Review of Summer Youth Employment Programs in Eight Major Cities and the District of Columbia

April 21, 2016

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A Report by the Office of the District of Columbia Auditor
Kathleen Patterson, District of Columbia Auditor
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What ODCA Found

The Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Program (MBSYEP) is notable for its broad scope, serving more youth per capita than any of the eight other cities included in this study and reflecting D.C. leaders’ commitment to the program. Due to MBSYEP’s broad scope (more than 13,000 young people enrolled in 2015), the program has a larger budget than similar programs in other cities. Other cities draw more on non-local resources, including federal and private grants as well as in-kind support, to support their programs to a greater extent than the District does.

MBSYEP’s program structure (length of program, hours worked per week, and wage rates) is similar to that of summer youth programs in other cities, but some cities have more diversified program options both for job-ready youth and youth who are at high risk because they live in high-crime neighborhoods, are in foster care, or face other challenges. Six of the eight cities studied include young people up to the age of 24 in their summer youth employment programs, as the District did in 2015 and will do again in 2016 and 2017. Four of the eight cities studied limited participation in their summer youth programs to youth who are low-income or face other types of disadvantage, as defined by the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Several of the eight cities studied in this report also benefited from more extensive private-sector involvement in their summer youth employment programs. In Baltimore, Boston, and Los Angeles, for example, business groups helped place youth in unsubsidized private-sector positions that could lead to full-time employment. Business and non-profit organizations also assisted with private fundraising.

Finally, ODCA found that the executive branch has not complied with statutory requirements, enacted in 2010, to commission an annual, independent evaluation of MBSYEP.

Why ODCA Did This Audit

The Council enacted legislation in 2015 directing ODCA to “conduct an evaluation of multiple years of the summer youth jobs program to assess whether the program has met and is meeting program objectives.” This report, which reviews the structure, eligibility rules, services, costs, and outcomes of summer youth employment programs in the District of Columbia and eight other large cities, is part of ODCA’s effort to fulfill the Council’s directive and inform discussions of how to make the Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Program (MBSYEP) as effective as possible.

What ODCA Recommends

This report makes 10 recommendations to improve the operations and outcomes of MBSYEP. ODCA recommends that the Mayor and DOES diversify MBSYEP’s funding base by expanding private fundraising efforts and considering the use of federal grant funds to support the program. The report also highlights the need for more private-sector involvement because it could help DOES develop more job placements in the private, for-profit sector while helping to place older youth in permanent, unsubsidized jobs, as other cities have done.

The report also urges greater tailoring of program components and activities to meet the diverse needs of the thousands of youth who enroll in MBSYEP each year. Older youth who are job-ready might benefit from a competitive, private-sector component of the program, based on evidence from such programs in Baltimore, Boston, Los Angeles, and New York City. A component of Chicago’s summer youth employment program, which led to sharp reductions in violent crime arrests by providing youth from high-crime neighborhoods with intensive mentoring and other supports, suggests the potential of services designed explicitly for high-risk youth.

DOES provided very thorough comments (attached at the end of this report) on a draft of this report and indicated that it is already working on many of these recommendations.

For more information regarding this report, please contact Anovia Daniels, Communications Analyst/ANC Outreach, at Anovia.Daniels@dc.gov or 202-727-3600.
The Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Program is notable for its broad scope. MBSYEP serves more youth per capita than any of the eight comparison cities, often serving twice the number of youth or more as other large cities.

Reflecting the broad scope of MBSYEP, the District’s summer youth employment program has a larger budget than similar programs in other cities.

Other cities also have more diversified funding bases for their summer youth employment programs than the District of Columbia does. As a result, the other cities have reduced the cost of the program to local taxpayers by drawing on federal and private sources.

In recent years, the trend has been for large cities to expand the number of youth served in their summer employment programs. The District’s MBSYEP program has also grown, but not as rapidly as in other cities because summer youth employment has long been a major initiative and high priority for D.C. policymakers.

Most (six of eight) of the comparison cities serve young adults up to the age of 24 in their summer youth employment programs, expanding the program beyond its traditional 14- to 21-year-old age group. Nevertheless, young adults between the ages of 22 to 24 account for a small percentage of summer employment participants in cities where they are eligible.

Many of the key elements of MBSYEP are similar to those found in summer youth employment programs in the eight comparison cities.

A key difference among summer youth employment programs in the eight comparison cities is whether they restrict summer youth employment programs to low-income and disadvantaged youth or allow all youth to participate, as the District does.

Despite the general similarities among summer youth employment programs in large cities, several cities have implemented innovative program components targeted at youth who may be at particularly high risk.

Several large cities have summer youth employment program components that are competitive and are designed to place older youth in private-sector internships that could lead to full-time employment. MBSYEP does not have a similar program.

Stronger private-sector involvement in several other cities has helped place some summer youth participants in unsubsidized positions. Developing unsubsidized positions not only saves money for the city governments, but may also reflect more serious commitments by employers that could lead to permanent employment for youth.

Several other large cities rely more on public-private partnerships or decentralized program models to administer their summer youth employment programs, but it is not clear if different organizational structures affect program effectiveness.
12. The main performance measures used for summer youth employment programs in large cities are:
   (1) the number of youth who participate and (2) reported satisfaction among youth and employer participants.

13. Several other cities have commissioned independent evaluations of their summer youth employment programs, including studies that have randomly assigned youth to program and control groups in order to isolate the impact of the program on youth well-being. By contrast, DOES has not commissioned an independent evaluation of MBSYEP since 2010 despite a statutory requirement to do so annually.

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Background

The District of Columbia’s summer youth employment program has served thousands of youth annually since it began in 1979.¹ In January 2015, D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser renamed the program the “Mayor Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Program” (MBSYEP) in honor of longtime D.C. Mayor and Councilmember Marion Barry, who established the program during his first term as mayor and championed it throughout his time in public office.²

MBSYEP is a critical program because of its important objectives, scope, and costs. MBSYEP seeks to give youth the opportunity to (1) earn money and gain meaningful work experience, (2) learn and develop the skills, attitudes, and commitment needed to succeed in the workforce, (3) explore career options, and (4) interact with professionals in a supportive work environment.³ MBSYEP expenditures totaled $19.3 million in FY 2015⁴ and the program has a $15.2 million budget for FY 2016.

MBSYEP has traditionally served 14- to 21-year-olds, and since 2010 the program has been authorized to place 10,000 to 21,000 youth in jobs each summer.⁵ In 2015, Mayor Bowser persuaded the D.C. Council to expand the program to 22- to 24-year-olds during the summer of 2015 to provide young adults with “meaningful work experience and individualized support that will help them to identify a career pathway.”⁶ In February 2016, the Council approved and Mayor Bowser signed emergency and temporary legislation that would authorize the participation of up to 1,000 youth between the ages of 22 and 24 during the summers of 2016 and 2017.⁷ Subsequently, the Council approved permanent legislation

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² See Mayor’s Order 2015-37, issued January 14, 2015.
⁴ Although reported FY 2015 expenditures for DOES program code 4820, “Summer Youth Employment Program,” were $18.0 million, $1.3 million in MBSYEP expenditures were charged to DOES’ Year-Round Youth Program and its Local Adult Training Program budgets, raising total FY 2015 expenditures to $19.3 million.
⁵ See D.C. Official Code § 32-241(a)(1).
⁷ This legislation is Act 21-306, the “Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Expansion Emergency Amendment Act of 2015,” which took effect on February 18, 2016, and expires on May 18, 2016. The temporary version of the legislation, Act 21-325, the “Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Expansion Temporary Amendment Act of 2015,” which took effect on February 18, 2016, and expires on May 18, 2016. The temporary version of the legislation, Act 21-325, the “Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Expansion Program Act of 2015,” which took effect on February 18, 2016, and expires on May 18, 2016.

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that is identical to the emergency and temporary acts. Mayor Bowser signed this legislation into law in March 2016, and it will become law following a required period of review by the U.S. Congress.\textsuperscript{8}

Both the high priority attached to MBSYEP and the debate about whether to expand the program permanently to include 22- to 24-year-olds have led the Council to seek more information about the program’s outcomes. To this end, the Council appropriated $200,000 in the FY 2016 budget of the Office of the District of Columbia Auditor (ODCA) to “conduct an evaluation of multiple years of the summer youth jobs program to assess whether the program has met and is meeting program objectives.”\textsuperscript{9}

The report presented below, which reviews the structure, eligibility rules, services, costs, and outcomes of summer youth employment programs in eight other large cities, is part of a multi-part effort by ODCA to evaluate the District’s summer youth employment program. By identifying promising practices in other cities, this report aims to offer D.C. policymakers with options to strengthen MBSYEP and ensure that it meets its objectives of promoting the career, educational, and social development of District of Columbia youth. Additional reports will cover background and summary data on the summer 2015 MBSYEP program; MBSYEP program management and internal controls; and the summer 2016 implementation of MBSYEP.

\textsuperscript{8} This legislation is Bill 21-399 (D.C. Act 21-340), the “Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Expansion Amendment Act of 2016.” As of this writing, the legislation had a projected law date of May 23, 2016.

\textsuperscript{9} See Section 10(b) of D.C. Law 21-76, the “Fiscal Year 2016 Budget Support Clarification Temporary Amendment Act of 2015,” effective February 27, 2016.
Objectives, Scope and Methodology

Objectives

The District of Columbia Auditor (Auditor) conducted a review of summer youth employment programs in eight large cities – Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco, and Seattle – in order to achieve the following three objectives:

1. To understand the different ways that summer youth employment programs can be structured;
2. To compare the design, eligibility requirements, activities and services, administrative structures, costs, and results of summer youth employment programs in other cities to those in the District of Columbia; and
3. To identify program changes that might help the District of Columbia’s summer youth employment program achieve its goals of providing youth with meaningful work experience, developing skills needed to succeed in the workplace, and interacting with professionals in a supportive work environment.

Scope

The review covered summer youth programs in the eight large cities listed above as well as the District of Columbia’s Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Program (MBSYEP). In order to make comparisons to MBSYEP and extract lessons about summer youth employment programs that might inform policy and practice in the District of Columbia, the review summarizes information about the goals and purposes, eligibility requirements, program structure and activities, outcomes, and costs of each program.

Methodology

The eight cities included in this review of summer youth employment programs were chosen based on the following characteristics: population, size of the summer youth employment program, distinctive features of the program, and geographical diversity. For example, Baltimore was selected because it is a nearby city with a population similar in size and other characteristics, such as high child poverty rates, to the population of the District of Columbia.\(^\text{10}\) New York City was chosen because it has the largest

\(^{10}\) According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the District’s population was 659,000 in 2014 and Baltimore’s population was 623,000. The five-year (2010-2014) estimate of the child
summer youth employment program in the nation and has a distinctive administrative structure in which community-based organizations assign youth to summer positions and monitor the quality of the program.\textsuperscript{11}

The following figure describes some of the salient characteristics of the summer youth program in the District of Columbia and each of the eight comparison cities.

**Figure 1**

**Background on the District of Columbia and Eight Comparison Cities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District of Columbia</td>
<td>659,000</td>
<td>13,230</td>
<td>14 to 21 (permanent) as well as 22 to 24 in 2015-2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore</td>
<td>623,000</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>14 to 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>656,000</td>
<td>7,529</td>
<td>14 to 21 (different program components have narrower age groups)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>2,722,000</td>
<td>24,679</td>
<td>14 to 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detroit</td>
<td>680,000</td>
<td>5,594</td>
<td>14 to 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>3,929,000</td>
<td>11,644</td>
<td>14 to 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>8,491,000</td>
<td>54,263</td>
<td>14 to 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>852,000</td>
<td>6,628</td>
<td>16 to 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seattle</td>
<td>668,000</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>14 to 24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sources:** Population data from each city for 2014 are from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey, 2014. Summer youth enrollment data for 2015 and age eligibility ranges are from program documents and interviews with program officials.

ODCA followed a two-step process in gathering information and data about the summer youth employment program in each city. First, ODCA staff collected a broad range of written information on each city’s summer youth program, drawing on sources as diverse as the web sites of administering agencies, annual reports, legislative reports, press releases, budgets, and performance reports, as well as program audits and evaluations (both internal and external).\textsuperscript{12} Second, ODCA staff conducted telephone interviews with officials involved in the summer youth employment program in each of the eight comparison cities. The phone interviews were used to clarify information drawn from the document review and to fill in gaps in that information.


