

## **Expanded Learning Opportunities Program Plan**

### **Sunrise Middle School**

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This plan has been reviewed by the parent advisory committee and was approved by the school board on January 10, 2022.

### **The Qualities of an Effective Program:**

#### **1 – Safe and Supportive Environment**

Throughout its ten years of service, Sunrise has built a familial atmosphere because such a supportive environment is indispensable to achieving healthy development of the whole child. Elements of that supportive environment include teachers and staff who know the students by name, a Parent Advisory Committee that assures that parents are heard and that their views, desires and assistance are integrated into Sunrise policies and practices, and membership of a parent on the board to assure that the Board is in touch with parental views and desires. Underscoring this dedication to safety and supportiveness, Sunrise is a sanctuary school. That fact is a source of comfort to families many of whose members are immigrants. The teaching and after-school staff reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of the student body, and most came from the same socio-economic roots as the students. The Expanded Learning Opportunities Program is conducted both on-site and off-site. Off-site venues include a variety of outdoor settings, cultural settings, and museums. Students are bused to these sites by properly licensed drivers. They are accompanied by after-school staff, teachers and parents to assure that all children are protected and supported during field trips. Several after-school staff have been trained as mentors and counselors. Students trust these staff members, and that bond helps to assure that any student in need is identified and receives services consistent with need.

#### **2 – Active and Engaged Learning**

The teachers from the instructional day and the after-school staff work closely together to assure that the project-based learning, the hands-on projects, the field trips, and the extra-curricular course offerings of the expanded learning program complement, build on, and extend learning from the instructional day program. When a teacher from the day program has some particular skill or interest that fits the after school or summer program, the teacher will both teach his or her regular class and provide enrichment in the after-school or summer program. An important aspect of the expanded learning program is that it offers the opportunity to focus on areas of whole-child development that are not the focus of the instructional day program. Social development is emphasized in some of the field trips through trust building and self-reliance activities. Students who choose to be part of the business club learn to apply mathematics and reasoning to entrepreneurship. Students participating in the coding and robotics activities apply logic, engineering, mathematics, and learn computer languages. Students in the long-distance running and parkour programs develop physically, learn anatomy and physiology, and build endurance. Students on the debate team sharpen their command of spoken English and learn the mechanics of constructing convincing arguments. Students in the dance and music programs learn traditional dances, choreography, and learn to play musical instruments. Each program in the Expanded Learning Opportunities Program requires action and engagement and either supports what is taught in the instructional day, supplements the instructional day by providing activities that allow students to put learning to use, or gives students opportunities to participate in activities not offered in any form during the instructional day.

### 3 – Skill Building

The Expanded Learning Opportunities Program provides opportunities to build skills in a broad array of areas. Students interested in computers and robotics learn coding and use code to operate devices. A school priority is to provide opportunities for civic engagement wherein students learn how to interact with public officials to bring about meaningful change. Much preparation is needed to be ready to make a convincing case to appropriate public officials. Students learn to do research on their subject, to understand the determinants that brought about the problem they wish to address, to use reason to choose solution approaches that are practical and feasible, and to develop work plans that include timelines, milestones, and assessment mechanisms. Students interested in business learn in the business club how products should be priced, learn approaches to marketing, learn to put together a business plan, learn how and why to develop a brand, and learn how to develop balance sheets and profit and loss tables. Students interested in the arts have choices about which art to pursue. Those interested in making art learn painting techniques, jewelry making methods, and how to sculpt. Students interested in dance learn traditional and contemporary dances and learn to choreograph. Students interested in music can learn to play the guitar or

drums or other instruments. Students interested in the environment and nutrition can participate in the gardening and cooking programs where they learn methods for growing nutritious foods organically, preparing food in ways that preserve the nutritional value of the foods, and learn ways they can take action to preserve or produce a healthy environment. In general, the school makes an ongoing effort to provide expanded learning opportunities that are diverse enough to capture the interest of every student and to help each student develop skills in an area or areas about which the student feels a passion.

