

Castroville Elementary United for Literacy: A Week of Reading and Learning

Proposal

Abstract

The Monterey County United for Literacy Program seeks to promote literacy and learning at Castroville Elementary. This proposal outlines a week of literacy-related activities designed to increase student achievement in reading and writing and to engage students in learning beyond the classroom. Activities include Family Literacy Night, Literacy in the Garden, and a Read-a-Thon. These activities will be carried out by Sarah Curtis, a current member of the AmeriCorps Literacy Program. By organizing community-building events, the program hopes to inspire students and families to take charge of the pressing literacy issues facing Castroville. It is expected that over 200 participants will be involved in the events, including students, faculty, staff, parents, community-members, and members of the AmeriCorps Literacy program. The effectiveness of these events will be evaluated through feedback forms as well as a personal reflection journal. The ultimate goal of the activities is to highlight the urgent need for a literate community and to engage students in literacy activities that are both diverse and fun.

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Background

Castroville Elementary is located in Monterey County and is thirty miles south of Santa Cruz. Agricultural fields producing artichokes, lettuce, broccoli, strawberries, and other row crops surround Castroville School. About 14.6% of families and 19.2% of the population live below the poverty line, including 23.0% of those under age 18 (Census 2000). Castroville Elementary is a rural school with approximately 630 students. Eighty-four percent of students are eligible for free or reduced lunch. Two-thirds of the students are English Language Learners. The enrollment is 94 % minority

(Castroville Elementary Accountability Report 2008-2009). Castroville Elementary is currently a 5-Year Program Improvement school with only 18% of the student body scoring proficient on English Language Arts tests. The activities outlined in this proposal will allow our students to learn critical literacy skills in different and engaging ways.

AmeriCorps

The Monterey County United for Literacy Program is a community-service learning program that focuses on students experiencing academic difficulty in Monterey County. Sponsored by AmeriCorps and the Monterey County Office of Education, this program targets K-4 students who scored *basic* on their federal language arts standardized tests in the hopes of boosting their test scores to *proficient* by the end of the after school program. In addressing the challenge of No Child Left Behind, this program is a community-wide literacy effort in a region where two-thirds of all K-4 students read below grade level and 50% of the parents are non-readers (Monterey County Office of Education 2010). Our mission is to enable Castroville Elementary children to read well and independently by the end of the third grade, and be able to successfully read to learn in the fourth grade. The doors of achievement will be open to children if they are able to read, enjoy reading, and are well prepared for the academic rigor that begins in fourth grade.

My Experience

I first became conscious of literacy related issues as a tutor for the Steps-to-College Program, ran by the Community Studies Department at UC Santa Cruz, where I volunteered at Pescadero Elementary. There, I saw that many students were struggling academically due to language and literacy-related barriers. I wanted to be more involved in this issue, so I signed up for a year of service with the Monterey County United for Literacy Program. As a tutor, I see my students struggle with the same literacy related issues. My students need every opportunity they can get to learn reading and writing skills, so I am proposing these activities to teach them these skills from a different angle.

Objectives

A week long of literacy-related activities will engage our students and get them interested in reading and writing. By carrying out these activities, we hope to accomplish the following:

- To teach students critical English Language Arts skills
- To get our students excited about reading
- Bring families and the community together to foster literacy
- Bring attention to the school's pressing literacy needs

Method

The Castroville United for Literacy Program seeks to promote reading and literacy to Castroville Elementary students and the larger community. Through organizing week long activities designed to teach literacy skills, it is our hope that we can engage students in high impact learning beyond the classroom. These activities include:

Read-a-Thon/High Frequency Word Challenge at Castroville Elementary: Monday 05/02/11 (throughout the week)

The Read-a-Thon/ High Frequency Word Challenge will reward students that read the most throughout the week or are able to do well on their High Word Frequency test (students are tested on the most common 300 words in the English language). Winners will receive a small prize. Read-a-Thon winners will be able to pick a book to keep.

Family Literacy Night: Tuesday 05/03/11

Families play an important role in the acquisition of literacy skills. Family Literacy Night is an opportunity for families to come together and read. Literacy Night will feature activities such as reading bedtime stories, alphabet bingo, writing short stories, and activities that teach writing skills. Food and snacks will be provided. Free books will be handed out to participants.

Castroville Elementary Spelling Bee: Wednesday 05/04/11

A Spelling Bee will be organized in order for students to learn to spell and read important words at their grade level. The Spelling Bee is an engaging way to get students familiar with academic words that will appear on their California Standards Tests 2011.

The Reading Zone: Thursday and Friday 05/05/11 and 05/06/11 (weekly)

The Reading Zone Club is an intervention program for 6th grade students that are reading below grade level. The goal of this program is to boost the fluency scores of 6th grade students before they transition into middle school. The students use The Read Naturally program, which uses timed read-along tapes to help students build their fluency. We hope to expand this program and work with another class of 6th grade students. We will need timers and batteries in order to accommodate another class.

Literacy in the Garden: Friday 05/06/11 (weekly)

Castroville Elementary has a school garden and I would like to use the garden to build our student's vocabulary. Materials are needed in order to fix up the garden and to carry out reading and writing lessons in the garden.

