

# Afterschool Programs That Reflect the *Learning in Afterschool & Summer* Learning Principles

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## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to describe the practices of actual afterschool programs that exemplify the learning principles promoted by the Learning in Afterschool project (LIA). Below we offer some background and a full description of the Learning in Afterschool project and its five learning principles that should define quality afterschool programming.

We follow this with a brief description of several afterschool programs and their practices that align with the LIA learning principles. In the appendix, readers can find, among other things, a full profile of these programs, perceived value of these practices and evidence of their effectiveness, and what program leaders believe are needed to implement these practices and program components. For more information on the LIAS project, go to [www.learninginafterschool.org](http://www.learninginafterschool.org).

## BACKGROUND ON THE AFTERSCHOOL MOVEMENT

In the years since the publication of the Carnegie study, *A Matter of Time* (1992), we have seen a huge expansion in the funding of afterschool programs. This is due to a consensus among policymakers and voters that afterschool programs are an essential contributor to reducing risk among young people.

In the early years, afterschool programs were valued as ways to keep kids safe afterschool, thereby providing vital support to single parents and working families. Later, these programs were expected to improve measures used to gauge school achievement. At the time, few people understood the opportunities discussed in *A Matter of Time* - the potential of afterschool programs to engage and excite young people in learning.



## ABOUT THE LEARNING IN AFTERSCHOOL & SUMMER (LIAS) PROJECT

The Learning in Afterschool & Summer Project is an effort by afterschool advocates and leaders to unify the field of afterschool and focus the movement on promoting young people's learning. This means offering opportunities not found at home or in school and applying our most recent knowledge on learning to our afterschool practices.

The idea of promoting young people's learning and broader development after the classroom day is not new. What is new is the vast number of children who are now able to access afterschool programs. We believe that afterschool programming is a unique institution that must offer more than safe havens or homework help after school. If afterschool programs are to achieve their true potential, they must become known as important places of learning – learning that complements, but is distinguished from, the learning that happens at school or home.

The goal of the Learning in Afterschool & Summer (LIAS) project is to position afterschool programs as places for learning. The project draws upon an extensive and growing body of research and is informed by the national discussions on education reform and youth development. Achieving this goal will require the incorporation of specific learning principles and approaches in the definition and expectations of afterschool programs, and acceptance by a broad array of stakeholders.



## ABOUT THE LIAS LEARNING PRINCIPLES

Below we detail each of the LIAS learning principles. We follow this by sharing program examples that demonstrate this principle. It is important to note that many of these examples demonstrate other LIAS principles as well. These principles did not happen accidentally. Instead, they are intentionally built into the design of these youth programs. All of these programs are operated within a school setting and receive funding from California's Afterschool Education and Safety (ASES) program or federal 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC).

## Learning that is Active

Learning and memory recall of new knowledge is strengthened through different exposures – seeing, hearing, touching, and doing. Afterschool learning should be the result of activities that involve young people in “doing” – activities that allow them to be physically active, stimulate their innate curiosity, and that are hands-on and project-based. Hands-on learning involves the child in a total learning experience, which enhances the child's ability to think critically.



## Afterschool Program Examples

### **WINGS: Winners Growing Strong (K-6) ASES, National City, CA**

All of the program activities offered to participants are hands-on, project-based, and end in a culminating event where the participants showcase the skills they've learned. The participants are given the opportunity to join the club of their choice. Activities include: Author Fair, where youth learn the entire process and production of writing and illustrating their own books, then display them at a fair where their books can be read and signed with their autograph; Art Gallery, where youth learn different styles of art and/or different artists and display their own works of art in a gallery where refreshments are served and tours are lead; Theater Production, where youth practice plays, musicals, and/or reader's theaters and learn all aspects of a stage performance (costumes, stage presence, voice projection, etc) and present a theater production in front of an audience.



## AP Giannini Middle School (grades 6-8), Sunset Neighborhood Beacon Center, San Francisco, CA

Participants in the Sunset Neighborhood Beacon program engage in learning that is very active. Each participant has a choice of 10 different project-based clubs. Project-based learning "clubs" employs a range of experiential approaches. All of the clubs are encouraged to integrate technology based on state goals and standards. The clubs include diverse activities such as *Urban Dance*, *Newsletter/Movie-Making*, *MOUSE Squad*, *Urban Music*, *Peer Resources* and a variety of fitness activities. When appropriate, the participants use a high-speed Internet connection and a variety of technologies and software including iMovie, FruityLoops Studio, Adobe Photoshop and the Microsoft Office suite to accomplish club goals.

Every project-based learning club addresses multiple school subjects with particular emphasis on English language arts. For example, the *MOUSE Squad* has strong reading, writing and comprehension components while simultaneously emphasizing mathematical reasoning, scientific investigation and experimentation, and technical skill-building. *Urban Dance* addresses content in the arts, social studies and mathematics. Participants learn about break dancing as part of hip-hop culture and how it has evolved over time. When young people are performing the basics of break dancing, they use addition and division patterns to keep rhythm and visualize the overall pattern of the dance form.



## **Poway Unified School District ASES Program (5 elementary and middle schools), Poway, CA**

One of the major events at the Poway ASES program is the annual *Duct Tape Fashion Show*. Elementary and middle school youth design fashion accessories, gowns, and sports outfits made entirely of duct tape. In its third year, this program is highly successful in engaging youth in an active and meaningful way. The fashion show is put on in mid March each year, but youth begin planning and working on costumes as early as November. Youth learn pattern making and construction techniques and have the opportunity to work on their designs once or twice a week in the afterschool program. When it is time to perform the fashion show, young people model the final product. A panel of judges, consisting of school board members, district employees, and others, votes for the best outfit from the different competing schools.

## **Alvarado ExCEL, (K-5), San Francisco, CA**

Youth in Alvarado ExCEL work on media projects where they use Photoshop and other graphic design software to create films about a theme of their choice. These media projects are hands-on and result in a final product, allowing them to develop skills in design and filmmaking. In the past, youth have researched their ancestry and created videos around this theme. This also provides youth with the opportunity to become culturally aware.



## Learning that is Collaborative

Knowledge should be socially centered, as collaborative learning provides the best means to explore new information. Afterschool programs are well positioned to build skills that allow young people to learn as a team. This includes listening to others, supporting group learning goals, resolving differences and conflicts, and making room for each member to contribute his or her individual talents. Collaborative learning happens when learners engage in a common task where each individual depends on and is accountable to each other.



## Afterschool Program Examples

### ***Orrick Year Round Enrichment Program (K-5), Bessie Carmichael Elementary School, San Francisco, CA***

Each club teaches the participants the importance of being part of a team. In the Video Making Club, participants follow a theme and cover core values within the video. They learn the different roles of a production crew, make short vignettes, then showcase the video. In the Music Club, participants are first taught the basics, practice their skills, then are given the opportunity to perform as a whole group. The Sewing Club allows participants to learn basic sewing skills then showcase the final product. A past project was a quilt where participants were responsible for making their own tile square and then learning how to put every square together making the quilt.



### ***Alvarado ExCEL (K-5), San Francisco, CA***

This program offers hands-on projects that include carpentry and building. Both of these projects require collaboration among the youth, as they are working on one project and must problem-solve together to complete it. For example, youth built a small-scale replica of the Golden Gate Bridge from scrap wood. They had to work together to fit different sized materials that were able to bear weight.

### ***Club Timberwolf (6-8), Julian Junior High School (ASES), Julian, CA***

Teen CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) is a program designed to train junior high students how to respond as a team to emergency situations. Students are trained in basic first aid, search and rescue, with a focus on teamwork and the ability to coordinate with emergency professionals. Teen CERT members learn to be prepared for a large-scale disaster or emergency such as: structure fire, forest fire, earthquake, or terrorist attack. Students learn from emergency professionals and are given basic equipment to help them be prepared.





## Learning that is Meaningful

Young people are intrinsically motivated when they find their learning meaningful. This means having ownership over the learning topic and the means to assess their own progress. Motivation is increased when the learning is relevant to their own interests, experiences, and the real world in which they live. Community and cultural relevance is especially important to new immigrant youth and those from minority cultures. Rather than learning that is focused on academic subjects, young people in afterschool can be helped to apply their academic skills to their areas of interest and real world problems. Also, when learning involves responsibility, leadership, and service to others, it is experienced as more meaningful.



## Afterschool Program Examples

### **McKinley Elementary School (K -5) After School Enrichment Program (ASEP), San Francisco, CA**

In Snack Squad, a handful of youth work together to learn the practical skills for leading a healthy lifestyle through working in the vegetable garden, nutrition education, and experience planning and preparing healthy snacks. These youth are given the opportunity to be leaders and pass the information on to other students through physical activities and peer-to-peer education.