#### 4 – Youth Voice and Leadership

The program provides opportunities for youth voice and leadership in two main ways, student government, and civic engagement. Each year students interested in government run for office. Each class elects its representatives as well as the student body president. Members of student government meet regularly, and meetings are conducted using parliamentary procedure. Elected representatives gather the views of those they represent, and the concerns and desires of classmates help government officials determine the activities on which they will focus attention. To work on several issues simultaneously members of student government may form task forces and recruit fellow students to participate in a given task. The issues that are addressed cover a broad range from planning and carrying out a recreational activity such as a dance or a presentation for the student body to setting up a composting program to keep food not eaten at mealtimes from simply becoming garbage, to working with the school board to include more healthy choices in school lunches, to addressing social problems such as increases in bullying on campus. The director, teachers and the school board respect youth voice and leadership and have on many occasions made changes in policies or practices based on recommendations from those in student government. It is also a school priority to engage students in civic activities that improve the community. Students are encouraged to identify an area where they wish to have an impact and then to put together a plan of action to achieve the impact they desire. To accomplish their objectives, students often must develop and present their arguments and problem solutions publicly. These presentations may be internal to the school. That is, they may be aimed at decision makers within the school. For example, the students determined that the school should use solar panels to supply power to the school. Students first convinced the director and the board that this should be done. Then the students met with officials of the county office of education, city government, and the city council person representing the area where the school is located, and, today, Sunrise is solar powered. Students have also taken on homelessness, issues of environmental justice, and racial discrimination. In all instances, the students show leadership both by giving

public voice to the issue of concern and by taking the steps necessary to bring about change in the area of concern.

## 5 – Healthy Choices and Behaviors

The school contracts with a food service that was chosen specifically because of its reputation for providing healthy and nutritious food. In addition, students have made the case, and the board has accepted their argument, that the school needs to provide a beverage alternative to milk that is non-dairy and healthy. On the students' recommendation, the school provides soy milk as an alternative to cow's milk. Beyond seeing that food served at the school, including after-school snacks, are healthy and nutritious, the school also has a gardening and a cooking program as part of the expanded learning opportunities program. The aim of these two programs is to teach students how to make healthy choices for themselves and their families. Students garden using organic methods and grow foods that are staples of meals in Latino households. The cooking program teaches students how to cook traditional meals in healthy ways. Students who participate in the gardening and cooking programs obtain skills that they can use throughout their lives to assure that they will consume healthy and nutritious foods prepared in a manner that preserves their nutritive value. Healthy choices and behaviors extend beyond healthy eating to making healthy social and emotional choices. Students have many opportunities to obtain and use substances that are harmful to their bodies and their mental development. To prevent, stop, and treat substance abuse, the school engages in the Tobacco Use Prevention and Education Program. Signage against substance use, education about effects of substance use, and providing training in methods to fend off overtures to use substances are part of the program. Counselors and mentors are employed by the school to work one-on-one with students who have begun to experiment with substances in an effort to stop substance use. In those instances where a student has become a chronic user, the school uses the services of a counseling center to help the student get his or her life back together. The mentors also work in the after-school and summer programs to guide students toward making healthy choices and engaging in healthy behaviors as customary practices.

## 6 – Diversity, Access, and Equity

Members of our staff have backgrounds, training and depth of experience that have made them highly skillful in working with students who are culturally and linguistically diverse and who have experienced inequity and lack of access. Many staff members come from families and living circumstances that mirror those of the students. They

know from personal experience what the students are experiencing. Moreover, staff members have been specifically trained in how to promote the development of students whose first language is not English and who are members of ethnic, racial, and differently-abled groups that have been discriminated against. And most of the staff have worked with Sunrise students for years. That depth of experience works continuously to the advantage of the students. All expanded learning opportunity programs are open to all students. Just as importantly, staff members are proactive in recruiting students to participate in the expanded learning programs. Our special education specialists are allies of the special education students. They make sure that special education students are full participants in the expanded learning opportunities programs. In part because our students have experienced discrimination, lack of access, and inequity, we place a special emphasis on giving students opportunities to examine prejudice, exclusion, and inequity as experienced by a diversity of groups including their own. One device for doing that is the Reconciliation Circle. Several times each year, students gather with individuals from groups that have experienced discrimination. They hear the stories of these individuals, talk with them about their feelings, desires, and reactions to discrimination and share their own experiences. Through these encounters, students look deeply into inequity and begin to engage in restorative justice. A second device to aid student experience and understanding in this area is direct engagement with groups who lack access to basics. In practice, most student experience has been with those who are homeless and those who lack access to food. Among the civic engagement projects the students have undertaken has been to visit homeless encampments and talk to people who are homeless. The school campus is also a distribution point for food from Second Harvest, an organization that supplies food to those who cannot afford to purchase it. Sometimes the students' own families are among those who receive food from Second Harvest. This series of experiences is profoundly important in helping our students understand how to remain strong in the face of discrimination against themselves, to be active in correcting inequities, and to be compassionate toward and supportive of those who have experienced oppression.

