

DOINGWHATWORKS



Video

FULL DETAILS AND TRANSCRIPT

Rethinking the School Day

Jacob Hiatt Magnet School, Massachusetts • January 2010

Topic: Increased Learning Time: Beyond the Regular School Day
Practice: Structure Time

Highlights

- This video describes the changes introduced at Jacob Hiatt Magnet School with the introduction of the Expanded School Day initiative.
- The curriculum emphasizes literacy training because student test data indicated a need in that area.
- Teachers at Hiatt are able to incorporate individualized instruction, more student support, and innovative teaching strategies with the longer school day.

About the Site

Jacob Hiatt Magnet School

Worcester, MA

Demographics

50% Hispanic

24% White

19% Black

3% Asian

67% Free or Reduced-Price Lunch

Jacob Hiatt Magnet School's nearly eight-hour expanded school day has led to visible student academic growth. The school's 2009 scores showed Adequate Yearly Progress in all subjects for the first time since 2002. The pillars of the school day redesign approach taken by the school include:

- Implementing school day redesign based on student assessment data
- Individualizing and differentiating instruction based on student needs
- Incorporating enrichment activities in academic classes
- Facilitating collaborative planning meetings for teachers and program instructors
- Fostering partnerships with local groups and organizations to provide extracurricular opportunities and resources

Full Transcript

Tony Caputo: Expanded Learning Day was an opportunity to totally redesign the school day and bring it into the 21st century. You know, it's really not rocket science to understand that if you give a kid more time in school, and you make that time engaging, that children are going to benefit.

Martha Dewer, to students: I want it finished.

Caputo: When we began the planning process for the expanded learning time, we decided that we needed to put the emphasis this year on the English language arts and writing. So when we designed our program, we designed a two-hour uninterrupted literacy block very first thing in the morning.

Dewer, to students: Now, what is this again, and what is this problem?

Dewer: Having them read every day has helped them a lot. They have to take a computerized test every fall and every winter, and I already saw a difference just in the fall, the fall's test scores.

Teacher, in fourth-grade team meeting: A couple of you were talking about some of your students are still having trouble

Dewer: Once a week, we meet as a team, the fourth grade meets as a team.

Dewer, in fourth-grade team meeting: So they didn't really have trouble with the timeline. They did pretty well.

Teacher, in fourth-grade team meeting: They did, actually, very well on it.

Dewer, in fourth-grade team meeting: Yes.

Dewer: So now we are looking at student data, and we are trying to analyze it in order to improve teaching.

Teacher, in fourth-grade team meeting: . . . sequence of events, so that was one after another.

Dewer: Teachers really need a lot of time to talk because when we talk, we are reflecting, and then we get

ideas from each other and then we become more effective.

Caputo: Our relationship with the teacher union is pretty typical. It's not always an easy relationship, but it was very interesting in that the teachers were 100% behind this program. We developed a very good relationship with the teacher union, and they were able to be very supportive of expanded learning time, even though they were in the process of a difficult negotiation for teacher contract for all of the teachers.

Dewer: It is a longer day, and it could be tiring at times. Obviously, I get paid more to work longer hours, but what I get out of it as an educator is more of the satisfaction that the children are learning more.

Adults playing guitar and singing to students: . . . be a real nice fellow all dressed up in . . .

Students respond: Yellow!

Singers: Good!

Caputo: Expanded Learning Day really gave us an exciting opportunity to bring community and cultural partners into the school and integrate them right into the core curriculum, making learning a lot more fun.

Teacher, to student: . . . was born in 1822 and he died in 1822, so they named their second son . . .

Dewer: In the past, I always wished to have maybe half an hour more for those children that needed the extra help. Now I have that time.

Caputo: We are redesigning school days to meet the needs of the 21st century. We can't continue to expect students to achieve at higher levels and not give them the tools that they need, and one of the tools that teachers and students need is more time.