Family Engagement and Middle Grades Transitions: The Role of Afterschool Programs

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Youth Program Quality Assessment

**ENGAGEMENT**
- Planning
- Choice
- Reflection

**INTERACTION**
- Belonging
- Collaboration
- Leadership
- Adult Partners

**SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT**
- Warm Welcome
- Active Engagement
- Encouragement

**SAFE ENVIRONMENT**
- Emotional Safety
- Healthy Environment
- Emergency Preparedness
- Accommodating Environment
- Nourishment

**Youth Voice in Governance**
**Professional Learning Community**
Charge from Michigan DOE:

Build an intervention for 270 afterschool programs to support middle grades transitions through family engagement.

• Here’s why:
  – AS programs have staff dedicated to family engagement and are focused on transitions
  – AS programs recruit and serve at-risk kids
  – AS program models incorporate school performance data, school staff, community based organizations, families
1. School Advocacy and Alignment
2. Academic Socialization
3. School-Community Connections
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Invitations</th>
<th>Intake Meeting</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
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### 1. School Advocacy and Alignment
- AS staff support family monitoring/advocacy during school day
- AS staff access grades, behavior, and attendance and monitor/advocate
- Curriculum and prof. dev. communication between school-day and AS teachers for expanded learning

### 2. Academic Socialization
- Build knowledge of careers and education pathways and set short term goals/plans
- 21st Century skills assessment: youth self-assess; teachers and family identify strengths
- Youth-led conferences on plans and performance

### 3. School & Community Connections
- AS staff support communication between school staff and families for networking, parent voice and parent education
- AS staff support communication including school sports, school clubs, community clubs and other opportunities

### Outputs
- More frequent monitoring and advocacy
- Greater family knowledge of school performance
- More time on academic content during AS
- Youth skill assessment
- Plans for education pathways and careers
- Youth-led conference presentation
- Communication between parents, teachers and AS staff
- Networking events for HS activities
Design Principles

• Rooted in positive youth development\textsuperscript{1}
• Provides for experiential support & substitution\textsuperscript{2}
• Impacts multiple levels of systems\textsuperscript{3}
• Identifies outcomes
• Feasible in 21\textsuperscript{st} Century Community Learning Centers
• Specifies core experiences and surface procedures\textsuperscript{4}
• Validated by:
  – Literature review\textsuperscript{5}
  – Client review and context fit
  – Stakeholder demand
  – Data & information
## Design Principle: Feasibility & Context Fit

### Prevalence of Aligned Practices

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Core Practices</th>
<th>Program Quality Scorecard Indicators</th>
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<td><strong>1. School Advocacy and Alignment</strong></td>
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</table>
| AS staff support family monitoring/advocacy during school day | 57% 97% Three-way communication  
 AS well informed about child’s learning successes and challenges in school  
 AS helped family get to know the school and school day teachers better |
| AS staff access grades, behavior, and attendance and monitor/advocate | 56% Receive student progress reports from school-day teachers during the current year |
| Curriculum and PD communication between school-day and AS teachers for expanded learning | 91% 67% AS knows academic content of school day on a week-to-week basis  
 AS discusses linkages with school day and/or progress of students |
| **2. Academic Socialization**                       | Students will work on group projects over 5+ sessions  
 Task complexity increases over time |
| **3. School & Community Connections**               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| AS staff support communication between school staff and families for networking, parent voice and parent education | 51% 13%  
 AS and Family discuss child’s progress in the program each semester  
 Family recruited to participate in and/or lead sessions at the afterschool program |
| AS staff support communication including school sports, school clubs, community clubs and other opportunities | 48% 32% Community service, service learning or civic participation  
 Community-led sessions or field trips |
Design Principle: Specify Core Experiences
Core Youth Experiences

1. School Advocacy and Alignment
   • Increased talk about school expectations and performance
   • Increased advocacy/monitoring experience during school
   • Increased active-participatory time-on-content

2. Academic Socialization
   • 21\textsuperscript{st} Century skill concepts and self-assessment
   • Goal thinking about careers and district pathways
   • Baseline goal discussion and youth-led conference\textsuperscript{7} with parents

3. School & Community Connections
   • Exposure/selection of sports/clubs for high school\textsuperscript{8}
Design Principle: Stakeholder Demand
Focus on Family Engagement in Program Improvement Plans

