

Grant Writing Project for School Reform

Ivy Sherman

C.W. Post Campus/Long Island University

BALDWIN UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT
BALDWIN NEW YORK

BROOKSIDE SCHOOL

Ms. Audra White
Senior Program Administrator
The Rauch Foundation
229 Seventh Street, Suite 306
Garden City, New York 11530-5766

February 22, 2012

Dear Ms. White,

I am writing in hope of securing funding for a much needed after-school program for students in grades one through five who are academically and emotionally at-risk and are enrolled in a non-Title I public school in Nassau County. The surprisingly non-Title I status of the school district greatly inhibits our access to financial resources. The need for quality after-school programs exist, but the funding does not.

We are seeking \$69,500.00 to provide a free after-school program for our students who meet specific criteria including a need for supervision after school hours. The Foundation's passion for promoting positive school attitudes for students in need makes The Rauch Foundation the perfect partner in our endeavor.

The program, C.A.S.P (Community After-School Program), would provide critical-thinking skills through a science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) curriculum and English Language Arts skills through a Reader's Theater program. Reader's Theater encourages students to practice reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills through stage performances. There will also be a parent component, using elements from the federal research-based Even Start Parent Program to engage parents in the education of their children. The Even Start Program has a strong parent literacy component for non-English speaking parents. It also offers proven strategies to assist parents in helping their children at home with their school work.

As the principal of a public elementary school in the Baldwin School District, I am frustrated by the lack of resources available to meet the needs of my school's changing demographics and the subsequent assistance for my students and their families. In the past ten years, I have witnessed our homeless population increase by 3%, students living in government-subsidized housing increase by 3.5%, and students eligible for free and reduced-priced milk grow by 10%. There has been a large increase in the need for translators at parent meetings and school-wide contacts and notices to go home in both English and Spanish. These are obvious indicators of a community in transition. In addition, the Nassau County Police Department has targeted the Baldwin School District for the last three years for a mandated gang resistance program (G.R.E.A.T.) for students in grade four because of the increasing number of gangs and gang activity among students of Latino descent in our area. However, due to current fiscal issues in Nassau County, the G.R.E.A.T. Program may be eliminated next year.

The demographics on Long Island have changed significantly in the last 20 years. Since 1990, the number of foreign-born residents has increased by 68%. The Hispanic population on Long Island has grown by 167%. Presently 15% of the overall population on Long Island is

Hispanic and that number has been increasing approximately by 2% every three years since 2000. However, our program would be available to any student who meets the criteria for inclusion.

We envision our program beginning in the 2012-2013 school year with 50 students at Brookside Elementary School and expand to the other four elementary schools in Baldwin and to Baldwin Middle School once we gauge the need across the District and the success of the program. We will be partnering with the Future Teachers Club at Baldwin High School, The Community Work Study Program at Molloy College, and the Broad Hollow Theater in Elmont. The Boys and Girls Club of America is interested in our program and is considering future involvement. Your investment of \$69,500.00 for the 2012-13 school year will be used to get our program at Brookside School off the ground. Our Board of Education and Superintendent of Schools have extended their support, but cannot commit financial resources at this time due to devastating cuts in state aid and the new imposed tax cap. Because of our non-Title I status, other private organizations that have a strong commitment to extended-day programs such as the Wallace Foundation and The After-School Corporation who have never before invested in suburban programs, are interested in our success before committing their funds.

We are confident that improved achievement (indicated by standardized progress monitoring, benchmark assessments, and New York State exams), increased parent involvement, improved attendance, and strong program participation, will prove that our persistence and belief in community connections and commitment can change the lives of students and their families across Long Island.

Since The Rauch Foundation is dedicated to changing the lives of at-risk children and families in our local communities, we are enthusiastic about your partnership in helping us to bring this level of change to our neighborhood. We look forward to hearing from you and greatly appreciate your time in considering our request to submit a proposal.

Sincerely,
Ivy Sherman, Principal
Brookside School

Proposal Rationale

Research suggests that economically and otherwise disadvantaged children are less likely than their more-advantaged peers to have access to out-of-school or complementary learning opportunities and that this inequity substantially undermines their development and chances for school success. Lack of exposure and participation in worthwhile extra-curricular activities such as academic enrichment, sports, and cultural activities perpetuate inequities in low-income communities (Weiss, Little, Bouffard, Deschenes, & Malone, 2009). In addition, in the 1990's, urban lawmakers realized that alcohol and drug abuse by under-age students and most crimes committed by youth under the age of 18 were taking place between the hours of 3:00 and 6:00 PM, specifically in impoverished neighborhoods (Afterschool Alliance, 2010). With the emergence of this information, the urgency for quality after-school programs for students who are considered at-risk rose tremendously. Federal, state, and local government agencies, as well as many large not-for-profit foundations responded quickly where the need was greatest – in large, urban school districts. Although, Nassau and Suffolk counties may not be defined as urban communities, they do share many of the same characteristics—steady growth of immigrant families, “white flight,” and the lack of diversity in low-poverty schools (Long Island Index, 2012, Federation for American Immigration Reform, 2012).