## 7 – Quality Staff

A phenomenon that is sufficiently salient that it has long been discussed in education circles across the country is this: In U.S. schools that serve low-income, ethnically and linguistically diverse students who reside in high crime neighborhoods there is very high staff turnover. The result over time is that students are served for short periods of time by inexperienced staff members who find themselves overwhelmed by the challenges they encounter. Sunrise is one of those schools with the characteristics educators talk

about, but it is not a school that has experienced the heavy turnover of staff that has plagued similar schools. Many members of the expanded learning staff have been with the school since it opened its doors more than ten years ago. These are staff members who know each student well, who may have worked with their older brothers and sisters in prior years, and who know the families of the students and the life circumstances of those families. That deep connection is an element of quality that cannot come from a good classroom education. It can come only from experience, from coming to know a place and the people in it. Sunrise has staff members with that quality. Stability of qualified staff has helped us add another element of quality to the staff. That is highly focused training. Stability has given us the luxury of supporting the auxiliary training of staff members in areas that are precisely focused on the needs of our students. For example, we work with an organization called Peacemakers that trains our staff members in how to effectively mentor students and families who experience crises and need to move back toward sustainability. Many of our families live on the edge. Consequently, our students are highly likely to experience crises. One quality of our staff members is that they know how to help such students and their families regain their footing. The majority of our students are English language learners. We have on staff experts who are skilled in working with students who, in part from lack of sufficient exposure to any language, use two languages in rudimentary ways. Our staff members know how to help our students become skilled in aural, oral, and written aspects of English and Spanish. A third aspect of quality that is present at Sunrise is coordination. Our day program and our expanded learning program staff work as a team to assure coordination between the day program and the after-school and summer programs. The result is that the expanded learning program is not a disconnected add-on to the day program. Thanks to the ability of the whole staff to coordinate, the expanded learning program supports, amplifies and complements the day program. The result is that our students engage with quality staff throughout the time they are at Sunrise.

## 8 – Clear Vision, Mission, and Purpose

The mission of the extended learning opportunities program flows from the mission of the school itself. Sunrise's mission is to educate the whole child so that each student can develop into a person who is healthy intellectually, physically, socially, psychologically, and emotionally and who is prepared to take an active role in bettering his or her community. To accomplish such an education, Sunrise builds on a foundation of academics, but also engages students regularly in outdoor experiences, acts of kindness, service to community, and activities aimed at building character, trust, self-confidence, and a growth mindset. To help students engage in reflection that fosters order, self-understanding, and inner peace, the school provides daily time for meditation. Many of the activities that address aspects of the whole child that are not

built through core academic studies are carried out in the expanded learning opportunities program. Sunrise is located in the Roosevelt Park neighborhood, a neighborhood populated by families who are poor, whose heads of household have a high school education or less, who live in cramped spaces sometimes with extended family members in order to afford rent, who speak Spanish in the home and work several jobs to make ends meet. Many are recent immigrants. The too frequent result for the children of these families is that they experience academic failure from the beginning of their schooling. Sunrise's vision is that by fitting a whole child approach to the specific growth needs of our children we can help them meet all their challenges, overcome them, and emerge as strong, confident, well-educated human beings.