\textsuperscript{12} In addition to written documents, ODCA staff drew on video clips of legislative hearings, press conferences, and program presentations in several instances.
Because this program review was not conducted as an audit as defined by the U.S. Government Accountability Office’s Government Auditing Standards, ODCA did not perform a data reliability assessment or otherwise verify the information provided by these entities. Therefore, the numbers in this report should be regarded as unaudited figures.
The Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Program is notable for its broad scope. MBSYEP serves more youth per capita than any of the eight comparison cities, often serving twice the number of youth or more as other large cities.

MBSYEP serves a much larger percentage of youth each summer, relative to the youth population, than any of the eight comparison cities. Although the District of Columbia, Baltimore, San Francisco, and Seattle have similarly-sized youth populations, in 2015 MBSYEP enrollment exceeded summer youth enrollment by more than 5,000 in Baltimore, more than 6,000 in San Francisco, and more than 11,000 in Seattle, as shown in Figure 2.

New York City operates the largest summer youth employment program in the nation, serving approximately four times as many youth (54,263) as MBSYEP served in 2015 (13,230). Nevertheless, New York City’s youth population is more than 10 times as large as the District’s youth population.

### Summer Youth Employment Participation Compared to Youth Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Program Enrollment (Summer 2015)</th>
<th>15- to 24-Year-Olds (2014 Data)</th>
<th>% Served</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District of Columbia</td>
<td>13,230</td>
<td>98,979</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore</td>
<td>8,000</td>
<td>93,435</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>7,529</td>
<td>129,882</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>24,679</td>
<td>393,626</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detroit</td>
<td>5,594</td>
<td>114,969</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>11,644</td>
<td>581,663</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>54,263</td>
<td>1,139,213</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>6,628</td>
<td>87,501</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seattle</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>85,067</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sources:** Data on summer youth employment program participation are from each city’s program. Data on the size of the youth population in each city are from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey, 2014.

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Reflecting the broad scope of MBSYEP, the District’s summer youth employment program has a larger budget than similar programs in other cities.

It was difficult to compare the District’s annual operating budget for MBSYEP to the budgets for summer youth employment programs in other cities because (1) some cities, such as Boston, San Francisco and Seattle, did not itemize the budgets for their youth employment programs, and (2) summer youth employment funding in some cities, such as Baltimore and Chicago, was spread among many agencies that employed youth, with no citywide total for program funding. Nevertheless, the available data show that the D.C. government spends more on summer youth employment than similarly-sized cities, reflecting the high priority placed on the program in the District.

Figure 3 shows that the District’s FY 2015 and FY 2016 budgets for MBSYEP ($19.7 million and $15.2 million, respectively) exceeded the entire budget for Boston’s Department of Youth Engagement and Employment (DYEE), which totaled $5.0 million in FY 2015 and $5.5 million in FY 2016. The summer youth program accounts for the bulk of DYEE’s budget, but DYEE also funds school-year job programs, career development workshops, the Mayor’s Youth Council, and a participatory budget project for youth. Boston’s youth population is larger than the District’s, but total population in Boston and D.C. is almost identical.

**Figure 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District of Columbia MBSYEP</td>
<td>98,979</td>
<td>659,000</td>
<td>13,230</td>
<td>$19.7 million (FY 2015) $15.2 million (FY 2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston Department of Youth Engagement and Employment</td>
<td>129,882</td>
<td>656,000</td>
<td>7,529</td>
<td>$5.0 million (FY 2015) $5.5 million (FY 2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seattle Youth Employment Program</td>
<td>85,067</td>
<td>668,000</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>$3.9 million (FY 2015) $3.6 million (FY 2016)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Data on the youth and total populations in each city are from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey, 2014. Summer youth enrollment levels are from program documents and budget data are from city budget documents and records.

Note: MBSYEP had a revised operating budget of $18.4 million in FY 2015 and actual expenditures of $18.0 million, but $1.3 million in MBSYEP expenditures were also charged to DOES’ Year-Round Youth Program and its Local Adult Training Program. The additional funds raise MBSYEP’s FY 2015 budget to $19.7 million and expenditures to $19.3 million.

Similarly, Figure 3 (see previous page) shows that the District’s FY 2015 and FY 2016 budgets for MBSYEP ($19.7 million and $15.2 million, respectively) exceeded the entire budget for the Seattle Human Services Department’s Youth Employment Program, which totaled $3.9 million in FY 2015 and $3.6 million in FY 2016.\textsuperscript{16} Seattle’s Youth Employment Program includes school-year employment as well as summer employment, and also funds after-school tutoring, GED preparation, and other services. The District is spending five times as much on summer youth employment than Seattle is spending on youth employment overall, but the District is also serving far more youth.

Among the eight comparison cities, only Los Angeles and New York City provided total expenditures for their summer youth employment programs (SYEP). As shown in Figure 4, New York City reported SYEP expenditures of $79.9 million in 2015,\textsuperscript{17} more than four times as much as the District, whereas Los Angeles reported SYEP expenditures of $13.0 million in 2015,\textsuperscript{18} less than the District. In 2015, D.C. spent more than twice as much as New York City on summer youth employment per youth resident, and more than eight times as much per youth resident as Los Angeles, reflecting the much larger youth populations in New York City and Los Angeles. In terms of spending per youth participant, D.C. spent slightly more ($1,458) than Los Angeles ($1,116), but almost exactly the same amount as New York City ($1,472) in 2015.

### Figure 4

**Summer Youth Program Spending, Enrollment, and Cost per Youth in the District of Columbia and New York, 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Summer Youth Program Expenditures, 2015</th>
<th>Youth Population, 2015</th>
<th>Summer Youth Program Enrollment, 2015</th>
<th>Cost/Youth Resident</th>
<th>Cost/Youth Participant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District of Columbia</td>
<td>$19.3 million</td>
<td>98,979</td>
<td>13,230</td>
<td>$194.99</td>
<td>$1,458.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>$13.0 million</td>
<td>581,663</td>
<td>11,644</td>
<td>$22.35</td>
<td>$1,116.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>$79.9 million</td>
<td>1,139,213</td>
<td>54,263</td>
<td>$70.14</td>
<td>$1,472.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sources:** Summer youth employment budget data are from city budget documents and records. Data on the size of the youth population in each city are from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey, 2014. Program enrollment data are from program documents and interviews with program officials.

**Note:** MBSYEP had a revised operating budget of $18.4 million in FY 2015 and actual expenditures of $18.0 million, , but $1.3 million in MBSYEP expenditures were also charged to DOES’ Year-Round Youth Program and its Local Adult Training Program. The additional funds raise MBSYEP’s FY 2015 budget to $19.7 million and expenditures to $19.3 million.

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\textsuperscript{17} New York City Department of Youth and Community Services, “Summer Youth Employment Program: Annual Summary, 2015,” pp. 5-7.

\textsuperscript{18} Hire L.A.’s Youth, “Final Summary Report: September 30, 2015.”
Other cities also have more diversified funding bases for their summer youth employment programs than the District of Columbia does. As a result, the other cities have reduced the cost of the program to local taxpayers by drawing on federal and private sources.

In fiscal year 2015, 99 percent of MBSYEP’s expenditures ($19,059,000) were funded by local tax dollars, while the other 1 percent of expenditures ($229,000) was funded by a private grant from the Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund intended to increase the number of participants in MBSYEP and to expand financial literacy efforts. MBSYEP’s FY 2016 budget of $15,218,000 includes $15,217,000 in local dollars and $1,000 in private grant funds. In contrast, other cities have reduced their reliance on local tax dollars by drawing on other funding sources to help fund their summer youth employment programs.

The most direct comparisons are with Los Angeles and New York City, which provided total FY 2015 expenditures for their summer youth employment programs. As shown in Figure 5, non-local sources of funds amounted to 41 percent of total program budget in Los Angeles and for 29 percent of the total program budget in New York City. Although the bulk of New York City’s non-local funding came from the state – an option that the District of Columbia does not have – New York City still drew on federal and private sources for 10 percent of its funding, compared to only 1 percent for the District.

**Figure 5**

**Fiscal Year 2015 Summer Youth Employment Program Revenue Sources in the District of Columbia and New York City**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Local</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Federal</th>
<th>Private</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District of Columbia</td>
<td>$19,059,000 (99%)</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$229,000 (1%)</td>
<td>$19,288,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>$7,695,000 (59%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>$4,636,000 (36%)</td>
<td>$713,000 (5%)</td>
<td>$13,044,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>$56,900,000 (71%)</td>
<td>$15,500,000 (19%)</td>
<td>$5,500,000 (7%)</td>
<td>$2,100,000 (3%)</td>
<td>$79,900,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding. Local funding for Los Angeles includes both city and county funding.


Although the other comparison cities did not present comprehensive, citywide budgets for their summer youth employment programs, Baltimore itemized spending on summer youth employment programs by its Office of Employment Development, or OED (this funding was supplemented by summer youth employment funding in other agencies).
As shown in Figure 6, OED generated 60 percent of its summer youth employment funding from non-local sources. Even though OED benefited from state funding which is not available to D.C., OED still relied on federal and private funding for 30 percent of its summer youth employment budget, compared to only 1 percent in the District.

### Figure 6

**Fiscal Year 2015 Summer Youth Employment Program Revenue Sources for the District of Columbia’s MBSYEP and Baltimore’s Office of Employment Development**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Local</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Federal</th>
<th>Private</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District of Columbia</td>
<td>$19,059,000</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$229,000</td>
<td>$19,288,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(99%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore</td>
<td>$1,737,000</td>
<td>$1,193,000</td>
<td>$1,000,000</td>
<td>$225,000</td>
<td>$4,155,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(42%)</td>
<td>(29%)</td>
<td>(24%)</td>
<td>(5%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Totals may not add up precisely due to rounding.

**Sources:** District of Columbia government’s financial management system; City of Baltimore, *Fiscal 2016 Agency Detail: Board of Estimates Recommendations*, Volume I, p. 544.

The Auditor identified the source of federal grant funding used to support summer youth employment programs in three of the eight comparison cities: Detroit, Los Angeles, and New York City. These cities drew on several types of federal funding including federal workforce funds provided by the U.S. Department of Labor, which are the main source of federal support for youth employment programs (summer and year-round) nationwide. To help fund their 2015 summer employment programs, Detroit used Community Development Block Grant funds; New York City used Community Services Block Grant funds (and had used Department of Labor workforce funds in prior years); and Los Angeles used both Temporary Assistance to Needy Families funding and federal workforce development funding.

Although the District of Columbia and many other jurisdictions have used federal workforce grant dollars in recent years to support year-round employment and training programs for youth, rather than summer youth employment, the enactment of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, or WIOA (which was signed by President Obama on

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19 The $225,000 in private funding shown for Baltimore does not reflect private donations, but rather an “impact aid” payment by the Horseshoe Casino which is located in Baltimore. See City of Baltimore, *Fiscal 2016: Summary of the Adopted Budget*, p. 122. The Baltimore City Foundation collects private donations to support Baltimore’s summer youth employment program, and those donations are not shown in the Baltimore City budget.

20 For example, DOES’ year-round youth program is budgeted for $5.9 million in federal grant funding for FY 2016, while the summer youth program has no federal grant funding in its FY 2016 budget. See Government of the District of Columbia, *Pathways to the Middle Class: FY 2016 Proposed Budget and Financial Plan*, Volume 6, Operating Appendices, p. B-63.
July 22, 2014, and replaced the Workforce Investment Act), may provide a reason for governments to use federal workforce dollars to help finance their summer youth employment programs. Among other changes, WIOA requires grantees to use at least 20 percent of their youth employment funding on work experience21 – a target that might be difficult to meet unless some of the money is used on summer employment. During the school year, youth have less time to gain work experience.

Finally, the Auditor’s research identified other major sources of non-local funding for summer youth employment programs in other cities. Examples of these non-local funding sources were as follows:

- **OneBaltimore**, a public-private partnership formed to rebuild communities following the April 2015 death of Freddie Gray in police custody, raised funds to help expand Baltimore’s summer youth employment program to serve all 8,000 applicants in the summer of 2015 (up from 5,285 youth the previous year). This effort also received support from The Bank of America Charitable Foundation, Prince and the New Power Generation, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, the Abell Foundation, and the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

- Boston’s summer youth employment program receives major in-kind support from the Boston Private Industry Council (PIC), which placed 3,310 youth in private-sector summer jobs in 2015 without receiving additional funding from the city (Boston’s PIC receives funding from the city school system to place youth counselors in schools, but those counselors provide a range of services that are not exclusive to the summer jobs program).

