

Our House After School Program Report Fall 2017

Summary:

Over the Fall semester the Our House after school program in collaboration with support from the Building Beloved Community efforts at Wildflower has started to blossom!

Youth Engagement

- We gave out surveys to students to learn more about interest in activities with about 45 responses. Students are highly interested in cooking, leadership development, field trips and sports activities.
- Initially between 10-15 students attended intermittently with an interest in free snacks
- As student voices became amplified through service projects, we have about 40 students who attend, engage in projects and play games on Tuesdays and Wednesdays (different students are able to attend different days).

Student Advisory Council

- The role and criteria defined, sent to teachers and counselors to identify and encourage youth leaders to apply. Because developing relationships with students took time and consistency, we feel we have a few student leaders who will be ready to apply in the Spring. These students are currently demonstrating leadership in the program.
- Our goal is to have 2-3 on board by Feb 15.

Community Partnerships

- Travis High School (THS) has fully embraced the program and all activity ideas with full use of the space of the cafeteria and offering of locker storage space and additional classroom space. They have offered the use of a wall to create a community art mural and the garden to start a garden and cooking club.
- The St Edwards SERVE volunteer program had 8 students join Travis students and Our House volunteers to clean up their garden. We plan to have another clean up day in the Spring and are working with the THS culinary program to use veggies from the garden.
- ACC Service Learning project, in which ACC students in a Macroeconomics course developed presentations on the disparities of community facilities and resources between 78704 and 78741, identified the needs for programs and support like Our House.
- Currently, a UT student in social work is serving one day a week as a volunteer.
- A Hip Hop group, the College of Hip Hop Knowledge, promotes working with youth and providing positive images through performances. They are very interested in coaching students and offering an open mic night.
- United Way for Greater Austin (UWATX) provided Volunteer Project Management to our program staff. They are ready to help with introducing and teaching students in this program.
- Other community partners have been engaged with, such as Jump On It, a summer concert series for youth in East Austin. Potential engagements may be pursued with groups like Southeast Austin Community Health, for healthy cooking class instructor; Creative Austin, for guidance on the community wall project; and, Generation Citizen on active citizenship classes in THS.

Programming

- Youth in Action (Tuesdays facilitated by Skye Howell), using student ideas from a question of the day open flip chart, focused on community issues. The students chose to focus on homelessness and community members in need. They created “Manna Bags”, initiated a Coats for Kids drive and made holiday cards for the children in Austin Children’s Shelter.
- Barrio Writers (Wednesdays facilitated by Leticia Ureita) focused on themes of community and engaged students in conversations about Gentrification, preserving family culture and stories and developed the concept of a community mural wall to be created by students on a THS wall.
- Assemblies on Social Emotional Learning topics (twice a month on Tuesdays at 10:30 am) are facilitated by Dr. Steve Larson.

Opportunities for Wildflower engagement

- Involvement in the community mural wall, cooking classes, guest instruction for self defense, dance, music, photography and art workshops.
- Partner in student led endeavors such a Coats for Kids, back to school drives, etc.
- Provide volunteers for unique AISD - wide programs, e.g. Generation Citizen, a program teaching experiential, active citizenship
- Provide adult supervision and chaperones for school facilitated field trips, usually a Saturday activity
- Offering of a safe space for summer activities and special events such as open mic and community dinner and fellowship.