## 9 – Collaborative Partnerships

Our collaborative partnerships have been chosen because of their efficacy in helping us meet our goal of educating the whole child. The outdoor program is a crucial component of the extended learning program. We partner with several organizations to give students rich and meaningful outdoor experiences. Hidden Villa is an organization that provides areas for hiking, educational programs about aspects of nature and conservation, and teaches students about organic gardening. The Santa Madre Center provides opportunities for horseback riding, leads students in trust-building activities, and also teaches children about Native American ways particularly with respect to the relationship between people and nature. Physical development is an activity in the extended learning program. We strive to help students understand the link between care of their own bodies and caring for others. The 500-Mile American Indian Spiritual Marathon helps us accomplish that objective. This group combines long-distance running, honoring of those Native American runners who, before non-indigenous people came to the region, went between villages to share news and information, and public service. The organization engages our students in long-distance running, teaches Native American ways, and engages students in acts of public service. We emphasize the link with indigenous peoples because most of our students have indigenous roots in the Americas. Social justice is an area of emphasis in the extended learning program. We are aided in our work in this area by Peacemakers, an ethnically and racially diverse organization that teaches members of our staff how to be mentors to children who are at risk, and that helps us carry out reconciliation and restorative justice circles with our students. Latinos United for a New America is an organization that organizes the residents of poor neighborhoods, trains leaders in the neighborhoods, and helps residents interact fruitfully with government officials to bring about improvements to the quality of life of those in poor neighborhoods. We are in the early stages of a partnership with this organization as it begins to organize our neighborhood Roosevelt Park. We are expecting that the organization will help our students obtain the skills they need to become effective spokespersons for their community and its needs. The life

circumstances of our students result in students encountering crises and trauma with some regularity. We use our own mentors and counselors in instances when intervention can relieve the crisis in a short time. For more serious trauma, we partner with the Alum Rock Counseling Center. The Center provides individual and group treatment to help students address ongoing trauma in a healthy and healing manner.

## 10 – Continuous Quality Improvement

Staff members who work directly with the students have ten days of professional development at the beginning of each school year. We estimate, on average, that staff members spend about one hour per week during the school year in professional development. Our continuous quality improvement program is focused on increasing the skills of staff members in areas that have the most positive impact on our students. Most of our students are English learners. Accordingly, our staff members take full advantage of workshops, classes and seminars offered by the Santa Clara County Office of Education concerning strategies for teaching English learners. It is important for staff members to know how to develop English skills that are consistent with the kind of activity in which the staff member is engaging the students. We are fortunate to have two staff members who each have over 20 years of experience in English language development. They work with other staff members to improve their skills in how to build student vocabulary and usage around specific topic areas. The whole child approach includes many activities meant to promote social and emotional development. Staff members receive training in how to promote socio-emotional learning from a variety of sources as opportunities arise. We also engage the help of Peacemakers in training staff in this area. Fundamental to any kind of instruction is the ability to engage the students. We have been introducing staff to CABE (California Association of Bilingual Educators) and Kagan Cooperative Learning Strategies, and these methods have been very useful for both the day program and the extended learning staff. Many of our students had experienced academic failure before coming to Sunrise. Those experiences have discouraged the students and made them feel incapable of mastery in many areas of learning. We work hard to replace the idea that there is just one right answer in a given area and all other answers are wrong with a growth mindset. If a child adopts a growth mindset, the idea of being either a failure or a success is replaced with the belief that every attempt to learn something or to do something is a step. One learns something from the experience, applies that learning, and takes another step. All staff are trained in methods to help students adopt and practice the growth mindset.



## 11 – Program Management

Overall responsibility for day-to-day operation of the school including the school-day, after-school, and summer programs lies with the Director who reports to the Sunrise Board. She is assisted by an Assistant Principal for Academics, an After School Program Director, an Assistant Principal for Discipline and Safety, A Director of Mathematics, and a Director of Special Education. The extended learning opportunities program includes the summer program and the after-school program. The summer program is administered by the Director in close collaboration with the Assistant Principal for Academics. Non-academic activity is an important part of the summer program, and this segment of the program is overseen by the After School Program Director. The after-school program is administered by the After School Program Director. Some certified math and English teachers from the school year day program volunteer to work in the summer program for extra summer stipends as do members of the after-school staff. From time to time, teachers from the day program also offer activities in the after-school program. One of the teachers in the day program, for example, has taught dance. Another taught robotics. The after-school program also has its own staff of instructors, activity leaders and mentors. The practice of using the school's own teachers and after-school staff in the summer program is of great benefit. Students know their instructors. Teachers and after-school staff get to know students entering the school in the coming school year since the option of coming into the summer program is offered to new enrollees. Continuity between the summer and school year programs is a major factor in assuring that our students advance steadily and achieve performance levels that exceed those of similar students at other schools nearby. Research has made clear that academic performance of low-income English language learners is significantly improved when they are taught consistently over time by teachers who look like themselves and who create a familial learning environment. Offerings in the after-school program are planned by the after-school staff in consultation with the day-program teachers and under the guidance of the After School Program Director and the Sunrise Director. Planners also consult students to ascertain the programs they wish to see. This planning takes place toward the end of the school year and into the summer before the school year in which the programs are offered. The result is a mix of programs that are always offered such as the physical development options, coding, art, cooking and gardening. Some classes are offered if there is demand. Examples include dance, robotics, and music. English and Mathematics form the core of the academic part of the summer program. Participation in a variety of sports including swimming is also a consistent feature as are field trips and excursions to natural settings. The method of content delivery, and the orientation of field trips is heavily influenced by the theme the students choose for the summer program. Teachers and staff, under the supervision of the Director, plan learning and