### **Poway Unified School District ASES Program (5 elementary and middle schools), Poway, CA**

Several afterschool activities are developed by gathering student input on their interests as well as staff talent and interest. The wrestling program is especially popular. Wrestling students from the high school coach and mentor middle school youth wrestlers, allowing the middle school youth to develop skills should they want to pursue wrestling in high school. It also provides the high school youth with a sense of purpose by becoming mentors and role models to the middle school youth.

## **HEAT: (Highlanders Effecting And powering Tomorrow) (9 -12), McLane High School (ASSETs), Fresno, CA**

McLane High School HEAT afterschool program engages youth in activities that are meaningful and expands horizons. They do this by involving youth in conferences and by connecting them with community organizations.

### **Summits & Conferences**

- *Female Youth Empowerment Conference:* HEAT works with others to identify 100 female youth that are at-risk for dropping out and sponsors a conference that consists of five workshops that focus on improving these young people's chances for success in a meaningful way. Workshops include resume writing, importance of physical health and activity, importance of healthy relationships, and developing personal statements for college.
- *Freshmen summit on slowing drop out rate:* A group of freshmen youth meets regularly and discusses strategies for slowing the drop out rate. Some strategies include handing out certificates to freshmen who have attended a certain number of school days, and they receive rewards for grade improvement. At the end of the year, the group of freshmen type up a report of what schools and the government can do to slow the drop out rate, and send it to the school district. The event is led by youth in all grade levels 9-12.
- *The Teen Abuse Project* works toward preventing teen abuse and is held in February and March each year. Eight youth go through 20 hours of training and then perform skits for the entire school relating to awareness of teen abuse and violence. Various events are held in a weeklong violence prevention and awareness campaign, concluding with a summit at the end of the week.

The McLane High School HEAT program also engages with a number of community partners to receive in-kind donations, bring in speakers, and introduce youth participants to community service opportunities. Examples include donations from major department stores for the various events, workshops on healthy relationships by local organizations, and opportunities to participate in community service with organizations that restore local parks. This partnership with community partners exposes youth to new things and new places, and gives them a greater awareness of things going on in their community.

## After School All-Stars (K -12), 450 school sites in 12 different cities

The *Life Service Action* initiative demonstrates the meaningful LIAS principle by giving participants the opportunity to improve their communities through hands-on student-led service projects. Past projects included creating a healthy lifestyle video, volunteering for the Special Olympics, planting urban gardens, fundraising for local charities, and serving meals to the homeless.



## Learning that Supports Mastery

Young people tell us they are most engaged when they are given opportunities to learn new skills. If young people are to learn the importance and joy of mastery, they need the opportunity to learn and practice a full sequence of skills that will allow them to become “really good at something.” Afterschool activities should not promote the gathering of random knowledge and skills. Rather, afterschool learning activities should be explicitly sequenced and designed to promote the layering of skills that allows participants to create a product or demonstrate mastery in a way they couldn't do before. Programs often achieve this by designing activities that lead to a culminating event or product that can be viewed and celebrated by peers and family members. For older youth, many programs are depending on apprenticeship models to assist youth in achieving a sense of mastery.



## Afterschool Program Examples

### **Poway Unified School District ASES Program (5 elementary and middle schools), Poway, CA**

Another special event at the Poway Afterschool program is the annual *Robotics Expo*. This program for middle schoolers started when a high school student from Poway thought it would be good to start building robotics skills in youth before they reached high school. The Poway high school robotics team has been involved in national competitions and is very successful. Once a week, a high school mentor goes to the middle school afterschool robotics activity to help youth with their projects. Youth spend this time planning, keeping records, and making adjustments to their projects in preparation for the robotics competition held in the gym. Parents and students attend this event, where 10-12 teams of two youth participate in demonstrating and adjusting their designs.



### **Sanchez Enrichment and After School Program (K-5), San Francisco, CA**

In the Gardening Club, participants learn the skills needed to grow and maintain both a vertical and traditional garden including measuring plant growth and knowing how much water the plants need. The participants of the Gardening Club are given the opportunity to learn a full sequence of skills over time, as they start off knowing very little about gardening. Their project culminates after their vegetables are fully grown when they learn how to properly cook them for eating.

### **LA's BEST Afterschool Enrichment Program (K-5) in over 186 Elementary Schools, Los Angeles, CA**

LA's BEST activities and clubs provide participants with the opportunity to develop their skills via projects that require moving through increasingly complex tasks. Their science activities, for example, have children initiate the process by developing inquiry skills, then collecting evidence via experiments, applying knowledge via assessments, and culminating with public presentations of their projects.

### **Balboa High School Afterschool (9-12), San Francisco, CA**

In the digital media arts club, participants learn various software programs and develop the skills to design complex 3-D animations. A filmography class has also given participants the chance to learn how to use video equipment and perform editing techniques. In the film class, youth have the option of participating in something called *Streetside Stories*, a program that builds literacy through storytelling. In this program, youth participants share a personal experience or story about themselves on a video that they shoot themselves. The stories are also published in a book every year. When the movies are completed, they are screened by the whole school at a final exhibition that includes food and live music. Finally, the videos are put on *Streetside* website.

## **Students Plus After School (9-12), Crawford High School (ASSETs), San Diego, CA**

Collective Voices, Peacemakers, and Refugee Speakers Clubs are clubs offered by Students Plus After School. These clubs are focused on increasing young people's public speaking skills. In the Refugee Speakers Club, participants go out and share their story with other local high schools, allowing participants to demonstrate their mastery of public speaking. Collective Voices is a structured public speaking class, where youth learn the technical aspects of public speaking. The course culminates in the participants traveling to a local college to speak in front of a class of 300 students about their experiences.



## **Club Timberwolf (6-8), Julian Junior High School (ASES), Julian, CA**

The *Kids with Cameras* program began as a partnership between Club Timberwolf's *Garden Club* and the Volcan Mountain Foundation, a wilderness protection program that advocates for the preservation of Volcan Mountain. For three weeks on Friday during the afterschool program, youth participated in photography workshops where they were introduced to the camera and learned composition and mechanics. Local retired photographers were recruited by members of the Volcan Foundation's Education Committee to teach the course and eventually accompany the youth to Volcan for further hands-on instruction.

First, participants practiced taking pictures in the school garden for three weeks. They then traveled to Volcan Mountain, a wildlife preserve in Julian Junior High's back yard, to photograph the preserve. The best images were used to make a series of gift cards for sale at the garden market and school office. The proceeds go to garden programs.

Photographers also looked over the young people's shots from Volcan, voted on the best images, and mounted them into 14x18 prints. An artists' reception was held at the public library, with youth and their parents, the garden club, library staff, and members from the community in attendance to celebrate the collection of photos. The prints are currently on display in the school library and will be hung gallery style in a classroom. The photo display is open to travel to go to other Volcan organizations.

## Learning that Expands Horizons

Young people benefit by learning opportunities that take them beyond their current experience and expand their horizons. Learning about new things and new places promotes a greater sense of potential of what they can achieve and brings a sense of excitement and discovery to the learning environment. Meeting new people can expand social networks in ways that create new opportunities. Afterschool programs have the flexibility to go beyond the walls of their facilities. They can use the surrounding community as a classroom and bring in individuals and businesses that young people may not otherwise come into contact with.

Expanding young people's horizons also includes helping them to develop a global awareness. This includes increasing their knowledge of other cultures and places and their understanding of the issues and problems they have in common across cultural and political divides.



## Afterschool Program Examples

### Balboa High School Afterschool (9-12), San Francisco, CA

At the Balboa program, one of the many hands-on clubs is the *Build On* club. This club offers participants the opportunity to travel outside of the country to build schools in poor, rural areas. This club exposes youth to different cultures and increasing their global awareness.

In the *Mouse Squad Club*, participants learn the basics of computer hardware, including how to troubleshoot, provide others with computer help, and other technology related skills. All of these clubs are designed to provide youth the opportunity to explore their potential and skills related to specific careers.

## After School All-Stars (K -12), 450 school sites in 12 different cities

*CampUs*, a Summer High School Transition program of *We Are Ready* initiative: Participants camp out at a college campus for 6 days so that they can learn all about what life is like in high school and college. While on campus, they are taught study skills and about the SATs, they create their own personalized 4-year plans, and they learn what requirements need to be met for graduation. Participants have the opportunity to pick majors, complete a mock college application which includes an essay, resume, recommendation letter, and in-person interview, and take part in a mock acceptance ceremony on the last day, held by the All-Stars staff. This allows the participants to visualize the process.

A second program component is the *Career Exploration Opportunities (CEO) Initiative*. Participants are exposed to different career options by meeting with local business owners, community leaders, and role models. In-person interviews and field trips to workplaces and business schools are just some ways that participants are able to expand their horizons and learn skills for the workplace and potential careers. For example, participants interested in culinary arts were given the opportunity to interview chefs at the Culinary Institute. Those interested in fashion design were given the opportunity to take a design class at the Skechers headquarters where they were able to design their own sneakers.





