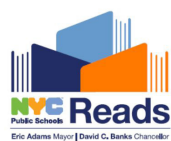


# PRINCIPLES AND GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOL-BASED COMMUNITY PARTNERS IN SUPPORT OF NYC READS



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## OVERVIEW

Teaching children to read is a team sport, and it takes everybody—families reading at home and encouraging their young ones to read, community partners offering literacy-rich activities that bring reading to life, teachers leading classroom instruction and building core skills, and intervention partners supporting those who need some additional help.

The City’s vast network of publicly-funded afterschool programs provide afterschool, community school and expanded learning models, offer learning and enrichment after the school day, before the school day, and during summer or other holidays in partnership with public schools. Many, if not all, of these programs are already offering literacy-rich activities aligned to what the evidence, now often referred to as the “science of reading,” tells us are helpful to children. These kinds of activities build vocabulary and background knowledge, such as theater, debate, choice reading, field trips, and other learning enrichments. And, these activities complement and amplify literacy efforts at home and in the school day.

This document provides guidance and inspiration for ways in which community-based organizations and New York City public schools can deepen their partnership to provide NYC’s young people with literacy instruction aligned to NYC Reads. Our hope is that leaders in schools and community organizations will use this document to guide additional collaborative planning – at the start of the year, mid-year and in end-of-year planning meetings; at retreats, and/or at regular check-ins – to further collaborative literacy efforts and strengthen children’s literacy throughout New York City.

This is a working document, so we expect to add and adapt this document as we learn together about bright spots and promising practices for school-community partnership to strengthen literacy throughout the five boroughs. If you have a suggestion or question about this document, please record it [here](#).

## PRINCIPLES OF PARTNERSHIP

The Department of Youth and Community Development and New York City Public Schools Literacy Collaborative developed the following principles for partnership between schools and community organizations to advance children’s literacy:

- **Comprehensive Literacy Vision:** Principals recognize that they lead a comprehensive literacy vision that includes afterschool and other partners. Their literacy vision includes the full range of literacy skill-building throughout the entire learning day, including in school and out of school. In turn, literacy leaders in community organizations recognize that their enrichment programming complements and enhances what young people experience in school. School and community partners both understand that they should connect their efforts seamlessly into a full and rich literacy learning day.

- **Afterschool Staff and Program Assets:** Principals recognize that staff in afterschool programs offer an incredible asset to broaden and expand their literacy vision and NYC Reads. Afterschool programs complement the school day. These programs may be particularly adept at supporting school-day instruction by offering theater, debate, and other applied learning activities; culturally relevant texts and book options for choice reading; and providing other literacy-rich activities focused on youth voice, social justice and other engaging themes.
- **Comprehensive Literacy Learning throughout the Day:** NYCPS, DYCD, individual principals and afterschool leaders all recognize that there are multiple ways that schools and community partners might organize support for the school’s literacy vision, based on partner assets, professional learning opportunities, and other factors. Principals and site directors decide on the right fit based on their school and community partner assets, needs and interests. Quantitative and qualitative data about young people’s needs and desires; capacity in and out of the school day; and family engagement efforts drive the appropriate partnership plan.
- **Collaboratively Data-Driven:** Principals, afterschool partners and all other literacy providers should meet regularly to assess their efforts using qualitative and quantitative information and make adjustments as needed.
- **Supporting Educator Pathways:** Afterschool educators working with our students in public schools represent an exciting recruitment pool for long-term careers in education and youth development.

## PLANNING QUESTIONS TO GUIDE COLLABORATION BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS

We recommend that schools and community partners enhance collaboration by first getting to know at a deeper level how they each approach literacy and the kinds of activities and instruction they offer. The following questions can guide school and afterschool leaders to explore and deepen their collaboration in order to advance literacy for all students in New York City.

Framework Element	Questions to Guide your Collaboration
<p><b>Comprehensive Literacy Vision</b></p> <p>RESOURCES: <a href="#">Literacy Leader Self Assessment</a>; <a href="#">Power of School-Community Partnerships for Learning</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the principal’s <a href="#">vision</a> for literacy?</li> <li>• How can community partners support this vision so that after-school programs add value and all students are receiving the literacy instruction they need?</li> <li>• Who is responsible at the school-level to develop the activities in the afterschool program? What is the best way for that person to collaborate with literacy leaders at the school?</li> </ul>

## Afterschool Staff and Programs as Assets

RESOURCES: [DYCD Literacy Framework](#); [NYCPS CR-SE](#)

- What are the afterschool programs' strengths and what activities that support literacy are offered by the afterschool partner?
  - How are those activities supported by the organization?
  - What curriculum or lesson plans are used?
- Who are the afterschool staff members?
  - What talents, interests and experience do they bring?
  - How can their perspectives on youth engagement be leveraged to support the principal's literacy vision?
- What texts are students reading throughout their literacy day, in school and afterschool?
  - Do they include authors from a broad spectrum of identities, cultures and experiences?
  - Do they include diverse characters inclusive of a broad spectrum of identities?
  - Do they include texts the student has chosen based on interest?
- What sorts of tasks and activities are students engaging in during afterschool?
  - Do they promote recognition of cultures and diverse backgrounds?
  - Do they help students examine their own and others' perspectives and make real-life connections?

## Comprehensive Literacy Learning throughout the Day

RESOURCE: [Afterschool Alliance Literacy Resources](#)

- Are afterschool learning activities aligned to NYC Reads and the principal's literacy vision?
  - Are some of the activities students are engaged in specifically designed to support students' literacy growth, such as vocabulary development and background knowledge?
- How are afterschool staff learning about the science of reading? How might they learn alongside teachers and other educators learning about the science of reading this year?
- What does data say about the type of literacy support your students need? How many students need additional support? How many need acceleration?
- Given your data needs, how are you communicating with your afterschool partners so they can plan and implement activities to work in tandem and provide additive value (for example, a student who is in an intervention during the school day may benefit from theater or debate provided by an afterschool partnership)?

## Collaboratively Data-Driven

RESOURCE: [Putting Data to Work for Young People, Every Hour Counts, Benefits of Afterschool programming](#)

- What data about students is available and communicated to help shape afterschool programming?
- How do you know if afterschool activities are supporting the growth of students? What data are you using to measure impact?

<p><b>Supporting Educator Pathways</b></p> <p>RESOURCES: <a href="#">9 Strategies for Recruiting, Hiring, and Retaining Diverse Teachers</a>; <a href="#">More than one in five New York students attend a school without any teachers of color</a>; <a href="#">Grow Your Own strategies for teacher development</a>; <a href="#">Afterschool as a teacher pathway</a>; <a href="#">Supporting Afterschool Educators of Color to Become Teachers</a>; <a href="#">CUNY – DYCD partnership to promote Youth Studies</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How can schools and community partners work together to support afterschool educators to build their skills, explore career goals, and learn about careers at NYCPS?</li><li>• How can we offer coursework and/or workshops to support afterschool educators in pursuing a pathway toward becoming a teacher at NYCPS?</li></ul>
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## ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

These principles and guiding questions were developed by members of the New York City Public Schools Literacy Collaborative, the Department of Youth and Community Development, and ExpandedED Schools.