Long Island has one of the most segregated school systems in the United States due to the economic homogeneity of its communities (Long Island Index, 2012). As demographics across Long Island are changing, school districts remain segregated more than ever. The needs of the increasing immigrant and at-risk populations in our schools are not being met in all locales.

Long Island has a large silent population - multiple non-English-speaking families residing in a single family home who are virtually unaccounted for. However, the children attend our public schools. Adult family members remain unseen due to language difficulties, the inexperience of negotiating with a formal agency (school system), and for too many, fear of discovery in an illegal or unsafe dwelling or risky immigration status. When parents remain uninvolved, the chances for school success are decreased. Parents need to demonstrate to their children that their education is important. Often, it's as simple as inquiring as to how their day went and what they learned (Anderson-Butcher, 2010).

A school district qualifies for Title 1 status when at least 40% of its students are determined to be poor. Each student who qualifies for free lunch entitles their school district to about \$1,000.00 from the federal government. Therefore, Title 1 Districts can better support their growing number of ESL, homeless, and academically at-risk students. However, there are many of these students throughout Nassau County that do not live in Title 1 School Districts. Baldwin is such a community.

Long Island school districts are easily and often overlooked for grants, especially school districts that could probably qualify for Federal Title 1 status but cannot easily document it. An after-school program at Brookside Elementary School that meets the needs of our changing community would greatly benefit both students and parents, and eventually all Baldwin residents.

Organization

(a) Brookside Elementary School is located in the Baldwin Union Free School District on the south shore of Nassau County, approximately 25 miles from Manhattan. We share 34 acres

of land with Baldwin Senior High School. In the 2012-2013 school year, we will house approximately 330 students in grades kindergarten through grade 5. Our one-story, handicapped-accessible building will house our Community After-School Program (C.A.S.P.). All school facilities would be utilized by the students in the program, including classrooms, library, computer laboratory, and auditorium.

We have a diverse student body and an active Parent-Teacher Association.

Approximately 50% of our students are African-American, primarily of Caribbean descent, 30% are of Hispanic heritage, 8% Caucasian, 7% Asian, and 5% are multi-racial. Since we do not have a hot lunch program, 12% are eligible for free or reduced price milk, up from 6% three years earlier. Out of need, the Baldwin School District began providing cold lunches to students who are eligible for free lunch.

(b) Organizational Staffing Chart

Title	Number	Hours per week	Community Partnership
Program Assistant	1	12	Baldwin School District
Certified Teachers	2	11	Baldwin School District
Certified ESL Teacher	1	6	Baldwin School District
High School Students	8	10	Baldwin High School
STEM Teachers (Gr. 3-5)	2	5	Molloy College
STEM Teachers (Gr. 1, 2)	2	3	Molloy College
Theater Specialist (Gr. 3-5)	1	6	Broad Hollow Theater
Theater Specialist (Gr. 1, 2)	1	3	Broad Hollow Theater

Goals and Objectives

There are two primary goals for the Community After-School Program. Underneath each goal are the respective objectives.

1. To provide students who are academically and emotionally at-risk with extended school day opportunities to improve academic performance, build self-esteem, and develop positive attitudes about school.
 - To implement an After-School program in the neighborhood elementary school from 3:00 – 5:00 PM, five days a week, for students in grades one through five who are considered academically and/or emotionally at-risk and show financial need.
 - To provide students with the opportunity to increase their academic performance and self-esteem by engaging in Reader's Theater and STEM programs implemented by specialists.
 - To partner with community institutions and organizations in order to establish community ownership.
2. To empower parents to engage confidently with their children in all aspects of their schooling.
 - To provide parents of eligible students with strategies to actively participate in their child's school experiences.
 - To provide instruction to parents using the necessary native languages and specialized curricula.

Methods

The program for the 20 students in grades 1 and 2 will differ slightly from those in grades 3 – 5. The program for students in grades 1 and 2 is outlined below:

- 3:00 – 4:00 PM - Healthy snack (sliced fruit, vegetables, milk, juice, cookies), homework assistance, small group work – read alouds, math games (FasttMath on the computer), and tutorials as needed. This hour is conducted and supervised by the certified teacher and assisted by four Baldwin High School students.
- 4:00 – 5:00 PM (Monday, Wednesday, Friday) – Students will work with a theater specialist from the Broad Hollow Theater in Elmont, writing original scripts to perform at bi-yearly family celebrations. Students and staff will have access to all materials necessary to develop and create two performances (materials for costumes, lighting, props and scenery, music, piano, stereo, etc). Performances will take place in February and June. The certified teacher and high school students will assist. Students will practice reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills, as well as singing and dancing, during this component of the program. Students not comfortable performing will focus on the musical, technical, backstage, and/or artistic element of the performances.
- 4:00 – 5:00 PM (Tuesday and Thursday) – Students will participate in inquiry-based activities that focus on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Instruction will be provided by two science-education graduate students from Molloy College’s Graduate School of Education. Students will gain experience in more complex problem-solving using a hands-on approach.
- Parent Sessions (Monday – Friday, 4:00 – 5:00 PM) – Parents will be exposed to the literacy skills necessary to assist their children at home. They will receive a complete orientation to the public school system and to the available services to assist families. A certified ESL teacher will differentiate instruction to meet the need of parents in