## **ABC (Achieve, Believe, Commit) After School Program, Orange Glen High School (9-12), Escondido, CA**

The Fashion Club meets once a week and participants must apply to be accepted into the club. Career speakers and community business owners are invited to speak and give lessons. Past projects have included a Recycle Event, where accessories are made from recycled products and modeled at a “trashion show”. The Fashion Club has also done community service projects where participants made beanies for a homeless shelter and made holiday cards for an orphanage. An all-expense paid field trip to Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising (FIDM) included a private lecture from an FIDM speaker, tour of the campus, and lunch.



## **LA's BEST Afterschool Enrichment Program (K-5) in over 186 Elementary Schools, Los Angeles, CA**

Activities, field trips and site visits from luminaries afford their students opportunities to become exposed to and to experience concepts beyond their daily routines. Whether via a trip to the Getty Museum, a visit with an actor or the local librarian, or activities that make global connections to children's lives in Colombia, children experience events, cultures and histories designed to broaden the realm of possibilities for what they can know and become.

## **The Prep Program (ASSETs), South El Monte High School (9-12), South El Monte, CA**

*Advocates For Change (AFC)* is PREP's afterschool club which focus on creating change through community service and fundraising in order to give back to the local and global community. Projects include volunteering at Columbia Middle School and Nativity, and raising awareness of the current genocides in the world.



## About Temescal Associates

[www.temescalassociates.com](http://www.temescalassociates.com)

Temescal Associates is dedicated to building the capacity of leaders and organizations in education and youth development who are serious about improving the lives of young people. Our clients include leaders of youth serving institutions and organizations, school and youth program practitioners, public and private funders, intermediary organizations, and policy makers. Their work ranges from building large scale youth and community initiatives to providing services to young people on a day-to-day basis.

To accomplish this, Temescal Associates draws on a pool of gifted and highly experienced consultants who excel at eliciting the internal knowledge and wisdom of those we work with while introducing new knowledge and strategies that can transform the day-to-day practices that lead to improved youth outcomes.

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# **Appendix:**

## **Afterschool Program Profiles**

In the appendix, the reader will find a full program profile of each program that is described above. These profiles include a program description, a summary of practices that are aligned with the LIAS principles, attendance information, a brief discussion of the perceived value of the practice, and from the perspective of the program leaders, what it takes to implement.



**Name of the Program**

LA's BEST After School Enrichment Program

**Name of the Organization that Manages the Program**

LA's BEST / LAUSD

**Number of Participants**

Total enrolled: 28,844 Daily average: 26,028 across 186 elementary schools

**Program Description**

LA's BEST (Better Educated Students for Tomorrow) was created in 1988 as a unique public-private partnership including the Office of the Mayor, the City of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Unified School District and the private sector. LA's BEST continues to address the growing need for high quality after school programs for thousands of children with the greatest needs and fewest resources. At no cost to parents, LA's BEST offers homework assistance, academic support and fun enrichment and recreation activities in a safe, supervised, and nurturing environment each day after school. LA's BEST currently serves more than 28,000 children, ages 5 to 12, at 186 elementary schools throughout the City of Los Angeles. The program operates from the end of the school day until 6PM daily. Since its inception, LA's BEST has been a continuing source of pride and hope for the City of Los Angeles.

**LIAS Learning Principles and LA's BEST Program Practices**

- *Active* – The LA's BEST approach to learning is differentiated, experiential and relevant. Staff use a CHECK-IN/ENGAGE/REFLECT protocol when designing and implementing activities that connect students to previous learning, while deepening their understanding through practical, hands-on engagement in integrated curriculum-based and enrichment clubs. Students experience activities that target their learning styles and are presented in a context that is both culturally familiar and age appropriate.
- *Collaborative* – Staff are encouraged to use individual, pairs, small groups and large groups as activities unfold. Teams form the crux of many projects and presentations.
- *Meaningful* – Activities, themes and clubs flow straight from student recommendations. The entire activity planning process at LA's BEST is built on continual assessment and response to student interests.
- *Supports Mastery* – LA's BEST activities and clubs provide participants with the opportunity to develop their skills via projects that require moving through increasingly complex tasks. Our science activities, for example, have students initiate the process by developing inquiry skills, then collecting evidence via experiments, applying knowledge via assessments, and culminating with public presentations of their projects.
- *Expands Horizons* – Activities, field trips and site visits from luminaries afford our students opportunities to become exposed to and to experience concepts beyond their daily routines. Whether via a trip to the Getty Museum, a visit with an actor or the local librarian, or activities that make global connections to children's lives in Colombia, students experience events, cultures and histories designed to broaden the realm of possibilities for what they can know and become.

### **Description of the Practice**

LA's BEST students experience activities in any of 14 core components (homework support, literacy, math, science, social science, digital learning/technology, visual and performing arts, social skills/conflict resolution, seasonal sports, drill team, nutrition, fitness, recreational games, and field trips). Clubs serve to organize the program at the site around issues and concerns of interest to the students. Activities bring the clubs to life, fostering experiential learning through reading, dance, sports or any other vehicle that develops knowledge and skills. Staff use daily activity plans to ensure that learning is intentional, differentiated and focused on the children's natural curiosity.

### **The Perceived Value of this Practice and/or Evidence of Effectiveness**

LA's BEST uses distinct measures of the effectiveness of our approach. In annual student and parent surveys, both have consistently rated the student experience and parent satisfaction highly. Independent evaluations of our program by UCLA's Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing (CRESST) have demonstrated the long-term impact of the practices including LA's BEST participants being less likely to drop out of school or be involved in crime, and more likely to outperform non-participants in math standardized test scores.

### **What it Takes to Implement this Practice**

Intensive orientation prior to the start of practice at a site provides staff with expectations for their work and prepares them to execute fundamental protocols like managing the learning environment and developing activities. Continuous training in a variety of topics ensures that staff are knowledgeable about the most current after school practices and how to translate these concepts and strategies when working with their specific group(s). A blend of purchased and proprietary curricula is used to support and guide staff in offering activities that will engage students and promote learning. Teams of traveling staff visit each site to monitor compliance and coach staff in implementing quality programming. Finally, data collected from the field in the form of student surveys, monthly activity reports, and observations are used to assess program services and assist staff in developing program improvement plans of action.

**Name of the Program:** Alvarado ExCEL

**Name of the Organization that Manages the Program:** San Francisco Unified School District ExCEL

**Number of Participants:** 150

**Program Description**

The ExCEL program is designed “to create and sustain ‘safe havens’ at public schools where students and community members can access expanded learning opportunities and integrated education, health, social service, and cultural programs in the out-of-school hours.” Alvarado ExCEL offers programming to youth in Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

**LIAS Learning Principles that are Aligned with the Program Practice**

- *Meaningful* – Participants are free to choose the club that is most interesting to them. For example, the media projects allow youth to explore their ancestry and learn about their culture and how it relates to them.
- *Active* – Activities are hands-on and project based.
- *Collaborative* – Activities provide youth participants with the opportunity to work on projects together.
- *Supports Mastery* – Projects that are long-term allow youth to build skills over time.

**Description of the Practice**

Youth in Alvarado ExCEL work on media projects where they use Photoshop and other graphic design software to create films about a theme of their choice. These media projects are hands-on and result in a final product, allowing them to develop skills in design and filmmaking. In the past, youth have researched their ancestry and created videos around this theme. This also provides youth with the opportunity to become culturally aware. Other hands-on projects include carpentry and building.

Both of these projects require collaboration among the youth, as they are working on one project and must problem-solve together to complete it. For example, youth built a small-scale replica of the Golden Gate Bridge from scrap wood. They had to work together to fit different sized materials that were able to bear weight. Most of these projects are long-term, bestowing youth the opportunity to learn skills over time, demonstrate mastery, and motivating them to keep coming. “If you aren’t present for all of these projects,” says Ligia, a group leader at Alvarado ExCEL, “your ideas won’t be incorporated. The youth get that.”

**The Perceived Value of this Practice and/or Evidence of Effectiveness**

Youth participants at Alvarado ExCEL get so involved in their projects, that they look forward to coming to the program every day. “Many of them tell their friends about the program and ask their parents to pick them up later so they can have more time to work on projects,” says Ligia. Additionally, the program is inclusive and youth feel invested in it. They feel a sense of belonging and that whatever they say or do counts. When working on projects, decisions are made by the group of youth, and projects are developed according to the youth’s interest. “This is the main motivator,” says Ligia. “They are working on something they really want to do, and this keeps them coming back.”

**What it Takes to Implement this Practice**

Certain equipment, such as laptop computers and Photoshop software, are needed for the media projects. Additionally, “the connection between afterschool staff and our youth participants is another thing that makes the program so strong,” says Ligia.



