



**21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTERS
BEST PRACTICES RESOURCE GUIDE**





21st Century Community Learning Centers Best Practices Resource Guide

Academic Achievement		
Title	Author/Source	Description
Improving Student Achievement and Closing the Achievement Gap	Hanover Research	Hanover Research examines best practices for improving student achievement, including strategies for engaging students and improving student outcomes. Best practices and case studies examine achievement levels and approaches for certain student sub-groups, academic programs, and innovative solutions at high-needs schools.
Best Practices in Increasing Academic Learning Time	Maribeth Gettinger and Jill K. Seibert University of Wisconsin-Madison	This paper overviews basic considerations focusing on (a) defining academic learning time and its constituent parts and (b) describing procedures to assess current levels of learning time and identify classroom practices that contribute to academic learning time. It also includes a best practices section describing strategies for increasing academic learning time that can be offered to classroom teachers through collaboration, consultation, or in-service training by school psychologists.
Structuring Out-of-School Time to Improve Academic Achievement	What Works Clearinghouse National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences	The goal of this practice guide is to formulate specific and coherent evidence-based recommendations for use by educators using out-of-school time programming to address the challenge of improving student academic achievement.
C.A.R.E. Strategies for Closing the Achievement Gaps	National Education Association	“Closing the gaps” involves not only improving achievement for all students, but taking the steps needed to significantly raise the achievement of traditionally underachieving groups of students, so that their achievement is on the same level as that of mainstream groups of students. As identified in reviews of the research literature, significant changes are needed to close these gaps. In order to take a leadership role in closing the achievement gaps, this report outlines a several things you can do.



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<p>Strategies for Closing the Achievement Gap</p>	<p>The Urban Education Network of Iowa</p>	<p>The strategies outlined in this handbook are shared as a means for teachers and staff to help all students reach their academic potential. Some may be more applicable than others, but they all have value. The strategies should serve as a strong support system to all school districts, buildings, teachers, students and community alike as they work together to help all students achieve success.</p>
<p>Identifying Achievement Gaps in Your School, District, and Community</p>	<p>National Education Association</p>	<p>This is the first in a series of short guides designed for NEA members to use in leading discussions about achievement gaps in their schools and communities. This guide includes a series of questions that will help identify the specific achievement gaps that exist locally, a first step in closing the gaps.</p>
<p>Identifying Factors that Contribute to Achievement Gaps</p>	<p>National Education Association</p>	<p>This guide is designed to help NEA members lead a discussion with other educators and community members that will identify the specific factors contributing to local achievement gaps in schools, school districts, and communities.</p>
<p>Identifying Stakeholders' Responsibilities for Closing Achievement Gaps: District and School Based Strategies</p>	<p>National Education Association</p>	<p>This guide focuses on district- and school-based strategies for closing achievement gaps.</p>
<p>Identifying Stakeholders' Responsibilities for Closing Achievement Gaps: Stakeholder Actions</p>	<p>National Education Association</p>	<p>This final guide in a series on closing achievement gaps, is designed for NEA members and others to use to identify stakeholders who share responsibility for closing local achievement gaps. Each of these stakeholders should be involved in, and accountable for, implementing programs and strategies that will close achievement gaps. Several stakeholders -- and a summary of actions each might take to close achievement gaps -- are listed below.</p>



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<p>Steps for School-Wide Reading Improvement</p>	<p>Barbara M. Taylor, University of Minnesota Barbara J. Frye, University of South Florida–St. Petersburg Debra S. Peterson, University of Minnesota P. David Pearson, University of California–Berkeley</p>	<p>This booklet created by the National Education Association reviews research backed approaches to school-wide reading improvement which are highly effective in enhancing students’ reading growth in two parts; Implementing a School-Wide Plan for Reading Improvement, and Using Study Groups To Improve Reading in Your School.</p>
<p>Academic Achievement of K-12 Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders</p>	<p>J. Ron Nelson, Gregory J. Benner, Kathleen Lane, and Benjamin W. Smith</p>	<p>This cross-sectional study was conducted with a random sample of 155 K-12 students served in public school settings and established the extent to which students with emotional/behavioral disorders (E/BD) experience academic achievement deficits with attention to age and gender differences.</p>
<p>Improving Academic Success For Economically Disadvantaged Students</p>	<p>Mac Taylor and Stefanie Fricano Legislative Analyst’s Office</p>	<p>This report provides data on the academic performance of ED students and surveys the programs that are designed to serve them. The report reviews trends in program spending and participation and attempts to look at the effectiveness of these programs individually and in the aggregate. Finally, it identifies shortcomings with the state’s existing approach to serving ED students and makes recommendations designed to improve the performance of these students.</p>
<p>Raising Minority Academic Achievement: A Compendium of Education Programs and Practices</p>	<p>Donna Walker James, Sonia Jones, and Steve Estes American Youth Policy Forum</p>	<p>This report covers a 22-month effort to identify, summarize and analyze evaluations of school and youth programs that show gains for minority youth across a broad range of academic achievement indicators, from early childhood through advanced postsecondary study</p>
<p>Participation in Out-of-School Settings and Student Academic and Behavioral Outcomes</p>	<p>Anamarie Auger, Kim Pierce & Deborah Lowe Vandell American Educational Research Association</p>	<p>This report examines the intensity or amount of low-income students’ participation in multiple OOS contexts—high-quality programs, structured activities, and unsupervised time with peers— and associations with student academic and behavioral outcomes, controlling for prior adjustment and student and family characteristics</p>



