



Fall 2025 Site Visit and Observation Report
Prepared by A&O Evaluation and Strategy for
Business Training Institute at Utica City School District
January 27, 2026

Observation dates: December 1 and December 17, 2025

Sites: Donovan Middle School, Kennedy Middle School, and Proctor High School

Number of classrooms observed: 11

KEY FINDINGS

Strengths:

The program offers high-quality instructional planning and delivery. Staff have good familiarity and strong rapport with the students, extending school-day relations. Youth were engaged and focused during activities as well as respectful toward both staff and peers.

Challenges:

No substantive implementation barriers were noted during observations.

Table 1. BTI at UCSD Fall 2025 Observations (n = 94)

Building	Grade levels	Type of class	Class name/activity	Number of students
Donovan	7–8	Enrichment	Unified Sports	3
Donovan	7–8	Enrichment	Karma Klub (community service)	4
Donovan	7–8	Enrichment	Dungeons & Dragons	13
Donovan	7–8	Enrichment	Crochet Club	5
Donovan	7–8	Enrichment	Baking/Cooking Club	21
Kennedy	7–8	Enrichment	Fashion Design	6
Kennedy	7–8	Enrichment	Community Service	8
Proctor	9–12	Enrichment	Welcoming Committee	10
Proctor	9–12	Enrichment	Theater	18
Proctor	9–12	Enrichment	Fashion Club	4
Proctor	9–12	Enrichment	Restorative Justice; Fitness	2

OUT OF SCHOOL TIME (OST) INDICATORS

Youth: Relationship Building

OST Indicators the Observer Looked for:

Youth are friendly, relaxed, and respectful with one another and socialize informally. They assist each other, for instance by reaching out to help a peer complete a project. They are collaborative, sharing materials and strategizing about how to complete activities. They interact with staff in a positive manner. They refrain from derogatory comments or disrupting others' work. If disagreements occur, they resolve them constructively.

Observer Saw:

All observed youth were respectful toward staff. In some observations students collaborated with one another, such as during a community service activity.

Youth: Participation

OST Indicators the Observer Looked for:

Youth are attentive and on task, following along with staff and/or following directions for the activity. They contribute their perspective to discussions. They listen actively to peers and staff and respond to staff and to one another, including with constructive feedback. They have opportunities to make meaningful choices and to take on responsibility or leadership roles.

Observer Saw:

Youth were on task and engaged, and they listened attentively to staff instructions. In several observations they made meaningful choices, such as designing their own tote bag during sewing.

Staff: Relationship Building

OST Indicators the Observer Looked for:

Staff show a caring disposition and an interest in youth as individuals. They listen attentively and pay attention as youth complete tasks, encouraging participation regardless of ability or other differences. Staff do not favor, or ignore, a particular youth or group. Staff guide positive peer interactions, use positive behavior management techniques, and set consistent behavioral standards that are appropriate for the age group and activity. Staff may explain why negative behavior (such as teasing) is unacceptable and offer alternatives. If it is necessary to discipline, they do so firmly while refraining from harsh criticism or anger.

Observer Saw:

Staff were highly attentive and engaged with the students, and they were very positive in their disposition. They generally encouraged the participation of all youth. Observers did not see any behavioral issues that would have required staff to use behavior management techniques.

Staff: Instructional Strategies

OST Indicators the Observer Looked for:

Staff communicate the purpose, goals, and expectations of the activity, and use a range of instructional techniques to engage those with different learning styles. They acknowledge participation and ask youth to expand upon their ideas, posing “why,” “how,” and “if” questions. Staff structure activities so that youth work cooperatively. The focus is youth-to-youth, rather than youth-to-staff. Staff assist youth without taking over the task, coaching to help youth complete an action on their own. They give feedback to help youth gauge their own progress and to push themselves creatively and/or physically.

Observer Saw:

Staff were well organized, and in some cases, they employed varied teaching strategies, depending on the timing of the observers’ visit. Some activities were appropriately challenging for the students’ age group (e.g., fashion design).

Recommendations:

No recommendations emerged from the fall observations.