

## Building Principal's Role in Ensuring Alignment Between the School Day and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Afterschool Program



The building principal is key to ensuring the alignment between the school day and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC) afterschool program in supporting students' success. Below are suggestions on how the building principal can promote a collaborative effort that results in a high-quality program:

- Meet regularly with the afterschool project director to support, guide, and problem-solve regarding the program
- Be an active participant in site-level 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC management team meetings
- Assign a school-day teacher (or teachers) to assist with planning in order to ensure afterschool curriculum aligns to school day objectives and students' needs are addressed
- Include the afterschool project director on the building's school improvement team to ensure collaborative efforts towards identified improvement goals
- Include the afterschool project director on the building safety planning committee and ensure the afterschool and summer programs conduct regular safety drills (e.g., fire, tornado)
- Invite the project director (and staff when appropriate) to regularly scheduled staff meetings. Provide time during these meetings for the project director to share information about the program (e.g., program goals, upcoming events, community collaborations).
- Develop an ongoing communication system between afterschool staff and school day teachers in order to:
  - Work together to recruit students to the program
  - Regularly communicate students' strengths and needs
  - Ensure needed space is available to staff and students during the afterschool program
  - Guarantee necessary resources are available to staff and students
  - Establish homework expectations and strategies to support homework completion
  - Share ideas for family and community involvement
  - Collaboratively plan family events with activities that reinforce school day learning objectives
- Support school day teachers' participation in the program through the design and implementation of a club on a topic of interest to the teacher and students (e.g., cooking, poetry writing, dance, astronomy)
- Support participation in summer Nebraska BLAST! (STEM) workshops (both teachers and afterschool staff are invited to participate and implement curriculum as a team)
- Include the afterschool project director and afterschool staff in shared staff development events including sessions focused on school safety and the school behavior management plan.

- Provide leadership in building and utilizing community partnerships to guarantee quality and sustainability of the afterschool program
- Make sure all school staff are informed about the program and find ways to support the program (e.g., office staff who inform program of daily absences, bus drivers, food service staff, custodians, school nurse to inform program leader re: medical needs of students)

For more information about Nebraska's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Program, visit <http://www.education.ne.gov/21stCCLC>.