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<p>CLASS MATTERS — In and Out of School: Closing gaps requires attention to issues of race and poverty.</p>	<p>Jayne Boyd-Zaharias and Helen Pate-Bain</p>	<p>A useful way of visualizing the remedy for the chronic problem of low achievement of poor and minority students is to return to Abraham Maslow’s 1954 hierarchy of needs for self-actualization. This article has patterned a hierarchy of needs for a self-actualized society after Maslow’s, using those needs as a lens to review environmental factors that affect the Achievement Gap.</p>
<p>The Achievement Gap is Real</p>	<p>Deborah Lowe Vandell University of California, Irvine</p>	<p>New research from Dr. Deborah Lowe Vandell and her colleagues at the University of California-Irvine School of Education demonstrates that consistent participation in afterschool activities during the elementary school years is linked to narrowing the gap in math achievement by grade 5.</p>

Problem Solving		
Title	Author/Source	Description
<p>Teaching Problem Solving: Tips and Techniques</p>	<p>Rhett McDaniel Vanderbilt University</p>	<p>Center for Teaching guide with strategies for Educators from Vanderbilt University - Teaching Problem Solving</p>
<p>Social Emotional Learning Problem-Solving in the Middle/High School Classroom</p>	<p>Tara Worthy-Segal Alignment Nashville</p>	<p>Help teachers understand the necessity of problem-solving as it relates to social emotional learning(SEL), feel equipped to use SEL best practices to promote problem solving in their classrooms, feel confident in their “toolbox” of strategies brainstormed with their colleagues in response to hands-on activities.</p>
<p>How You Can Help Children Solve Problems</p>	<p>Ellen Booth Church Scholastic</p>	<p>Tips from Scholastic on how you can help children solve problems for grades Pre-K-2</p>
<p>Teaching Problem-Solving Skills</p>	<p>University of Waterloo</p>	<p>Basic principles for teaching problem solving and one model to implement in your classroom teaching.</p>
<p>5 Steps to a Problem Solving Classroom Culture</p>	<p>Lee Watanabe-Crockett</p>	<p>Creating a culture of problem solving in a math classroom or in a school involves prompting students and educators to think a little differently and systemically.</p>
<p>The Executive Guide To Improvement And Change</p>	<p>G. Dennis Beecroft, Grace L. Duffy, John W. Moran</p>	<p>Excerpt: The 4 basic steps of problem solving in the classroom</p>



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Health and Wellness		
Title	Author/Source	Description
Best Practices Guide for Healthy Schools	Colorado Legacy Foundation	This pamphlet outlines Colorado's guidelines for a Healthy School District: Healthy schools provide nutritious meals, snacks and beverages, and require that students are physically active every day. They teach students what it means to be healthy. Healthy schools offer access to health care services; provide a school environment that allows students to feel safe and a sense of belonging and engagement; and include workplace wellness programs for all staff. These best practices can help districts develop a comprehensive and coordinated approach to healthy schools.
Healthy Schools Program Framework of Best Practices	Alliance for a Healthier Generation	The Healthy Schools Program Framework of Best Practices identifies specific criteria that define a healthy school environment. Through an assessment tool and a customized action plan, the Framework helps schools work towards the Alliance's National Healthy Schools Award.
Tips for Teachers: Promoting Healthy Eating and Physical Activity in the Classroom	Nation Center for Chronic Disease Prevention Center for Disease Control	Promoting Healthy Eating & Physical Activity in the Classroom
Indiana Afterschool Specialty Standards Healthy Eating and Physical Activity	Indiana Afterschool Network	Indiana Afterschool Network Specialty Standards for Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Evaluation
CREATING HEALTHY SCHOOLS Ten Key Ideas for the Social and Emotional Learning and School Climate Community	American Institute of Research	Social and emotional learning (SEL) and school climate are complementary and intertwined. Positive school environments with opportunities for social and emotional learning enable students and staff to develop social and emotional competence, which in turn can make school climate more positive. This report outlines the ten key ideas that lead to positive classroom.
Inventory of Best Practices	Frisco ISD Health and Wellness Inventory of Best Practices	List of health and wellness practices happening at Frisco schools.



