

DOINGWHATWORKS



Video

FULL DETAILS AND TRANSCRIPT

Encouraging Participation Through Communication

Marshall Elementary School, California • January 2010

Topic: Increased Learning Time: Beyond the Regular School Day
Practice: Maximize Attendance

Highlights

- Parents of Marshall Elementary School students found out about the after-school program from the daytime teachers.
- Program leaders communicate with families to let them know about activities and workshops as well as address any concerns parents may have.
- The support families receive through the after-school program (e.g., academics, transportation) makes the program a positive experience for families, and Marshall students really like being part of the program.

About the Site

Marshall Elementary School

San Francisco, CA

Demographics

78% Hispanic

7% White

3% Black

2% Asian

90% Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

65% English Language Learners

Marshall Elementary School's after-school program aims to promote students' academic skills and enrichment experiences by using the following strategies:

- A full-time lead teacher aligns planned program activities with the regular school day.
- After-school staff and a parent coordinator maintain regular communication with parents.
- The after-school program uses reading curricula aimed at helping English language learners.
- The after-school program director monitors students' progress and works to tailor the program to their needs.
- After-school teachers receive ongoing coaching and professional development.

Full Transcript

On-screen text: Students at Marshall Elementary are offered academic support after school.

On-screen text: After-school program staff keep parents informed, so they feel comfortable signing up.

On-screen text: We interviewed parents in their home language and asked the following four questions:

On-screen text (Question #1): How did you hear about the after-school program?

Parent #1: I heard about the program from the daytime teachers, and I was interested. So I decided to sign my daughter up for the program. The teachers themselves gave us the information.

Parent #2: Every Wednesday the kids bring their folders home—that's how we found out that there was an after-school program, and that they had transportation.

Parent #3: We found out about the program from the daytime teachers; they tell us when the school has programs for kids who need extra help.

On-screen text (Question #2): When you signed up for the after-school program, what questions or concerns did you have?

Parent #4: I was worried that my daughter wouldn't want to stay at school for so long. That was my concern, because she's never been great at staying at school for a long time. But she adapted well; she likes the program. She doesn't want to leave when I come to pick her up at five o'clock. She doesn't want to leave because she's having such a great time doing puzzles and activities and coloring. She finishes her homework and then she plays with her classmates, and they do activities. She likes being in the program.

Parent #1: Like any parent, you worry about whether the people who are with your children are qualified

and how much experience they have. The school told us that the after-school teachers are qualified to work with kids and that they can help our kids.

On-screen text (Question #3): How do program leaders communicate with parents?

Parent #5: Well, if we have any questions we can go see Araceli, who is involved with the program.

Whatever questions or concerns we might have, she gives us the information we need. She gives the kids a flyer and they give it to us, or if she sees parents she gives it right to us, so we can find out if they are doing an activity or something special. She keeps us informed by giving us the flyers.

Parent #6: When we pick up our kids, they give us a flyer with information about projects or programs that are going on. For example, the kids have enrichment classes; they get to choose which activity they want to do, like cooking or painting. So they tell us what activity the kids chose.

On screen text (Question #4): How does the program help your child and your family?

Parent #7: My son likes the program a lot. In preschool they said he would need speech therapy, but now he stays after school and interacts with the other kids, and they have workshops, and he doesn't need speech therapy. He talks more now; he talks a lot. It's good for him to stay and connect with other kids in the program. It's a lot of time, but he likes it. When I come to pick him up he doesn't want to leave; he wants to stay and do his activities—reading, writing, and his homework.

Parent #4: The program helps with homework, so I don't have to pick my daughter up at school and then help her with her homework after we get home. She does her homework here; she does it all by herself. She's very independent. Also, I don't need to worry about transportation. And the schedule is good.

Parent #6: The program supports us—for example, I work and I don't have to run around to pick up my daughter and bring her home or drop her off somewhere else. That's one way the program supports me. And they help the kids with their homework. They also have workshops, where they teach the kids how to cook, or they do math activities to help make math easier for them. It's a big help.