**Name of the Program**

ASES in Poway USD

**Name of the Organization that Manages the Program**

Poway Unified School District

**Number of Participants**

800-1,200 across 5 schools

**Program Description**

The ASES program in Poway USD serves five elementary and middle schools and focuses on two elements of afterschool programming: academic literacy and program activities. The academic literacy portion includes the utilization of a software program called Compass Learning, which helps youth build math and language arts skills.

The program also involves its youth in a number of activities that result in culminating events.

**LIAS Learning Principles that are Aligned with the Program Practices**

- *Active* – Youth are involved in projects that are hands-on and allow them to be physically active. Examples include the Duct Tape Fashion show and the Robotics Expo.
- *Meaningful* – Youth are free to choose the activities that are most important to them.
- *Mastery* – Youth have the opportunity to learn progressively more complex skills and work on a project that culminates in a final product.
- *Collaborative* – Youth work on projects together and must problem-solve together to accomplish goals.
- *Expands Horizons* - Activities are designed to provide youth the opportunity to explore their potentials and skills related to specific careers. Examples include the Duct Tape Fashion show, which gives youth the opportunity to explore fashion design techniques, and the Robotics Expo, where youth learn engineering and design skills.

The ASES Program at Poway sponsors four major events that require planning, time management, and follow through, and culminate in an event. All of these culminating events require collaboration, active youth participation, and are meaningful to youth.

**Description of the Practice**

The ASES program holds four major activities that culminate in a final event where youth demonstrate their learning and skill development. The first of these events is *The Amazing Race*, which is coordinated with Lights On Afterschool each fall. Fourth and fifth graders form teams of two from each of the five different ASES schools and compete amongst each other to answer trivia questions and solve clues. Site supervisors at each location design different activities that take youth to different parts of the campus to solve clues and problem solve. As the weeks progress, teams are eliminated. Teams are posted on display boards on site and the local KRAM TV program shows which teams are eliminated each week. This program is aired over the district, which helps to recruit students to the ASES program.

The second major event the Poway ASES program engages its youth in is the annual *Duct Tape Fashion Show*. Elementary and middle school youth design fashion accessories, gowns, and sports outfits made entirely of duct tape. In its third year, this program is highly successful in engaging youth in an active and meaningful way. The fashion show is put on in mid March each year, but youth begin planning and working on costumes as early as November. Youth learn pattern making and construction techniques and have the opportunity to work on their designs once or twice a week in the afterschool program. When it is time to perform the fashion show, one or two students model the final product. A panel of judges, consisting of school board members, district employees, and others, votes for the best outfit from the different competing schools.

The third special event that the afterschool program offers is an annual *Robotics Expo*. This program for middle schoolers started when a high school student from Poway thought it would be good to start building robotics skills in youth before they reached high school. The Poway high school robotics team has been involved in national competitions and is very successful. Once a week, a high school mentor goes to the middle school afterschool robotics activity to help youth with their projects. Youth spend this time planning, keeping records, and making adjustments to their projects in preparation for the robotics competition held in the gym. Parents and students attend this event, where 10-12 teams of two youth participate in demonstrating and adjusting their designs.

Finally, the District Wide Talent Show takes place every January and allows middle schoolers to perform a variety of talents, including music, dance, and more. Youth practice their talent in the afterschool program starting in November. High school students are involved as dance instructors and lighting managers.

In addition, other ASES program activities are developed by gathering student input on their interests as well as staff talent and interest. The program offers a number of sports, including soccer, football, basketball, and wrestling. The wrestling program is especially popular. Wrestling students from the high school coach and mentor middle school youth wrestlers, allowing the middle school youth to develop skills should they want to pursue wrestling in high school. It also provides the high school youth with a sense of purpose by becoming mentors and role models to the middle school youth.

### **The Perceived Value of this Practice and/or Evidence of Effectiveness**

The evidence of this program's value is in the student interest, motivation, anticipation, pride and teamwork – “youth get really amped up for the long awaited Amazing Race,” says Linda Ellett, Student Support Services Teacher on Special Assignment/Program Coordinator at Poway Unified School District. The Amazing Race activity has become so successful, says Ellett, that there was interest in holding a parent-student amazing race next year, and perhaps even a teacher-staff Amazing Race as well.

School spirit and team pride is also evidence of the successfulness of these practices. All Amazing Race teams and Robotics teams receive t-shirts with logos and prints designed by students. The t-shirts help to promote school and district-wide spirit, says Ellett. “The shirts increase the youth's connectedness to being part of something larger than themselves.”

### **What it Takes to Implement this Practice**

To make these culminating events successful, says Ellett, district level planning and collaboration with outside contacts is crucial. “Once this broad planning is done, we let site supervisors and kids take ownership of these activities and events,” she says.

Some of the above events require more resources and training than others. For the Amazing Race, there is more sharing of ideas and collaboration among staff. “One site supervisor planned 30 different activities and shared these with the other site supervisors, so the training component was really based on information sharing among staff,” explains Ellett.

The robotics program involves the most training and funding – a basic kit costs \$500 and ends up costing \$800 for total competition. Poway USD paid \$1,200 for a 12x12 competition playing field to hold the robotics competitions. The field is placed in the gymnasium on the day of the competition to provide a more realistic setting for the competition.

As the years go on, more parts are ordered to build the robotics program. Regarding staff training, the program requires someone who has strong mechanical and computer skills. This person is chosen from existing staff – in some cases it is an ASES aide or staff person, a science teacher, or a teacher who has an interest in robotics. High school students are also involved in the middle school robotics program. A high school age mentor meets with middle schoolers to help out with the robotic projects, once or twice a week. To prepare the high school students, they too meet once or twice per week with a designated robotics advisor. It is here that the high school youth becomes prepared to go to the middle school sites by learning software, helpful hints, and updates from the previous year.

Regular ASES staff lead the Duct Tape Fashion show, usually someone who is fashion oriented. The costs for this program is relatively inexpensive, and consist mainly of 15-20 rolls of duct tape (\$7/roll).

**Name of the Program**

Sunnyside ExCEL After School Program

**Name of the Organization that Manages the Program**

Bay Area Community Resources

**Number of Participants**

90

**Program Description**

Sunnyside's ExCEL program, which is part of the district's Student Support Services Department, runs from 2:40–5:40 p.m. Monday through Friday. ExCEL works to promote academic development in literacy while improving social skills and emotional and physical health. Activities include arts and crafts, homework support, creative writing, literacy groups, friendship circles, and organized physical activities. There is no fee for this program for eligible students.

**LIAS Learning Principles that are Aligned with the Program Practices**

- *Active* - Learning and memory recall of new knowledge is strengthened through different exposures – seeing, hearing, touching, and doing. Afterschool learning is the result of activities that involve young people in “doing” – activities that allow them to be physically active, stimulate their innate curiosity, and that are hands-on and project-based.

**Description of the Practice**

We provide opportunities for all grades to do hands-on learning. This involves programs with science, soccer, poetry, dancing, theater, cooking, music and other languages. We give instructions to the students in these areas and then let them get hands-on in playing instruments, dance routines, writing and presenting poetry, creating plays, practicing languages, assembling meals, etc.

**The Perceived Value of this Practice and/or Evidence of Effectiveness**

Service provider surveys are given to students and parents to collect feedback from them. District and Department of Children, Youth, and their Families (DCYF) surveys are given to staff at end of year. Feedback shows that 99% of parents are pleased to have their children in the program and former participants of the program that are now college age come back to volunteer for the program because they still believe in the program.

**What it Takes to Implement this Practice**

We ask students about what interests them and bring programs based on their feedback. We have program curriculum that emphasizes this and after training in the multiple types of learning. As well, we bring in outside service providers that are focused on giving the students opportunities to try new things and be active in their education.



**Name of the Program**

After School Enrichment Program (ASEP) at McKinley Elementary School

**Number of Participants**

250

**Program Description**

The After School Enrichment Program (ASEP) uses a Theme Based Learning curriculum that is aligned with day school and supports literacy development. Themes last for 6 weeks and are aligned with CA Academic Standards for Science, Social Studies and Health. Individual activities are also aligned with day school's language arts and visual arts standards. ASEP offers three after school options: the ASEP Comprehensive Enrichment Program – theme-based learning and academic alignment activities, Language Immersion Program – Spanish and Mandarin immersion classes, and After School Clubs - science, art, chess, and soccer enrichment classes.

**LIAS Learning Principles that are Aligned with the Program Practices**

- *Collaborative* - Many of the programs teach collaboration, as the projects are the result of youth working together to accomplish tasks.
- *Meaningful* - Participants are free to choose the club that most interests them.
- *Supports Mastery* - A number of clubs provide participants with the opportunity to learn increasingly complex skills and get better at a task.