- Chicago received a $10 million grant over two years from Inner City Youth Empowerment, LLC, formed by Earvin “Magic” Johnson and Mark and Kimbra Walter, to expand the violence prevention component (“One Summer Chicago Plus”) of the city’s summer youth employment program. The grant was projected to fund 5,000 employment opportunities for Chicago youth during the two years, and to triple the size of One Summer Chicago Plus.

- Detroit’s summer youth employment program, Grow Detroit’s Young Talent, raised nearly $7 million in external funding for its 2015 program. Major sources included The Skillman Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Bank of America Charitable Foundation, DTE Energy Foundation, JPMorgan Chase Foundation, Marjorie S. Fisher Fund, Fifth Third Bank, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the Wayne Metropolitan Community Action Agency, and the Detroit Wayne Mental Health Authority.

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21 See subsections 129(c)(2)(C) and (c)(4) of Public Law 113-128, the “Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.”
• Los Angeles’ summer youth employment program expended private grant funding from the Citi Foundation, AT&T, and Bank of America for its summer 2015 program. As noted earlier, Los Angeles generated $713,000 in total private funding for 2015. The program has also received funding in prior years from the Disney Corporation, JPMorgan Chase, and Goldman Sachs.

• San Francisco’s Youth Jobs+ program cited private-sector contributions totaling $542,000 in 2015, including donations by JPMorgan Chase, the Walter S. Johnson Foundation, the Stupski Foundation, Starbucks, Bank of America, Enterprise, Sunset Development, Prologis, SMG Moscone, and Ernst & Young.

• Seattle’s summer youth employment program received $855,000 in private-sector contributions in 2015, including donations from JPMorgan Chase, Russell Investments, and Russell Wilson’s Why Not You Foundation.

A key factor that may enable other cities to generate more private donations to support their summer youth employment programs is the presence of a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization to accept the contributions, as in the case in Detroit (where the city’s workforce development agency, the Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation was established as a 501(c)(3)) and Los Angeles (where the city’s Workforce Development Board formed a 501(c)(3) subsidiary). Officials interviewed for this report expressed the view that forming a 501(c)(3) stimulates private donations because contributions to a 501(c)(3) are tax-exempt and are not directly managed by the government. Chicago has also used the McCormick Foundation as an intermediary for significant corporate contributions.

Recommendations:

1. The District should expand private fund-raising efforts, drawing on the resources of the local business community, and consider establishing a 501(c)(3) organization under the auspices of its Workforce Investment Board to solicit private donations.

2. DOES should consider using federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds to support the summer youth employment program, because WIOA (which was signed by President Obama on July 22, 2014) requires grantees to spend 20 percent of their youth funds on work experience for in-school or out-of-school youth. Because work opportunities for youth are more plentiful in the summer, DOES may not be able to meet the WIOA targets unless it uses WIOA funds to support summer youth employment.
In recent years, the trend has been for large cities to expand the number of youth served in their summer employment programs. The District’s MBSYEP program has also grown, but not as rapidly as in other cities because summer youth employment has long been a major initiative and high priority for D.C. policymakers.

Summer youth programs have been growing significantly in most of the comparison cities, as shown in Figure 7. High rates of youth unemployment dating back to the Great Recession have been a major impetus to the expansion of summer youth employment programs in other cities. The other major factor was the availability of federal stimulus funds to support summer youth employment programs in 2009-2010. Several officials from other cities who were interviewed for this report observed that their city governments wanted to maintain funding for summer youth programs after federal stimulus funding expired.

Between 2004 and 2015, enrollment in the District’s summer youth employment program grew by 80 percent, from 7,337 in 2004 to 13,230 in 2015. Other cities have shown rapid growth in the last several years. For example, enrollment in New York’s summer youth program grew 77 percent between 2012 and 2015 (from 30,628 youth to 54,263 youth) and enrollment in Los Angeles’ program more than tripled, from 3,638 in 2012 to 11,644 in 2015.

**Figure 7**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Change in Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District of Columbia</td>
<td>7,337 in 2004 to 13,230 in 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore</td>
<td>5,285 in 2014 to 8,000 in 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>14,500 in 2011 to 24,679 in 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detroit</td>
<td>2,500 in 2008 to 5,594 in 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>3,638 in 2012 to 11,644 in 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>30,628 in 2012 to 54,263 in 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seattle</td>
<td>586 in 2013 to 2,000 in 2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sources:** Program annual reports and other published sources from each city.

It is important to note that changes in enrollment reflect issues and concerns that are distinctive to each city. For example, the large growth in Baltimore’s summer youth employment program from 2014 to 2015 was part of policymakers’ response to the civil unrest that followed the death of Freddie Gray in police custody in April 2015.²²

The long-term enrollment patterns in each city’s summer youth employment program can also be complicated, reflecting changing federal and state policies, local priorities, and economic conditions. In the summer of 2008, enrollment in D.C.’s summer youth employment program surpassed 21,000 due to then-Mayor Adrian Fenty’s decision to open enrollment to all applicants.23 Enrollment in New York City’s program has fluctuated with changes in federal and state funding, 24 and it is not clear if New York will be able to sustain the enrollment level that it achieved in 2015.

Most (six of eight) of the comparison cities serve young adults up to the age of 24 in their summer youth employment programs, expanding the program beyond its traditional 14- to 21-year-old age group. Nevertheless, young adults between the ages of 22 to 24 account for a small percentage of summer employment participants in cities where they are eligible.

Cities that serve 14- to 24-year-olds in their summer youth employment programs include Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, New York City, and Seattle, while San Francisco serves 16- to 24-year-olds. Baltimore serves only 14- to 21-year-olds. Boston’s summer youth employment program has three different components that serve different age groups, but none of the youth served are older than 21. The relevant data from the District of Columbia and the eight comparison cities are summarized below in Figure 8 (see next page).

District policymakers face the decision of whether to follow the lead of some of the other large cities by permanently increasing the program’s age ceiling from 21 to 24. In 2015, the Council authorized DOES to serve as many as 1,000 22- to 24-year-olds in the summer 2015 program, and DOES reported that 844 people in that age group enrolled. As noted earlier, in February 2016 the Council approved and Mayor Bowser signed emergency legislation that would authorize the participation of up to 1,000 youth between the ages of 22 and 24 during the summers of 2016 and 2017. Subsequently, the Council approved permanent legislation that is identical to the emergency and temporary acts. Mayor Bowser signed this legislation into law in March 2016, and it will become law following a required period of review by the U.S. Congress.

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25 This legislation is Act 21-306, the “Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Expansion Emergency Amendment Act of 2015,” which took effect on February 18, 2016, and expires on May 18, 2016. The temporary version of the legislation, Act 21-325, the “Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Expansion Temporary Amendment Act of 2015,” was under congressional review as of this writing, with a projected law date of April 28, 2016.

26 This legislation is Bill 21-399 (D.C. Act 21-340), the “Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Expansion Amendment Act of 2016.” As of this writing, the legislation had a project law date of May 23, 2016.
Age Eligibility for Summer Youth Employment Programs in the District of Columbia and Eight Comparison Cities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Age Eligibility for Summer Youth Employment Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| District of Columbia | 14 to 21 (permanent)  
                        | 22 to 24 (2015 through 2017)                                                            |
| Baltimore    | 14 to 21                                                                                |
| Boston       | Department of Youth Engagement and Employment serves 15 to 18  
                        | Action for Boston Community Development serves 14 to 21                                 |
|              | Boston Private Industry Council serves 15 to 19                                         |
| Chicago      | 14 to 24                                                                               |
| Detroit      | 14 to 24                                                                               |
| Los Angeles  | 14 to 24                                                                               |
| New York City| 14 to 24                                                                               |
| San Francisco| 16 to 24                                                                               |
| Seattle      | 14 to 24                                                                               |

Sources: Program annual reports and other published documents, and interviews with program officials.

Many summer youth employment programs traditionally served 14- to 21-year-olds because the U.S. Department of Labor provided federal funding for summer youth programs for disadvantaged individuals in that age group through the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA).27 The Workforce Investment Act of 1998, which replaced JTPA, no longer provided a separate funding stream for summer youth employment, but retained the 14 to 21 age bracket for disadvantaged young people served by the Act’s youth employment and training programs.28

Federal stimulus grants provided in 2009-2010 through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 allowed states to serve young people up to the age of 24 in summer youth programs. Once that precedent was set, some cities continued to serve that age group using their own funds. One summer youth employment official interviewed for this report stated that after federal stimulus funding expired, his city continued to serve 22- to 24-year-olds because, “We didn’t want to pull back, and there was a need.”

The decision by some cities to include 22- to 24-year-olds in their summer youth employment programs is also consistent with a recent change in federal youth employment programs. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), signed into law by President Obama on July 22, 2014, authorizes employment and training services for out-of-school

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27 See section 203 and 251-253 of Public Law 97-300, the “Job Training Partnership Act,” effective October 13, 1982. This law has since been repealed.

28 See section 101 of Public Law 105-220, the “Workforce Investment Act of 1998,” effective August 7, 1998. This law has been superseded.
youth between the ages of 16 and 24 (previously, the age range was 16 to 21). Nevertheless, federal employment and training services to in-school youth are available only to those between the ages of 14 and 21. 

Available data suggest that the 22- to 24-year-old group is usually a small part of a city’s summer youth employment program. In 2015, the 22- to 24-year-old age group accounted for 4 percent of summer youth employment participants in Chicago, 5 percent in New York City, and 7 percent in San Francisco.

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Many of the key elements of MBSYEP are similar to those found in summer youth employment programs in the eight comparison cities.

Many of the core elements in summer youth employment programs are similar in the District of Columbia and other large cities. Programs usually last an average of six weeks; youth generally work 20 to 25 hours per week; and youth are paid the prevailing minimum wage in most cities. Figure 9 shows the length of the summer programs, hours that youth work, and wages that youth are paid in D.C. and the eight other cities.

**Figure 9**

Core Features of Summer Youth Programs in D.C. and Other Large Cities: Length of Program, Hours Worked, and Hourly Wages (Summer 2015)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Length of Program</th>
<th>Hours Worked/Week</th>
<th>Hourly Wages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District of Columbia</td>
<td>6 weeks</td>
<td>20 for ages 14 and 15 25 for ages 16 to 21 30 for ages 22 to 24</td>
<td>$5.25 for ages 14 and 15 $8.25 for ages 16 to 21 $9.25 for ages 22 to 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore</td>
<td>5 weeks</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>$8.25 (state minimum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>6 weeks</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>$9 (state minimum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>6 weeks</td>
<td>20-25</td>
<td>$8.25 (state minimum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detroit</td>
<td>6 weeks</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>$7.50 for ages 14 to 17 $8.15 for ages 18+31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>6 weeks</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>$9 (state minimum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>6 weeks</td>
<td>20-25</td>
<td>$8.75 (state minimum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>varies by program component</td>
<td>varies by program component</td>
<td>most positions pay minimum wage ($12.25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seattle</td>
<td>7 weeks</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>at least $11 (city minimum)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Sources: Program annual reports and other published documents, and interviews with program officials.*

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31 Detroit youth who participate in a special program called “Career Pathways Internships” can earn $10/hour.
A key difference among summer youth employment programs in the eight comparison cities is whether they restrict summer youth employment programs to low-income and disadvantaged youth or allow all youth to participate, as the District does.

The District does not limit participation in its summer youth employment program based on income or other indicators of disadvantage, such as having a disability or being involved in the criminal justice system. Although four of the eight comparison cities (Baltimore, Chicago, New York City, and San Francisco) mirror the District’s policy in allowing all youth meeting age requirements to participate, three cities (Detroit, Los Angeles, and Seattle) limited eligibility to youth meeting federal Workforce and Innovation Act (WIOA) standards for low income and other forms of disadvantage. Those standards are outlined below. Boston follows a hybrid policy in which all youth meeting age requirements are eligible, except in one program component serving low-income youth. Figure 10 summarizes the policies of the District and the eight comparison cities regarding eligibility restrictions based on low income or other forms of disadvantage.

**Figure 10**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Eligibility Restrictions Based on Income or Other Indicators of Need</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District of Columbia</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>Department of Youth Engagement and Employment and Boston Private Industry Council serve all youth meeting all requirements, while Action for Boston Community Development only serves low-income youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detroit</td>
<td>WIOA rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>WIOA rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seattle</td>
<td>WIOA rules</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Program annual reports and other published documents, and interviews with program officials.

