

Alignment Initiative of Seattle Public Schools

THE ALIGNMENT INITIATIVE

Alignment is a framework that guides how schools, school-based after-school programs, families, and communities work collectively to support the academic success and thriving of children and youth. It is also a tool to ensure that schools and after-school programs complement the teaching and learning happening during the core school day. The Alignment Initiative carries out this vision in aligned after school programs, 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CLCs), and wellness centers throughout the Seattle School District.

The Seattle School District's Office for Community Learning leads the program. Experienced community organizations partner with the schools to operate aligned after-school programs in school sites. **Program partners** include YMCA, Seattle Parks and Recreation, Camp Fire USA, Boys & Girls Clubs, Tiny Tots, and Powerful Schools. The Alignment vision is guided by the **Learning Partners** oversight group, including representatives of Seattle Public Schools, School's Out Washington, SOAR, *helping kids reach for the sky*, City of Seattle, King County, Camp Fire USA, and Seattle Parks and Recreation.



CORE OUTPUTS

- 90 current school-based after-school providers and schools (elementary and middle) plus four middle school wellness centers are currently engaged in alignment. Includes fifteen CLCs serving nineteen schools.
- Close to 10,000 children and youth served annually by aligned after-school programs
- Over 125,000 hours of supplemental standards-based education is provided each year after school
- Over 500 after-school program staff and SPS school staff trained in how to support learning after-school.
- Studies have found that middle school students who are engaged in an after-school program are more likely to have higher attendance and engagement in school. After-school is an incentive for daily attendance.
- According to the Evaluation Report of the Middle School After School Activities Program for the 2001-2002 school year, over 50% of middle school students in Seattle are being served via this program

IMPACT

- Increased math, reading, and test scores
- Higher attendance in core school day, fewer disciplinary actions
- Increased community awareness of and support for the role of after-school

Alignment is GROWING and EXPANDING to include wellness centers at middle schools and clinics at high schools. The concept is also growing beyond the boundaries of Seattle; Seattle's Alignment model is considered a national standard, and has been identified as a best practice in national publications.

Alignment is an INVESTMENT. Alignment brings key ingredients to the school community, and these ingredients produce direct results. The School District invests in alignment through providing in-kind space for programming. In return, aligned programs invest in schools by providing:

- Quality training that increases support of individual learning goals
- Opportunities for family involvement
- Financial resources
- Enhancements to the space provided by the district
- Hiring of quality staff
- Scholarships
- Resources through experienced host organizations
- Leveraging of dollars

Alignment is about partnership between schools and community-based providers, drawing on the strengths of principals, classroom teachers, and program specialists. Collaboration is powerful. When we share our resources and strengths to learn from one another, share resources, and collaborate, the positive results for our kids increase exponentially.

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