**Description of the Practice**

One of the culminating projects for the Solar System theme is for groups to accurately scale and model the planets and put them in line of orbit on the playground, which demonstrates the collaborative principle.

The practice is meaningful to the youth as they gain ownership by having the opportunity to vote on what to focus on. In Snack Squad, a handful of youth work together to learn the practical skills for leading a healthy lifestyle through working in the vegetable garden, nutrition education, and experience planning and preparing healthy snacks. These youth are given the opportunity to be leaders and pass the information on to other students through physical activities and peer-to-peer education.

Some of the Arts Enrichment classes that are offered to youth and support mastery are visual/mural art, world dance, beatboxing, and Capoeira – classes that are more focused on process and exploration. The youth showcase everything they've learned at end of the 10 week session.

**What it Takes to Implement this Practice**

The After School staff meet with day school teachers to ensure that both curriculums align with one another. ASEP develops curriculum that has 6- 9 themes for each grade. The staff use pre-planned curriculum binders and are offered professional development opportunities. The practice is very affordable to implement with no significant funding needed.

**Name of the Program**

Sanchez Enrichment and After School Program (K-5), San Francisco, CA

**Number of Participants**

275

**Program Description**

Our program offers eight-week sessions in gardening, dance, computer technology, and yoga- allowing students to engage deeply with the discipline, and demonstrate their mastery through culminating events.

**LIAS Learning Principles that are Aligned with the Program Practices**

- *Supports Mastery* - A number of clubs provide participants with the opportunity to learn increasingly complex skills and get better at a task.

**Description of the Practice**

In the Gardening Club, participants learn the skills needed to grow and maintain both a vertical and traditional garden including measuring plant growth and knowing how much water the plants need. The participants of the Gardening Club are given the opportunity to learn a full sequence of skills, as they start off knowing very little about gardening but finish the session being able to cook the vegetables they grew.

**The Perceived Value of this Practice and/or Evidence of Effectiveness**

Positive feedback is collected from surveys given to teachers, students, and parents at the end of each year. Each program leader also gives a report on participation and if the youth made any gains.

**What it Takes to Implement this Practice**

Our staff are supported in developing their own skills through professional development and on-site coaching. Staff development trainings are held so that the goals are understood and to measure student progress.

**Name of the Program**

WINGS: Winners Growing Strong (K-6) ASES

**Name of the Organization that Manages the Program**

The National City Public Library

**Number of Participants**

1500/day

**Program Description**

Culminating events occur every month. Events include: spelling & math bees, math olympiads, math & science fairs, stage productions, sports competitions & tournaments. Before and after school/summer day camp for national school district – provide 10 programs K-6.

**LIAS Learning Principles that are Aligned with the Program Practices**

- *Active* - The activities in the various clubs are hands-on and project-based.
- *Meaningful* - Participants are free to choose the club that most interests them.
- *Supports Mastery* - A number of clubs provide participants with the opportunity to learn increasingly complex skills and get better at a task.

**Description of the Practice**

All of the program activities offered to participants are hands-on, project-based, and end in a culminating event where the participants showcase the skills they've learned. The participants are given the opportunity to join the club of their choice. Activities include: Author Fair, where youth learn the entire process and production of writing and illustrating their own books, then display them at a fair where their books can be read and signed with their autograph; Art Gallery, where youth learn different styles of art and/or different artists and display their own works of art in a gallery where refreshments are served and tours are lead; Theater Production, where youth practice plays, musicals, and/or reader's theaters and learn all aspects of a stage performance (costumes, stage presence, voice projection, etc.) and present a theater production in front of an audience.

**The Perceived Value of this Practice and/or Evidence of Effectiveness**

WINGS received a Golden Bell award from the California School Board Association in 2011. There is a waiting list and the program cannot accept all kids into the program. Positive feedback was collected from surveys given to students, staff, and parents at the end of the year. WINGS was recognized in several studies for their best practices.

**What it Takes to Implement this Practice**

Training and mentoring of staff; instruction by contracted specialists; program curriculum and materials; involvement of families; coordination with school day personnel. Administration sets the parameters for each culminating event - what it involves, when, where, etc. Coaches are trained on the curriculum and how to run the activities but are given the freedom to choose the awards, celebration, and personalization for each site so they have ownership.

**Name of the Program**

Orrick Year Round Enrichment Program (K-5), Bessie Carmichael Elementary School, San Francisco, CA

**Name of the Organization that Manages the Program**

YMCA of San Francisco/Embarcadero Branch

**Number of Participants**

130

**Program Description**

We offer project based learning clubs. The clubs last the entire semester. This semester we offer: Hollywood Club, Science Club, Scrapbook Club, etc.

**LIAS Learning Principles that are Aligned with the Program Practices**

- *Active* - The activities in the various clubs are hands-on and project-based.
- *Collaborative* - Many of the programs teach collaboration, as the projects are the result of youth working together to accomplish tasks.
- *Supports Mastery* - A number of clubs provide participants with the opportunity to learn increasingly complex skills and get better at a task.

**Description of the Practice**

Each club teaches the participants the importance of being part of a team. In the Video Making Club, participants follow a theme and cover core values within the video. They learn the different roles of a production crew, make short vignettes, then showcase the video. In the Music Club, participants are first taught the basics, practice their skills, then are given the opportunity to perform as a whole group. The Sewing Club allows participants to learn basic sewing skills then showcase the final product. A past project was a quilt where participants were responsible for making their own tile square and then learning how to put every square together making the quilt.

**The Perceived Value of this Practice and/or Evidence of Effectiveness**

The program has a waiting list. Feedback from parent/student surveys, school district surveys and evaluations, focus groups, and the Department of Children, Youth, and their Families (DCYF) site visits say that the program exceeds expectations.

**What it Takes to Implement this Practice**

Training; professional development with staff; meetings with counselors; team trainings for staff; weekly programs and go over standards or peer learning. Some conference fees for staff training.



**Name of the Program**

Sunset Neighborhood Beacon Center at AP Giannini Middle School

**Name of the Organization that Manages the Program**

AspiraNet

**Number of Participants**

Total enrolled: 304, Daily average: 269

**Program Description**

Sunset Neighborhood Beacon Center (SNBC) afterschool programs include a variety of project-based learning activities supporting homework, language arts, creative arts, IT skill development and civic engagement.

Currently, SNBC's oversees afterschool programs at several school sites involving more than 750 participants each day in elementary, middle and high school programs. Waiting lists total more than 250 children and middle school youth. All programs are offered free of charge for these youth and their families.

**LIAS Learning Principles that are Aligned by the Program Practices**

- *Active* – The participants are active in their learning as all the afterschool clubs are project-based.
- *Collaborative* – Many of the clubs teach collaboration, as the projects are the result of the team working together to complete their tasks.
- *Meaningful* – Participants are free to choose the club that is most meaningful to them.
- *Supports Mastery* – Most of the clubs provide participants with the opportunity to learn increasingly complex skills, which enable them to complete sophisticated projects. For example, in the Urban Music Club, once participants have learned the advanced skills of being a DJ, they have the opportunity to create a mixtape as a culminating project and to serve as DJs for outside events.
- *Expands Horizons* – The clubs are designed to provide the youth the opportunity to explore their potentials and skills related to specific careers. One example is the flash animation club where young people learn the skills of flash animation. They are encouraged to learn advanced skills in high school and explore them as a pathway to a future career.

**Description of the Practice**

Participants at AP Giannini Middle School have a choice 10 different project-based clubs. Project-based learning "clubs" employ a range of experiential approaches. All of the clubs are encouraged to integrate technology based on state goals and standards. In addition to homework assistance, the clubs include diverse activities such as Urban Dance, Newsletter/Movie-Making, MOUSE Squad, Urban Music, Peer Resources and a variety of fitness activities. When appropriate, the participants use a high-speed Internet connection and a variety of technologies and software including iMovie, FruityLoops Studio, Adobe Photoshop and the Microsoft Office suite to accomplish club goals.

Every project-based learning club addresses multiple school subjects with particular emphasis on English language arts. For example, the MOUSE Squad has strong reading, writing and comprehension components while simultaneously emphasizing mathematical reasoning, scientific investigation and experimentation, and technical skill-building. Urban Dance addresses content in the arts, social studies and mathematics. Participants learn about break dancing as part of hip-hop culture and how it has evolved over time. When young people are performing the basics of break dancing, they use addition and division patterns to keep rhythm and visualize the overall pattern of the dance form.

**The Perceived Value of this Practice and/or Evidence of Effectiveness**

They maintain a high rate of attendance in terms of frequency and duration. A large number of former participants are now instructors or volunteers of the programs.