As noted earlier, out-of-school youth between the ages of 16 and 24, as well as in-school youth between the ages of 14 and 21, are eligible for employment and training services provided through WIOA grant funds. In

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addition, WIOA sets the following eligibility criteria that restrict federal funding to youth who are low-income or subject to other disadvantages:

- **Out-of-school youth** are eligible if they are not attending school and are either high school dropouts or recipients of a high school diploma, or its equivalent, but are still deficient in basic skills or an English language learner. In addition, out-of-school youth qualify for federal funding if they fall into any of the following categories: (1) subject to the juvenile or adult justice systems, (2) homeless or runaway youth, (3) in foster care or have aged out of foster care, (4) pregnant or parenting, (5) have a disability, or (6) live in a low-income household. ³³

- **In-school youth** must be attending school and living in a low-income household, and also must fall into any of the following categories: (1) deficient in basic skills, (2) English language learner, (3) an offender, (4) homeless or runaway, (5) in foster care or have aged out of foster care, (6) pregnant or parenting, (7) have a disability, or (8) need additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or maintain employment. ³⁴

To qualify as a low-income individual for youth services provided through WIOA funding, a youth must show that he or she receives public assistance from programs such as Temporary Assistance to Needy Families or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or that he or she lives in a high-poverty area. ³⁵

Although the District has long followed a policy of universal eligibility for the summer youth employment program, there are not enough slots to serve all youth who might want to participate. To allocate the slots to youth most in need, the District could establish a preference for low-income youth as well as youth who meet other criteria for disadvantage set forth in WIOA (those who are involved with the criminal justice system, are homeless or runaway, are in the foster care system or exited from it, have a disability, are pregnant or parenting, or are English language learners).

**Recommendation:**

3. The District should consider giving enrollment priority to youth who are low-income or otherwise disadvantaged, as defined by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.


³⁴ See section 129(a)(1)(C) of Public Law 113-128, the “Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.” (29 U.S.C. § 3164(a)(1)(C))

³⁵ See section 129(a)(2) of Public Law 113-128, the “Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.” (29 U.S.C. § 3164(a)(2))
Despite the general similarities among summer youth employment programs in large cities, several cities have implemented innovative program components targeted at youth who may be at particularly high risk.

Because of their broad scope, summer youth employment programs such as MBSYEP serve many young people who are struggling in school or have dropped out, live in distressed neighborhoods with high levels of crime, and lack family or community support. Summer youth programs therefore have the potential to help youth facing these risks by tailoring services to them and referring them to other forms of assistance, such as school-year employment or educational opportunities. Several of the cities included in this study had developed innovative program components or policies to target youth at risk which might be usefully adapted by MBSYEP.

Chicago has implemented the One Summer Chicago Plus program, which connects youth who are identified to be at risk for involvement in violence with a 20-hour per week summer job, a mentor, and training in civic leadership, decision making, and job readiness. This program component targets 16- and to 19-year-olds who are enrolled in public high schools located in high-crime areas and have missed six to eight weeks of school or have been involved in the juvenile justice system.

Due to a two-year, $10 million grant from Inner City Youth Empowerment, LLC, formed by Earvin “Magic” Johnson and Mark and Kimbra Walter, Chicago served 1,880 youth in One Summer Chicago Plus in 2015 and plans to expand the program to 3,000 youth in 2016. In 2015, 697 youth participating in One Summer Chicago Plus were assigned to a “WPA-style infrastructure maintenance program” in which they painted more than 300 viaducts and infrastructure locations, including boarded-up houses. A randomized, controlled study by the University of Chicago’s Crime Lab and the University of Pennsylvania found that youth who participated in One Summer Chicago Plus experienced a 43 percent reduction in violent-crime arrests over a 16-month period. The study also found “suggestive evidence” that arrests fell by a larger percentage among youths at a higher risk of violence.  

Los Angeles’ policy of observing federal WIOA eligibility requirements ensures that its summer youth employment program serves only low-income youth or youth facing other disadvantages. In a joint effort, the city and county of Los Angeles reserved 500 summer youth slots for current and former foster care youth. More generally, Los Angeles reserves 90 percent of its summer youth employment slots for low-income youth. 

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37 County of Los Angeles, City of Los Angeles, L.A. Opportunity Youth Collaborative, and Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, “Short-Term Jobs for L.A. County Foster Youth.”
income youth, with the rest of the positions reserved for youth who are school dropouts, homeless, in foster care, pregnant or parenting, or have a disability, consistent with WIOA standards.

New York City also reserves summer youth employment positions for at-risk youth, although it does not restrict eligibility to low-income or disadvantaged youth as Los Angeles does. New York City selects most summer youth employment participants by a lottery, but reserves a small number of slots for runaway and homeless youth, foster care youth, and youth involved in the juvenile justice system (whom the city refers to as “vulnerable youth”) and for youth with disabilities. Vulnerable youth, who are referred to the summer youth employment program by city agencies such as the Administration for Children’s Services and the Department of Probation, receive specialized mentoring, counseling, and educational support. In 2015, New York City reported serving 2,078 vulnerable youth and 2,962 youth with disabilities. 38

Recommendation:

4. District of Columbia policymakers should consider program and policy changes similar to those adopted in Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York that provide specialized services or reserve slots for youth at risk of involvement in violence, youth in foster care, runaway and homeless youth, and youth with disabilities.

38 New York City Department of Youth and Community Services, “Summer Youth Employment Program: Annual Summary, 2015,” pp. 5, 12.
Several large cities have summer youth employment program components that are competitive and are designed to place older youth in private-sector internships that could lead to full-time employment. MBSYEP does not have a similar program.

The Auditor identified three comparison cities (Baltimore, Los Angeles, and New York City) that established specialized components of their summer youth employment programs devoted to helping older youth (often near the age of high school graduation) obtain private-sector positions that could lead to full-time employment. Although these programs are generally small and involve a competitive application process, they may offer a valuable option for youth seeking a permanent foothold in the labor market. The D.C. Chamber of Commerce sponsored a similar initiative as part of the District’s summer youth employment program, but it was terminated in 2009 due to the economic recession. The specialized, private-sector programs in each city are described below.

The “Hire One Youth” program in Baltimore was created in 2012 by a partnership between the Greater Baltimore Committee (a business group) and the Mayor’s office. As the name of the program would suggest, businesses are asked to hire at least one 16- to 21-year-old who is “responsible, motivated, and engaged.” Businesses interview youth applicants and make hiring decisions based on the interviews. The youth are pre-screened for skills and interests and must complete six hours of job readiness training and prepare a resume before they can be referred to participating employers for an interview. In 2015, 180 private-sector employers hosted approximately 500 youth through Hire One Youth. Participating employers include the Johns Hopkins Health System and Johns Hopkins University.

The “L.A. Youth at Work” (LAYAW) program in Los Angeles, part of the umbrella summer youth employment program known as “Hire L.A. Youth,” is intended to help youth between the ages of 16 and 24 gain entry-level employment. LAYAW is administered by the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce and UNITE-LA, a non-profit that specializes in business-education partnerships. A key aspect of the LAYAW program is a work readiness certificate awarded to young people who undergo a job skills workshop (which includes resume writing) and perform well in a practice interview. Youth cannot receive job leads from the Chamber unless they attain the certificate, which is described as a “badge that shows you are well prepared and employers trust it represents a job-ready applicant.” Described as a “stepping stone to future high-skil, high-wage employment,” LAYAW has offered approximately 2,000 summer youth employment positions annually with companies such as

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39 See www.baltimorecity.gov/hireoneyouth.
40 See www.layouthatwork.org/our_mission.
41 See www.layouthatwork.org/our_mission.
Vons/Safeway, The Gas Company, JPMorgan Chase, AT&T, Cedars Sinai, Kaiser Permanente, Carl’s Jr., UPS, Pacific Parks, Levi’s, Adidas, and McDonald’s. The Los Angeles Workforce Development Board pays the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce $200,000 annually – a very modest sum when compared to the total $13.0 million cost of Los Angeles’ summer youth program in 2015 – to support this work.

The “Ladders for Leaders” program in New York City offers high school and college students summer internships in the private and public sectors that may lead to permanent employment. Like Baltimore’s “Hire One Youth” program, Ladders for Leaders is a competitive program in which youth interview with employers and receive pre-employment training before reporting to a work site. A report on New York City’s 2015 summer youth employment program (of which “Ladders for Leaders” is a part) states that 35 percent of Ladders for Leaders participants received an offer of employment at the end of the program, and that 94 percent of participants rated the experience as positive. Described as a “program that offers outstanding high school and college students the opportunity to participate in paid professional summer internships with leading corporations, non-profit organizations and government agencies in New York City,” Ladders for Leaders served 1,035 youth at 191 worksites (including 203 technology-sector internships) in 2015.  

From 2006 to 2009 the D.C. Chamber of Commerce administered a private-sector placement effort, similar in many respects to the programs described above, for as many as 250 summer youth participants each year. Youth aged 17 or older were screened by the Chamber and placed in a week of work readiness training before being assigned to a summer employer. Officials in other cities who were interviewed for this report emphasized that private-sector employers will be reluctant to grant opportunities to youth without the screening and training that a private-sector partner can provide. D.C. policymakers could seek to re-establish a similar program in order to help youth who are ready to seek full-time employment find private-sector positions with good wages and prospects for career growth.

Establishing a private-sector component of MBSYEP could also broaden the range of work experiences available to participants. Public-sector positions (with D.C. government agencies, public charter schools, and the federal government) made up more than half (53 percent) of MBSYEP summer placements in 2015. Positions at private non-profit organizations accounted for 37 percent of summer placements in 2015, while positions at private for-profit firms provided 10 percent of summer placements. Increasing the number of positions in the for-profit sector might help youth develop future career options because the District has a significant private-sector employment base despite its reliance on federal and local government jobs. As of November 2015, the professional, business, and

42 New York City Department of Youth and Community Services, “Summer Youth Employment Program: Annual Summary, 2015,” p. 20.
other services sector accounted for 239,800 jobs located in the District of Columbia, more than the federal and local governments combined (235,200 jobs). Other large sectors of the District’s employment base include health care (71,300 jobs) and leisure and hospitality (69,900 jobs). Developing a private-sector component of MBSYEP could help young people begin career paths in these industries.

Recommendation:

5. D.C. policymakers should consider establishing a competitive, private-sector component of MBSYEP that is intended to place students who are 16 years of age or older in summer jobs that may lead to full-time employment.

Stronger private-sector involvement in several other cities has helped place some summer youth participants in unsubsidized positions. Developing unsubsidized positions not only saves money for the city governments, but may also reflect more serious commitments by employers that could lead to permanent employment for youth.

All of the District’s summer youth employment positions in 2015 were subsidized: the D.C. government paid the youths’ wages. In the past, the District was able to place some youth in unsubsidized summer jobs: during 1999, DOES reported placing 1,726 youth in unsubsidized summer positions, while 10,223 youth were placed in subsidized summer employment. By 2006, unsubsidized placements had dwindled to 99 (while 12,630 youth had subsidized summer jobs), but the District has been able to place youth in unsubsidized jobs at different points in the past and it is not clear why this could not be done again.

Placing youth in unsubsidized summer jobs could provide youth with an opportunity to demonstrate their readiness for full-time, permanent employment. The following examples from other cities suggest that the District should be able to develop unsubsidized summer positions for some youth participants:

- Employers who participate in Baltimore’s “Hire One Youth” program (the private-sector component of Baltimore’s summer youth employment program) pay participants’ wages. Hire One Youth enrolls approximately 500 youth each year. The Hire One Youth program is chaired by Donald Fry, the president and CEO of the Greater Baltimore Committee, an organization of business and civic leaders, reflecting the private sector’s role in the program.

- Boston’s Private Industry Council (PIC) placed 3,310 youth in unsubsidized summer jobs during the summer of 2015. The PIC focuses its summer placement efforts on teens graduating from high school and older teens, who may be the most ready for unsubsidized employment as they prepare to enter the workforce full-time. PIC career specialists who work in the public schools help match students to jobs based on their career interests and experience.

- Participants in New York City’s Ladders for Leaders program (a specialized summer youth program option designed for job-ready

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46 Employers can either put the youth directly on their payroll, or pay the city a stipend to cover a youth’s wages and have the city take care of payroll for them.
youth) receive unsubsidized employment from private firms and government agencies. There were 1,035 participants in Ladders for Leaders in 2015.

**Recommendation:**

6. DOES officials should seek to re-introduce unsubsidized summer placements to MBSYEP and to increase gradually the number and percentage of positions that are unsubsidized or partly subsidized.
Several other large cities rely more on public-private partnerships or decentralized program models to administer their summer youth employment programs, but it is not clear if different organizational structures affect program effectiveness.

