To build a strong school culture and climate and address the widening achievement and opportunity gaps, principals are increasingly working with after-school and summer learning programs to ensure student success.

Key areas for principal action include:

- Promote a continuum of learning and opportunity
- Champion after-school programs and needed resources
- Support quality after-school and summer learning

**STRATEGIES**

**Expand the vision of learning to include high-quality experiences both in- and out-of-school.**

- Demonstrate the belief that the school’s mission, vision and plan encompass learning that occurs during and beyond the traditional school day.
- Articulate to all stakeholders the value of learning opportunities that occur after school, whether they are school-based, school-linked or community-based.
- Consider after-school opportunities as added learning time and a complement to, not an extension of, the school day.
- Offer learning opportunities in after-school that are different from, but connected to, those in the school day.
- Articulate a continuum of services and supports for students.

**Act as a catalyst in the community to develop quality after-school programs.**

- Use the credibility of the principal to advocate for after-school programs for students.
- Understand after-school funding streams and policy issues.
- Keep the public and policymakers focused on the need for a continuum of services that supports students’ learning beyond the school day.
- Promote and facilitate partnerships among schools, providers and communities that secure adequate, sustainable funding for after-school programs.
Support linkages, connections and relationships between the school day and after-school learning that ensure program content meets community, school and student needs.

- Extend the school's culture of adult learning to after-school staff members.
- Ensure that the school's learning and core academic standards are connected to activities in after-school programs.
- Connect professional development opportunities for after-school and school-day staff members to ensure consistency in standards of teaching and learning and to encourage relationship-building among staff members.
- Collaborate with stakeholders to create learning opportunities for students beyond the traditional school day.
- Facilitate the development of an after-school plan that identifies and addresses the needs of students and the community.
- Connect students with a diverse group of role models who will help ensure their success.
- Encourage families to support and participate in after-school learning.

Work with after-school directors to evaluate after-school programs to ensure they achieve defined outcomes.

- Define short- and long-term outcomes for after-school programs collaboratively with the program director.
- Use data to ensure that children most in need have access to after-school.
- Hold programs accountable to expectations jointly developed with the program director.
- Ensure that after-school programs are well managed and employ sound fiscal practices.
- Create formal and informal communication strategies between the principal and the program director and school and after-school staff members.
- Use data and evaluation results to document program impact and make the case for quality after-school programs with school, community and political leaders.