Overview
With the passage of the American Rescue Plan in March of 2021, Georgia has an unprecedented opportunity to provide expanded and improved learning and supports for all students. The federal stimulus package will help Georgia combat learning loss and meet students’ well-being, connectedness, and mental health needs as we move ahead and begin to recover from the setbacks exacerbated by the events of 2020. The Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network (GSAN) is proud to work with the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) to establish the Building Opportunities for Out-of-School Time (BOOST) Grant Program. Over the next 3 years, approximately $85 million will be available through competitive grants to expand access to and improve the quality of summer enrichment opportunities and comprehensive afterschool programming for K-12 youth statewide.

Purpose
BOOST Grants are intended to support the learning acceleration, connectedness, and well-being of Georgia’s students, utilizing a whole child approach.

What is learning acceleration and what is a whole child approach?

**Learning acceleration** strategically prepares students for success in the present—this week, on this content. Rather than concentrating on a list of items that students have failed to master, acceleration readies students for new learning. Past concepts and skills are addressed, but always in the purposeful context of future learning. Acceleration jump-starts underperforming students into learning new concepts before their classmates even begin. Rather than being stuck in the remedial slow lane, students move ahead of everyone into the fast lane of learning. Acceleration provides a fresh academic start for students every week and creates opportunities for struggling students to learn alongside their more successful peers. Research, practice, and common sense confirm that a whole child approach to education will develop and prepare students for the challenges and opportunities of today and tomorrow by addressing students’ comprehensive needs through the shared responsibility of students, families, schools, and communities. Educating the whole child means to acknowledge AND address non-academic factors that impact academic outcomes while expanding learning opportunities. A whole child approach ensures that each student is healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged. For more information on whole child supports, visit the Georgia Department of Education’s [Whole Child Toolkit](#).

Applicants must propose to use funds for at least one of the following purposes:

- **Expand access to serve more youth, with an emphasis on children who were most impacted by the pandemic.** Potential strategies include:
  - Increasing program slots for children and youth
  - Expanding an existing program to a community with few or no options currently available
  - Creating a new program in a community with few or no options currently available
  - Increasing weeks, days, hours of summer programming

- **Reduce barriers to participation to ensure access for all.** Potential strategies include:
  - Providing free transportation to and from the program site(s)
  - Offering subsidies/scholarships to offset enrollment costs
  - Increasing access for children and youth with disabilities, youth experiencing homelessness, youth in foster care, English language learners, youth receiving free or reduced-price lunch, and migratory youth

- **Increase programmatic quality and expand or enhance supports/services offered.** Potential strategies include:
• Increase programmatic quality and expand or enhance supports/services offered. Potential strategies include:

  ▪ Enhancing learning acceleration through increased staffing of certified teachers, new curriculum, staff professional development, and/or activities

  ▪ Enhancing behavioral health supports through hiring of social workers or counselors, training of staff, and/or utilizing well-being and connectedness curriculum

  ▪ Adding new enrichment opportunities, such as career exploration, youth entrepreneurship, STEAM, and/or the arts

  ▪ Developing new partnerships with other community-based organizations, municipalities, and/or schools