The Auditor found that several other cities rely more on private-sector assistance in implementing different parts of their summer youth employment programs, which reduces the administrative burden on the lead agency (which is usually a workforce development agency similar to D.C.’s Department of Employment Services, or a human services agency). In addition, some cities rely on a more decentralized management model in which several public agencies help the lead agency administer the summer youth program. The Auditor did not identify any research that specifically evaluates the impact of administrative structure on the effectiveness of summer youth employment programs, but finds that the approaches used in other cities merit a careful examination. The administrative systems used by summer youth employment programs in other cities are described below.

As noted earlier, Boston’s Department of Youth Engagement and Employment (DYEE), the lead agency for Boston’s summer youth employment program, is responsible for only a portion of summer youth job placements. In Boston’s three-pronged approach, DYEE placed 3,208 youth (43 percent of the total) in the summer of 2015, while the Boston Private Industry Council (PIC) placed 3,310 youth (44 percent), and Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD) placed 1,011 youth (13 percent). DYEE places youth in government and non-profit positions; the PIC places youth in private, for-profit positions; and ABCD places youth in non-profit positions. This partnership of a government agency, business group, and a community-based non-profit allows each organization to focus on the industry sectors that it knows best and also helps the program to include a broader mix of jobs – particularly jobs in the private, for-profit sector – than is found in other cities.

Chicago is among the cities that uses a “hub and spoke” model to administer its summer youth employment program. The “hubs” are community-based organizations and government agencies (such as the Chicago Public Schools, the Chicago Park District, and the Chicago Housing Authority) that are engaged by the city’s Department of Family and Support Services to develop and manage the “spokes” – the work sites that provide summer employment for youth. In 2015, there were 63 hub agencies that worked under contract with the “One Summer Chicago” program to place youth in summer jobs and monitor the quality of their summer experience.

Detroit’s summer youth employment program, “Grow Detroit’s Young Talent” (GDYT) is a public-private partnership between the city’s workforce development agency (the Detroit Employment Solutions
Detroit also uses the “hub and spoke” model of contracting with community providers to identify work sites for the summer youth program.

Corporation, which is a 501(c)(3) organization) and a non-profit organization, City Connect Detroit, which focuses on issues pertaining to children, youth, and families; community health; and community development. Due to Detroit’s severe financial crisis,47 private-sector organizations including City Connect Detroit and The Skillman Foundation launched GDYT in 2009. GDYT is now the umbrella organization for Detroit’s joint summer youth employment initiative; both the Detroit Employment Solutions Corporation and City Connect Detroit place youth in summer jobs. Detroit also uses the “hub and spoke” model of contracting with community providers to identify work sites for the summer youth program.

In addition to benefiting from 2,000 annual job placements made by the local chamber of commerce, Los Angeles’ Hire LA Youth program relies on a decentralized system in which agencies are required to develop and implement summer youth employment programs. Because the work of identifying and monitoring placements does not fall solely on the city’s Economic and Workforce Development Department, that office (and the other agencies) can devote more attention to the quality of the summer placements. Unlike the D.C. Department of Employment Services, Los Angeles’ workforce development agency does not have to administer a payroll system for thousands of summer youth; instead, the youth are added to the regular payrolls of city agencies as seasonal workers or are paid through the payroll systems of private-sector employers. The result is that the lead administering agency has more time and resources to develop summer placements for youth participants and monitor the quality of the summer experience.

To facilitate the expansion of Hire L.A. Youth, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti issued an executive order in 2015 requiring each agency head to (1) designate a Hire L.A. Youth liaison, (2) identify part-time and full-time job opportunities within the agency, (3) expand departmental training programs to include young people between the ages of 14 and 24, whenever possible, and (4) provide six-week paid employment opportunities each summer. In addition, the executive order instructed the general manager of the Economic and Workforce Development Department to maintain a record of job placements made by each agency in accordance with the order.48

In a system similar to Chicago’s, New York City’s summer youth employment program contracts with 58 community-based organizations (known as “SYEP providers”) that handle applications and enrollment, job placements, payroll processing, and site monitoring in different parts of the city. Some of the SYEP providers serve only younger youth (14 and 15 years old), some serve only older youth (16 to 24 years old), and some

47 The State of Michigan appointed an emergency financial manager to oversee Detroit’s finances in 2013.
serve both groups. The rationale for this approach is to draw on the expertise and resources of community groups that are familiar with the youth they serve and the neighborhoods where they live.

San Francisco’s “Youth Jobs+” program is also a public-private partnership with a decentralized structure similar to that of Los Angeles. The Department of Children, Youth, and Their Families serves as the lead agency in the city government and the United Way of the Bay Area leads the effort to recruit private-sector employers. In addition, other agencies such as the San Francisco Unified School District (which employed 132 youths during the summer of 2015) and the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (which employs more than 1,000 youth each summer) administer sizable summer youth programs that are part of the Youth Jobs+ initiative. Finally, the city government contracts with eight community-based organizations that serve as “doorways” to the program and provide assistance with resume writing, interview preparation, and job applications (the “doorways” organizations do not provide services exclusively for the summer youth program but support a range of human services programs).

In Seattle, the Department of Human Services (DHS) is the lead agency for summer youth employment, but in 2015 DHS worked with other city government agencies (such as the Department of Parks and Recreation) and non-profit organizations to place 2,000 youth in summer positions in 2015. DHS was responsible for the placement of 750 youth. Because Seattle’s summer youth employment program has grown quickly – and Seattle Mayor Ed Murray has announced his intent to continue that growth – DHS has hired a non-profit intermediary to place youth in summer jobs because the agency does not have the capacity to do this by itself. The intermediary will work not only to increase the number of summer positions but also to “recruit private employers as well as provide a matching function between youth and employment opportunities.”

Recommendations:

7. DOES should evaluate whether drawing on private-sector expertise to administer various aspects of MBSYEP would increase efficiency and effectiveness. These alternatives would include partnerships with business organizations or non-profit organizations to identify summer placements for youth, place youth in those jobs, and monitor implementation of the summer program, as well as handle internal functions such as payroll and timekeeping.

49 In his 2016 “State of the City” address, Seattle Mayor Ed Murray set the goal of placing 4,000 youth between the ages of 14 and 24 in summer jobs. See Seattle Mayor Edward Murray, “2016 State of the City,” February 16, 2016, p. 16.

8. The Mayor should consider issuing an executive order outlining agency responsibilities in developing and administering MBSYEP, including the roles of agencies besides the Department of Employment Services in creating and monitoring summer positions for youth.
The main performance measures used for summer youth employment programs in large cities are (1) the number of youth who participate and (2) reported satisfaction among youth and employer participants.

The U.S. Department of Labor has established three common performance measures for youth employment and training programs – (1) attainment of a degree or certificate, (2) literacy and numeracy gains on basic skills tests, and (3) placement in employment or education – but those measures are not as useful for summer youth employment programs because of the program time frame. Summer youth program officials in other cities who were interviewed for this report stated that it is hard to isolate the impact of their programs, which are a short-term intervention. This is a reasonable concern given the many other factors that affect young people’s progress in school and the workplace.

In addition, traditional youth employment performance indicators do not measure important aspects of summer youth employment programs, such as teaching youth how to conduct themselves in the workplace and cooperate with others. When approving supplemental funding for summer youth employment programs as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, Congress mandated that work readiness indicators would be the only measure of performance that states would have to report for their programs.

Because measuring the impact of summer youth employment program is so challenging, the eight comparison cities focused largely on enrollment levels. In addition, many programs surveyed youth and employers about their experiences in the summer program, but the cities varied as to whether they (1) surveyed youth both before and after the summer program to try to gauge program impact, and (2) whether they included survey results in formal reports to the Mayor, Council, and general public. Figure 11 (see next page) summarizes the use of summer youth employment program performance measures in the District of Columbia and the eight comparison cities.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Youth Enrollment Levels</th>
<th>Program Survey Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District of Columbia</td>
<td>Yes Included in Agency’s Annual Performance Accountability Report</td>
<td>Yes Post-Program Survey Data for Youth Included in Report on Summer 2015 Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore</td>
<td>Yes Reported in Agency’s Annual Operating Budget</td>
<td>Yes Select Measures from Post-Program Survey of Youth Are Reported in Annual Operating Budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>Yes Reported in Agency’s Annual Operating Budget</td>
<td>Yes Pre- and Post-Program Surveys Conducted for Youth and Employers, But Not Formally Reported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago</td>
<td>Yes Not Formally Reported&lt;sup&gt;51&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Yes Not Formally Reported&lt;sup&gt;52&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detroit</td>
<td>Yes Not Formally Reported&lt;sup&gt;53&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>No&lt;sup&gt;54&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>Yes Reported in Agency’s Annual Operating Budget</td>
<td>Yes Pre- and Post-Program Surveys Conducted for Youth, and Post-Program Survey Conducted for Employers – Published in 2014 Evaluation Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>Yes Reported in Program’s Annual Report and Mayor’s Management Report</td>
<td>Yes Post-Program Surveys of Youth and Employers Are Conducted, But Not Formally Reported&lt;sup&gt;55&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>Yes Not Formally Reported&lt;sup&gt;56&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seattle</td>
<td>Yes Not Formally Reported&lt;sup&gt;57&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Yes Post-Program Surveys of Youth and Employers Are Conducted, But Not Formally Reported&lt;sup&gt;58&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>51</sup> Chicago’s Department of Family and Support Services issued a report on the 2015 summer youth program that includes the enrollment level, but the report appears to be internal and is not posted on the city’s website. The “Performance Metrics” page on the City of Chicago’s website shows no performance measures for the summer youth program, nor does the city’s annual operating budget.

<sup>52</sup> Chicago’s Department of Family and Support Services issued a report on the 2015 summer youth program that includes survey data, but the report appears to be internal and is not posted on the city’s website. The “Performance Metrics” page on the City of Chicago’s website shows no performance measures for the summer youth program, nor does the city’s annual operating budget include program performance measures.

<sup>53</sup> The only data on summer youth employment levels found in a search of the City of Detroit website was from a press release entitled “Summer of Opportunity: 5,594 Detroit Youths to Have Employment Thanks to Grow Detroit’s Young Talent,” dated June 26, 2015.

<sup>54</sup> The University of Michigan issued a report on youth participant survey responses in 2014, but data from this study were not displayed on the City of Detroit Internet site.

<sup>55</sup> A review of the city’s budget documents, the annual Mayor’s Management Report, and the summer youth employment program annual report for 2015 did not identify any instances in which program survey data were reported.

<sup>56</sup> ODCA received enrollment data from the San Francisco Department of Children, Youth, and Their Families, but did not identify any published sources of this information.

<sup>57</sup> Enrollment data for the summer youth employment program are not included in the performance data presented in Seattle’s FY 2016 budget.
Youth and employer survey data generally show very positive results. For example:

- Among participants in D.C.’s 2015 MBSYEP program, 86 percent of youth rated their MBSYEP experience as “good, great or excellent,” and 94 percent expressed their intent to participate in 2016 if the opportunity were available.

- In Boston, 97 percent of summer youth participants surveyed in 2015 stated that they would recommend the program to a friend and that they felt better prepared to enter a new job, respectively. In addition, 80 percent of Boston youth stated that they considered an adult they had worked with to be a mentor and 93 percent said they had someone they could use as a job reference.

- In Chicago, 80 percent of youth participants in the 2015 “One Summer Chicago” program reported that they found a sense of purpose and meaning in their summer position, while 76 percent of employers stated that they would hire their youth employee if they had an open position.

- In Los Angeles, participants in the 2014 summer youth program gave the program an average satisfaction rate of 4.3 on a 5-point scale, while workplace supervisors rated the program at 8.8, on average, on a 10-point scale.

The focus on enrollment levels leaves policymakers and the general public with meager information about the quality of summer youth employment programs and their impact. Youth and employer satisfaction rates provide valuable information, but tell little about longer-term effects. To provide decision makers and the general public with a fuller picture of the quality of summer youth programs, agencies could track additional measures such as (1) program attrition, (2) the number and percentage of placements in high-growth industry sectors, and (3) the number and percentage of unsubsidized or partly subsidized jobs. DOES reported on attrition rates in its report on the summer 2015 MBSYEP program, and continued reporting of this measure would be useful to policymakers and the public. 59

**Recommendation:**

9. DOES should expand the range of performance measures for MBSYEP by reporting annual data on program attrition, the

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58 Survey data for the summer youth employment program are not included in the performance data presented in Seattle’s FY 2016 budget.

