



FEATURED *resource*

AFTERSCHOOL CURRICULUM GUIDES TO MATH

www.sedl.org/afterschool/guide/math/

This free online database of math curricula reviews is an initiative of the Program in Education, Afterschool and Resiliency (PEAR) at Harvard University and the National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning at SEDL. It is designed to help you locate and make informed choices about high-quality math resources to enrich your afterschool program.



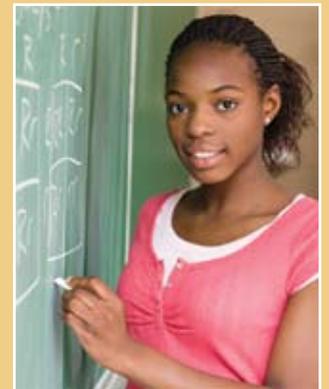
AFTERSCHOOL *news*

Collecting "Good" Data for Your Evaluation

An afterschool leader's job involves compiling attendance records, parent surveys, behavior reports, report cards, and standardized test scores. Although it might seem that you are simply amassing paperwork with these records, you are actually engaged in the important task of collecting data. "An evaluation is only as good as the data it contains," explains Zena Rudo, a project director with the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory who has performed evaluations on afterschool programs for the National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning.

What can you do to make sure you're collecting "good," or meaningful, data? As the current school year comes to a close and you begin to think about fall programming, it helps to remember that the same adage that applies to planning an evaluation goes for collecting the data: start early and get all of the players involved. "If you're supposed to collect data on parent contact and involvement, you're not going to be able to remember what happened at the beginning of the semester or the school year. So, ask your staff to make notes on parent attendance at afterschool events as well as their own efforts to contact parents as they happen. Your numbers will be much more accurate if you do it as it happens," says Rudo. She also recommends that program directors hold training sessions so staff can make sure data collection instruments like attendance forms, parent comment forms, and other records are completed correctly.

If your data collection involves getting feedback from people who interact with your program, consider the tone and language of the surveys you use. For example, a survey for parents will probably have a different tone than one given to day-school teachers. If some of your students' families speak limited English, try to make arrangements to have surveys translated. Finally, be sure to go to a variety of sources for feedback on your program. "If you want survey data on your afterschool program's impact on students, you want to survey afterschool instructors, day school teachers, parents, and the students themselves," explains Rudo.



"An evaluation is only as good as the data it contains."

ZENA RUDO
project director, SEDL

The National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning helps state education agencies and local practitioners develop high-quality programs for academic enrichment as well as youth development activities.



"Data is now my friend!"

STEVEN VILLANO

Cooperative for Afterschool Enrichment (CASE)

HOUSTON, TX

Steven Villano used to hate data. As special events coordinator with the Cooperative for Afterschool Enrichment (CASE) for the Harris County Department of Education in Texas, he helps compile and use data from the monthly reports his program collects from its 21st Century Community Learning Center afterschool sites.

Villano began to have a change of heart about that four-lettered word, data, when his colleague, Tori Greig, developed a monthly report that presented the data in a way that told a story. Essentially a spreadsheet, the monthly report is created from data collected from Harris County's afterschool sites and shows at a glance the extent to which afterschool sites are meeting their goals. For example, if there are 90 students enrolled but the goal is 100, afterschool leaders may want to consider increasing enrollment. If, out of the 90 enrolled students, there is an average daily attendance of 65, they will probably want to think about increasing student participation.

Villano says that although he still may not love data, "I now see it as relevant and valuable to the bottom line—which is providing more students and their parents with quality afterschool programs. Data is now my friend!"

IN YOUR *words*

Some afterschool programs don't operate through the last day of school. How late in the school year do you think an afterschool program should continue?

- An afterschool program only needs to operate until spring testing is finished.
- Programs should continue until the last day of school. Students enjoy it, and many need the safe haven.
- Afterschool programs should continue through summer in addition to being offered after the regular school day.
- Afterschool programs should be offered during school holidays as well.

To participate in this survey and view results, go to www.sedl.org/cgi-bin/mysql/afterschool/survey200705.cgi.

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NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP FOR QUALITY AFTERSCHOOL LEARNING

at the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory



DATA COLLECTION *tip*

Including Students in Your Data Collection

Afterschool is supposed to be all about the students, but students are not always involved in data collection and evaluation as much as they can be. Students are great sources of information. Ask them for feedback on the afterschool program, why they come or don't come, and what types of activities they prefer. Their opinions can really improve your program.

Do you have a training tip you would like to share? E-mail us at afterwords@sedl.org with "training tip" in the subject line.



ANNOUNCEMENT

Registration for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers 2007 Summer Institute is now open. The Summer Institute will take place in Miami, Florida, July 17–19. For more information, go to www.sei2003.com/21stcentury/.

EVENTS *calendar*

May 2–3 Success in Afterschool: Increase Your Odds
LAS VEGAS, NV

May 8–9 The After-School Institute's Third Annual
Eastern Regional Conference on After-School
BALTIMORE, MD

For more events, visit our calendar at www.sedl.org/afterschool/training/calendar.html.