Stewardship

As part of my involvement in the AmeriCorps Monterey County United for Literacy Program, I have been trained in literacy instruction. In addition, I have a long history of community service as an UC Santa Cruz student. I served as a tutor for the Steps-to-College Program, I participated in College Nine's Alternative Spring Break Program, and I was an intern for the Chicano/Latino Resource Center. Finally, as the Chancellor's Undergraduate Intern for Latino Student Retention (2006-2007), I was responsible for running a campus-wide retention program for Latino students and managing a small budget of \$4,000 for event programming.

Evaluation

I intend to formulate evaluation cards that participants will fill out at the end of each event. These cards will determine the student's engagement level as well as gauge what they learned. The data collected from these cards will be used to write an evaluation report of all of the events. Further, I will also formulate staff and administration feedback cards in an effort to see how Principal Hugo Galvan, Assistant Principal Kristi Burns, and site coordinator Marilyn McLoughlin felt the events were successful in developing literacy skills.

Community Service Project Grant

Itemized Budget Form

All budgeted items below must include their vendor, marketed full name, product number, and the *exact cost* of the item. Applications that include estimates or incomplete budget forms will be returned to the student and will not be considered for that deadline (no exceptions!). We will accept an additional page outlining the below expenditures if necessary; however, this is not required.

Title of Project Castroville Elementary United for Literacy: A Week of Reading and Literacy

1. Budgeted Project Items	Vendor	Cost
Family Literacy Night (Food)	Little Caesar Enterprises, Inc.	\$30
Family Literacy Night (Food)	Target Corporation	\$87.94
Family Literacy Night (Materials)	Dollar Tree Inc.	\$9.90
6 th Grade Reading Zone (Materials)	Dollar Tree Inc.	\$11.88
Literacy in the Garden (Materials)	ACE Hardware Corporation	\$67.86

A. Total Grant Project Cost= \$207.58

2. Other Income Sources	Amount
N/A	N/A

B. Total Other Income Sources = \$0

3. In-kind Contributions	Amount
N/A	N/A

C. Total in-kind Contributions=\$0

4. Total Other Income & In-Kind	Amount
N/A	N/A

D. Add Amounts from Lines B & C= \$0

5. Remaining Balance	Amount
\$0	\$0

E. Subtract Line D From Line A \$0- 196.38=-\$207.58

6. Grant Request	Amount
Castroville United for Literacy Project	\$207.58

F. Total Amount Requested

\$207.58

7. Other Budget Information

- If the amount listed in part F is less than the amount listed in part E, how will you obtain the rest of the funds needed for the project?

Not Applicable (N/A)

8. Should you be awarded less than the amount requested, will you still be able to implement your project?

Yes No

Please complete upon grant approval:

Do all of your vendors have an existing account with UCSC? Yes No

If no, please specify:

Budget Breakdown

Family Literacy Night

Little Caesar Enterprises, Inc.

Hot-N- Ready Large Pizza (three pepperoni and three cheese)- \$5.00 x 6= \$30

Target Corporation

Market Pantry Apple Juice (203140693ID378426-0683) \$3.54*6 = \$21.24

Market Pantry Tortilla Chips Restaurant Style (071068670188969293)- \$1.99* 10= \$19.90

Market Pantry Golden Sandwich Cookies Cream Filled (07109061418896912) - \$1.99* 5= \$9.95

Market Pantry Chocolate Sandwich Cookies Cream Filled (071-09-0736-18899116) - \$1.99 *5= \$9.95

Pace Mild Picante Salsa (04156500072)-\$2.69 *10= \$26.90

Dollar Tree Inc.

White Paper Plates 50 Pack (076955735717)- 99 cents x 3= \$2.97

Foam Cups 45 Pack (041594629017) – 99 cents x 3= \$2.97

Soft and Silly Napkins 140 Pack (744096520201)-99 cents

Scotch Transparent Tape Double Pack (051131798922)- 99 cents x 3=\$2.97

Total Cost: \$127.84

The Reading Zone with 6th Grade Students

Dollar Tree Inc.

Electric Kitchen Minute Timer (639277154637)- 99 cents x 6= \$5.94

EveryReady Super Heavy Duty Batteries 4 Pack AA (629312113453)-99 cents x 6=\$5.94

Total Cost: \$11.88

Literacy in the Garden

ACE Hardware Corporation

Home Plus® 3 Piece Garden Tool Set with Lepper Hedge and Shear Pruner (GT2501) - \$20.99

Miracle-Gro® Garden Soil for Flowers & Vegetables (73451300) – 4.99 x 7=\$34.97

American Seed: Cabbage Seeds (0840100070)-99 cents

American Seed: Radish Seeds (0840100070)-99 cents

American Seed: Lettuce Seeds (0840100070)-99 cents

American Seed: Sunflower Seeds (0840100070)-99 cents

American Seed: Tomato Seeds (0840100070)-99 cents

American Seed: Corn Seeds (0840100070)-99 cents

American Seed: Parsley Seeds (0840100070)-99 cents

American Seed: Carrot Seeds (0840100070)-99 cents

American Seed: Pea Seeds (071953000530)- \$1.99

American Seed: Garden Bean Seeds (071953000530)- \$1.99

Total Cost: \$67.86

Total Project Cost: \$207.58