**What it Takes to Implement this Practice**

SNBC employs a variety of strategies, including sharing in-house resources, (such as SNBC's afterschool guide, "The Best of Both Worlds," with program staff), as well as through conducting both an orientation training at the beginning of the school year and supplemental staff development trainings throughout the rest of the year. SNBC's staff also must develop club outlines and lesson plans that describe their intention to make learning active, meaningful, profound, and aligned with California Academic Standards. Additionally, SNBC engages often with outside organizations at conferences, through site visits, and through citywide networks to exchange best practices and valuable resources.

**Name of the Program**

Kids With Cameras

**Name of the Organization that Manages the Program**

Club Timberwolf is the afterschool program, managed by Julian Junior High School (ASES)

**Number of Participants**

Average of 50 youth attend the afterschool program on a daily basis. Ten youth attend Kids with Cameras.

**Program Description**

Club Timberwolf is an afterschool program for 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> graders that runs from 2:15 to 6pm Monday through Friday in Julian, California, a rural suburb of San Diego. There are about 90-100 kids in the grades, with over half attending the afterschool program daily. It runs like a typical after school program with time to do homework (PowerHour) and enrichment programs, including a program called Kids with Cameras.

**LIAS Learning Principles that are Aligned with the Program Practices**

- *Collaboration* - (More with other agencies and the community).
- *Meaningful* - Youth are able to demonstrate something they learned, other people can see their products, raising money for wilderness protection.
- *Active* - Youth work outside and learn how to operate a camera.
- *Supports Mastery* - Youth learn increasingly complex photography techniques through a series of classes. They learn how to skillfully use their cameras, and develop a vocabulary for identifying photographic concepts. The club ends with a culminating event that allows youth to display and celebrate their photographs with others.

**Description of the Practice**

The *Kids with Cameras* program began as a partnership between Club Timberwolf's *Garden Club* and the Volcan Mountain Foundation, a wilderness protection program that advocates for the preservation of Volcan Mountain. The *Garden Club*'s president, Tricia Elisara, had the idea to run a club focused on photography in the setting of the afterschool program in collaboration with the Volcan Mountain Foundation. The afterschool program's Director agreed to run the photography club in conjunction with her *Club Live* afterschool program and thus, the *Kids with Cameras* program was piloted in the fall of 2011. For three weeks on Friday during the afterschool program, youth participated in photography workshops where they were introduced to the camera and learned composition and mechanics. Local retired photographers were recruited by members of the Volcan Foundation's Education Committee to teach the course and eventually accompany the youth to Volcan for further hands-on instruction.

First, participants practiced taking pictures in the school garden for three weeks. After the three weeks were up, youth went on a fieldtrip to Volcan Mountain, a wildlife preserve in Julian Junior High's back yard. The best images were used to make a series of gift cards for sale at the garden market and school office. The proceeds go to garden programs.

Photographers also looked over the young people's shots from Volcan, voted on the best images, and mounted them into 14x18 prints. An artists' reception was held at the public library, with youth and their parents, the garden club, library staff, and members from the community in attendance to celebrate the collection of photos. The prints are currently on display in the school library and will be hung gallery style in a classroom. The photo display is open to travel to go to other Volcan organizations.

**The Perceived Value of this Practice and/or Evidence of Effectiveness**

Youth and parent feedback for the Kids with Cameras program has been overwhelmingly supportive. During the night of the reception, all youth were recognized for their accomplishments and one young person talked about how the experience changed her life, cultivating her interest in photography.

Additionally, the local paper featured an article about the Kids with Cameras program and its success, which can be viewed here: <http://kidsingardens.com/2011/11/18/kids-with-cameras-an-exercise-in-place-making/#comments>.

**What it Takes to Implement this Practice**

Tricia Elisara, the Garden Club president, stresses the importance of collaboration between school and community. The Volcan Mountain Foundation's Education Committee had it in their interest to expand awareness about local preservation to young people. The afterschool program's willingness to incorporate Elisara's idea into their afterschool venue allowed for the program to come to fruition.

While youth used their own or borrowed cameras during the pilot of Kids with Cameras, the program is seeking funds to purchase a standard camera for participants to use. "This would allow for instructors to teach to one camera," explains Elisara.

It was also important to have knowledgeable photography instructors. The Volcan Mountain Foundation's Education Committee had connections to local retired photographers, who were recruited to instruct the club. This proved to be a valuable resource for the young people, who learned a great deal from professional photographers.



**Name of the Program**

After School All-Stars (K -12)

**Number of Participants**

Los Angeles: 4,000/day, Bay Area 2,500, San Diego: 1,500

**Program Description**

After-School All-Stars is a national non-profit organization based in Los Angeles which provides free, daily afterschool programs to 81,000 low income, urban kids at 453 Title I schools in 12 cities across the U.S.- from New York to Hawaii. 90 percent of our students are minority, 85 percent qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch and 65 percent are middle school age. Our local staff partner with schools and community groups to offer three hours of daily programs combining Academic, Enrichment and Health and Fitness activities. We are currently responding to America's high school dropout, youth obesity, and student disempowerment crises through our four national program initiatives focused around middle to high school transition, sports-based youth development, service learning and career exploration.

**LIAS Learning Principles that are Aligned with the Program Practices**

- *Active* - The activities in the various clubs are hands-on and project-based.
- *Collaborative* - Many of the programs teach collaboration, as the projects are the result of youth working together to accomplish tasks.
- *Meaningful* - Participants are free to choose the club that most interests them.
- *Expands Horizons* - The activities are designed to provide the youth the opportunity to explore their potentials and skills related to specific career.

**Description of the Practice**

*CampUs*, a Summer High School Transition program of *We Are Ready* initiative: Participants camp out at a college campus for 6 days so that they can learn all about what life is like in high school and college. While on campus, they are taught study skills and about the SATs, they create their own personalized 4-year plans, and they learn what requirements need to be met for graduation. Participants have the opportunity to pick majors, complete a mock college application which includes an essay, resume, recommendation letter, and in-person interview, and take part in a mock acceptance ceremony on the last day, held by the All-Stars staff. This allows the participants to visualize the process.

Leadership workshops are also held on campus, which teach participants about policy issues, project planning, and consensus building and public speaking skills. Participants work collaboratively in groups to research problems in the community, develop a solution and present it to their peers and All-Star staff.

*Career Exploration Opportunities (CEO) Initiative* - Participants are exposed to different career options by meeting with local business owners, community leaders, and role models. In-person interviews and field trips to workplaces and business schools are just some ways that participants are able to expand their horizons and learn skills for the workplace and potential careers. For example, participants interested in culinary arts were given the opportunity to interview chefs at the Culinary Institute and participants interested in fashion design were given the opportunity to take a design class at the Skechers headquarters where they were able to design their own sneakers.

The *Life Service Action* initiative demonstrates the meaningful LIAS principle by giving participants the opportunity to improve their communities through hands-on student-led service projects. Past projects included creating a healthy lifestyle video, volunteering for the Special Olympics, planting urban gardens, fundraising for local charities, and serving meals to the homeless.

**The Perceived Value of this Practice and/or Evidence of Effectiveness**

Student, parent, faculty, and staff evaluations and surveys have provided positive feedback about the program.

**What it Takes to Implement this Practice**

In addition to providing our chapters with the curriculum we have developed for each of our National Program Initiatives, the After-School All-Stars (ASAS) national program department works to provide seed funding, hands-on staff training and evaluation support to all chapters implementing the initiatives. Where possible, ASAS partners with existing organizations with specific expertise in relevant areas for the benefit of our students.

**Name of the Program**

Balboa High School Afterschool

**Name of the Organization that Manages the Program**

Balboa High School

**Number of Participants**

200-250 ADA

**Program Description**

The Balboa High School Afterschool program serves 250-300 youth on a daily basis. The program offers academic support, enrichment activities, and recreation activities. The program offers general afterschool programming, which takes place in the library every afternoon. Tutoring and homework help is provided during this time. This general programming sees the largest number of youth each day: Up to 300 on some days.

Club offerings, such as woodshop, digital media arts, and hip hop class vary in length: some run for 5 weeks, others 8 weeks, and some last a whole semester. These clubs arise from student interest and the school climate and culture.

**LIAS Learning Principles that are Aligned with the Program Practices**

- *Active* – The participants are active in their learning as all the afterschool clubs are project-based.
- *Collaborative* – Many of the clubs teach collaboration, as the projects are the result of the team working together to complete their tasks.
- *Meaningful* – Participants are free to choose the club that is most meaningful to them.
- *Supports Mastery* – Most of the clubs provide participants with the opportunity to learn increasingly complex skills, which enable them to complete sophisticated projects. For example, the woodshop club, digital media arts club, and filmography club all expose youth to activities that require progressively more complex skill building.
- *Expands Horizons* – The clubs are designed to provide the youth the opportunity to explore their potentials and skills related to specific careers. There are also clubs that expose youth to different cultures.

