

PROFILE

ExpandedED Schools by TASC

What they are doing:

ExpandedED Schools—an initiative of TASC (The After-School Corporation)—has created a scalable and economic model that reimagines and works within schools to help close the opportunity gap by expanding the school day, engaging the community and enhancing learning. The program adds two-and-a-half to three hours to each school day and partners with experienced community organizations, such as the YMCA or the Boys and Girls Clubs, to bring talented community educators into the classroom and to provide a range of offerings that enhance the curriculum—from the arts and physical exercise to hands-on science and other enrichments.

Over the past several years, TASC has worked to increase the ability of classroom teachers and expanded-day community educators to support students' social and emotional development. To that end, it developed a measurement tool called **GradTracker** to help ExpandedED Schools identify students' progress toward graduation. GradTracker collects data on student achievement, attendance, and behavior (e.g., incidence of suspensions) that allow schools to identify areas where students may need tutoring or other supports across the expanded school day. The survey is completed for each student twice a year either by a classroom teacher or community educator, and includes elements of the **DESSA Mini** (a social and emotional growth assessment tool) and the **Character Growth Card** (a similar assessment tool developed originally by KIPP). TASC provides support to schools to synthesize school- and grade-level—but not student-level—data. This data provides the foundation for planning conversations that help the full expanded learning time team (principals, teachers, ExpandedED site coordinators, and a parent coordinator) develop an action plan to help students at high risk and to better develop all students as effective learners.



Elementary school students participate in an ExpandedED School that expands the school day and engages the community to enhance learning opportunities for kids.

Early data gathered by GradTracker highlighted the need to channel more resources to help students improve their social and emotional development. TASC responded by creating a resource guide that showcases resources and strategies for social and emotional development. And it has focused on building collaboration

and shared norms for social and emotional learning into the ExpandedED Schools experience. For example, TASC has deployed new policies for teachers and community educators to work together to deal with students' negative behaviors. In addition, some schools have adopted a specific curriculum or approach (e.g., [RULER](#) and the [Morningside Center's 4Rs](#)) and trained all school staff, including the community educators. In some instances, the ExpandedED Schools community-based partners help fund this professional development, an important way to pool professional learning resources across the school and expanded day. Teachers and community educators also come together for joint planning sessions to share strategies that are working with particular students or classes.

On the horizon, ExpandedED Schools is exploring the possibility of sharing what it is learning about social and emotional development to all schools across a district. For example, the New York City Department of Education has engaged TASC as a thought partner as it considers using the DESSA Mini throughout the district as a tool for teachers. A critical next step for ExpandedED Schools is to develop a set of more specific teaching tools and resources that teachers and community educators can use in their work with students. In addition, TASC continues to refine the GradTracker data collection and action plan development as they learn from the first year of work.

What they are learning:

- **Student data in easily digestible and actionable formats is critical to developing shared goals and action plans around effective learning.** Measurement tools need continuous improvement, including the procedures for its administration (e.g., ensuring that the same educator fills out the survey for a student in the fall and the spring to effectively capture growth).
- **A key success factor for collaboration among the school day staff and community educators and, in particular, the joint planning sessions, is ensuring that the time feels central to the school's goals rather than an add-on.** This is a theme echoed by many of the organizations engaged in this work. Planning and collaboration time has to be sponsored by the school leadership, and the right set of adults must all be at the table to learn from each other about the experience of specific students.
- **Now that the data on students' social and emotional skills and behaviors is available, the adults who work with students are hungry for the resources and tools that will help them better support their students' social and emotional growth.**

This profile is one of a series of profiles on organizations focused on developing effective learners.

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