

---

# Linking Summer Programs to the School Year through Academic Standards

---

Jenell Holstead, Ph.D.

Leslie Jenkins, M.S.

Megan Weikel, M.A.

**Center for Evaluation & Education Policy**

**Indiana University**

---

## Workshop Overview

- Discuss importance of linking summer programming with the school year
- Describe challenges often faced by summer programs in creating these links
- Brainstorm key ways to link summer programming with the school year and provide effective examples
- Demonstrate how to find academic standards for your state and discuss how to utilize standards to plan program offerings

## Defining “Links to the School Day”

### **Being linked to the school day means that...**

out-of-school-time programs *support* and *enhance* learning that occurs during the regular school day/year.

### **Being linked to the school day does not mean that...**

programs duplicate what is done during the regular school day/year.

## Examples of “Links to the School Day”

### **Activity Alignment**

- Tutoring sessions are provided
- Other enrichment activities are intentionally planned to complement the school year activities

### **Teacher Involvement**

- Summer program staff communicate with teachers regarding school year academic progress
- Teachers directly implement programming

## Examples of “Links to the School Day”

### **Resources are Shared**

- Program has access to ample school space
- Program staff are provided resources to engage with teachers during school year/summer (mailbox, school email address)
- Student data are made accessible to program staff

### **Opportunities for Interaction Exist**

- Program staff are invited to attend school faculty meetings
- Meetings with principals are scheduled and occur

## Why is Linking Summer Programs to the School Year Important?

- Helps youth reach their academic goals
- Helps schools' reach their academic goals and objectives
- Reduces likelihood of providing duplicate services
- Helps increase family interaction with schools
- Helps staff know participants' academic abilities, personal situations, and interventions already attempted
- Prevents summer learning loss!

## **DISCUSSION:**

**What are the challenges to establishing links to the school day faced by summer programs?**

## Challenges Observed in Linking Summer Programs to the School Year

1. **Purpose of program may be misunderstood by school staff**
2. **Sometimes provided little school space to offer program**
3. **Difficulty obtaining student-level data**
4. **Have little access to communicate with school day staff**
  - School staff not accessible during the summer
  - Not provided school mailbox/email address
5. **Difficulty recruiting teachers to participate (even indirectly) for the program**

## Why Establish Links?

The most effective out-of-school-time programs directly and purposefully connect the program to the school day.

*(Policy Studies Associates, 1995)*

Aligning the out-of-school-time program with the regular school day is necessary to improve academic performance.

*(U.S. Department of Education, 2009)*

**So...Summer Programs must overcome these challenges!!**

## But how?

## What can Summer Programs do to Link with the School Day?

1. Activity Offerings
2. Communication with School Staff
3. Marketing the Program
4. Sharing Resources

### Communication and Marketing are not the same...

- Communication occurs individually with school personnel
- Marketing involves efforts to ensure that the all school staff are aware of the program

# Small Group Activity

## Instructions:

In groups, use the questions provided to guide a discussion regarding the topic that the presenters have provided you. Talk about strategies that you have used in your programs or have seen others do.

Afterwards, we will share ideas with the entire group.

## Program Offerings

### **1. How do you utilize school curriculum during the summer?**

How do you know which curriculum is used during the year?

How do you obtain such curriculum?

### **2. Do you know what the school/district learning standards are?**

How did you find this information out?

Give examples of how you utilize this information to plan activities.

## Additional Ideas for Program Offerings

- Offer tutoring, credit recovery, summer school opportunities
- Include academic concepts in multiple program offerings
- Inquire about curriculum and research it
- Look at school's website or state Department of Education's website for school information on progress/goals
- Provide program staff copies of the academic standards
- Require lesson plans be created (and be linked to the academic standards)
- Plan field trips based on topics covered during the regular school day/year

## Communication with School Staff

- 1. How do school personnel meet your program staff?**
- 2. In what ways do program staff communicate with teachers about student performance?**
- 3. Are teachers actively recruited to work for your summer program? How so?**

## Additional Ideas for Communication with School Staff

- Schedule a meeting!
- Pay school personnel to provide in-service trainings for you and your staff
- Communicate with teachers prior to the end of the school year/after the next school year begins
- Use a formal method of communication about student performance
- Ask to observe classrooms before school year ends
- Bring dessert to the teacher's lounge at lunchtime during first week of school
- Survey the teachers to get information on what would be helpful during summer programming or to get information on students to target
- Inform teachers of opportunities to participate in program

## Other Ideas for Linking to the School Day: Marketing Program and Sharing Resources

- Develop teacher newsletter to disseminate at beginning of school year (can even be created by students!)
- Provide program fliers/handouts to be displayed in front office
- Request bulletin board space
- Have information about your program included on the school's website
- Donate extra materials/supplies that are not needed by your program to the school at the end of the summer
- Ask your program staff to attend large school events and help out
- Determine if your staff have knowledge/skill sets that would be beneficial for school staff's professional development needs

## Where can I find more ideas?

### **Institute of Education Sciences Practice Guide:**

Structuring Out-of-School Time to Improve Academic Achievement

[http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/ost\\_pg\\_072109.pdf](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/ost_pg_072109.pdf)

## In Summary....

### Ways to link with the school year includes:

1. Activity Offerings
2. Communication with School Staff
3. Marketing the Program
4. Sharing Resources

All of these require collaboration with the school....

But if schools refuse to collaborate, focus on:

**Activity Offerings**

# How do we ensure activities align with the regular school day?

## Use the academic standards...

What are Academic Standards?

- Public statements about what students should know and be able to do
- Are typically broken down by subject area and grade

All states (except Iowa) have these, and some cities even have their own (Boston, New York, LA, Denver, El Paso, and Cincinnati)

If you can't find Academic Standards for your state/city, visit [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org) for common standards across states

## How can I find the Academic Standards?

- 1) Go to your state's Department of Education website
- 2) Search
  - “Academic Standards”
  - “Content Standards”
  - ”Curriculum Standards”
  - “Standards of Learning”
- 3) Search by grade and subject area

## How do I interpret the information?

- 1) Standards are categorized by grade level
  - Keep in mind that content may overlap across numerous grade levels
- 2) Standards are categorized by content area
  - Could be very general, or very specific
- 3) Standards are generally listed in the order that they are taught in school
  - Easier to master concepts taught earlier in school year
  - More difficult concepts taught later in school year

# Small Group Activity:

## Tie a Summer Activity to the Academic Standards

### Instructions:

On the note card provided to you...

- 1) Select a grade level/age group to be served
- 2) Write a brief description of a recreational activity you've provided during the summer

Next, pass your note card to the left...

- 3) Write down one academic standard which could be incorporated into this activity
- 4) Write a brief description of the revised activity which incorporates this standard

Rinse and Repeat!

# Linking Summer Programs to the School Year through Academic Standards

---

Jenell Holstead, Ph.D.

Megan Weikel, M.A.

Leslie Jenkins, M.S.

**Center for Evaluation & Education Policy**  
**Indiana University**

---