field trips in a manner that makes use of the theme as the core around which learning and summer activities are organized. While the manner of content delivery is influenced by the theme, the activities themselves remain consistent from summer to summer and include swimming, sports, outdoor field trips, a camping trip, arts and STEM projects, and English and Mathematics. Preparation for the summer program begins in March when the summer staff begin meeting weekly to plan logistics. The meetings continue during the summer program as a means to permit quick adjustments as needed to assure maximum return from the program. Participating staff also begin signing students up for the summer program in March. They advertise the program and talk to the students about the activities that will be offered. While the summer program is voluntary, staff work hard to sign up as many students as possible because the academic performance in the new school year of students who participate in the summer program is markedly better than students who did not participate. The school principal is responsible for reporting to the school's Board of Directors about the program's successes and failures, number of students involved, financial accounting, and academic progress. It also is incumbent upon the school principal to maintain school safety, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to make sure the program adheres to all federal, state and local requirements. All parent materials are distributed in both Spanish and English since about 75 percent of our family heads of household speak only Spanish. The extended learning program has a clear organizational structure with well-defined job descriptions and duties. Particular strengths of the program are that those staff who work directly with the students are likely to come from backgrounds like the students and many of these staff members have been with the program for years ensuring program stability.

## **General Questions**

### **For an Existing ASES and 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Grantee:**

The ELO-P at Sunrise Middle in 2021-2022 is a program conducted jointly and seamlessly with the school's ASES-funded after school program and its 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC-funded summer program.

The program will offer three hours of academic, enrichment and recreational activities to its participants through an after school program on each of the 180 school days. During the summer and on school intercessions the program will offer 30 days of nine hours or more academic, enrichment and recreational activities.

The program is offered to all of Sunrise Middle's 290 students, and about 125 students participate on a regular basis during the school year. It is expected that nearly that many students will also participate in the summer. Nearly 90 percent of our students are low-income and more than 50 percent are English Learners. All students benefit greatly from these programs.

The after school portion of this program offers healthy snacks, an hour of academic assistance (including math and reading intervention), 45 minutes of enrichment or STEM activities, and an hour of recreational activities and/or sports.

The summer portion of the program includes 20 days of academics, including Project Based Learning, in the mornings and enrichment and recreational activities, including swimming, in the afternoon. Additionally, we offer field trips at least once a week.

The intercession portion of the program will include overnight field trips to exciting and adventurous locations – for example,

- Joshua Tree, desert rock climbing and/or Backpacking ( 4+ days );
- Hidden Villa, organic farm and wilderness trip ( 2 x 2 days );
- Tahoe, snow science and snowboarding ( 2 days )

Total: 10+ days

All put together, the new seamless ELO-P program will offer a rich variety of cultural, sports and outdoor experiences for the students at Sunrise Middle School, most of whom could not afford these experiences otherwise. The program will also be of great advantage to our many English Learners, most of whom would not get enough practice speaking academic English otherwise since Spanish is usually spoken in their homes. This program also will give our students the extra time they need to build on their academic skills.

### **Transitional Kindergarten**

Not applicable

### **Sample Summer Program Schedule**

8-9 am – Current Events/ English

9-10 am – Math

10-10:15 – Brunch

10:15-12 – Project Based Learning

12-12:30 pm – Lunch

12:30 – 1 \*\* – Meditation and/or Reading time  
1-3 – Sports / Swimming / Art / Technology, etc.  
Some students may choose to leave at 3 pm  
3-3:15 – Snack  
3:15-4 pm – Academic support  
4-5 pm – Games and recreational activities  
5 pm – Last students leave

\*\* On a Friday the entire afternoon would consist of a field trip.