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School Wellness Policy and Best Practices for Policy Development, Implementation, and Evaluation	Paula H. Moll Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction Child Nutrition State of Washington	The School Wellness Policy Toolkit is designed to help schools implement Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act (passed by congress in 2010) requirements. Throughout the toolkit you will find “best practice” examples of the great things schools across Washington are doing to improve nutrition and physical activity.
National Afterschool Association HEPA Standards	National Afterschool Association	In 2011 the National AfterSchool Association adopted standards for healthy eating and physical activity (HEPA) in Out-of-School time.

Behavior Management/Positive Discipline		
Title	Author/Source	Description
How to Develop Positive Classroom Management	Evantheia Schibsted Edutopia	Tips from educators about proactive discipline methods. Join the conversation and share your experience about what works.
Discipline By Design The Honor Level System: 11 Techniques for Better Classroom Discipline	Adapted from: Thomas R. McDaniel A Primer on Classroom Discipline: Principles Old and New	Here are eleven techniques that you can use in your classroom that will help you achieve effective group management and control.
Tips for Achieving and Maintaining Discipline	Excerpted from: Anthony D. Fredericks, Ed.D. The Complete Idiot's Guide to Success as a Teacher	There are certain steps you can take to ensure that your students are disciplined and behave in an appropriate manner. Find those tips here. New teachers will find this behavior-management resource particularly valuable.
Looking into Learning-Centered Classrooms: Implications for Classroom Management	Carolyn M. Evertson, Vanderbilt University and Kristen W. Neal, Modern Red SchoolHouse	Throughout the paper there is extensive body of knowledge about learning and teaching as well as case studies to develop a set of conceptual benchmarks for best practice. The benchmarks are intended to aid teachers in understanding key distinctions between typical management practices and the kind of research-based practices found in learning-centered classrooms where management, teaching, and learning are complementary.
Positive Discipline in the Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Classroom A Guide for Teachers and Teacher Educators	Caroline Haddad UNESCO	The positive discipline tools presented here are concrete alternatives to such punishment practices.



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Equitable Access		
Title	Author/Source	Description
Equitable Access Toolkit	American Institutes for Research	Designed expressly to support states in developing their State Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators, our Equitable Access Toolkit includes resources and materials to guide state leaders through the most critical aspects of developing plans— stakeholder engagement, root-cause analysis, and data review.
Implementation Playbook	American Institutes for Research	Start the process of implementation with this step-by-step tool designed to support you wherever you are in the implementation process. Use this resource to assess community awareness about your equity plan, identify a project leader and team to implement your equity plan strategies, assess current levels of implementation, clarify leading indicators of success, create a project management plan, and act on the plan.
Equitable Access Support Network Resources Library	Equitable Access Support Network	Sort, search and download reusable tools, policy briefs and guidance to raise standards and achievement. State Plans to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators: Guidance and Examples for States
Equitable Access to Excellent Educators: An Analysis of States’ Educator Equity Plans	Wesley Williams, II, Richard Adrien, Carrie Murthy, Darcy Pietryka Westat Equity Team	An Analysis of States’ Educator Equity Plans
Reducing stereotype threat in classrooms: a review of social psychological intervention studies on improving the achievement of Black students	Regional Educational Laboratory At SERVE Center UNC, Greensboro	Stereotype threat arises from a fear among members of a group of reinforcing negative stereotypes about the intellectual ability of the group. The report identifies three randomized controlled trial studies that use classroom-based strategies to reduce stereotype threat and improve the academic performance of Black students, narrowing their achievement gap with White students.