**Description of the Practice**

Youth participants have the option of participating in a number of different clubs that demonstrate many of the LIAS learning principles. In woodshop class, a professional woodworker teaches participants how to master various tools (hand saw, jig saw, etc.) to make progressively more complex wood projects. In the past, projects were made based on a need in the school. For example, teachers at Balboa were in need of doorstoppers, so this became the woodshop project. Youth participants often work together on these projects.

In the digital media arts club, participants learn various software programs and develop the skills to design complex 3-D animations. A filmography class has also given participants the chance to learn how to use video equipment and perform editing techniques. In the film class, youth have the option of participating in something called *Streetside Stories*, a program that builds literacy through storytelling.

In this program, youth participants share a personal experience or story about themselves on a video that they shoot themselves.

The stories are also published in a book every year. When the movies are completed, they are screened by the whole school at a final exhibition that includes food and live music. Finally, the videos are put on *Streetside* website. (For an example of two Balboa participants' stories, see the following links:

[http://www.youtube.com/user/streetsidestoriessf?ob=video-mustangbase#p/search/1/wlDk\\_d\\_4WK8;](http://www.youtube.com/user/streetsidestoriessf?ob=video-mustangbase#p/search/1/wlDk_d_4WK8)

[http://www.youtube.com/user/streetsidestoriessf?ob=video-mustangbase#p/search/0/qlN2Q-jjQ0g\)](http://www.youtube.com/user/streetsidestoriessf?ob=video-mustangbase#p/search/0/qlN2Q-jjQ0g)

In the *Mouse Squad Club*, participants learn the basics of computer hardware, including how to troubleshoot, provide others with computer help, and other technology related skills. All of these clubs are designed to provide youth the opportunity to explore their potential and skills related to specific careers. Other clubs include the *Build On* program, which presents an opportunity for participants to travel outside of the country to build schools in poor, rural areas. This program exposes youth to different cultures and increasing their global awareness.

### **The Perceived Value of this Practice and/or Evidence of Effectiveness**

According to Aaron Yen, Balboa High Afterschool Program Manager, for ten years, Balboa was considered one of the worst public schools in San Francisco. "The school has done a complete 180, and a lot of that has to do with the afterschool program," Yen says. Additionally, the program has been heavily promoted through social networks like Twitter and Facebook by youth participants, with upwards of 300 students following the program.

Every year, more and more graduates of the program come back to visit from college and personally tell program leaders how much the program meant to them. The amount of support from faculty, administration, and counselors has also been an indicator of the program's success. Afterschool program leaders are also asked by school administration to take more of a role in instructional day meetings that are designed to help students from failing, including aiding in the drafting of a student's workplan.

Another indication of the program's success is the number of youth participants. The grant states that 142 youth per day are needed, but Balboa has always been above and beyond this number, with an average of 225 youth attending on a daily basis.

### **What it Takes to Implement this Practice**

According to Yen, collaboration among the afterschool program and school administration is a must. Additionally, he emphasizes how important it is to understand the school's culture and develop programs based on the interest of the youth participants and the talents of staff. For example, Balboa once had a math tutor who had a passion for art. That, combined with the youth participants' interest in graffiti arts, led to the development of a graffiti art club called WildStyle. There are a lot of things that aren't offered during school and identifying those things that young people want is very important, says Yen. In this way, the program strives to be an extension of the school day.

Communication among staff to discuss ideas and creative ways to do programming amid budget cuts is also important. There is a lot of relationship building that staff members are responsible for as well, says Yen. Finally, while there is increasing support for high school afterschool programs, says Yen, there are few examples of what works because it “hasn’t been done before.” The support is necessary, but so is the sharing and promotion of successful best practices.



**Name of the Program:** Students Plus After School

**Name of the Organization that Manages the Program:** Crawford High School ASSETs

**Number of Participants:**

100-200 ADA

**Program Description**

The Students Plus After School program aids refugee and immigrant teens in integrating into the American school system. Students Plus is a walk-in voluntary afterschool program at Crawford High School in City Heights. The program operates Monday through Friday from 2:30 - 5:30pm during the school year and Tuesday through Friday from noon - 3:00 pm during the summer. The goals of the program are to improve student language acquisition, improve student grades and performance on standardized exams, advocate on the students' behalf, and provide participants with a sense of belonging.

The program offers homework help and academic assistance, enrichment programs, and outreach to parents and teachers. For the most recently arrived students, two levels of English as a Second Language classes are taught in the Students Plus Afterschool program. The extra hours of English are taught in a relaxed and teen-friendly environment, and pushes students to acquire language skills more rapidly. Each school day, an average of 60 students attend the afterschool program where they meet with a tutor, complete their homework assignments, and are then free to participate in any of the clubs that meet 1-2 times per week.

The Clubs focus on arts and leadership development and include the Japanese Club, Vietnamese Club, Garden Club, Refugee Speakers Club, Collective Voices Club, Tennis, Boys & Girls Clubs, Photography Club, and Outdoor Adventure Club. The program also offers college visits, SAT prep, high school exit exam prep, the One World Youth Project, a global education curriculum that builds critical thinking and problem solving, and allows youth to participate in a cross-cultural exchange with partner programs abroad.

**LIAS Learning Principles that are Aligned with the Program Practices**

- *Active* – the activities in the various clubs are hands-on and project-based.
- *Collaborative* – Many of the clubs teach collaboration, as the projects are a result of youth working together to accomplish tasks.
- *Meaningful* – Participants are free to choose the club that most interests them.
- *Supports Mastery* – A number of clubs provide participants with the opportunity to learn increasingly complex skills and get better at a task.

**Description of the Practice**

The program's *Garden Club* engages youth in hands-on gardening and composting, demonstrating the active LIAS learning principle. At the end of the harvest season, youth see the benefit of their work in the form of produce. *Garden Club* participants participate in the project from start to finish: Preparing the soil, planting the seeds, harvesting the produce, and selling it to teachers.

*Collective Voices*, *Peacemakers*, and *Refugee Speakers Clubs* are clubs offered by Students Plus After School with the goal of increasing young people's public speaking skills. In the *Refugee Speakers Club*, participants go out and share their story with other local high schools, allowing participants to demonstrate their mastery of public speaking. *Collective Voices* is a structured public speaking class, where youth learn the technical aspects of public speaking. The course culminates in the participants traveling to a local college to speak in front of class of 300 students about their experiences.

Our English as a Second Language classes are generally collaborative among participants. Older students participate as mentors to younger youth. Participants learn together through group work and group projects.

### **The Perceived Value of this Practice and/or Evidence of Effectiveness**

Carolyn Smyth, Youth Department Program Manager at Students Plus, shared an anecdote that demonstrated the success of the afterschool program in improving language skills among immigrant youth. According to Smyth, for a new group of refugees, it typically takes 5-7 years to master the language and to graduate. One young woman from a refugee group in Africa accelerated her mastery of language and graduated in just four years, something program leaders attribute to the afterschool program's ESL classes and public speaking clubs.

### **What it Takes to Implement this Practice**

According to Carolyn Smyth, strong student-staff relationships are the driving indicator of success in the afterschool program. Most of the staff at Students Plus After School have taught ESL before and have experience in refugee camps or Peace Corps. In addition, regular staff trainings are provided on subject specific tutoring, ESL, and understanding immigration issues and refugee impacts. Staff are also encouraged to take advantage of any other training offered in the community. Volunteers from local colleges who are interested.

**Name of the Program**

The Prep Program at South El Monte High School

**Name of the Organization that Manages the Program**

LEARN LA, 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC

**Number of Participants**

225 Average Daily Attendance

**Program Description**

LEARN LA serves 12 high schools in the Los Angeles area, with one of those programs being the PREP program at South El Monte High School (SEMHS). The program offers students academic and homework assistance in the form of tutoring labs in various subjects, CAHSEE Prep, and SAT Prep. The library houses a general tutoring lab where students can work more independently. The PREP program also offers students various enrichment activities based on student interest. Examples include Creative Arts and Writing, Photography, Film, Fashion, Dance, Speech and Debate, Drama, Guitar Club, and more. The program also provides youth with college awareness requirements, peer mentoring, and community service opportunities.

**LIAS Learning Principles that are Aligned with the Program Practices**

- *Active* – The participants are active in their learning as the afterschool clubs are project-based, hands-on, or require youth to be physically active.
- *Collaborative* – Many of the clubs teach collaboration, as the projects are the result of the team working together to complete their tasks. An example includes the Outdoor Youth Connection, a leadership program where youth must work together to plan, organize, and lead outdoor and team building activities.
- *Meaningful* – Participants are free to choose the club that is most meaningful to them and have the opportunity to suggest clubs of interest to them. Many of the clubs offer real world experiences that are relevant to the youth. Examples include the Outdoor Youth Connection, a leadership program where youth learn leadership and team building skills through camping, and Advocates for Change, a club focused on community service.
- *Expands Horizons* – The clubs are designed to provide the youth the opportunity to explore their potentials and skills related to specific careers. One example is the Afterschool Advisory Board, which consists of youth who determine where the community needs help and acts on it.

