



SCALING UP

Addressing After School Needs District-Wide

There is a significant unmet demand for after school programs in schools nationwide. In a rapidly growing district, enrollment increases can exacerbate existing program issues.



“ONE OF THE PROBLEMS WITH OUR PREVIOUS AFTER SCHOOL PROVIDER WAS THAT THEY WEREN’T ABLE TO SCALE UP,”

said Kelley Boynton, executive director of elementary schools for Bethel School District, which covers over 200 square miles in southeast Pierce County in Washington. “We have close to 21,000 students in our district, and the provider was serving only about 120 kids across our elementary schools. We had extensive waiting lists and that was a real challenge for our community.”

When families sought other childcare options, it was often difficult to find a provider close to their child’s school. As a result, many requested transfers.

“When a family that lives within one school boundary requests to transfer to another elementary school, 98% of the time their rationale for wanting to move was related to childcare,” said Boynton. “Our schools are already overcrowded, so it was difficult to accommodate those requests.”





Finding a new partner

Bethel School District began looking into after school providers and initiated a partnership with Right At School in fall of 2018.

Right At School provides safe, engaging, and meaningful in-school and extracurricular programs to enrich the lives of students, giving parents peace of mind, and enabling schools to focus on their academic mission.

"Right At School promised that they would be scalable, nimble, and competitive with their pricing, and that they would run a highly structured program, which would mean fewer behavioral challenges. That appealed to us and their references were strong, but we didn't jump in right away," said Boynton. "Our board agreed to give us a year to see if Right At School could deliver on its promises. We gave our other provider a year to show us if they could meet our criteria as well, but they couldn't match what Right At School was able to provide."

"When we communicated our desire to scale up and serve many more students, the principals were apprehensive because of their bumpy experiences with earlier providers," said Boynton. "One of the promises Right At School made was that their program wouldn't be a burden for administrators. At the end of that first year, I surveyed our principals and used a number of their quotes in a presentation to the board about our success with Right At School. Even principals who were apprehensive at the beginning said, 'This is great for the community, it's great for Bethel, and it's great for my school. It's a win.'"

BETHEL SCHOOL DISTRICT • SPANAWAY, WA

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it's great for Bethel, and it's great
for my school. It's a win.**





Providing engaging, meaningful academic enrichment and SEL

Today approximately 740 students in Bethel Schools participate in Right At School's extended day enrichment programs each day.

Right At School offers before and after school programs in 17 of the district's 18 elementary schools, as well as care during non-school days and breaks. It also accepts state subsidies and federal grants, including funding provided by the McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program.

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've invited Right At School staff to attend professional development alongside our staff in our social-emotional learning curriculum," said Boynton. "They use the same language and strategies that our teachers are using during the school day. As a result, student behavior is more consistent from building to building. Our teaching staff value Right At School."

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"Equity matters to us, and Right At School works well within our community,"

-Kelley Boynton, executive director of elementary schools for Bethel School District

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Eliminating administrative headaches

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

"When you're running a program of this size, there are going to be some challenges, but Right At School is responsive," said Boynton. "They communicate well and they support their people well. If we have a need or concern — and there are very few — they tackle it head-on. They're great to work with."

Attracting teachers

Right At School benefits district teachers and staff as well. "When we go to career fairs or are recruiting hard-to-fill positions, we always

mention that we have Right At School in our elementary schools and that it's discounted for staff. It's a recruiting tool for us," said Boynton.

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Giving parents confidence

Parents, too, appreciate the Right At School enrichment programs. "When I talk with families, they say that their children look forward to going to Right At School and that they enjoy it," said Boynton. "It's a well-run program. It's productive. Parents feel confident dropping off their children, and I hear that from

many community members. The community believes that Right At School is part of the Bethel School District, not just a partner. The programming and the staffing have been outstanding, which helps give our district a good name."

Building a sense of belonging in summer camps

Right At School also runs two summer camps in Bethel Schools, which serve approximately 500 students. The camps include enrichment activities, daily games and team sports, student-led community service projects, and opportunities for free play and socialization.

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"By the end of the summer, we see a boost in students' sense of belonging at school,"
said Boynton.

Students
500
in RAS Bethel
Summer Camps





Creating a **partnership** that works

Since 2018, Bethel Schools and Right At School have created a successful partnership that has evolved as the district's needs have changed.

For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, when the district temporarily moved to a hybrid model of instruction, Right At School helped district leaders gain strategies they could use to safely reopen schools.

"At the beginning, there was a lot of apprehension that the requirement for face coverings would create disciplinary challenges, but we watched Right At School and it wasn't an issue. We also watched how Right At School managed physical distancing and we were able to use that as we put together our own protocols. It was great to be able to see how they built all of these safety protocols into their systems as we were preparing to bring kids back into our buildings."

BETHEL SCHOOL DISTRICT • SPANAWAY, WA

Elementary
Schools
17

Students
740



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“Right At School got ahead of us in rolling out all of the protocols to match the guidance from CDC and the Department of Health.”

*-Kelley Boynton, executive director of elementary schools for **Bethel School District***



Creating a **partnership** that works

Looking back over the last five years, Boynton said, "When we first started with Right At School, they made a number of promises — and some of those promises sounded unrealistic because many of us have had experiences with providers that haven't been perfect. Right At School delivers on its promises. It is a point of pride for us."

"One of the main differences with Right At School is the appreciation we get from our staff, our administrators, and our community," he said. "We're proud that we have an opportunity for our students to participate in meaningful, productive activities that help them to be better kids."



District Data & Demographics

31 schools
Grades K-12
20,000+ students

<https://www.bethelsd.org>

51.6% Free/reduced lunch
1.1% American Indian/Native Alaskan
4.2% Asian
7.9% Black/African American

21.3% Hispanic
5.0% Pacific Islander
44.3% White
16.1% Two or more races

Bring Right At School to Your District

Ready to bring world-class after school enrichment to your community?

Give us a call at: **855-AT-SCHOOL**

RIGHTATSCHOOL.COM