59 DOES reported an attrition rate of 11.8 percent, defined as the drop in youth paid from the first week of the program to the final week, divided by the number of youth paid during the first week. See Government of the District of Columbia, “MBSYEP Summer Report,” pp. 22-23.
number and percentage of placements in high-growth industry sectors, and the number of percentage of youth in unsubsidized or partly subsidized jobs. These measures would supplement the existing data on enrollment levels and youth and employer satisfaction.
Several other cities have commissioned independent evaluations of their summer youth employment programs, including studies that have randomly assigned youth to program and control groups in order to isolate the impact of the program on youth well-being. By contrast, DOES has not commissioned an independent evaluation of MBSYEP since 2010 despite a statutory requirement to do so annually.

In Los Angeles, the Workforce Development Board has contracted with researchers at California State University (CSU) at Northridge to evaluate the city’s summer youth employment program. The 2014 evaluation of the “Hire L.A. Youth” program included not only a pre-program and post-program survey of participating youth, but also a follow-up survey seven months after the program ended to gauge longer-term impacts and a series of focus groups with youth to probe their experiences in depth. The research performed by the CSU-Northridge researchers also included a post-program survey of employers, and the final evaluation report offered findings about program performance as well as recommendations about how to improve the program.60

As noted earlier, Chicago commissioned a study of its “One Summer Plus” program, which yielded particularly robust results by randomly assigning 1,634 youth from 13 high-crime Chicago neighborhoods to one of two program models or a control group that did not participate in either version of One Summer Plus. Youth in One Summer Plus were offered 25 hours of paid employment per week as well as guidance from an adult mentor, or 15 hours of paid employment per week and 10 hours of socio-emotional learning based on cognitive behavioral therapy principles (the youth in the control group were free to pursue summer jobs or other activities on their own).

The evaluation of Chicago’s program by researchers at the University of Chicago’s Crime Lab and the University of Pennsylvania found that both models of the One Summer Plus program were equally effective in reducing arrests for violent crime, which dropped by 43 percent over a 16-month period relative to the control group.61 The decline in arrests largely took place after the eight weeks of summer employment ended, suggesting that the program changed behavior rather than simply keeping youth busy and out of trouble during the summer. In addition, the evaluation noted “suggestive” evidence that the reduction in violent-crime arrests was most pronounced for youth who were at higher risk of being involved in violence.62 Chicago’s use of rigorous program evaluation helped generate stronger financial support for its program. Mark Walter,

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one of the partners in Inner City Youth Empowerment, LLC, which contributed $10 million over two years to expand the “One Summer Plus” program, was quoted as saying that, “As a result of the research findings, we felt compelled to help bring this opportunity to a greater number of kids who can benefit.”

Because New York City assigns youth to its summer youth employment program by a lottery, creating groups of participants and non-participants who are otherwise similar in their characteristics, the city’s program has been a fertile ground for research on program impacts. A 2014 study published by the National Bureau of Economic Research, by Alexander Gelber, Adam Isen, and Judd Kessler, found that participation in the city’s summer youth employment program increased earnings and employment during the year of participation, but led to a modest decrease in earnings in subsequent years while having no effect on college enrollment. Most encouraging, though, were findings that participation in the program led to lower rates of incarceration and mortality. The researchers stated that:

SYEP causes a decrease in the probability of incarceration of 0.10 percentage points, driven by a decrease among males. While this effect is small in percentage point terms, it represents a substantial 10.36 percent reduction relative to the baseline incarceration rate of 0.95 percent. The SYEP-induced decrease in mortality, also driven by males, is 0.08 percentage points, again small in percentage point terms but a substantial 19.92 percent of the 0.38 percent baseline mortality rate. Evidence from analyzing cause of death suggests that SYEP may prevent death by external causes. SYEP appears to put youth on a path that leads away from dangerous outcomes.

The point estimates suggest that by October 2014, around 86 lives were saved by the four years of the SYEP program from 2005 to 2008.

Two additional studies took advantage of the random assignment of youth to New York City’s summer youth employment program to estimate its impacts on academic outcomes. A study published in 2014 by Jacob Leos-Urbel found that students selected to participate in SYEP had higher school attendance rates (by approximately 1 to 2 percent, or two three days) than those not selected, with a positive impact on attendance of 3


percent (four to five school days) for students aged 16 or older. Another study published in 2015 by Amy Ellen Schwartz, Jacob Leos-Urbel, and Matthew Wiswall found that youth who were selected to participate in SYEP were more likely to take and pass New York State’s Regents exams, a series of tests in different subjects aligned with New York State’s learning standards.

The Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation is presently studying the effect of New York City’s summer youth employment program on academic and labor market outcomes. The evaluation, which is funded by the U.S. Department of Labor and the Walton Family Foundation and is using data from New York City’s Department of Youth and Community Development, is scheduled to end on September 30, 2016.

By contrast, DOES has not commissioned independent evaluations of MBSYEP, even though they are required by law (see D.C. Official Code § 32-244, which took effect on September 24, 2010). Specifically, the Mayor is required to “hire an independent contractor to evaluate the summer youth employment program” annually (an activity that DOES would perform on the Mayor’s behalf). The evaluation must include pre-program and post-program surveys of participating youth and employers, as well as interviews with “local youth workforce stakeholders, experts, and providers,” as well as a range of other requirements.

DOES has posted copies of annual MBSYEP evaluation reports from 2010 to 2014 on its website, but these reports do not comply with the statutory requirements (and no evaluation was published for 2015). The most critical deficiencies are as follows:

- Only the 2010 evaluation, which was conducted by researchers at Brandeis University’s Heller School for Social Policy and Management, can be considered independent. The evaluations for 2011 through 2014 were prepared in whole or in part by the DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation, a non-profit

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67 These requirements include discussion of (1) satisfaction among participating youth and employers, (2) job responsibilities of participating youth, (3) support mechanisms for youth and employers, (4) progress as it relates to job readiness and specific work skills gained by youth, (5) the percentages of youth participating in activities such as work experience, academic instruction, and youth enrichment, and (6) steps taken to address shortcomings identified in previous evaluations and the effectiveness of the corrective actions. See D.C. Official Code § 32-244.
established by the D.C. government that helped administer the summer youth employment program in those years. 69

- The 2012 and 2013 evaluations pertained to the One City Summer Initiative, an umbrella program covering recreation, food, summer school, and other services in addition to the summer youth employment program. The 2012 and 2013 evaluations included only brief descriptions of the summer youth employment program and do not qualify as evaluations of the program. 70

Recommendation:

10. DOES should follow the requirements of the law by (1) hiring an independent contractor to conduct the evaluation of MBSYEP, (2) ensuring that the evaluation covers all of the requirements set forth in D.C. Official Code § 32-244, and (3) presenting the evaluation to the Council and posting the evaluation on the DOES web site by December 30th of each year.


## Audit Results Summary

Our audit identified the following recommendations for the executive branch and DOES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finding</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Program is notable for its broad scope. MBSYEP serves more youth per capita than any of the eight comparison cities, often serving twice the number of youth or more as other large cities.</td>
<td>1. The District should expand private fund-raising efforts, drawing on the resources of the local business community, and consider establishing a 501(c)(3) organization under the auspices of its Workforce Investment Board to solicit private donations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflecting the broad scope of MBSYEP, the District’s summer youth employment program has a larger budget than similar programs in other cities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other cities also have more diversified funding bases for their summer youth employment programs than the District of Columbia does. As a result, the other cities have reduced the cost of the program to local taxpayers by drawing on federal and private sources.</td>
<td>2. DOES should consider using federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds to support the summer youth employment program, because WIOA (which was signed by President Obama on July 22, 2014) requires grantees to spend 20 percent of their youth funds on work experience for in-school or out-of-school youth. Because work opportunities for youth are more plentiful in the summer, DOES may not be able to meet the WIOA targets unless it uses WIOA funds to support summer youth employment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>In recent years, the trend has been for large cities to expand the number of youth served in their summer employment programs. The District’s MBSYEP program has also grown, but not as rapidly as in other cities because summer youth employment has long been a major initiative and high priority for D.C. policymakers.</td>
<td>3. The District should consider giving enrollment priority to youth who are low-income or otherwise disadvantaged, as defined by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Most (six of eight) of the comparison cities serve young adults up to the age of 24 in their summer youth employment programs, expanding the program beyond its traditional 14- to 21-year-old age group. Nevertheless, young adults between the ages of 22 to 24 account for a small percentage of summer employment participants in cities where they are eligible.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Many of the key elements of MBSYEP are similar to those found in summer youth employment</td>
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programs in the eight comparison cities.

A key difference among summer youth employment programs in the eight comparison cities is whether they restrict summer youth employment programs to low-income and disadvantaged youth or allow all youth to participate, as the District does.

Despite the general similarities among summer youth employment programs in large cities, several cities have implemented innovative program components targeted at youth who may be at particularly high risk.

Several large cities have summer youth employment program components that are competitive and are designed to place older youth in private-sector internships that could lead to full-time employment. MBSYEP does not have a similar program.

Stronger private-sector involvement in several other cities has helped place some summer youth participants in unsubsidized positions. Developing unsubsidized positions not only saves money for the city governments, but may also reflect more serious commitments by employers that could lead to permanent employment for youth.

Several other large cities rely more on public-private partnerships or decentralized program models to administer their summer youth employment programs, but it is not clear if different organizational structures affect program effectiveness.

4. District of Columbia policymakers should consider program and policy changes similar to those adopted in Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York that provide specialized services or reserve slots for youth at risk of involvement in violence, youth in foster care, runaway and homeless youth, and youth with disabilities.

5. D.C. policymakers should consider establishing a competitive, private-sector component of MBSYEP that is intended to place students who are 16 years of age or older in summer jobs that may lead to full-time employment.

6. DOES officials should seek to re-introduce unsubsidized summer placements to MBSYEP and to increase gradually the number and percentage of positions that are unsubsidized or partly subsidized.

7. DOES should evaluate whether drawing on private-sector expertise to administer various aspects of MBSYEP would increase efficiency and effectiveness. These alternatives would include partnerships with business organizations or non-profit organizations to identify summer placements for youth, place youth in those jobs, and monitor implementation of the summer program, as well as handle internal functions such as payroll and timekeeping.
8. The Mayor should consider issuing an executive order outlining agency responsibilities in developing and administering MBSYEP, including the roles of agencies besides the Department of Employment Services in creating and monitoring summer positions for youth.

| The main performance measures used for summer youth employment programs in large cities are (1) the number of youth who participate and (2) reported satisfaction among youth and employer participants. |

| 9. DOES should expand the range of performance measures for MBSYEP by reporting annual data on program attrition, the number and percentage of placements in high-growth industry sectors, and the number of percentage of youth in unsubsidized or partly subsidized jobs. These measures would supplement the existing data on enrollment levels and youth and employer satisfaction. |

10. DOES should follow the requirements of the law by (1) hiring an independent contractor to conduct the evaluation of MBSYEP, (2) ensuring that the evaluation covers all of the requirements set forth in D.C. Official Code § 32-244, and (3) presenting the evaluation to the Council and posting the evaluation on the DOES web site by December 30th of each year.

Several other cities have commissioned independent evaluations of their summer youth employment programs, including studies that have randomly assigned youth to program and control groups in order to isolate the impact of the program on youth well-being. By contrast, DOES has not commissioned independent evaluations of MBSYEP despite a statutory requirement to do so annually.
Conclusion

The District of Columbia government has devoted substantial resources to support the well-being of young people through the Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Program (MBSYEP), which served more than 13,000 youth in the summer of 2015 at a total cost of $18 million. Traditionally serving 14 to 21-year-olds, MBSYEP expanded in 2015 to serve 22- to 24-year-olds, who again will be eligible to participate in the summers of 2016 and 2017. The District enrolls more youth per capita in its summer youth employment program than any of the eight large cities studied in this report – often two to three times as many youth – and spends more on summer youth employment per youth than other large cities as well.

To maximize the impact of this substantial investment in MBSYEP, District policymakers must constantly seek ways to improve the program and take advantage of its broad reach to link youth to a range of services and assistance, such as year-round education and training. By reviewing the structure, activities, financing, and outcomes of summer youth employment programs in eight other geographically-diverse, large cities (Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco, and Seattle), this report aims to assist in that process. One theme of this report is that greater private-sector involvement in MBSYEP would strengthen both the program’s quality and its finances. Business groups in other cities such as Baltimore, Boston, and Los Angeles have focused on placing youth in summer jobs in the private, for-profit sector, thereby broadening the range of summer positions for youth. The District should benefit from a similar initiative because these positions can be particularly valuable for youth who are finishing school, or have finished school, and are seeking permanent employment. In addition, other cities have generated substantial private support for their summer youth employment programs, sometimes by using a 501(c)(3) organization to lead the private fundraising effort.

