

DOINGWHATWORKS



Presentation

FULL DETAILS AND TRANSCRIPT

Aligning Out-of-School Programs With the Regular School Day

May 2010

Topic: Increased Learning Time: Beyond the Regular School Day
Practice: Align Instruction

Highlights

- Aligning out-of-school academic activities with regular school day lessons can maximize the extended learning time program's effectiveness.
- Districts and schools can take active role in making sure that there is alignment between the out-of-school program and the school curriculum.
- Some of the ways to support alignment include sharing student background and academic achievement information, sharing professional development opportunities and materials, and assigning a coordinator to initiate and oversee communications between school staff and program instructors.

Full Transcript

Slide 1: Welcome

Welcome to the overview on Aligning Out-of-School Programs With the Regular School Day.

Slide 2: Alignment with standards

Increased-learning-time programs conducted before or after school, on weekends, or during the summer months can be an effective way for schools to promote the academic achievement of their students. However, the success of these programs may depend on how closely their curriculum is aligned with academic standards and what is being taught at school.

Slide 3: Alignment with schools and districts

This alignment can be achieved a number of ways:

- Having a coach train program staff in how to align their curriculum with district standards;
- Having a district curriculum specialist assist with planning, curriculum alignment, and material and activity selection;
- Encouraging program instructors to work closely with classroom teachers to identify and address gaps in students' learning and subskills that they are struggling with;
- Using academic support during increased-learning-time programs to reinforce what is taught in core subject areas during the regular school day; and
- Using tools such as online portals that allow classroom teachers and program instructors to easily share information about students' work.

Slide 4: Degree of coordination

Some programs may require more coordination than others. For example, after-school programs that are not taught by the school's regular classroom teachers may require more coordination than those taught by the school teachers.

Slide 5: Ensuring alignment

The district can take an active role in facilitating alignment by designing or reviewing the curriculum used by out-of-school programs.

The district may require that these programs align activities and lesson plans with the state and local standards, as well as with the daily content and curriculum of the school they are working with.

School and district officials can direct program staff to relevant resources, such as school improvement plans or other specific school- or district-based objectives, as well as state and local curriculum standards that are available online.

Slide 6: Funding for coordination

Hiring a coordinator within each school to facilitate collaboration between program instructors and classroom teachers can ensure that routines and structures are in place to maintain alignment. This does not have to be a full-time position and can in fact be filled by an existing teacher or coach. Ideally, this coordinator would work from the school site, being visible and available to both students and teachers.

Slide 7: Coordinator responsibilities

The coordinator may:

- Encourage classroom teachers to document student progress, goals, homework, and other information in logbooks or journals; students may be asked to have parents review these logbooks as well as carry them every day to share with out-of-school instructors;
- Invite program instructors to participate in common planning periods with classroom teachers;
- Identify school space and resources, such as computer labs and lesson plans, that can be used by program instructors;
- Create procedures for sharing student information with program instructors, insofar as it is possible within district regulations; data might include formal and informal assessment results and messages from classroom teachers about issues they have had with students,
- Identify relevant professional development opportunities that out-of-school program instructors can attend with classroom teachers to help them align instructional strategies.

Slide 8: District staff position

Appointing a district staff person as a liaison between the out-of-school programs offered in the district and the district's office can also ensure alignment. This person will play a key role in coordinating and providing technical assistance to out-of-school programs.

Slide 9: Staffing Models

Staffing considerations are closely tied to which alignment strategies are chosen and what funding is available. Some programs are staffed by classroom teachers, other certified teachers, or paraprofessionals,

while other programs may train their staff members to deliver academic instruction. Some school principals may decide to shift the hours of teachers, coaches, or specialists to later start times so they can stay at school beyond regular school hours.

Slide 10: Using existing teachers

Using existing school staff may require the least coordination and alignment efforts. Regular school teachers are already familiar with state and local standards, school improvement plans, and all school and district initiatives. They are also able to observe program students throughout the day and can provide valuable support and insight, further strengthening the program's ability to address students' needs.

Slide 11: Conclusion

As the district works with out-of-school programs to align their curriculum with students' needs, school curriculum, district requirements, and state standards, it will want to remind everyone involved of the ultimate goal that they all share: helping students succeed in school.

Slide 12: Learn more

To learn more about Aligning Out-Of-School Programs With the Regular School Day, please see the additional resources on the Doing What Works website.