



# FACT SHEET

## Expanded Learning Information System (ELIS)

Big Thought, Dallas Afterschool, and SMU’s Center for Research and Evaluation (CORE) are working together to provide a single, comprehensive data tool that supports the out-of-school time (OST) ecosystem across Dallas. We call this innovative tool the *Expanded Learning Information System (ELIS)*. [www.ELISdfw.org](http://www.ELISdfw.org).

### How did ELIS come about?

As leaders in out-of-school time (OST) and enrichment, Big Thought, Dallas Afterschool and SMU CORE saw a need to create more efficiencies in the way data is collected, shared, and used to support programs. Many OST and enrichment providers collect data for Big Thought, for Dallas Afterschool, and for other entities as well. Yet, these same providers often lack some key data they really need in order to make systematic program decisions and improvements. In addition, the data can take too long to get back to them in order to be truly useful. Finally, the process of data collection providers were asked to engage in was often redundant and lacked efficiency. Through catalytic funding received from the Better Together Fund, our organizations worked together—with the local OST network— to solve this need by establishing ELIS.

### Why we built ELIS.

The primary objectives behind ELIS are:

- Reduce data collection redundancies consistently burdening program providers and intermediary organizations;
- Deliver actionable data frequently enough that program improvements can be made;
- Drive positive outcomes for children, families and communities by supporting data driven decision making, at scale;
- Provide better evidence about what works to key stakeholders, including Dallas ISD, OST providers, backbone organizations, funders, universities, families, and other local and state education agencies and school districts; and
- Equip organizations with usable data to support their communications and development needs.

### What is ELIS?

ELIS is a comprehensive **information system** of student-level and programmatic data to support Out-of-School Time (OST) and enrichment service providers throughout Dallas. ELIS is a **data hub** and a **data dashboard** where information about programs and students can be accessed.

ELIS is also an **approach to improvement** - where data in the system are paired with professional development to support ongoing program and system-wide improvements.

ELIS requires data **inputs**

- OST ecosystems are complex; this means that data about different parts of the system must come from multiple places. As a data hub, ELIS is a tool to efficiently combine information from individual providers throughout the city and from participating ISDs.

- Big Thought and Dallas Afterschool have streamlined the data we are asking OST providers to collect by utilizing a common student survey and a common attendance template.

ELIS produces data **outputs**

- As a data dashboard, ELIS provides a central digital space where providers can access both program data (i.e., data about program quality, survey data, etc.) and de-identified and aggregate ISD data about the students they serve. Data are available over multiple years and views are customizable by program site, student demographics and other key variables.
- The data dashboard has consolidated data across multiple components of the OST system, allowing providers involved with multiple initiatives to access and view data in one location.

ELIS **supports** use of these data for improvement

- Merely delivering data to providers is insufficient for improving program quality and student outcomes. Providers and their program staff must be knowledgeable about how to use the data to make iterative changes and improvements to the programs and activities they provide youth. ELIS, therefore, also refers to training, technical assistance, capacity building and professional learning communities where data is reviewed and analyzed.

### **Who can access ELIS?**

ELIS is structured to operate under Big Thought’s Dallas City of Learning (DCoL) project and data sharing agreements. This means that any provider wishing to access data must join and participate in DCoL. OST and enrichment service providers are the target audience for ELIS and hoped to be its primary users.

ELIS is intended for providers who operate direct service programs in OST, meaning students enroll with the provider to participate in programming. At this time, providers working within another service provider’s program (e.g., providing periodic enrichment within another program) are not eligible for ELIS.

Subsequent phases of ELIS will also add functionality for funders and policy makers to gain account access to view aggregate systems/sector level data for the initiatives or providers they support.

### **What are the requirements for my organization to be involved?**

In order to utilize and benefit from the ELIS system, a service provider must actively participate in either/both Dallas Afterschool’s Program Quality Initiative and Student Outcomes Project and/or Big Thought’s Dallas City of Learning (DCoL). From there, service providers must roster their students into the Dallas City of Learning (DCoL) platform and submit attendance data. Providers will also be invited to attend ELIS related orientations and trainings on how to use the system and how to use the data for program improvement. We anticipate that there will be two to three of these trainings offered per year.

### **How is ELIS accessed?**

The ELIS dashboard is accessible at [www.ELISdfw.org](http://www.ELISdfw.org). With a unique login and accurate credentials, providers are able to view data about their organizations/programs/sites and their students (aggregated and de-identified). While one login per participating organization is provided free of charge, organizations can also purchase additional licenses. Each login is customized to allow access to specific programs and/or sites.

