



SCUSD After School Program

2012-2013 PROGRAM PLAN

Based on State Program Plan Guide



Youth Engagement Services

2012-2013

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM PLAN

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Name(s) of Site Employees

Name	Credentials
GEORGE MURRAY	106 UNITS - CSUS
ALEXANDRIA RAFAEL	70 UNITS – SCC
ASHLEY OLOW	102 UNITS - CSUS
DEANNA TORRES	NCLB
LILI STEVENS	30 UNITS – CITY CERTIFICATE- NCLB

Target Population

The target population for this program is for the students of Pony Express Elementary. Our program is open to all cultural demographics, athletic capability as well as any academic level. We are a primarily gate school, but even with that said our students still need the help like any other students would need. As far as students that have suspensions or behavioral attitude we always are accepting and try to solve the problem by working side by side with the school and keeping an open communication with the parents and teachers. We are located in the South Land Park / Greenhaven area of Sacramento, CA, and primarily work with students of an Asian descent, even with the majority of our students being Asian we seem to have a well-rounded program representing students that display if not all close to all ethnic backgrounds. This is important so that all students can see and experience diversity, be able to work with and be able to work with one another in any situation, and be able to experience something outside of their norm that they might not be totally familiar with.

Enrollment

Students are enrolled into the START program on a first come, first serve basis; however priority is given to returning students and foster youth. Students are also referred by teachers and school staff, and the START afterschool program tries to accommodate those students into the program as best as we can. If the program is full, we offer a waitlist for the student to be added to for when a spot opens up. Registration forms for the following school year are sent out prior to summer vacation and returned before the school ends that year so that we have a good idea and good amount of children enrolled for the following year while also informing parents where they stand with the program, so they are prepared for the following year. Back to school nights and other START events are advertised with flyers that are passed out to parents, as well as displayed on our information board in the cafeteria and in our new office in room 15.

One thing that I would like to say that advertising for the program is minimal; we at Pony Express START are 98% referral based. We are referred by current and past students, parents, and above all teachers and school staff.

Program Goals and Requirements

The way that we assessed the needs of our school, was see who we impact the most, I also connect with the principal and teachers on a regular basis to make sure we as an afterschool program are meeting their needs to assist their students. The students and their families are our primary focus above all. START has developed a program that not only aligns with the school day, but also brings relevant programs and activities that the students are interested in, START also provides academic support in a physically / emotionally safe setting where relationships are built. Relationships are built with school staff, principal and most importantly teachers because in order to be successful we must develop a trusting relationship; Talking to teachers to show them that you have an open door policy, also observing classrooms to show them that we want to learn from them as well. Another priority is being present and participating in the staff meetings that the school holds once a month. We also discuss what we do on a daily basis with parents and try to connect with them about their child's progress in the program. We look for information, input, and direction from the school staff as well as from the parents. They let us know what they think their child or student needs assistance in and we try to accommodate them.

Sacramento START does play a giant role in our program design because they provide us with the tools and curriculum to assist students. It also helps us align better with the school to offer a one of a kind program that everyone is happy with.

We offer student and parent surveys on a regular basis in order to keep providing a top quality after school program. Also keeping an open communication with teachers and showing them what we offer and do is another big way to get feedback. At any time teachers and/or parents could ask for us to use certain curriculum we have.

Youth Engagement Services

Some of the major goals are college readiness, student athlete and student leaders. These three things are major roles in providing youth with life skills that they will take for the rest of their lives. College readiness, we here at Pony Express START promote discussions, current events, and real life situations that may occur. We do this by having real discussions with students that require critical thinking and opinion based answers in a classroom setting. It gives the chance for them to come up with their own ideas and definitions but while also listening to other opinions and understanding where they might come up with that answer. Having respect for another's opinions and agreeing to disagree, allows students to get over stage fright or public speaking.

Also we have a peer to peer tutoring program that allows them to step into leadership roles. The S.W.A.T Team is a program that offers the chance for the intermediate youth to assist with homework and activities for the primary grade level. S.W.A.T. stands for "Students Working Actively to Tutor". This has been a great success for both parties and great feedback from parents and teachers.

Another goal that I have set forth already in the first two weeks of program, is that I want more community involvement. I and the new principal have already discussed having an event that showcases the community and the neighborhood. I have had a meeting with several parents and teachers to start the planning on this spring time community event offering vendors, car show, and community leaders.

In order to incorporate the community and letting the youth shine we have connected with our local Starbucks. We are posting art work on a monthly basis representing such events like: Red Ribbon Week, and Lights on After School. More art work is to come soon for other events.

Student athletes are not taken lightly here at Pony Express, sports are not only an extracurricular activity but it also creates discipline for a child. Academics before athletics, this teaches them the importance of keeping grades up to be able to participate in a sport. As well as to have self-discipline to stay focused on academics when the time is given to accomplish the goal and see the reward in the end. Without the student there can't be the athlete and/or leader.

My vision statement for the START program would be: Pony Express START works to enrich the lives of youth through educational curriculum (that aligns with the school day), sports, and ethics to better their future visions and aspirations to become College /Career ready students. As a program, we would also introduce a culturally diverse environment to establish a well-rounded program that real life situations that the youth may understand. We also allow them to grow and develop aspects of the program.

To retain and recruit students to come and stay in the program their ideas and opinions are important. We always ask for their feedback and show them that this is their program as well and student voice matters here. We check daily to make sure that our attendance numbers are above par and keeping track of why children are missing.

