

# The Gauteng Community of Practice

## LEARNING BRIEF

October 2021

### Strategies for learner recruitment and retention in After School programmes



#### The Community of Practice explored the following areas:

- Different strategies around learner recruitment.
- Tips on learner retention.
- How working with parents and the school community assists in both learner recruitment and learner retention.
- Maximising learner numbers and attendance.

#### Take-away lessons on learner retention:

- Having **direct contact within a partner school** is key. This can be the principal, deputy principal or HOD. It is through these individuals that After School Programmes get buy-in from the community. Organisations can communicate directly with parents and learners through the school.
- It is important to **continuously communicate and update parents** about the programme and the progress of the learners. This helps them keep track of how their children participate and attend the programme which, in turn, has a positive impact on learner retention.
- Building a **good relationship between tutors and learners** also ensures regular attendance. Generally, learners tend to communicate freely with tutors and build relationships of trust. The higher the tutor consistency, the greater the learner consistency in attending.



#### Take-away lessons on learner recruitment:

- It is important for organisations to **develop a recruitment plan** that is reviewed annually. Organisations can choose to include activities such as: school activations, social media campaigns, press releases, programme presentations, etc.
- **Recruitment should start before the year ends.** There should be a call for applications and advocacy around the programme which is followed by the review of applications, interviewing and the selection phase.
- The recruitment plan is a living document, and it is essential that an organisation looks at **what is working well and what the key lessons** are for recruitment.
- Again; **buy-in from parents and the rest of the community** is key in solidifying the voice of the After School programme and its importance. Pitching to these stakeholders is just as important as attracting learners.
- The ability of a programme to retain learners has impact on learner recruitment. A **stable and impactful programme** attracts other like-minded learners.



#### The Importance of Planning

Think about **timelines and the resources needed** when recruiting and retaining learners. The CoP explored the step-by-step plans and activities that different organisations do to **prepare for learner recruitment** over a period of three months. Even so, it's helpful to remember that learner recruitment can be an **ongoing process** throughout the year.

Outcomes from this activity can be viewed on this [Jamboard illustration](#).