- 30% of plans focused on family engagement
- Examples:
  - Afterschool Program will establish monthly newsletter to better inform parents and community.
  - Staff will communicate positive feedback to parents via phone (weekly or monthly).
  - Ask parents to volunteer or to speak at afterschool session.
  - Continue to seek community sponsors for our monthly family nights to highlight both our program and the assistance that individuals, companies, businesses, and clubs give to us. Engage parents through community involvement opportunities and fun hands-on family events.
  - Survey Parents. Meet with staff. Meet with PTO. Organize and planning parent involvement opportunities.
  - Update webpage regularly. Each class create and direct a youtube or website video.
Design Principle: Identify Outcomes

• Its complicated – where and how do effects occur
  – Jingle Jangle Jungle
  – Proximal effects... Non-cognitive?
  – Transfer
  – Compliers / Needers

• Three Other Hypothetical Effect Pathways
Influences on School Success - Main Effects

- Family Setting
- School Setting
- Afterschool Setting

- Parent
- AS Staff
- School Staff

Youth T1
Youth T2
Academic Advocacy – Moderation Effect

School Setting

- Parent
- AS Staff
- Youth T1
- Youth T2

Family Setting

Afterschool Setting

School Staff
Academic Socialization – Reciprocal Effect

Afterschool Setting

Parent

AS Staff

Youth T1

Youth T2

Family Setting

School Setting

School Staff
School Community – Cross Level Effect
Work Samples

1. School Advocacy and Alignment
   EX: Nashville - Data Systems

2. Academic Socialization
   EX: Chicago - Skills Assessment
   EX: Careers Curricula

3. School-Community Connections
Nashville Data Systems

Owned by School System

SMS Program Management (MNPS/NAZA)

Part of the SMS where afterschool programs are set up and students are enrolled into the programs
• Information on Program Provider, Location, Staff, Funding, etc
• Dual entry of student information not required by program providers

Operational System where all student information is entered by schools i.e.:
• Student Demographics
• Contact Information
• Grades
• Behavior Info
• School staff have access to afterschool program enrollment info for individual students

MNPS Chancery SMS

MNPS Data Warehouse

System that gathers data from many data systems (can be internal or external to district) and is used by NAZA for:
• Reporting
• Data Analysis
• Performance Measurement
• Impact Measurement

Owned by Metro Government

Role Based Security

Needed data is exported outside MNPS firewall
• Buffer to protect MNPS data
• Direct linkage of external users to MNPS systems is not required
• Only data required by NAZA and program staff is sent
• Participation data is received and sent back to data warehouse to be made available in the MNPS data warehouse within 24 hours
• Basic reporting for programs (i.e. ADA, attendance submission verification) available directly from NAZA database

NZA External Database

Roster Information

Attendance Info

Internet page designed for site staff to take attendance for the classes they are assigned
• Program instructors only see the rosters for students they teach
• Program Instructors view directory information for students
• Participation data is collected and sent to the external database

NZA Program Class Roster (Web Form)
21st Century Skills Assessment

**FUNDAMENTALS**
- Appearance
- Timeliness
- Oratory/ Speaking

**WORK ETHIC/ CHARACTER**
- Attitude
- Accountability/ Integrity
- Self Control
- Ambition/ Initiative

**PROBLEM SOLVING**
- Supervision
- Procedure/ Rule Following
- Problem Solving Approach
- Information Management

**INTERPERSONAL**
- Verbal Communication
- Active Listening
- Feedback
- Teamwork

**COMPUTER**
- Computer Literacy

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**DOMAIN** | **3 = EXCEEDS STANDARD/ EXPECTATION**
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**Self Control**
Can suppress own reaction and remedy difficult individuals or situations with a calm and non-defensive manner. Keeps personal matters from interfering and maintains top performance.

**Information Management**
Can identify, acquire, and analyze information across disciplines to solve a problem. Can extract and understand information from charts and graphs. Recognizes information most relevant to a situation. Can organize information effectively. Seeks opportunities to learn new information.
Career Education – Examples of Curriculum

• Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID)
  – Grades 4-12
  – http://www.avid.org

• Citizen Schools
  – Grades 6-8
  – http://www.citizenschools.org/

• GEAR UP
  – Middle and high school

• Talent Search
  – Middle and high school
Works Cited

7. Youth-led conferences
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See the full report for the *Youth Program Quality Intervention Study* at
www.cypq.org/ypqi