attendance. The parent component will be modeled after the Even Start Family Literacy Program. The emphasis of the program on Tuesdays and Thursdays will be on improving conversational English for the parents of our ESL students who are in need of these skills. Therefore, parents have choices as to which sessions they will attend. Parents of enrolled students will be required to attend at least two classes per month. Parents will also be expected to assist staff and students with the final Reader's Theater performance in June and in at least one family event throughout the year. We are planning two events, a Family Game Night and a Family Library Night. Local restaurants will be donating food for our family events.

The program for 30 students in grades 3- 5 is outlined below:

- 3:00 – 4:00 PM (Monday – Friday) – a quick healthy snack will be provided at 3:00 PM. Students will then work with a theater specialist from the Broad Hollow Theater in Elmont, writing original scripts to perform at bi-yearly family celebrations. Students and staff will have access to all materials necessary to develop and create two performances (materials for costumes, lighting, props and scenery, music, piano, stereo, etc). Performances will take place in February and June. The certified teacher and high school students will assist. Students will practice reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills, as well as singing and dancing, during this component of the program. Students not comfortable performing will focus on the musical, technical, backstage, and/or artistic elements of the performances. The first performance in February will be a separate performance from students in grades 1 and 2, however, the June performance will include all of the participants performing together.

- 4:00 – 5:00 PM (Monday – Friday) - Students will participate in inquiry-based activities that focus on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Instruction will be provided by two science-education graduate students from Molloy College’s Graduate School of Education. Students will gain experience in more complex problem-solving using a hands-on approach. This portion of the program will culminate with a STEM Fair in May.

Evaluation

There will be several indicators of program success that we will be monitoring closely. First and foremost, success will be determined by student participation and consistency of attendance. Both are indicative of student interest and accomplishment.

The NWEA (Northwest Education Association) bench-mark testing will allow us to monitor individual academic gains in both English Language Arts and mathematics three times per school year and will provide us with specific gains and weaknesses for each student in order to modify the instructional pieces of the program. In addition, performance on New York State exams in English Language Arts and mathematics for students in grades 3 – 5, and in science for students in grade four will also be a valuable indicator, especially with the inclusion of longitudinal data. These results will be compared to a control group of students in the same grades who attend public school in a similar school district near-by and did not participate in an after-school program

We will be looking for increased family participation in all aspects of Brookside School. Displays of increased involvement will include but are not limited to: attendance at PTA-sponsored functions including meetings; volunteering in child’s classroom and at lunchtime; and

attendance at district and school-sponsored events such as Parent Workshops and Parent-Teacher Conferences. Since parent attendance at Parent-Teacher Conferences is retained from year-to-year, it will be easy to create baseline data.

Sustainability strategies

We will be looking to initially sustain our program through small grants from the Wallace Foundation, The After-School Corporation, The Baldwin Education Association, and the Baldwin School District. The Boys and Girls Club of America has programs in a neighboring district and will determine their involvement after the completion of our first year.

There are federal grants that support extended-day programs such as the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program, the largest federally-funded source of funds for After-School programs in the nation. We will also seek involvement by other colleges and universities on Long Island, and the Police Athletic League – Baldwin Unit, the only community-based organization in Baldwin.

The possibility of charging parents, based on a sliding scale, is also an option, although, we hope not to resort to this option.

We are confident that standardized and authentic measures of effectiveness will demonstrate our program is a success in order to attract the additional funding we need to sustain our program.

Budget

The budget for a five day-a-week program for 30 weeks is indicated in the chart below. The program runs for 10 hours per week from October 1, 2012 through May 31, 2013. When broken down, the cost of the program is \$1,390.00 per student for eight months, or \$46.33 per

week. When looked at from this perspective, it is evident how much a child can benefit from such a small investment.

Need	Hrs. per week	Rate	Total per week	Total
2 Certified Teachers	11	\$30.00 per hour	\$660.00	\$19,800.00
1 Program Manager	12	\$20.00 per hour	\$240.00	\$7,200.00
1 ESL Teacher	6	\$30.00 per hour	\$180.00	\$5,400.00
8 HS Students	10	\$40.00 per week	\$320.00	\$9,600.00
2 Molloy Students	5	\$10.00 per hour	\$100.00	\$3,000.00
2 Molloy Students	3	\$10.00 per hour	\$60.00	\$1,800.00
1 Theater Specialist	3	\$25.00 per hour	\$75.00	\$2,250.00
1 Theater Specialist	6	\$25.00 per hour	\$150.00	\$4,500.00
Snacks - 50 students		\$1.00 per day	\$250.00	\$7,500.00
Materials				\$8,450.00
			\$2,035.00	\$69,500.00

References

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