**Description of the Practice**

The *Afterschool Advisory Board/Community Service Club* provides participants with the opportunity to learn and develop leadership skills, public speaking skills, and the experience of providing services to others.

The *Outdoor Youth Connection* is a 3-day leadership training for youth in outdoor activities, team building and leadership skills while camping at a California State Park. Upon completion of the training, youth gain the experience and skills needed to organize two outdoor events for their peers.

Enrichment clubs, such as Guitar Club, Creative Arts, and fitness clubs, provide participants with the opportunity to participate in active and hands-on projects. In Guitar Club, youth learn increasingly complex guitar skills, allowing them to become better at guitar playing. The Creative Arts Club also builds on progressively complex art techniques. An instructor with a graphics arts degree teaches youth participants various art techniques to further improve their basic or intermediate art skills.

*Advocates For Change (AFC)* is PREP's afterschool club which focus on creating change through community service and fundraising in order to give back to the local and global community. Projects include volunteering at Columbia Middle School and Nativity, and raising awareness of the current genocides in the world.

### **The Perceived Value of this Practice and/or Evidence of Effectiveness**

The numbers of youth participating in the afterschool program have increased steadily since its inception in 2007, indicating its growing success. Additionally, teachers and administrative staff are very supportive of the program and pleased with the results.

### **What it Takes to Implement this Practice**

All new hires to the afterschool program staff must go through training. Once hired, staff are trained to give one-minute speeches on the programs and present these speeches to the twelve other high schools involved in LEARN LA. Staff also do a minimum of 3-4 trainings each year with group leaders. Trainings are also provided for youth leaders, who assist with the clubs. Some of these youth leaders are high school seniors and some are freshmen in college. Many kids come through the program and apply for a job through the organization. We get many returning students this way.

The training and program design of the Outdoor Youth Connection is done by California State Parks Foundation and Pacific Leadership Institute. The youth organization is responsible for a \$10 fee per student, a \$25 for registration fee, and the cost of transporting the youth to the campsite. All other materials were provided by the Outdoor Youth Connection program, including staff from the Pacific Leadership Institute who led the activities with support from staff from the PREP program.

**Name of the Program**

ABC (Achieve, Believe, Commit) After School Program, Orange Glen High School (9-12), Escondido, CA

**Number of Participants**

260/Day

**Program Description**

In addition to the Academic Assistance programs, we offer a variety of enrichment programs. Our units of service was over 45,000 last year. Examples of active and meaningful programs: Students in Scholarship, College Applications or College Test programs visited UCLA last Saturday. Students in the Art Appreciation visited the Getty Museum. MESA and Robotics will be competing starting in February. The Fashion Club officers meet and design their projects. Last week, they designed and created holiday cards for an orphanage. They will attend a private Debut Party and Fashion Show in March and tour the Academy Awards. The Environmental Club participated in the beach cleanup day.

**LIAS Learning Principles that are Aligned with the Program Practices**

- *Active* - The activities in the various clubs are hands-on and project-based.
- *Meaningful* - Participants are free to choose the club that most interests them.
- *Expands Horizons* - The activities are designed to provide the youth the opportunity to explore their potentials and skills related to specific careers.

**Description of the Practice**

The Fashion Club meets once a week and participants must apply to be accepted into the club. Career speakers and community business owners are invited to speak and give lessons. Past projects have included a Recycle Event, where accessories are made from recycled products and modeled at a “trashion show”. The Fashion Club has also done community service projects where participants made beanies for a homeless shelter and made holiday cards for an orphanage. An all-expense paid field trip to Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising (FIDM) included a private lecture from an FIDM speaker, tour of the campus, and lunch. Participants were given the opportunity to apply what they learned from the lecture and took part in a scavenger hunt at the local mall.

**The Perceived Value of this Practice and/or Evidence of Effectiveness**

You know this program is successful from the high attendance rate and the positive feedback on surveys from students, staff and parents. The program gets high marks from visitors from San Diego Unified and the press.

**What it Takes to Implement this Practice**

We change the schedule every 8 weeks to keep the interest high. Poster size pictures and class schedules are posted around campus to advertise the program. We listen to the students and they vote on which programs stay. The first staff development lunch is before school starts in August where training notebooks are issued to all staff.

A proposal is submitted to department chairs and faculty. It is changed twice a semester to keep interest high. Schedules and flyers are distributed. The student advisory committee suggest different topics. Orange Glen purchased an iPad2, wireless printer, robots, laptops, and banners for advertising/marketing.



**Name of the Program**

McLane High School HEAT: Highlanders Effecting And powering Tomorrow

**Name of the Organization that Manages the Program**

McLane High School 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC

**Number of Participants**

250-280

**Program Description**

The McLane High School HEAT afterschool program provides a broad array of activities and services for high school youth, including academic assistance, tutoring, credit recovery, college prep, community service opportunities, leadership programs, physical activities, and summits/conferences that allow youth participants to discuss issues that affect them.

**LIA Learning Principles that are Aligned with the Program Practices**

- *Meaningful*: Program activities are meaningful in that they focus on issues and topics that are most relevant to youth. Examples include the summits and conferences that focus on topics that are meaningful to youth, including addressing the drop-out problem, teen abuse, and gender-specific topics.
- *Expands Horizons*: This afterschool program exemplifies the LIA principle “expands horizons” due to its ability to reach out to community resources and expose youth to these external opportunities.

**Description of the Practice**

The following events sponsored by the McLane High School HEAT program address topics that are meaningful to the youth participants.

**Summits & Conferences**

- *Female Youth Empowerment Conference*: The state of California identifies 100 female youth that are at-risk for dropping out and put together a conference that consists of five workshops that focus on improving these young people’s chances for success in a meaningful way. Workshops include resume writing, importance of physical health and activity, importance of healthy relationships, and developing personal statements for college. “All those things that are missing in the regular school day are covered in this conference,” explains Catherine Estes, Afterschool Program Coordinator.
- *Freshmen summit on slowing drop out rate*: A group of freshmen youth meets regularly and discusses strategies for slowing the drop out rate. Some strategies include handing out certificates to freshmen who have attended a certain number of school days, and they receive rewards for grade improvement. At the end of the year, the group of freshmen type up a report of what schools and the government can do to slow the drop out rate, and send it to the school district.

#### October Lights On

- During the annual Lights On Afterschool event, participants at McLane High School's HEAT program participate in a weeklong writing activity where they express what is valuable to them about the afterschool program. At the end of the week, a summit is held where students and staff discuss the writings and what can be done to improve the program.

#### Teen Abuse

- Projects that work toward preventing teen abuse are held in February and March each year. Eight youth go through 20 hours of training and then perform skits for the entire school relating to awareness of teen abuse and violence. Various events are held in a weeklong violence prevention and awareness campaign, concluding with a summit at the end of the week.

The McLane High School HEAT program also engages with a number of community partners to receive in-kind donations, bring in speakers, and introduce youth participants to community service opportunities. Examples include donations from major department stores for the various events, workshops on healthy relationships by local organizations, and opportunities to participate in community service with organizations that restore local parks. This partnership with community partners exposes youth to new things and new places, and gives them a greater awareness of things going on in their community.

### **The Perceived Value of this Practice and/or Evidence of Effectiveness**

There are a number of factors that demonstrate the success of the McLane High School HEAT program. One factor is the number of youth that participate in the program: On average, they see 250-280 youth per day, while the grant states that they need only 175 per day. Additionally, the school administration's willingness to collaborate and support the afterschool program indicates the success of the program.

Additionally, the number of community partners that have in some way engaged with the program is evidence of the program's success. For five years, Catherine Estes has built relationships with the GAP, Chic Shoes, Macy's, Bloomingdale's, the NFL, and others to provide in-kind donations to the program. Maria Shriver, Debra Bowen, Secretary of State, and Marco Rubio, US Senator, have all sponsored the various conferences and summits.

### **What it Takes to Implement this Practice**

The key factor to implement this practice is collaboration between the community, school, and afterschool program. The HEAT program also collaborates with Region 7 (Fresno) and state-level organizations. Training is another key component to success. Staff participate in five hours of development training each month, as provided by California Department of Education, the Afterschool Network, CalSAC modules, or LACOE's quality assessment rubric.

There are also high expectations for the youth that have been integral to implementing this practice. Youth are expected to attend the program a minimum of three hours per week and maintain a 2.0 or above GPA. There is also plenty of documentation that shows what youth are working on for parents and teachers to monitor. A tutor log is kept for each youth every day so that their teachers can review what they are working on and how they are doing. Parents are given a daily form that shows what their children worked on in the tutoring lab each day, as well as how long their child stayed in the program.