 3, 2025 – April 1, 2026
10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.



Participants will:

Attend a “See the Possible” Learning Journey and retreat in Greenville/Spartanburg, SC on Oct. 13-15, 2025, to observe afterschool programs in action and learn principles of evidence-based programming.

Design and implement a **multi-month collaborative project** with at least one other Learning Lab participant. Projects will focus on improving one or more aspects of program through collaboration and partnership.

Part in a **monthly OST Learning Lab Sessions** designed to provide ongoing, personalized support and meaningful partnership development opportunities.

Programs in the Danville region operated by members of the cohort and host a **Peer Exchange program** for presentations and reviews.

Participants’ program will receive a stipend to support their participation, associated with covering time away from work, or costs associated with their project.

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Questions?

Email Susanne Bell at sbell@drfonline.org

Learning Objectives:

- **Strengthen knowledge and utilization of a shared set of evidence-based strategies** for high-quality OST programs that improve student outcomes. Participants will learn how to observe, assess and improve programs using a common set of tools program quality. Everyone will know what quality programming looks and sounds like and how to move the needle on quality in programs.
- **Improving collaboration and creating more partnerships.** Participants will plan and implement a collaborative project focused on at least one of the following domains: improving program quality, expanding access to reach more young people, and/or strengthening sustainability and funding. Everyone will have concrete experience working with at least one other partner.
- **Building new relationships and deepening networks and connections.** Participants will work with each other, guest faculty, and leaders from both within and outside the region to implement their collaborative projects. Everyone will be connected to a network of OST leaders and have more and better contacts and resources they can draw on for future assistance.
- **Shifting the culture and mindset about afterschool and summer programs.** Participants will view the OST Learning Lab as a vehicle for expanding and improving their respective programs and for reducing isolation and competition between and among programs. Everyone involved in the OST Learning Lab will experience the tangible benefits that come from aligning efforts and having a more consistent, coordinated message and approach across the region.

Appendix C: Commitment Agreement

The Commitment Agreement is signed by all participants at the first action session. This document makes explicit the functions of both the participants, faculty and the foundation through the Leadership Lab's trajectory.

Out of School Time Learning Lab Shared Agreements & Syllabus

The Out-of-School Time Learning Lab, provided by the Danville Regional Foundation in partnership with the Smarter Learning Group, is a multi-month leadership development experience.

The focus of the Lab is strengthening quality, access and sustainability among programs that operate beyond the regular school day and year. While there is no cost to participants, this program represents a meaningful investment in them and in the Dan River Region's out of school time field by DRF and the designers as these programs provide critical services and support for young people and their families.

Objectives

- **Strengthening knowledge and utilization of a shared set of evidence-based strategies** for high-quality afterschool and summer learning programs that improve student outcomes. Participants will learn how to observe, assess, and improve programs using a common set of tools and frameworks for OST program quality. Everyone involved in the OST Leadership Lab will know what quality programming looks and sounds like and how to move the needle on quality in programs.
- **Improving collaboration and creating more partnerships.** Participants will plan and implement a month collaborative program focused on at least one of the following domains: improving program quality, expanding access to reach more young people, and/or strengthening sustainability and funding. Everyone involved in the OST Leadership Lab will have a concrete experience working with at least one other partner to improve some aspect of their program.
- **Building new relationships and deepening networks and connections.** Participants will work with each other, guest faculty, and leaders from both within and outside the region as they implement their collaborative projects. Everyone involved in the OST Leadership Lab will be connected to a regional, state, and national network of leaders in OST programming and have more and better contacts and resources they can draw on for assistance in the future.
- **Shifting the culture and mindset about afterschool and summer programs.** Participants will view the OST Leadership Lab as a vehicle for expanding and improving their respective programs and for reducing isolation and competition between and among programs. Everyone involved in the OST Leadership Lab will experience the tangible benefits that come from aligning efforts and having a more consistent, coordinated message and approach across the region.

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It is expected that all participants will contribute and be open to ructors, guest faculty, and peers. With a variety of sectors, backgrounds ing will be most beneficial when it is shared and mutual, with everyone ipants are expected to make their best effort to attend all components. Leadership Lab is designed to be responsive to participant interests.

oundation, the Smarter Learning Group, and guest faculty commit to the will also:

ment that is open, safe and builds trust amongst participants based on ideas, suggestions and needs of participants of high quality content that that is available related to the topics discussed thinking, innovation and new approaches to out of school time delivery fashion to questions and requests from participants mindful that within the context of the Dan River Region, power and important role.

Working Together

Working Together
Leadership Lab equips participants, allows for sharing challenges and supportive environment for professional and programmatic
te goal vision is to increase the quality and accessibility of out of school
n, and that requires shared values.

- es are adapted from Visions Inc.:
- itation to be open minded to others' ideas, feelings, worldviews and goals so that greater exploration and understanding are possible.
- te – assumes that disagreement is not only inevitable but can help
- comes.
- ttack, blame, or shame – assumes that we are less likely to take in what
- and solve problems across differences when showing disagreement by
- rong.”
- s – assumes that our learning about differences can be maximized when
- thoughts, feelings and reactions; self-focus includes “I” statements when
- ne.”
- ow” – means being aware of not just “what we say,” but “how”
- or do something and how the members of the group react.
- d thinking” – invites us to see that more than one reality or perspective
- same time rather than seeing reality as strictly either/or, right or wrong,
- or that.
- nt” and “impact” – invites us to consider that in cross-cultural
- ment might not match our impact.
- honor personal sharing and to not repeat personal or sensitive details
- the group.

community not outside of the group.

2

- DRF's offices: 512 Bridge St.
- Park in the lot behind the row of flags.

other, hear about the goals of the OST Learning Lab will learn and do together.

nts will travel to programs in Charlotte, North
They will use the Program Quality Site Observation
hers, and identify best practices. The trip will also
of high-quality programs and additional presentations.

Learning Activities

Learning Activities
about research and best practices for Pillar 1 and will
ends-on learning activities into programming.

Autonomy & Choice

Autonomy & Choice
 e about research and best practices for Pillar 2 and will
 ities for autonomy and choice into programming.

2. Enjoyment

Enjoyment
about research and best practices for Pillar 3 and will
engagement and enjoyment into programming.

Relationships with Staff & Peers

onships with Staff & Peers
 about research and best practices for Pillar 4 and will
 relationships with staff and peers into

and Other Topics

and Other Topics
for the April final presentations. Based on participant
topics of interest.

med, and accomplished during the OST Learning Lab leagues.

o change based on the needs, interest and feedback of

To become effective this agreement must be signed and received by both parties:

Out-of-School Time Leadership Lab Participant

Print Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Out-of-School Time Leadership Lab Facilitator

Print Name
Signature
Date



Questions?

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Senior Program Officer
Danville Regional Foundation
sbell@drfonline.org

CASE STUDY



Out-of-School Time
Leadership Lab

About the Author

Susanne R. Bell is a program director and senior program officer for the Danville Regional Foundation, where she leads and cultivates the education and workforce portfolio.

About the Danville Regional Foundation

As a place-based foundation, DRF's mission is to be a catalyst for long-term transformation through the development, promotion and support of impactful activities and programs that address the health, education and well-being of all the Dan River Region's residents.

The Foundation is one part of a large collaborative network of partners from all sectors working together as agents for innovation promising a sustained positive impact on the entire region.

DRF envisions thriving Dan River Region communities where all residents are encouraged and equipped to build healthy and productive lives for themselves and their families.



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