In addition, the District might benefit by tailoring more intensive services to youth at high risk, such as youth in foster care, youth with disabilities, homeless youth, youth involved in the criminal justice system, and youth in high-crime neighborhoods. A rigorous evaluation of Chicago’s “One Summer Chicago Plus” program by researchers at the University of Chicago and the University of Pennsylvania suggests the potential of this approach. One Summer Chicago Plus provided summer employment, a mentor, and training in civic leadership, decision making and job readiness to youth living in high-crime neighborhoods who missed six to eight weeks...
of school or have been involved in the juvenile justice system. The researchers found that the program reduced violent crime arrests by 43 percent over a 16-month period.

Finally, the executive branch must comply with statutory requirements to commission an annual, independent evaluation of MBSYEP. An independent evaluation of MBSYEP has not been conducted since 2010.
Agency Comments

On April 2, 2016, we sent a draft copy of this report to the Director of the Department of Employment Services (DOES) for review and written comment. DOES provided written comments on April 19, 2016. The comments are shown on the following pages in their entirety.
Department of Employment Services (DOES) Management Response

Office of the District of Columbia Auditors (ODCA)
“Review of Summer Youth Employment Programs in Eight Major Cities and the District of Columbia”

April 19, 2016
April 19, 2016

Ms. Kathleen Patterson
District of Columbia Auditor
Office of the District of Columbia Auditor
717 14th Street, NW, Suite 900
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ms. Patterson:

This letter is in response to your letter dated April 4, 2016, regarding ODCA’s report entitled, “Review of Summer Youth Employment Programs in Eight Major Cities and the District of Columbia.” Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this review.

As requested, DOES has prepared a separate, written response that addresses each recommendation from the Office of the District of Columbia Auditor. Please find our response attached.

Additionally, the following timeframes for implementation, specific to ODCA’s recommendations and for which DOES is in agreement, is provided below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation Number</th>
<th>Timeframe Implementation</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>October 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>December 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>October 2016</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Within the next 90 days</td>
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While the ODCA report raises numerous concerns regarding the Marion Barry Summer Youth Employment Program, (MBSYEP), as compared to other municipal jurisdictions, DOES’ commitment to strengthen and expand high quality employment training and supplementary support services to District residents remains paramount.

Please let me know if you have any questions. We look forward to your response, as well as receiving a final copy of your report.

Sincerely,

Deborah A. Carroll
Director

cc: Courtney Snowden, Deputy Mayor of Greater Economic Opportunity
    Rashad Young, City Administrator
    Lawrence Perry, ODCA
Overview Statement

The Department of Employment Services (DOES) has reviewed information contained in the above referenced District of Columbia Auditor (ODCA) review of the Mayor Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Program. The review contains evaluation results and recommendations based on ODCA’s research of summer employment programs in eight cities and interviews with staff of each city’s respective agency administering the program.

DOES welcomes this review and is in agreement with several of the recommendations, many of which are already in progress at the agency. As you noted, direct comparison to the District of Columbia’s program do not exist, but there is much we can learn from other programs.

We are encouraged that many of the recommendations outlined in this report are consistent with the direction we have been taking this program in Fiscal Year 2016.

Each of the evaluation recommendations is discussed in the attached.

DOES looks forward to working with the ODCA, Councilmembers, and stakeholders to ensure investments will promote a comprehensive youth development initiative in the nation’s capital in comparison to similar cross-country strategies, particularly as it relates to private sector opportunities and career pathways for older youth in the program.

EVALUATION RESULTS

Evaluation Result #1

The Marion S. Barry Summer Youth Employment Program is notable for its broad scope. MBSYEP serves more youth per capita than any of the eight comparison cities, often serving twice the number of youth or more as other large cities.

Reflecting the broad scope of MBSYEP, the District’s summer youth employment program has a larger budget than similar programs in other cities.

Other cities also have more diversified funding bases for their summer youth employment programs than the District of Columbia does. As a result, the other cities have reduced the cost of the program to local taxpayers by drawing on federal and private sources.

Recommendation:

1. The District should expand private fund-raising efforts, drawing on the resources of the local business community, and consider establishing a 501(c)(3) organization under the auspices of its Workforce Investment Board to solicit private donations.

2. DOES should consider using federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds to support the summer youth employment program, because WIOA (which
was signed by President Obama on July 22, 2014) requires grantees to spend 20 percent of their youth funds on work experience for in-school or out-of-school youth. Because work opportunities for youth are more plentiful in the summer, DOES may not be able to meet the WIOA targets unless it uses WIOA funds to support summer youth employment.

**Management Response:**

- Effectively expanding private fund-raising would allow the District to expand the capacity of the MBSYEP so that more youth can be served, while also allowing for innovative investments in program enhancements to improve the quality of the experiences for participating youth and employers. DOES has taken the following steps with respect to private fund-raising:

  - DOES has budget authority to accept donations to support the program. There is currently a link on the program website, [www.summerjobs.dc.gov](http://www.summerjobs.dc.gov) that allows for individual donors to make contributions through the DC Office of Partnerships and Grant Services (OPG) approved donations process.

  - In 2015, DOES applied for and was awarded a $260K grant from the Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund (CFE) to expand services and increase its financial literacy efforts. The funding provided by CFE allowed the District to place additional focus on financial empowerment and literacy by designing a web-based educational platform to educate and assess youth progress beyond their 6-week work experience. Additionally, the funds allowed the program to increase the number of youth participants served in the MBSYEP and to expand its Savings Incentive Challenge, which provided youth with an opportunity to win a $1,000 savings incentive.

  - In 2015, DOES partnered with more than 200 community based organizations to offer work readiness training programs and quality work experiences to youth. Though it is not formally documented as a private donation to the MBSYEP, many of these partners receive substantial private support to fund their programs and engage youth in meaningful experiences. Similarly, in 2015, DOES partnered with more than 140 private sector employers. Though it is not formally documented as a donation to the MBSYEP, some of these employers contribute to the program through the supplementation of youth wages, expansion of the number of hours that youth may work at their site per week, and through other in-kind donations of time and resources to their assigned youth participants.

  - Several other summer employment programs exist that are sponsored and funded by the private and government sectors, but they are not currently branded under the larger MBSYEP. Some examples include the annual Summer Youth Program operated by private developer, W.C. Smith and the annual program operated by the DC Housing Authority (DCHA) exclusively for residents of DCHA properties. Additionally, DOES provides support to other government agencies and organizations.
that engage in large summer hiring efforts by referring potential candidates and sharing job advertisements. For example, DOES has historically worked closely with the DC Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) to refer eligible youth for consideration as lifeguards and summer camp counselors that are hired and managed separate from the MBSYEP. Additionally, DOES actively participates in the Mayor’s Summer Strong DC initiative which helps to ensure that all agencies that offer summer programs and services share information and encourage participation so that all youth are able to engage in positive activities during the summer.

- According to WIOA, federal funds may not be used to fund stand-alone summer youth employment initiatives. Rather, summer employment is one of fourteen mandatory service components that must be made available to in-school and out-of-school youth who are eligible to receive services throughout the year. Multiple ongoing strategies are underway by the District to ensure the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) goals are met and that enrollment in year-round programs and services are expanded. Specific to the twenty percent (20%) spend down of youth funds on work experience for in-school and out-of-school youth, DOES currently contracts with eight (8) federally funded vendors in support of this mandate. Each vendor is required to meet the guidelines set forth by the WIOA as outlined in the Scope of Work (SOW).

Moving forward:
- DOES will continue to explore and research other jurisdictions’ private fund-raising activities for feasibility of replication in DC. Specifically, the agency plans to recruit this support as it relates to “digital badging”, a program whereby youth will have the opportunity to participate in various online or in person trainings to build skills and competencies. As the agency embarks upon digital badging to document youth learning and achievements, DOES will seek donations to provide incentives to youth interested in earning badges.

- DOES will seek to expand access to privately-funded programs by ensuring that information pertaining to these opportunities is made available to as many youth as possible. Additionally, DOES will consider ways to capture, brand, and report on privately-funded activities that align with the mission of the MBSYEP.

- DOES will continue to work on efforts to boost enrollment in its year-round programs for in-school and out-of-school youth and will ensure that summer employment activities are offered as a core component of their individualized service strategy.

**Evaluation Result #2**

Compared to the other cities, D.C. places greater weight on summer youth employment and less emphasis on year-round employment and training programs for in-school and
out-of-school youth. For program year 2014, D.C. had a much higher ratio of summer youth enrollment to year-round youth enrollment than Baltimore, Boston, or New York City.

**Recommendation:**

3. DOES should consider boosting enrollment in year-round youth employment programs to provide more intensive assistance to youth who are disconnected from school or work. This step would not diminish the importance of summer employment for youth, but would integrate summer employment as a component of year-round assistance to youth who need intensive, longer-term assistance.

**Management Response:**

- There are several reasons as to why DC may not be able to reach a similar ratio to other cities, based on factors including differences in program models, funding limitations, and the fact that many youth are enrolled in school and other required activities during the school year that limit their availability for services. But despite these differences, we agree that it is important to enroll more youth in year-round employment programs and have begun to do the work it will take to make that a reality. The District has a plan in place to boost the number of year-round programs and services available to in-school and out-of-school youth that are poised to benefit from year-round programs.

- In FY16 (to date), DOES is serving a total of 884 youth in year-round programs. DOES is still in the process of screening and selecting additional youth service providers through the Human Care Agreement process to build capacity.

  - The FY16 program capacity is 1,145 youth.
    - 402 in the DC Career Connections Program;
    - 93 in the In-School Program;
    - 200 in the Youth Earn and Learn Program (YEALP);
    - 100 in the Pathways for Young Adults Program (PYAP); and,
    - 350 in the Marion Barry Youth Leadership Institute (MBYLI).

  - Each of these year-round programs and initiatives include subsidized employment opportunities that occur during the traditional school year and during the summer months.

  - DOES is still in the process of screening and selecting additional youth service providers through the Human Care Agreement process. This will allow DOES to serve even more youth during FY16.

- Note: In review of figure seven (on page 14 of the report) the number of youth in year round programs was understated for the District of Columbia. The report has 183 youth for total year round enrollment and the correct number is stated below based on program year 2014. As such, the ratio of youth participants in year-round programs to MBSYEP is 15 to 1 as opposed to 70 to 1. Program year 2014 year-round totals are as follows:
Evaluation Result #3

In recent years, the trend has been for large cities to expand the number of youth served in their summer employment programs. The District’s MBSYEP program has also grown, but not as rapidly as in other cities because summer youth employment has long been a major initiative and high priority for D.C. policymakers.

Most (six of eight) of the comparison cities serve young adults up to the age of 24 in their summer youth employment programs, expanding the program beyond its traditional 14- to 21-year-old age group. Nevertheless, young adults between the ages of 22 to 24 account for a small percentage of summer employment participants in those cities where they are eligible.

Recommendation:

4. The District should consider giving enrollment priority to youth who are low-income or otherwise disadvantaged, as defined by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

Management Response:

- DOES shares this goal and is currently implementing this national best practice. Highlighted below are specific examples:

  o The District is proud to join the six other cities in expanding the core mission of the MBSYEP to serve youth up to the age of 24, which is directly aligned to the WIOA definition of the term “youth”. Mayor Bowser’s vision was to ensure that all young people in the city have a gateway to meaningful employment and a pathway towards a career. By authorizing this expansion beginning in 2015, 2,526 applications were submitted, 988 youth were determined eligible, 911 youth completed all of the steps required to participate in the program and finally, 844 youth ages 22-24 were employed in the 2015 MBSYEP.

  o DOES currently allows enrollment outreach priority to vulnerable youth and works across multiple District of Columbia Government agencies to ensure that the city’s most disconnected youth have increased employment and training options. In so doing, the District partners with several agencies to improve services to low-income and disadvantaged individuals such as, the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS), Child and Family Services Administration (CFSA), Department of Human Service (DHS), Department of Health (DOH), District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), Department of Disability
Services (DDS), DC Public Charter School Board (PCSB), Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA) and many community-based organizations. Collectively, these agencies work together to ensure that high quality services, workforce preparation, and competitive integrated employment support is available to District youth.

- DOES engages in a series of electronic data verification activities that help to streamline the application process for vulnerable youth. Specifically, youth who are in the care of the Child and Family Services Administration (CFSA) and the Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services (DYRS) are able to bypass much of the in-person application steps.