### **What kind of data are accessible through ELIS?**

Once logged in, providers are able to dynamically navigate through a data dashboard. All data are aggregated and de-identified. No provider will be able to see student names nor ID numbers through this system. Depending on the provider’s affiliation (with either Big Thought and/or Dallas Afterschool) and depending on what data the organization submits – for example, a provider may not collect student surveys—a view of the ELIS dashboard may not have all data elements listed here:

1. Attendance at OST program and sites
1. Program Quality (i.e., AQuA and/or Six Dimension of Quality Teaching and Learning)
2. Student Surveys and Assessments (i.e., social and emotional learning)
3. Other Program Surveys (i.e., Staff or Caregiver surveys)
4. Aggregate school district data, if student attends Dallas ISD (i.e., school attendance, course grades)

### **My organization partners with both Dallas Afterschool and Big Thought – how will this work for me?**

Service providers who are already participating in Dallas Afterschool’s Program Quality Initiative and Student Outcomes Project will continue all aspects of these initiatives. Likewise, all providers who are already participating in Dallas City of Learning will continue all aspects of that initiative. The only thing that will change will be invisible to most stakeholders: instead of student-level data flowing through multiple redundant channels, Big Thought and Dallas Afterschool student data will flow through Dallas City of Learning.

Additionally, Big Thought and Dallas Afterschool have worked to create efficiencies in the data collection tools utilized across both backbone agencies. For example, an attendance reporting template has been created that in a single format meets the reporting needs of both entities, eliminating the administrative burden of providers having to enter attendance data into multiple tools/formats. Shared stakeholder survey tools have also been developed.

### **What is the project timeline for ELIS?**

There is a multi-phase approach to the development and implementation of ELIS.

- **Complete: Planning Phase** - This was the original phase and it extended through September 2019. During this phase partners focused on front-end process improvements, building and testing functionality, and migrating existing system data from the 2017-18 and 2018-19 program years.
- **Complete: Phase 1 (Pilot Implementation)** - Starting in September 2019, a small group of service providers will be invited from a pool of existing Dallas Afterschool, Big Thought and The School Zone partners to pilot ELIS. Pilot participants will reflect a diversity of geographic locations, demographics, and programming types and will be asked to provide feedback on processes, tools and resources.
- **Ongoing: Phase 2 (1.0; Implementation)** - Contingent on the experience and learning of the pilot group, during the 2019-20 program year a secondary group of service providers already engaged with Dallas Afterschool, Big Thought DCoL, and/or The School Zone will be eligible for participation as well. Our intent is to start inviting small cohorts of additional service providers to access the ELIS on a rolling basis starting in December 2019 through December 2022.
- **Ongoing: Phase 3: (2.0 Continuous Improvement)** - Congruent to ELIS 1.0 being available to partners, Big Thought, Dallas Afterschool and SMU are working to revise and improve the functionality of the dashboard by migrating to a Tableau interface and to add additional data elements. These enhancements started in 2021 and carry through 2022.

### **What is required to roster into the DCoL platform?**

Rostering into the DCoL platform requires the following:

- 1) Provider registers their organization on the DCoL platform and agrees to applicable terms and conditions;
- 2) Provider lists program(s) on the DCoL platform;
- 3) Provider gathers and submits rostering information on their participants using the ELIS Enrollment and Attendance template. This information will include name, date of birth, email address and the student identification number, which then allows the system to match students with district data, as available;
- 4) Provider will also be required to submit attendance or dosage data for their participants. Note that this information is an input and will be matched with extant Dallas ISD data by SMU CORE. The data is “stripped” of identifying information prior to being loaded into ELIS; no identifying information about students who are rostered into DCoL will be accessible through ELIS.

### **What does the training include? When will it take place?**

ELIS data trainings will include a variety of topics ranging from introductory how-to instructions on how to enter data into the system and how to access data from an organization’s system dashboard, along with additional opportunities to explore how to apply this data to identify potential program improvements and build interventions to better serve program participants. Specific training opportunities and dates will be published and communicated to participating service providers as they become available.

### **How often will the data be updated?**

Depending on the data source the timeline for updates to ELIS will vary. SMU CORE receives data from program partners and from DISD on approximately a monthly basis. Incoming data take 1-2 months to process.

- 1) Program data (enrollment and attendance, program quality, student surveys and assessments) will be updated two times a year. Estimated time periods are
  - a. October/November (data collected during spring semester and summer)
  - b. March/April (data collected during fall semester)
- 2) School District Data will be updated four times a year. Estimated time periods are
  - a. August/September (data from previous school year: fourth grading period, end of year assessments)
  - b. December/January (data from current school year: first grading period, beginning of year assessments)
  - c. March/April (data from current school year: second grading period)
  - d. May/June (data from current school year: third grading period, middle of year assessments)

### **How do we define the academic year?**

The academic year will begin each fall and run through the spring semester and conclude at the end of each summer (approximately August through July/August).

### **How does my organization become a participant in ELIS?**

Service providers already working with Big Thought's Dallas City of Learning and/or Dallas Afterschool's Student Outcomes Project and/or Program Quality Initiative, should reach out to their respective contact to discuss next steps of ELIS access.

Service providers not currently engaged with Big Thought or Dallas Afterschool are encouraged to do so and can initiate contact via the ELIS Contact Us form found at: [www.elisdfw.org/contact-us/](http://www.elisdfw.org/contact-us/).

### **Is there any fee for using ELIS?**

At this time there is no fee for using ELIS. ELIS is a value add for service providers participating in Dallas City of Learning and/or Dallas Afterschool's Student Outcomes Project/Program Quality Initiative. While one login per participating organization is provided free of charge, organizations can also purchase additional licenses.