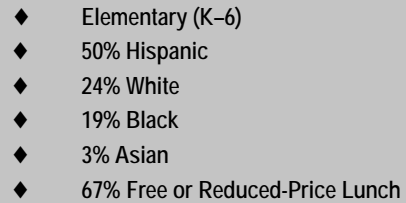


Jacob Hiatt Magnet School

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Worcester, MA 01610
Principal: Patricia Gaudette

Administrators at Jacob Hiatt Magnet School implemented an overhaul of the school day after the results of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System test made clear the need for change. They used data from standardized and periodic assessments, as well as feedback from school staff, to design a school day customized to school and student needs.

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- ◆ Elementary (K-6)
 - ◆ 50% Hispanic
 - ◆ 24% White
 - ◆ 19% Black
 - ◆ 3% Asian
 - ◆ 67% Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

An inner-city magnet school in Worcester, Massachusetts, Jacob Hiatt Magnet School was established to foster racial integration and currently houses more than 700 students from throughout the district. Hiatt is one of 22 schools funded by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Expanded Learning Time grant program. This program is the nation's first statewide initiative to expand school time. Each participating school receives per-student funding to expand the school year by 300 hours. Schools are required to increase time for academics, enrichment, and teacher collaboration.

Hiatt was one of the first schools to receive funding under this initiative and has had significant time to revisit and revise its approach. The school formed multiple partnerships to carry out an approach invested in exceptional enrichment opportunities, data-informed curricular design, and teacher quality. Hiatt worked with a local university to solidify its curriculum plan and with several cultural foundations and nonprofit groups to support enrichment activities. A team of teachers, administrators, parents, and community partners redesigned the school schedule to incorporate 300 additional hours of learning time each year.

Data-Informed Instruction

The expanded learning time initiative allows Hiatt Magnet School to provide students additional time in the core academic subjects of literacy and mathematics. Moreover, staff gets additional time to instruct students using one-on-one tutoring, smaller groups, and individualized strategies.

In addition to state-administered standardized tests, the school staff analyzes language arts and mathematics assessments administered three times a year. The data, categorized by individual strand, provide teachers with information on individual student and subgroup strengths and weaknesses. Data are used to plan instruction and group students according to needs. For instance, students struggling with a particular math skill are placed in an appropriate support group and receive two additional hours of instruction in the identified need each week.

The expanded learning time initiative lends itself to greater opportunities for differentiated instruction, both in content and delivery. Teachers are able to analyze student needs and, based on their conclusions, vary modes of instruction among whole-group, small-group, and individual instruction.

Increasing Instruction in Core Subjects

With the help of the expanded learning time grant, students receive at least 10 hours of literacy instruction and seven and a half hours of math instruction per week. The added time enables teachers to differentiate instruction, provide project-based learning opportunities, and engage students in hands-on activities. Over this past academic year, the school added two periods a week for students in grades 2 through 6 to receive additional specifically tailored support in math.

Uninterrupted Literacy Block

Having analyzed students' test scores, the staff at Hiatt realized students showed the greatest need in literacy instruction. Thus, with the redesign of the school day, literacy became a priority. The minimum ten hours of literacy instruction per week begins with a two-hour, uninterrupted daily literacy block that emphasizes guided and silent reading. Content-based student assessments showed many Hiatt students needed extra help with open-response questions. Thus, Hiatt implemented two 20-minute instructional blocks each week dedicated to open-response questions across all subject areas, with a focus on finding the elements.

Fostering Student Engagement Through Partnerships

Hiatt emphasizes enrichment activities to engage students and retain them in the program. Partners collaborating with Hiatt's program submit a Partnership Request for Proposal outlining the sequence of their programming and drawing explicitly from Massachusetts' curriculum standards. With the help of partners, the eighth hour of the school day is dedicated to additional tutoring and interactive lessons through electives that engage and motivate students with "fun" activities presenting academic content in innovative ways.

In partnership with the local professional basketball team and the local YMCA, the Hiatt program also provides special literacy classes and swimming lessons during that last hour of the school day. Partnerships with local cultural and art-focused organizations allow students to participate in enrichment classes such as Art and Geometry, Life in Japan, and Native American Poetry. Many of the partnerships were built upon infrastructure of prior collaboration within the community. Hiatt's programming took advantage of the school's historical collaborators to improve the program. The program supplies a way for community-based organizations to reach out to the students and share resources.

A Focus on Professional Development

The added time in Hiatt's school day provides more opportunities for teachers and other staff to collaborate and plan instruction individualized to student needs. Collaborative planning time for teachers and school administrators has greatly increased with the redesigned school day. In addition to three district-mandated elementary school teacher

prep periods per week, the school was able to add two additional 45-minute blocks for teachers to meet. During these collaborative planning meetings, teachers are able to analyze student data and make instructional decisions based on them.

Hiatt Magnet School also partners with a local university to provide expert-guided professional development opportunities for staff. In total, instructional staff members participate in more than 18 hours of professional development per year.

Evaluation and Program Results

With state funding to support expanded learning time and community partnerships and collaboration, Jacob Hiatt Magnet School students are showing academic gains in English language arts, math, and science, with district formative assessments showing the school outpacing its district peers.

After the implementation of expanded learning time, Hiatt students demonstrated an increase in standardized test scores, interim assessments, and non-academic indicators such as enrollment, attendance, and student, teacher, and parent satisfaction rates. The percentage of students scoring at or above “proficient” on state-administered standardized tests increased by 10% in English language arts and almost 20% in math.

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