



Beyond the Classroom

What Principals Want When It Comes to
Afterschool and Summer Learning

2017 K-5 Principal Survey Report



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS
&
AFTERSCHOOL AND SUMMER LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER,
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INTRODUCTION

Decades of research has confirmed that children and youth who participate in expanded learning opportunities such as afterschool and summer learning programs experience improved academic, social and emotional, and health and wellness outcomes. (Little, Wimer, and Weiss, 2008) This has led to a widely held belief among educators, parents and policy makers that out-of-school-time (OST) programs are a basic element of a comprehensive education. However, just as more educators are relying on OST programs to support in-school learning, there is still a great need to establish quality standards and best practice models to increase programmatic impact, unify principals and OST providers in the delivery of afterschool and summer programs, and understand more fully the expanded learning field so that this critical component of the educational system may be best utilized by those that need it and understood by those that fund and support it.

This report summarizes findings from a national survey of elementary school principals conducted in February 2017. This research was carried out in partnership between the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the College of Charleston's Afterschool and Summer Learning Resource Center with funding provided by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. Survey efforts targeted (1) activities offered in afterschool and summer programming, (2) program operations and management, (3) OST-school partnerships, (4) resources and funding, (5) program quality and perspectives on student outcomes, and (6) challenges in OST programming. Supplemental questions gauged principals' interest in OST advocacy efforts and involvement in regional and national networks to improve quality.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

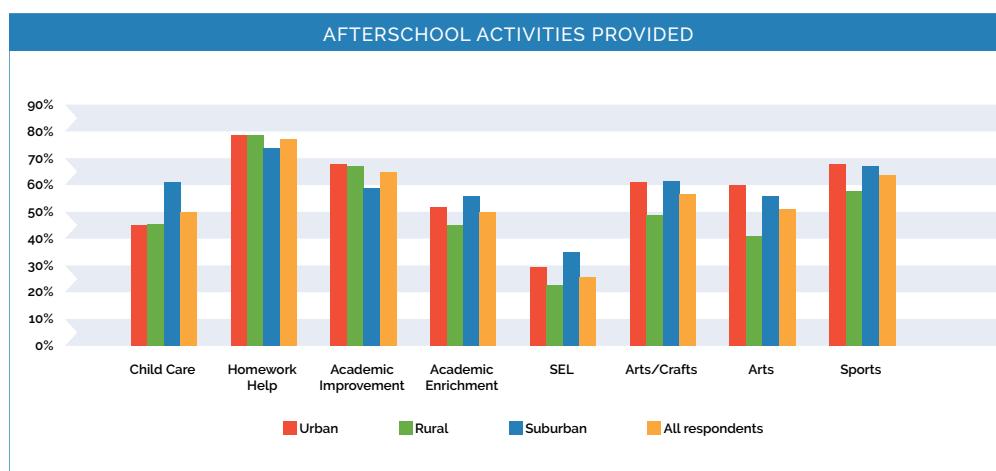
1,217 elementary school principals, representing 38 states across the country, responded to the survey (see figure A). Forty percent (n=488) of respondents were from rural or small town communities, 31% (n=376) were from suburban communities, and 29% (n=352) were from urban or city communities. Descriptive data regarding principals' student body characteristics are provided in Table 1.

The electronic survey, distributed through the online survey platform, Qualtrics, consisted of twenty-five quantitative and two qualitative questions targeting the current state of principals' afterschool and summer programming as well as their perceptions of needs and challenges Appendix I provides a complete list of survey questions. Quantitative data is presented in this report; qualitative data is presented in a companion report.

Table 1. Descriptives of principal-reported student body characteristics.

	n	Min	Max	M	SD				
% Eligible for free or reduced-price lunch				1217	0	100	49	32.2	
% English Language Learners	1216	0		100	11	18.7			
% Students who qualify for special education services				1215	0	100	17	13.9	
% White/Caucasian	1214	0		100	62	33.5			
% Black/African American				1213	0	100	18	25.3	
% Hispanic/Latino	1215	0		99	11	18			

Figure A. Number of survey respondents per state.



Secondary Analysis by Type of Community

In order to understand more fully afterschool and summer programming within various settings, secondary analyses focused on respondents among each of the three types of communities (urban/city, rural/small town, and suburban). This was done to uncover how OST programs function within each setting as well as reveal challenges and needs that may be specific to one type of community over another.

Table 2 provides data on the student body characteristics as well as the racial and ethnic composition of student body populations within each community. Data indicate that urban and rural communities are similar in the number of children living in poverty (66%; 53%), but urban communities show the greatest need in terms of children living in poverty, percent of English Language Learners, and children receiving special education services compared to rural and suburban communities. With regard to racial and ethnic composition, urban communities have a greater variety of student ethnicities compared to rural and suburban communities which consist of mostly white student populations.