



RIGHT AT
SCHOOL



EXPANDING ACCESS, ELIMINATING BARRIERS, **EMPOWERING** EVERY FAMILY.

A District That Raised the Standard
for Out-of-School Time

How Valley Stream 13 Partnered with Right At School to
Deliver a Flexible, Responsive Program Rooted in Belonging



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VALLEY STREAM 13
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Leadership That Knows the Work

Dr. Judith LaRocca brings both experience and perspective to Valley Stream 13 in Valley Stream, New York. As Superintendent, after having served 6 years in the district as Assistant Superintendent, she understands the district from every angle. Her leadership is grounded in continuity. She has seen the district evolve and has helped shape the systems that support students today.



When Valley Stream 13 first partnered with Right At School in 2020, Dr. LaRocca was part of the leadership team guiding that decision. When she stepped into the superintendent role in 2022, she had the opportunity to reassess the district's approach. After evaluating their needs and the impact of the program, she chose to continue and deepen the partnership with Right At School. Because what she saw was not just a program that worked. It was a partnership that could grow, respond, and deliver over time.



“It’s never a yes or no. It’s ‘let’s see if we can do this.’ Every time something comes up, there’s a willingness to figure it out and make it work for our families.”

– DR. JUDITH LAROCCA, SUPERINTENDENT

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Raising the Standard for What Families Deserve

VALLEY STREAM 13 HAS ALWAYS BEEN CLEAR ABOUT ITS MISSION:

every child is treated as a scholar, and every student is supported through a strong partnership between home, school, and community. That philosophy extends beyond the classroom.

The district's priorities reflect that belief. Experiences that engage students throughout the day. Support that meets the needs of every learner. Connectedness that builds strong relationships. Environments where students feel they belong.

But before 2020, one part of that system was not fully aligned. After school care was not reaching every family who needed it. The issue was not effort, it was limitation. The district made a decision to raise the standard. Not to adjust around the problem, but to solve it.

Waitlists were growing, programs were capped, and families were being turned away. The district explored other provider models, but many lacked the flexibility or scalability to meet growing demand. Right At School offered a model designed to expand with the district, without compromising quality or consistency.



"If we're going to say that families are important and that we're here to support them, then we can't have a system where some get access and some don't. It was unacceptable to say there would be winners and losers when it comes to that support."



A New Approach Built to Scale

The initial transition to Right At School marked a shift in what was possible. From the start, the focus was clear. Eliminate waitlists, expand access, and build a program that could grow with the district.

And the results were immediate.

There have been no waitlists in Valley Stream 13 to this day. No families turned away. Programs operate across all four elementary schools, serving more than 200 students.

What made the difference was not just scale. It was how the program responded when the unexpected happened. When pre-K was introduced, requirements changed overnight. Licensing, staffing, and structure all needed to adjust. Right At School moved just as quickly. That responsiveness became a pattern.

“When pre-K came in, that was a completely different program with different regulations. Another provider might have said, ‘that’s not something we do.’ Right at School said, ‘okay, we’ll figure it out.’ And they did.”



“Right At School immediately worked to license and meet the new New York state regulations for younger children, showing a commitment to avoiding exclusion of any students. There’s really nothing we’ve brought forward that they haven’t been able to deliver on.”



Momentum That Builds Over Time

As the partnership continued, the impact extended beyond access.

The program became a stable, trusted part of the district's daily operations. Families relied on it, participation remained strong, and feedback reflected high levels of satisfaction. That level of consistency helped reduce administrative burden and build confidence for families, staff, and leadership.

"In many places, the district ends up managing the after school program. That's not the case here. Issues are handled, communication is clear, and things are resolved before they ever rise to my level."



A Partner, Not a Provider



"A vendor runs a program. A partner asks, 'what do you need?' There are check-ins. There are surveys. There's communication with families. There's flexibility. That's what makes it sustainable."

