

Strategic Learning Initiatives: Extended Time

Research by Marzano (2003) estimates that students have approximately 1,008 instructional hours during the course of a school year, assuming a school calendar of 180 days and approximately 5.6 hours per day devoted to instruction in all academic areas. For students who are well below grade level and in schools with poor student performance, additional time in the school day is needed to close achievement gaps. An additional one-hour of time per school day would add 180 instructional hours or 30 instructional days to the school year. This would significantly increase time for core academic subjects, targeted academic intervention for students, and enrichment.

One use of this additional time will be for the implementation of Success Time, a key instructional intervention and master scheduling strategy of the FIP model. As stated earlier, within the FIP model, one period per day (30 minutes) is set aside to re-teach or enrich a skill that was taught previously. Groups are formed on the basis of results of the FIP skill assessment administered according to the FIP Calendar of Skills.

Specific after-school activities at the project school will be tailored to the needs of each school community. For families with unique parental needs, after-school programs will become a critical area within this project's model. Extended opportunities will be created for learning beyond the end of the school day so that students and parents/families can take part in enriching academic experiences and a myriad of after school programs that are aligned with their personal needs. Such programs will be designed and delivered by faculty, students, and community partner organizations. These programs will enable students, parents, teachers, and administrators to collaborate with one another on teams in workshops, which will explore how learning can be enhanced and enlivened. All of the parent programs will emphasize how parents can support students in ways that go beyond teaching just the basic skills to also include the acquisition of knowledge that is truly meaningful to their children. Through this project, families would learn how to support student learning at home and to develop an additional understanding of how they can inspire student learning.

The School Leadership Team will determine the best approach for each school during the needs assessment and action planning phases. A critical aspect of this determination will be the availability and effectiveness of the schools' existing afterschool programs, and the willingness of the school to extend learning time for students and collaboration time for teachers. SLI will work closely with the school in identifying and implementing effective methods for extending learning time, and will provide a variety of programmatic options for making the best use of this time.

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