- Currently, DOES engages in a number of efforts to help ensure that the city’s most vulnerable youth are afforded the opportunity to engage in the MBSYEP:
  - DOES engages in direct outreach with a number of public and charter schools, including Ballou Senior High School, Anacostia Senior High School, and Friendship Public Charter School by hosting on-site events and engaging with school staff to ensure that all students are informed about the program and able to successfully engage.
  - DOES hosted an on-site opportunity for the more than 100 youth engaged in the DC National Guard Youth Challenge Academy whereby all of their youth participants were able to enroll and engage in summer employment.
  - DOES engages in mobile outreach campaigns where the DOES mobile unit and computers are brought on site in neighborhoods with high concentration of poverty such as Woodland Terrace, Congress Heights, and at the DC General Homeless Shelter.
  - DOES participated alongside the Executive Office of the Mayor’s Office of Community Relations (MOCRS), the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services (DMHHS), and the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice (DMPSJ) to offer summer employment opportunities to youth and families identified through the Mayor’s Community Stabilization effort. This effort, intended to provide comprehensive city services and programs to the city’s most vulnerable families resulted in more than 35 young people connecting to summer employment in 2015.

**Evaluation Result #4**

Despite the general similarities among summer youth employment programs in large cities, several cities have implemented innovative program components targeted at youth who may be at particularly high risk.

**Recommendation:**
5. District of Columbia policymakers should consider program and policy changes similar to those adopted in Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York that provide specialized services or reserve slots for youth at risk of involvement in violence, youth in foster care, runaway and homeless youth, and youth with disabilities

**Management Response:**

- The District currently allows enrollment outreach priority to vulnerable youth as described in the response to Evaluation Result #3. In 2015, DOES launched a strategic partnership with the DC Department of Disability Services (DDS), Rehabilitative Services Administration (RSA) as a result of engagement in a capstone project as part of the DC Alliance for Youth Advocates’ Youth Workforce Development Professionals Leadership Academy. The goal of this partnership was to provide targeted supports to youth with disabilities designed to get them connected to summer employment and then provide them with support to ensure that they have all of the necessary resources and assistive technology needed to be successful throughout their experience. Through this effort, youth also receive specialized services, mentoring, and engage in professional development opportunities to enhance their experience.

**Moving forward:**

- Beginning in 2016, DOES will consider reserving a specific number of MBSYEP slots and identifying a youth service provider (or network of youth service providers) to support youth identified as being at risk for violence or crime, homeless, in foster care, or who have a disability. Likewise, DOES will strengthen its partnership with DDS and will use this as a model for partnerships with other District government agencies that provide targeted services to vulnerable youth. Additionally, the Office of Youth Programs is holding between 100-200 youth for MPD, DMPSJ, DYRS, CSOSA, and victims of violent crime and other young people in their families.

**Evaluation Result #5**

Several large cities have summer youth employment program components that are competitive and are designed to place older youth in private-sector internships that could lead to full-time employment. MBSYEP does not have a similar program.

**Recommendation:**

6. District of Columbia policymakers should consider program and policy similar to those adopted in Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York that provide specialized services or reserve slots for youth at risk of involvement in violence, youth in foster care, runaway and homeless youth, and youth with disabilities

**Management Response:**

- In 2015, DOES engaged approximately 545 employer partners, including 384 in non-government sectors. As a part of MBSYEP, DOES engages many employers in a competitive interview and selection process to identify their
assigned interns for the summer. Altogether, 7,084 (54.0%) of youth participants who were assigned to jobs were selected by employers through their individual interview and selection process. Many private employers, including some of our larger retail partners like CVS, AutoZone, Jamba Juice, and others, leverage the MBSYEP as a recruitment source for continued employment opportunities beyond the scope of the MBSYEP.

Moving forward:

- DOES will explore ways that other cities have branded separate private internship programs and will consider ways to embed these strategies into the existing program structure.

**Evaluation Results #6:**

Several large cities have summer youth employment program components that are competitive and are designed to place older youth in private-sector internships that could lead to full-time employment. MBSYEP does not have a similar program.

**Recommendation**

7. D.C. policymakers should consider establishing a competitive, private-sector component of MBSYEP that is intended to place students who are 16 years of age or older in summer jobs that may lead to full-time employment.

**Management Response:**

- Currently, the District engages in this ongoing practice, which is a key component of the MBSYEP’s success. In an effort to demonstrate the competitiveness of the world of work, the District hosts an annual career fair targeting students who are 16 years of age or older for summer job placement that may lead to full-time employment. During the career fair employers interview and hire students on the spot for summer job placement participation.

- Additionally, many private sector employers use the MBSYEP as an entry point for more permanent placement and career pathway opportunities within their organizations. Youth who are selected to participate in the MBSYEP at some of the private sector host sites are offered an opportunity to convert to full-time employment at the conclusion of their MBSYEP experience.

**Evaluation Result #7**

Stronger private-sector involvement in several other cities has helped place some summer youth participants in unsubsidized positions. Developing unsubsidized positions not only saves money for the city governments, but may also reflect more serious commitments by employers that could lead to permanent employment for youth.
Recommendation:

8. DOES officials should seek to re-introduce unsubsidized summer placements to MBSYEP and to increase gradually the number and percentage of positions that are unsubsidized or partly subsidized.

Management Response:

- While DOES solicits partner employers and offers to pay youth wages up to the statutory requirement for weekly hours and pay rates, there are some private employers who voluntarily opt to supplement the wages of their assigned interns above the statutory amounts. These supplemental wages are paid directly by the employer to their assigned participants. Currently, employers are not required to report their supplements directly to DOES.

- Additionally, as MBSYEP staff become aware of unsubsidized summer employment opportunities (particularly those that pay more than the statutory requirements of MBSYEP), these opportunities are shared via email with all youth in the MBSYEP database. The goal is to ensure that as many youth as possible are aware of and engaged in the best summer employment opportunities possible.

Moving forward:

- DOES will implement a plan that will enable private employers to post their summer job opportunities and screen applications in the MBSYEP youth portal. Though DOES will not fund these slots, DOES will consider rebranding the program so that these kinds of opportunities may be considered a part of the unsubsidized program. Likewise, DOES will ask employers to report when they have supplemented the wages for their assigned youth with their own unsubsidized funds. DOES will work to track those youth who opt to participate in other unsubsidized employment opportunities.

- DOES will run a promotional campaign to encourage employers to commit to offer year-round internships for youth.

- Additionally, DOES will continue to explore additional innovations that will increase unsubsidized summer placement opportunities by 20% over the next five years. DOES will also encourage partners to establish and maintain year-round opportunities for work experience including part-time work, paid and unpaid internships, and job shadowing opportunities.

Evaluation Result #8

Several other large cities rely more on public-private partnerships or decentralized program models to administer their summer youth employment programs, but it is not
clear if different organizational structures affect program effectiveness.

**Recommendation:**

9. DOES should evaluate whether drawing on private-sector expertise to administer various aspects of MBSYEP would increase efficiency and effectiveness. These alternatives would include partnerships with business organizations or non-profit organizations to identify summer placements for youth, place youth in those jobs, and monitor implementation of the summer program, as well as handle internal functions such as payroll and timekeeping.

**Management Response**

- We have already begun looking at how to find efficiencies within the program, either by outsourcing administration of aspects of the program to external partners or streamlining internally.

- Drawing upon national best practices, DOES has considered implementing practices that draw upon private-sector expertise. In fact, in previous years, DOES piloted outsourcing the payroll function to a private vendor but there were significant issues with internal controls that led to challenges with management of funds.

- However, there are other ways in which DOES leverages private sector partners. DOES engages in this model with a number of key partners who work to ensure that youth have high quality summer experiences. Three examples from FY15 are included below:

  - More than 150 MBSYEP participants who were also enrolled in the DC Public Schools NAF Academies engaged in internships that directly align to their course of study. This track was created in partnership with the DCPS NAF team and allowed participants to put theory into practice and fulfill the work experience requirement of the NAF curriculum. DOES anticipates serving more youth through this partnership in FY16.

  - DOES partnered with the On-Ramps to Careers program to ensure that 20 youth interested in IT careers received the necessary exposure they needed to be successful. On-Ramps staff worked with each individual young person to identify an opportunity that matched their interest and skill level and they were able to work with a variety of employers in the IT space, including partners like Microsoft and Accenture. DOES anticipates serving more youth through this partnership in FY16.

  - DOES partnered with the H Street Main Street organization to develop opportunities for youth to work with a variety of business owners and entrepreneurs that are a part of the city’s Main Streets program. Through this effort, more than 200 youth were able to engage in effective customer service training and were assigned to a business that closely aligned to their interests and allowed them to engage in
workshops that taught them how to start and run their own businesses.

Moving forward:

- DOES will continue to explore ways to further develop opportunities for more private sector involvement in the placement and matching of youth to industry-specific opportunities.

**Evaluation Results #9:**

The main performance measures used for summer youth employment programs in large cities are (1) the number of youth who participate and (2) reported satisfaction among youth and employer participants.

**Recommendation:**

10. DOES should expand the range of performance measures for MBSYEP by reporting annual data on program attrition, the number and percentage of placements in high-growth industry sectors, and the number of percentage of youth in unsubsidized or partly subsidized jobs. These measures would supplement the existing data on enrollment levels and youth and employer satisfaction.

**Management Response:**

- DOES Office of Youth Programs tracks more information than the total number of participants and program satisfaction as part of its internal review of the MBSYEP each year. In 2015, DOES conducted a review of its data and published it in its first annual MBSYEP Summer Report. This report provides an overview of the program and provides detailed information about the demographics of youth participants, program attrition, and post-program outcomes.

Moving forward:

- DOES will continue to develop and publish an annual Summer Report at the close of each iteration of the program. DOES will continue to expand the type of information that is collected and reported to ensure that information about the program is delivered in full transparency.

**Evaluation Result #10**

Several other cities have commissioned independent evaluations of their summer youth employment programs, including studies that have randomly assigned youth to program and control groups in order to isolate the impact of the program on youth well-being. By contrast, DOES has not commissioned independent evaluations of MBSYEP despite a statutory requirement to do so annually.
**Recommendation:**

11. DOES should follow the requirements of the law by (1) hiring an independent contractor to conduct the evaluation of MBSYEP, (2) ensuring that the evaluation covers all of the requirements set forth in D.C. Official Code § 32-244, and (3) presenting the evaluation to the Council and posting the evaluation on the DOES website by December 30th of each year.

**Management Response:**

- From 2010-2014, DOES engaged with independent contractors that have produced evaluations of the MBSYEP. These reports are currently available at [www.summerjobs.dc.gov](http://www.summerjobs.dc.gov). In 2015, DOES engaged in developing an internally produced report in accordance with the law and ensured that it was posted by the February 1 deadline. In addition to the statutory requirements to conduct evaluation, in 2015, DOES worked closely with Dr. Judd Kessler, Assistant Professor of Business Economics and Public Policy at the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania, who led a rapid-cycle evaluative experiment to test strategies that might improve attendance outcomes and reduce attrition among MBSYEP participants. Dr. Kessler found that sending youth weekly email reminders had a positive effect on attendance.

Moving forward:

- DOES is currently working with the Office of the City Administrator to contract with a research institution to conduct the annual evaluation in 2016 and beyond.
Auditor’s Response to Agency Comments

The Office of the District of Columbia Auditor (ODCA) thanks the Department of Employment Services (DOES), for its written comments on a draft of this report. We appreciate the detailed and constructive response as well as the description of DOES’ plans to act on some of the recommendations.

We have made a number of changes in response to DOES’ comments, in particular by deleting a draft finding and recommendation concerning the balance between year-round and summer youth employment and training programs operated by DOES (see pp. 5-7 of DOES’ comments).

The DOES Director noted (see p. 11 of DOES’ comments) that some private employers opt to supplement the wages of their MBSYEP participants, and that DOES will ask employers to report when they have supplemented the youths’ wages. ODCA commends DOES for pledging to take this step and will follow up in its compliance reporting.

Although DOES stated (see p. 14 of DOES’ comments) that it has engaged independent contractors to evaluate MBYSEP on an annual basis, the Auditor maintains that only the 2010 evaluation, conducted by researchers at Brandeis University, can be considered independent. The evaluations submitted for 2011 through 2014 (no evaluation was published in 2015) were prepared in whole or in part by the DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation, a non-profit established by the D.C. government that helped administer the summer youth employment program in those years.

Moreover, the 2012 and 2013 evaluations pertained to the One City Summer Initiative, an umbrella program providing recreation, food, summer school, and other services in addition to the summer youth employment program. The 2012 and 2013 evaluations included only brief descriptions of the summer youth employment program and do not qualify as evaluations of the program.