– DR. JUDITH LAROCCA, SUPERINTENDENT

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For Dr. LaRocca, the difference is clear:

A provider delivers a service, and a partner shares responsibility. That structure shows up in meaningful ways every day with Right At School. Staff are trained and supported, constantly doing the research on child development to meet the needs of all students. Programs are supervised consistently, and feedback is gathered and acted on. Right At School's anticipatory solution support ensures adjustments are made before issues grow. Right At School remains engaged, continuously improving and aligning with the district's goals.

Built Around Real Life

*Access is not just about availability.
It's about usability.*

In Valley Stream 13, flexibility is essential. Families manage changing schedules, and their needs shift throughout the year. Right At School meets that reality with adaptable options, allowing families to use the program in ways that work for them.

"Parents can use it five days a week. They can use it two days. They can use it as they need it. That flexibility makes a real difference for families."



Strengthening the Student Experience

Valley Stream 13 aligns its approach with New York State's Portrait of a Graduate, emphasizing collaboration, communication, and problem-solving. These skills are not taught in isolation. They are built through experience.

"You can't collaborate if you don't have opportunities to collaborate. You can't resolve conflict unless you're given the chance to do it in a productive way."

That is where extended day programming plays a critical role. Relationships are not separate from learning. Students engage in structured activities where they build friendships, they learn how to navigate social situations, and they develop independence.

The program is not designed to replicate the school day, but to instead seamlessly support and extend it.

The environment supports both academic growth and real-world skill development, creating a consistent sense of belonging throughout the day.



"That sense of belonging,

that connection to a trusted adult, does more to support learning than adding more instruction ever could."

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"WHEN STUDENTS FEEL CARED FOR AND VALUED, THAT SUPPORTS EVERYTHING ELSE WE'RE TRYING TO DO DURING THE DAY."

Why It Works: Structure, Flexibility, and Belonging

The Right At School model is designed to go beyond supervision. It creates structure, consistency, and a sense of belonging that extends throughout the school day.

Students participate in meaningful activities, staff are trained and supported, and programs are both structured and adaptable. The result is a program that feels intentional rather than transactional, reflecting the needs of both the district and the families it serves.

“Right At School is constantly looking at research on child development and asking what works best for kids. That level of investment shows up in the program every day. When students feel cared for and valued, that supports everything else we’re trying to do during the day. Students know they belong.”



FAMILIES FEEL CONFIDENT IN THE CARE THEIR CHILDREN ARE RECEIVING,

with seasonal feedback that is positive and ongoing. When something does come up, it is addressed early and professionally. School leaders are not pulled into daily operations because the program runs with clarity, accountability, and strong supervision.

“I can count on one hand the number of times anything has come to me in the 6 years of our partnership. That tells you the program is being run the right way.”

The program has become something students genuinely want to be part of. Not just because they need care, but because they feel connected and enjoy the experience. It is a place where they are known, supported, and truly valued.

“Bringing on Right At School is the best thing we ever did.”



The Bottom Line: A Partnership That Delivers

With Right At School,

access has expanded, waitlists have been eliminated, and families have flexible options that reflect how they live and work.

- ✓ Students benefit from a consistent, supportive experience.
- ✓ District leaders gain a partner they can rely on.
- ✓ The result is a program that delivers for both families and the district.

For Valley Stream 13, this is not just an add-on. It is a strategic extension of the school day.

"Out-of-school time cannot be an afterthought. You can't ignore the time students spend in before and after school programs. If we want the best outcomes for students, we have to take this opportunity seriously. It has to be a priority."



RIGHT AT
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VALLEY STREAM 13
SCHOOL DISTRICT

4 Elementary Schools

Total Enrollment:
2,189 students

PARTNER SINCE

2020

Students Enrolled in RAS:

- 228 total students
- 200 of them enrolled full-time (Monday-Friday)

Bring Right At School to Your District

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

RIGHTATSCHOOL.COM

