



Implementation Planner

Goals for Aligning with the School Day

Clarify goals and objectives for aligning with the school day. Ensure that your processes with staff and programming with youth further the goals you identify.

- Support and expand academic content learning (e.g., core literacy, math, science, content knowledge) through hands-on activities and projects.
- Support and reinforce targeted academic skills through use of school materials, tutoring, and school-content practice activities.
- Support student success in school by building learning skills, such as focus, engagement, communication, teamwork, behavior, diligence, time management, and organization.
- Build good attendance habits and reinforce attendance in school.
- Build students' 21st century skills.
- _____
- _____



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Alignment Strategies

Effectively aligning with the school day involves understanding where areas for alignment exist and how best to achieve common goals. Assess the strategies below as readily doable, somewhat complex, or challenging from the standpoint of your program, feasibility, and time constraints.

Alignment Strategies and Techniques Examples	Readily doable	Somewhat complex	Challenging
Align for content knowledge			
Obtain copies of textbooks and reading materials to keep available.			
Obtain and make staff aware of content standards.			
Train staff on creating activities with academic content objectives.			
Obtain and use academic performance data from schools to guide programming.			
Talk with teachers about academic goals, topics, and projects.			
Include afterschool staff on school academic teams and in professional development sessions.			
Provide teachers with evidence of youth learning and accomplishment.			
Target oral English and communication skills for English language learners.			
Align for attendance			
Work with schools to target outreach and recruitment for afterschool.			
Know school attendance policies.			
Obtain attendance data from schools; share afterschool attendance data with schools or districts.			
Identify youth with attendance problems in school, and aim to re-engage in afterschool.			
Align for 21st century and study skills			
Partner with school teachers for project-based homework learning.			
Train staff in using homework time to build a range of skills.			
Target specific 21st century skills for projects and activities.			
Talk with teachers, school leaders, and districts about priority skills.			
Establish processes for communicating with teachers and parents about homework.			
Align for healthy youth development			
Know each participant's school, and list names and contacts.			
Be aware of and share with school the potential obstacles to children's learning, such as health, developmental, housing, or social issues.			
Collaborate on parent outreach, communication, and engagement.			
Talk with teachers and school leadership about afterschool goals, programming, and activities.			
Have school and afterschool staff attend each other's events and parent conferences.			



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Sharing Responsibility for Student Learning

Use the checklist below to build program-wide awareness of school content and begin facilitating closer links between programming and school content.

- Obtain content standards:** Many districts post on the Web. May also get from teachers or school administration or from "plain language" books and guides written for parents and non-schoolteachers. Standards websites may have explanatory or clarifying material.
- Obtain content standards in targeted areas:** If focusing on one area, such as language and literacy, you may begin by working only with those standards.
- Share content standards with staff:** Integrate into orientation, activities, and project planning; make accessible through plain language; and show relevance and application.
- Observe what children are working on for homework:** Allocate staff meeting time to share notes on what children and youth are working on, challenges, and support strategies.
- Talk with teachers:** Get teacher names and contact info at the beginning of the year; reach out to establish regular communication; get copies of lessons or curriculum sections; visit classrooms.
- Talk with children and youth:** Have youth explain what they are learning in school, what they are excited about, and what is confusing them. Use informal times, such as transitions, snack time, and dismissal, to talk with youth.
- Other**

Sharing Responsibility for Student Development

Use the checklist below to identify and begin determining how to align with school practices and goals regarding learning skill development.

- Attendance:** Strong afterschool attendance can positively impact school attendance; it is important to develop attendance expectations, patterns, and habits of good attendance at all grade levels.
- Organization:** Use homework time to overtly address and build organization skills, such as note taking and time tracking.
- Task persistence:** Use tools, such as time logs, to track persistence and document improvement; share with parents and teachers.
- Test taking:** Skills in test taking, regardless of content, can be taught directly; practice builds confidence and speed.
- Work habits:** Listening, being on time, meeting deadlines, following through, time management, etc. can be explicitly developed through projects, homework time, and procedures throughout the day.
- Communication skills:** Create opportunities for individual and group presentations, group discussions, expressing diverse opinions and views, and building multilingual awareness and skills.
- Working with others:** Create team projects, form diverse groups, give youth practice in giving and receiving criticism, help youth learn to ask for help.
- Creativity and critical thinking:** Ensure that staff ask and encourage questions; have youth explain their thinking; expand opportunities for independent, open-ended work; and establish processes for self-evaluation.
- Decision making and self-governance:** Use projects to emphasize data collection, weighing evidence, forming and expressing opinions, and working independently.



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Partner with Schools

Where does your program stand with respect to these areas of connecting with the school day? Identify steps to move toward stronger collaboration.

	Needs Work	Strong
Contact information	No knowledge of schools the children and youth attend or who staff are.	Readily accessible list of school addresses, Web sites, principals, afterschool liaison, relevant teachers.
Roles, expectations	Afterschool staff and school staff do not meet or discuss programming .	Afterschool and school staff meet regularly; see themselves as a team serving the children; share and discuss goals, activities, and curricula; collaborate on alignment efforts. MOUs in place for joint undertakings.
Data	Afterschool provides school with no data. Schools provide afterschool with no data, or data in unusable form.	Data important to improving services to children and youth are identified and shared, with privacy regulations met, in useful forms. Information may include attendance, English language proficiency, reading and math scores, behavior incidents, special needs, class grades, afterschool performance reports, etc.
Systems	School and afterschool do not share policies or procedures with respect to students or families.	Afterschool and school understand each other's policies and procedures. Afterschool partners with schools for parent outreach and communication.
Relationships	Staff from school and afterschool do not know one another's names and would not recognize one another on the street.	Staff attend each other's events, communicate easily, and respect each other's contributions to youth development.
OTHER		



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Training

On which topics do staff need training?

- Understanding program goals for alignment.
- Seeing themselves as afterschool educators.
- Communicating with teachers and schools.
- Supporting learning during homework time.
- Knowing school content standards.
- Creating project and activity objectives to link with content.
- Understanding and using tools to develop 21st century learning skills and study habits, such as contracts.
- Collecting attendance data by individual.
- Communicating with schools about attendance.
- Using data to plan programming and activities.
- Documenting learning to share with teachers.
- Other

How much time is available, and when, for staff training?

- During orientation.
- During staff meeting time.
- During program breaks.
- In conjunction with schoolteacher professional development.
- At conferences.
- In professional development sessions scheduled during the year.
- Other

Topic	Date	Time	Who participates	Who leads



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