



Hazlet Township Public Schools
Hazlet, N.J.

CASE STUDY

Providing Cost-Effective Before & After School Programs with Consistent Staffing for Students



RIGHT AT
SCHOOL



RIGHT AT
SCHOOL



The quality of staffing for before and after school programs can vary widely from one provider to the next.

When the contract with Hazlet Township Public Schools' (HTPS) provider was nearing its end, district leaders decided it might be worthwhile to pursue other options.

"We had a wonderful relationship with an alternative vendor for before and after school care, but a continuing concern was consistency in staffing. When you don't have that consistency for students, discipline and other issues arise," noted Joseph J. Annibale, assistant superintendent of HTPS, a suburban district in Monmouth County in the coastal region of central New Jersey.

"We also wanted to make the program as cost-effective as possible to the Hazlet community. When we reviewed Right At School's offer, it was difficult to say 'no.' What I most appreciated is their dedication to, and investment in, their staffing," he said.

"With all the vetting and training Right At School conducts, they have highly capable staff running their before and after school programs. We've never experienced a staffing issue with Right At School."

Partnering to implement before and after school programs

HTPS partnered with Right At School in September 2017 to offer before and after care for preK-6 students in all of its elementary schools, as well as care during non-school days and breaks. Right At School provides safe, engaging, and meaningful in-school and extracurricular programs to enrich the lives of students, give parents peace of mind, and enable schools to focus on their academic mission.

"Right At School is open to all preK-6 students in our district, and they're willing to work closely with parents. If there's a financial challenge or related obstacle to getting a child into the program, Right At School has been accommodating and fair across the board," noted Annibale.

In HTPS, Right At School provides parents with flexible, affordable options ranging from one to five days a week, including morning and afternoon programs or both. It also offers discounts for military families, siblings, and families who qualify for free or reduced lunches.

“Working parents want to be certain their children are safe and that when they pick them up at 6 p.m., everything is fine. We want that too, but we also want to make certain the program is meaningful and that kids are getting something worthwhile out of it,” Annibale said.

Providing engaging, meaningful enrichment

Right At School’s Disguised Learning™ preK-8 curriculum supports learning standards in English language arts, literacy, mathematics, science, social studies, the arts, physical fitness, and service learning. Social-emotional learning (SEL) is carefully woven into the curriculum and aligned with standards from the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL).

In addition, all Right At School educators are trained in SEL and trauma-informed care. “We want to provide our families with a quality program, not just a babysitting service,” said Annibale. “The enrichment that Right At School provides is a proven product. We know that our students are safe and that they’re receiving the support they need to be successful.”

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Not only did Right At School reach out to explain how they could support us, they also provided a number of resources to assist in that process.

— Joseph J. Annibale, Assistant Superintendent

CHOOSING THE RIGHT AFTER SCHOOL PARTNER



Improving homework completion

Right At School also provides daily and consistent homework help after school. Staff provide instructional support, encourage critical thinking, and promote problem-solving. They help students understand their homework but will not solve the problems for them.

“One of the most significant benefits for students and families is the homework support,” said Annibale. “When parents pick up their children, they appreciate knowing that the majority, if not all, of their assignments are complete. As a result, we’ve also seen an improvement in the quality of homework since we began partnering with Right At School.”

Providing support and flexibility during the COVID-19 pandemic

When the COVID-19 pandemic forced schools to close in March 2020, HTPS implemented remote learning. “Not only did Right At School reach out to explain how they could support us, they also provided a number of resources to assist in that process. I thought that was notable — to have a partner initiate contact and offer suggestions like that is admirable,” said Annibale.

During the 2020-21 school year, HTPS moved to a hybrid learning model in its elementary schools. PreK-6 students attend school five days a week on an early dismissal schedule. As a result, Right At School extended its hours of programming to wrap around the adjusted school schedules.

Proactively assisting the administration

For school and district leaders, Right At School has eliminated administrative headaches by handling all aspects of program implementation, including the structure, curriculum, and the hiring and training of staff.

“Our former vendor created challenges and concerns for our building principals. Now, my phone never rings — and that’s a true testament to Right At School,” said Annibale. “Stacey Golembiewski, senior area manager, has been an integral part of this partnership. She keeps me aware of any issues that arise through the week and is hands-on when resolving a concern.”



“Right At School was there for us, and they’re flexible in a number of ways,” said Annibale. “The feedback from our principals and teachers has been very positive.

The classrooms, gymnasiums, and cafeterias that Right At School utilizes are left immaculate. Right At School staff bring their own sanitizing materials and follow every CDC and New Jersey health and safety protocol in place.”

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Recently, a colleague from another school district in Monmouth County reached out to Annibale to ask him his thoughts about Right At School. “I readily responded that Right At School is a high-quality before and after care program that will customize their program to meet your district’s needs. It’s cost-effective; they invest quality time and effort into their staffing.

They don’t just show up and run their program; they make a genuine effort to learn and understand the culture of the district and how best to cater their program to each school’s needs and expectations.”



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Making parents and school staff happy

To date, Annibale says he has received nothing but positive feedback about Right At School from parents, building principals, and teachers.

“It’s all been very positive,” he said. “Each and every person I’ve encountered, including the administrative staff, at Right At School has been wonderful. If something comes up, they are immediately available to support us. Not only have we grown as colleagues, we’ve grown as friends.”

District Data

8 schools
Grades preK-12
2,800 students
www.hazlet.org

Student Demographics

2.8% Asian//Pacific Islander
1.6% Black/African American
12.6% Hispanic
82.9% White

19.5% Free/reduced lunch

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“Each building principal has developed a wonderful rapport and genuine respect with the Right At School staff in their building. The quality of the staffing is second to none.”

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— Joseph J. Annibale, Assistant Superintendent of Schools