Youth Engagement Services

Keeping the kids interests as part of the program keeps them engaged to see what will tomorrow will bring.

To address the achievement gap we keep in close contact with the teachers that let us know weekly and monthly how students are doing, what they would like us to work on with the kids, and what might be the best way to approach or work with a certain child.

Program Content/Quality

The Pony Express START program aligns with the school day by keeping in close contact with the teachers, vocally and written. We have a START open house(Teacher's Tea) to showcase our curriculum so the teachers know what tools we have and use, so when teachers let us know what students need they can also let us know what curriculum best suites the child. I and my 2nd in charge Alexandria Rafael also work for the school and have a wonderful relationship with the school and all the staff. We have the same rules as the regular school day and carry over school culture when we can we participate in school activities and events.

Youth involvement is one of many things that we take pride in at Pony Express START. I have many graduating students from the past years who have come back to be involved in the program and serve as volunteers. Also students that are enrolled in the program do have class jobs, to encourage good behavior and responsibility. These jobs always give the students a sense of importance and ownership of the program which in today's world is very important for a student that lacks the support at home and needs another outlet such as sports, self-expression, and art.

Another big aspect that we are incorporating this year is LEGOS. LEGOS may seem just like a fun activity for spare time or fun. But studies have shown the importance of LEGOS and how they assist with the development of youth. They not only stimulate creativity and lateral thinking, they also help build math and pattern skills. With the interlocking parts. They also develop problem solving skills, allowing them to think on their own and reliant on their own imagination. Completing such tasks and challenges give youth a sense of self confidence to take on harder challenges not just with LEGOS but in school and in life.

Collaboration and Partnerships

At Pony Express START we have begun to branch out to several neighborhood businesses to build partnerships such as Massage Envy, Raley's, The Nugget, and Starbucks. We are actually working in collaboration with Starbucks to have monthly art shows for the participants of the Pony Express START Program. They will display our art publically for everyone to see, also one night a month Starbucks has a special recognition for the START students.

Staffing

As the Site Director with START I am required to attend mandatory trainings. Some main training's that I like my staff to focus on but not limited to, that are provided by START are: program planning, positive discipline, and the 40 developmental assets. These trainings are core pieces to developing a program and working with youth. We are required to complete certain trainings every year to establish a good foundation to build a program up from program planning, positive reinforcement, CPR, program managing, and monthly SCUSD meeting to name just a few.

Program Administration

Pony Express START takes attendance daily and is completed in the beginning of program time when school is let out. All of the students come straight to the cafeteria and sit at designated tables depending on grade level for attendance. After that they have supper and proceed with a bathroom break, group activity time, and homework time. After homework time we have curriculum and rotation time between other clusters. At the end of the day all remaining students meet in Room 15 for the last 10-15 minutes to wrap up the day. If students are not going to show up I ask parents to let me know why they are out for the day, and to let them know what are valid reasons for early dismissal such as; parallel program, sick, medical apt, or family emergency. If parents are late and do not let me know why or if they are going to be late they are given a late pick up warning and this is recorded. If for some reason this becomes a repeating pattern I would take further action to work with the parents and/or possibly dismiss the child from the program.

Classroom management is taken seriously; in the beginning of each year I hold a meeting with all staff to come up with a discipline plan so that we all follow the same plan of action across the board; so there is no confusion between students, staff, and parents. We handle behavior problems by talking with the children and depending on the severity of the problem and/or if the problem persists in a repeating manner an action plan or conduct violation is brought upon that child. When communicating with the parents of their child's behavior we are upfront with them. We always let them know what their child did, why they did it, and what actions we took to alleviate the problem. After that we always end the conversation on a positive note. To let the child know that he/she is a good child and we expect more from them. It holds them more responsible for their actions and gives them ownership if they decide to do something wrong again. Depending on the severity of the problem or injury we always contact the SCUSD and START to let them know of the problem that occurred. Parent complaints are taken very seriously and are dealt with a one on one approach, letting them know that we will get to the bottom of things and that our supervisors and affiliate supervisors are here to help and advise us on what actions we can take.

Outcome Measures and Evaluation

The most important part of the program is that we are making a difference in the lives of our students, families and surrounding community. The ways that we gauge our effectiveness is through parents, teachers, and student surveys; also monitoring student academics, and how they communicate in and out of the class. This builds relationships, helps bridge the academic gap for some to develop trust. We cannot just ask for trust without showing them that we are here for them, as much as we want them here for us. I believe that the best way is to see the percentage of returning participants in the following year, grades, and to see if they return after graduating to give back to their own community. Here at Pony Express START we are a family and we have developed a community, so for a student to graduate and return to give back time to another student that possibly had the same problems that they had, is rewarding in itself.

If these goals and achievements as a program are not met then we as a program must back up and think what we can do to make a change in these children's lives. How can we do this, and what do they need from us. Evaluations from parents and students make a world of difference in developing a program. You get an insight to what they want and also looking back to your days as a kid. What did you want to see? What did you want to do? How can we make this curriculum fun and engaging, to grab their attention and have the best possible program.

I think the best way to evaluate a program's effectiveness is to not only look at it once or twice a year but constantly. Not every child is the same nor is their individual needs. A one of a kind program is my goal. We develop a program designed for the youth and the community it resides in. We develop a program that has constant growth for our youth. We provide a safe and welcoming program where youth can develop their own individuality and become their own unique self.