



SAMPLE MATERIAL

Aligning After-School Programs With the School Community

Marshall Elementary School, California

Topic: Increased Learning Time: Beyond the Regular School Day

Practice: Organize Instruction

This document was prepared by the Expanded Collaboratives for Excellence in Learning (ExCEL), a San Francisco Unified School District organization that partners with local agencies such as Mission Graduates to provide after-school programs at sites like Marshall Elementary School. The alignment document includes a quiz and tips for integrating after-school programs into the school community. Program leaders can use the quiz to check on how well their program aligns to the school community and implement the tips as needed.

The three main levels of alignment with the school community are:

1. Interpersonal Bridging—The after-school program has visibility as a support system for students and families.
2. Programmatic Bridging—The after-school program has integrated itself within the school community.
3. Systemic Bridging—The after-school staff understand the school's vision and work to align the after-school program with it.

Both the quiz and tipsheet incorporate these three levels and include important, relevant information for program leaders to consider when working on aligning their program with the school community.

School Community Alignment

QUICK QUIZ

LEVEL 1 Interpersonal Bridging - The after school program has visibility as a support system for students and families.			
1. After school staff have identified and connected with key school site staff (principal, lead teacher, counselors, etc.), and recognize them as resources.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROGRESS
2. After school staff have identified and connected with key organizations in the school community (PTA, school site council, YMCA, mental health, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROGRESS
3. After school staff exhibit a level of professionalism and high standards, allowing school day staff to see them as a valuable and reliable resource.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROGRESS
LEVEL 2 Programmatic Bridging - The after school program has integrated itself within the school community.			
4. An effective communication system provides school day staff with updates on the after school program (e.g. contribution to the school newsletter, weekly school envelope, enrollment lists, after school schedule).	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROGRESS
5. After school staff seek out information, referrals, and resources from the school day (e.g. student referrals from teachers and counselors; student grades, test scores, or reading levels; information from teachers regarding concerns about specific students).	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROGRESS
6. After school program staff work in partnership with the school to support established school events such as family nights, open houses, orientations, and fairs.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROGRESS
7. The after school program is familiar with state academic standards and incorporates learning opportunities to support student achievement in meeting those standards.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROGRESS

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LEVEL 3 Systemic Bridging – The after school staff understand the school's vision and work to align the after school program with it.			
8. After school staff and other service providers meet with school administrators and other school day staff on a regular basis to promote collaboration and alignment and to discuss program updates, needs, and concerns.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROGRESS
9. After school staff solicit feedback from school day teachers and staff through surveys or focus groups regarding how the after school program can best support them.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROGRESS
10. After school program leadership attends and provides itself as a resource to school day meetings such as faculty meetings, Coordinated Services Team, Student Assistance Program, and Student Success Team meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROGRESS
11. The after school program focus is aligned with the school's themes, vision, climate, behavior plan, and academic focus.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROGRESS
12. The after school program is familiar with or is participating in school leadership committees that develop the school site plan or is on the school site council.	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROGRESS

School Community Alignment

TIPS

TIPS

Level 1: The after school program has visibility as a support system for students and families.

- ❑ **Get to know all school staff.** Drop by to see the teachers, principal, secretary, and others when they're least busy (prep periods, lunch, before or after school).
- ❑ **Make yourself available.** If possible, set up a desk and work during the regular school day in a place that's centrally located and has signage. Keep your door open at all times to students, families, and school day staff. Because school staff are often busy or in the classroom, they need to be able to drop in at their convenience to speak with you.
- ❑ **Educate the community about the after school program.** Draft a newsletter or brochure. Include the mission, goals, objectives, information on how the after school program is funded, staff, program classes, program events, and partners. Send out after school rosters so everyone is aware of which students are enrolled.
- ❑ **Invite school day staff.** Invite them to attend after school events and parties. Hire them to teach after school or to train after school staff.
- ❑ **Provide appreciation** to teachers who let the after school program use their rooms. Also thank principals, custodians, security, and secretaries for their support.

Level 2: The after school program has integrated itself within the school community.

- ❑ **Get involved.** Be visible in the halls and yard and help out with supervision when possible. Help to plan school events like parent nights, school concerts, or orientations.
- ❑ **Set up systems of communication.** Establish a regular meeting time (e.g. the first Tuesday of every month at 10:00 am) with the site coordinator, principal, and other important members of the school community (see "How to Create an After School Program Leadership

Team" in Chapter 1). Create form letters to inquire about individual students and share concerns.

- ❑ **Attend and participate in faculty and/or grade-level meetings.** Keep all staff up to date on your accomplishments and events. You can also take the opportunity to recruit staff members for events and positions.

Level 3: The after school staff understand the school's vision and work to align the after school program with it.

- ❑ **Establish after school mission and goals with school day staff.** Meet with the principal, teachers, and other key members of the school day community to establish the after school program's mission and goals (see "How to Create an After School Program Leadership Team" in Chapter 1). Together, ensure that the after school program both supports the school day, and also supplements it with things that the regular school day does not offer.
- ❑ **Get school day staff feedback.** Host focus group meetings to solicit feedback from school day staff. Send out a survey to teachers to find out how the after school program can better serve the school and student needs.
- ❑ **Participate in school leadership committees.** Get involved in any school leadership committees that are shaping the school's overall vision. Help to decide how the after school program can be incorporated into the school site plan or join the school site council.
- ❑ **Collaborate with student support services** provided by counselors, school psychologists, mentor programs, student advisors, school nurses, case managers, and parent liaisons. Participate in the Student Success Team (SST) or Student Assistance Program (SAP). Become aware of student needs and provide resources.