

## **Time, Learning, Academic Achievement, School Success, and Healthy Development: Developing Program Configurations with Relevant Ideas and Terminology**

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### This Tool's Purposes:

1. To extend, expand, accelerate, students' academic learning during out-of-school time to improve learning, social competence development, academic achievement, and overall school success
2. To provide learning supports and instructional resources to teachers and instructors, enhancing their efficacy, effectiveness, and retention, by connecting out-of-school learning with classroom learning
3. To improve students' mastery of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities
4. To engage more students, facilitating their readiness for post-secondary education, including career and technical education, while simultaneously preventing in-grade retention and dropouts
5. To develop new systems that support educators, expanding the boundaries of school improvement and ensuring that no adult works alone, especially teachers.

### **Multiple Kinds of Learning During Out-of-School Time**

#### Extended Learning:

Formal and informal, planned and unplanned learning that occur outside of school (during out-of-school time). Extended learning includes explicit learning and expanded learning.

- ❑ ***Explicit learning in extended day programs*** (usually called after-school programs) is essentially more school during non-school hours. It typically replicates school instruction and training. It includes coaching, tutoring, direct instruction, subject matter enrichment, and academic remediation. Examples: Tutoring and homework assistance during after school programs and in community youth development agencies; academic interventions and response to intervention protocols.

#### Expanded Learning:

Provides important alternatives to classroom teachers' customary instructional strategies.

- ❑ ***Embedded academic learning*** in which students' favorite activities are harnessed for their instructional power. For example, a basketball player learns geometry by applying it to her/his performance. An aspiring musician increases his/her literacy and language skills by reading about music theory and marketing.
- ❑ ***Community-based, project-centered learning*** whereby students apply, test, and utilize academic subject matter to frame and solve important problems and capitalize on timely opportunities. For example, students apply science content as they solve a

pollution problem, and they apply writing and analytical skills when they write newsletters and newspaper articles about pollution and their work to prevent it.

- ❑ ***Community-based service learning*** in which students volunteer and gain preparation for civic engagement and democratic citizenship. They serve while learning and learn while serving in community organizations, business and corporations, and neighborhood agencies. Students often gain new career awareness while increasing their curiosity and motivation to learn academic subject matter and succeed in school.
- ❑ ***Technology-driven and –assisted learning*** (“e-learning”) in which students rely on information age technologies such as computers, cell phones, MP3 players, and the digital mass media (e.g., global television). This learning may be self-directed; peer-assisted and –governed; team-based, and social network-facilitated (local, regional, national, and global networks consisting of diverse learners of all ages).
- ❑ ***Socio-emotional learning*** in which students develop personal-social responsibility, emotional control, social competence for problem solving and positive interactions with others, and conflict resolution skills and strategies. This kind of learning can be offered in special social emotional learning programs or it can be embedded in other kinds of programs (e.g., sport programs, arts programs, music programs, drug prevention programs, non-violence programs).
- ❑ ***Blended learning*** in which students are treated to powerful combinations of e-learning, group-team learning, personalized learning, and conventional instruction. Blended learning takes advantage of students’ interest in internet technologies, including their ability to “research” problems on the net.

#### Accelerated Learning:

Learning is accelerated when any or all of the following three conditions are evident. (1) Formal instructions exceed a given norm or standard, perhaps including alternative, more sophisticated learning strategies not typically available to all students. (2) The pace of learning and instruction is more rapid than the norm, and it is determined by the student(s) and/or by external assessments of their progress and proficiency. (3) The academic content presented to, and then mastered by, the student exceeds conventional norms and standards.

The age-graded structures, standards, and norms of conventional schooling provide a basis for comparison. Quite simply, academic content once taught (and restricted) to students in higher grades and in higher levels of education (e.g., university) is presented to, and learned by, students earlier in their educational careers, i.e., at earlier grades and levels of the educational hierarchy. Accelerated learning is facilitated by alternative kinds of learning strategies encompassed under expanded learning, and it also is facilitated by extended learning—outside the school and beyond the regular school day. Accelerated learning achieves its potential when it is connected to school learning.

#### Connected Learning:

Requires deliberate linkages between classroom learning and instruction and out-of-school time learning and instruction. The aim is to support students and teachers alike by providing them with additional, alternative learning and instructional resources. Connected learning's import is evident when one or more of the above learning strategies proves to be pivotal in the teacher's ability to achieve success with one or more students. Solid communications strategies and protocols are needed to make it happen.

### **Alternative Program Configurations**

- ❑ ***School-based, extended day programs***—basically lengthening the day and providing more school in what used to be out-of-school time
- ❑ ***School-based, after school programs***—Academic activities that proceed beyond tutoring and “drill and skill exercises” are dovetailed with fun, engaging youth development activities. Because kids vote with their feet, these latter activities are critical to the success of these programs; and often are used as incentives and rewards for academic work.
- ❑ ***Community-based out-of-school time programs***—Although these programs offered by Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCAs, etc. often are stand-alone entities, they achieve their potential when they are linked to schools and connected to classrooms. School linkages and classroom connections depend on school-family-community coordinators and linkage protocols, which are jointly designed by teachers.
- ❑ ***Home-based out-of-school time programs***—One or more parents volunteer for program cooperatives. As with community-based programs, they may stand-alone entities or school-linked (with coordinators and protocols).
- ❑ ***School-and-work programs, including apprenticeships and internships***—A centerpiece in career and technical education, these special programs have unlimited potential for project-based learning. As with the other kinds of learning, teacher involvement and leadership are pivotal resources.
- ❑ ***Special summer enrichment experiences and summer camps.***

### **Toward Digital Portfolios**

The above programs and the variety of learning experiences they provide stand as a powerful complement to school-based learning. They indicate the limitations of the long-standing idea that schools are the only place where important academic learning occurs.

In this perspective, the conventional report card is limited. Digital portfolios, which contain all relevant report card information and much more, are the order of the day. These portfolios will be special resources for college and job applications.