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Human Resources		
Title	Author/Source	Description
Staffing Practices of High-Quality Afterschool Programs	Ajay Khashu Nikole Lobb Dougherty: The After-School Corporation for Cornerstones for Kids	This is an overview of a study of New York after-school programs and best practices to cultivate. This study examined staffing and other organizational practices that distinguish higher quality after-school programs. The study builds on TASC’s ongoing evaluation of 21st Century Community Learning Centers serving approximately 20,000 youth at 100 New York City public schools.
Staff Selection: What’s Important for Out-of-School Time Programs?	Allison J. R. Metz, Ph.D., Tawana Bandy, B.S., and Mary Burkhauser, M.A.; Child Trends	To expand what is known about staff selection, Child Trends recently conducted a review of existing research and collected data on this topic as part of a study on the role of frontline staff in the effective implementation of out-of-school time programs. i This brief presents findings from that study and the research review, as well from other research about staff selection, and links these findings to effective strategies for recruiting and selecting frontline staff. The brief also describes these strategies.
Using Professional Development to Enhance Staff Retention	Denise Huang and Jamie Cho	Using rigorous methods, researchers identified 53 high-functioning programs representative of eight geographic regions, including rural, urban, community-based, and school district related programs. Exemplary practices in organization, structure, and especially in content delivery were examined.
Teacher Recruitment & Retention	Afterschool Alliance	Teachers who feel prepared and supported enter the classroom excited and encouraged, ready to inspire students and teach them the tools they need to succeed academically, socially and professionally. Through innovative programming and an eye towards professional support and development, afterschool is an ideal platform through which to recruit, retain, and support America’s teachers.
Showing Appreciation for Your School’s Staff	National Association for Elementary School Principals	Tool guide: 17 Ways to Show YOUR Gratitude



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<p>National Best Practices: Teacher Recruitment & Pipeline</p>	<p>Illinois Network of Charter Schools and National Alliance for Public Charter Schools</p>	<p>The National Alliance for Public Charter Schools and the Illinois Network of Charter Schools have come together to seek out national best practices around teacher job fairs, new recruitment channels, teacher pipelines, and how to recruit high quality candidates in the current education environment.</p>
<p>Best Practices In Recruitment And Retention</p>	<p>Business and Legal Reports, Inc.</p>	<p>In this special report you will discover, through actual case studies, how leading companies, large and small, are developing and improving their own HR practices in order to hire the best candidates and keep them.</p>
<p>Identifying Staffing Needs and Recruiting Qualified After-School Staff</p>	<p>Policy Studies Associates, Inc</p>	<p>What kinds of staff does a TASC supported project need? Where can those staff be found? This Resource Brief addresses those questions with examples of promising practices from TASC sites.</p>
<p>Inspiring a Culture of Appreciation</p>	<p>Anne Marie Canale, Cheryl Herdklotz, Lynn Wild; Faculty Career Development Services; The Wallace Center</p>	<p>The goals of this study are to share research on faculty appreciation, recognition and rewards; present findings on practices at peer institutions; highlight current practices at Rochester Institute of Technology; and provide suggestions to campus leadership on addressing this challenge based on innovative models and promising practices. Rewards and recognition related to tenure, promotion, and merit increases were not the focus of this research, but rather it is a study to highlight the less formal and informal rewards that institutions practice.</p>
<p>Examining practices of staff recruitment and retention in four high-functioning afterschool programs</p>	<p>Huang, Denise; Cho, Jamie; Nam, Hannah H.; La Torre, Deborah; Oh, Christine; Harven, Aletha; Huber, Lindsay Perez; Rudo, Zena; Caverly, Sarah L.;</p>	<p>An examination of the influence of staffing practices and professional development opportunities on the ability of after school programs to recruit and retain high quality staff members, based on evidence from the recruitment practices of 4 after school programs, one each from California, Florida, Indiana, and Texas, that participated in the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) evaluation.</p>
<p>Igniting the Fire: Professional Development for After School Staff</p>	<p>The American Federation of Teachers under grant No. 2005-00837 from the Charles Mott Foundation for the</p>	<p>This study aims to promote a model of learning that can ignite the interest and curiosity of students, and also develop habits of work and mind that will benefit students as they pursue more education</p>



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	project After-school Professional Development for Teachers	and work. It addresses one strategy primarily—the use of project learning in academically oriented after-school programs.
Core Competencies for Afterschool Educators	C.S. Mott Foundation	This document is a guide designed to be used in conjunction with other existing resources to help program staff and supervisors improve their practice and program quality.
Conducting a “Stay” Interview	National Afterschool Alliance	Rather than conducting an exit interview, hear your employees' voices while they're still with your organization and conduct a stay interview.
Afterschool Professionals Appreciation Week Toolkit	National Afterschool Alliance	Afterschool programs offer youth opportunities for enhanced education. At the heart of afterschool programs are those who work with them. Celebrate Afterschool Professionals Appreciation Week. Templates and graphics to help you spread the word and celebrate.