

Making Kane County Fit for Kids Fit Kids 2020 Plan Implementation Call for Projects 2019 Application

Applicant Information

Project Name: Blackhawk Academy: Whole Child Fitness Initiative

Project Location: Blackhawk Academy, 1870 W. Galena Blvd., Aurora, Illinois 60506

Applicant Name: Joy Howard

Applicant Address: 1870 W. Galena Blvd., Aurora, Illinois 60506

City, State, Zip: Aurora, Illinois 60506

Contact Name and Title: Joy Howard, School Social Worker

Phone: 630-801-6384 Fax: 630-801-9446 E-mail: jhoward@sd129.org

Project Period: June 1, 2019 – May 31, 2020

Project Funding

1. Total cost of identified project: \$ 44,967.00
2. Total available funds (or secured) from other sources: \$ 29,967
3. Amount requested from Making Kane County Fit for Kids: \$ 15,000

Attached a budget for the project. Include all project expenses and funding sources. Indicate the status of each funding source (i.e. yet to apply, application pending funding committed, etc.)

The budget sheet and timeline are attached.

FIT FOR KIDS GRANT PROJECT GOALS GRID AND QUESTIONNAIRE

Project Summary: (Provide a general statement explaining the problem/opportunity the project will address and identify the benefits of implementing the project.)

Negative outcomes that Blackhawk Academy (BHA, a West Aurora School District 129 alternative education program) students face include but are not limited to substance misuse, teen pregnancy, victims or perpetrators of violence, delinquency, juvenile incarcerations, stress, mental health problems, poor academic performance, truancy, dropping out of high school, and diminished access to gainful employment and secondary educational opportunities. As result, BHA students are more at high risk for future adverse

outcomes by the time they reach adulthood than their mainstream peers. Further, there is an increased likelihood that BHA students may make poor nutrition and health choices resulting in childhood obesity. Prospective studies have revealed that obese adolescents are at risk for major anxiety and depressive disorders later in life. An overweight child is at greater risk for depression, other mental health disorders and body image dissatisfaction. (*Paediatrics & Child Health*, Volume 17, Issue 4, April 2012, Pages 205 -206, <https://doi.org/10.1093/pch/17.4.205>)

Currently, almost one third of all U. S. children and adolescents are overweight or obese, and the rates among Black and Hispanic children, as well as children living in lower-income households, as even higher. (Dianne S. Ward, E. D. (2011, October). *School Policies on Physical Education and Physical Activity*. Retrieved from Robert Wood Johnson Foundation: <http://www.activelivingresearch.org>) In recent years, the amount of physical activity the all youth receive, both in and out of school has declined. Consequently, this trend results in young people becoming more overweight and less fit. Research speaks to the benefits of physical activity for adolescents in all educational settings. Regular physical activity in children and adolescents promotes health and fitness. Physical activity also has brain health benefits for school-aged children, including improved cognition (e.g., academic performance, memory) and reduced symptoms of depression. (US Department of Health and Human Services. *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*, 2nd edition. Washington, DC: US Department of Health and Human Services; 2018.) Participation in physical activity, instruction around good nutrition and the adoption of behaviors associated with an active lifestyle have been shown to significantly mitigate many, if not all, these negative outcomes for youth. Physical activity supports them in making positive life changes. However, Alternative Education Programs face considerable obstacles in providing opportunities for physical activity within the structure of the school day. The 2017-2018 fitness test for Aerobic Capacity Pacer conducted with BHA students yielded the following results. High school students in grades 9 -12 were tested. All tested students were below expected West Aurora School Districts for adequate fitness levels. What can we provide for BHA students to assist with improving both physical and social/emotional health in order to achieve positive academic and life outcomes?

The necessary programming/facilities to provide an effective physical activity program for BHA students is resource-intensive, but the potential investment promises increased educational outcomes for students. In order to level the playing field for BHA students, a multipurpose room was designed to house physical education equipment and provide space for recreation and instructional activities. A variety of cardio exercise equipment is needed to meet Blackhawk Academy's growing student population and to provide opportunities for physical activity similar to those offered to mainstreamed peers. By outfitting the multipurpose room with the appropriate equipment, we believe the following student benefits will occur:

- Increased student engagement and participation
- Increased attendance
- Improved cardiovascular health
- Improved academic and social emotional outcomes
- Decreased disciplinary consequences

Target Population of your organization and project Blackhawk Academy and Careers and Technology Education students in West Aurora School District 129

Project Goal(s)

| | Methods or process to reach your goal | How will you know you met your goal? Measures and data collected |
|--|---|---|
| 1. All Blackhawk Academy students will participate scheduled physical activity during the school day throughout the school year by May 2020 at least 3 out of 5 days per week. | Classroom teachers will track participation in scheduled physical activity sessions during the school week. | Evidence of participation will be based on teacher documentation. |
| 2. Student academic engagement/participation will increase by 10% by May 2020. | Work completion will be monitored. | Evidence of work completion will be monitored through the on-line learning platform. |
| 3. By May 2020, West Aurora Fitness testing will yield a 10% increase of Aerobic Capacity fitness. | BHA students will participate in West Aurora School District mandated fitness testing. | Fitness testing evidence will be analyzed and compared to 2018- 2019. |
| 4. By May 2020, students will increase their ability to self-manage as evidenced by a 10% decline in disciplinary consequences. | Disciplinary consequences will be reviewed and monitored. Classroom teachers will provide anecdotal and observational data. Students will asked to self- assess their progress. | 2019 – 2020 disciplinary consequences will be compared to 2018/2019 data to determine outcomes. Classroom teachers will provide anecdotal and observational data. Students will asked to self- assess their progress. |
| 5. By May 2020, student attendance will increase by 10%. | Daily attendance will be tracked and monitored. | Daily attendance will be tracked and monitored. |

(Each goal will have at least one method and measure. Expand the grid and add more boxes to the table if needed.)

In addition to completing the grid above, please provide short answer to the questions below.

Project Questions

1. Provide a detailed description of your project/program, including the target population and geographic area it will serve.

The Blackhawk Academy (BHA) is an alternative education program that serves students in grades 6 – 12 plus. The academy houses the following programs: SUCCESS Academy, Connections, Transitions, and the Careers Center. The Connections and Transitions programs are designated for those students requiring special education. Approximately 400 students are enrolled in programs housed at BHA. In addition, West Aurora

High School students in the blended PE program will also utilize the facilities at BHA. In the 2020-2021 school year, students from Batavia School District are slated to participate in programs offered through the Careers Center.

The academy receives students from Jefferson, Washington, Herget, and Jewel middle schools, as well as West Aurora High School. These students typically have not responded to the supports and services provided in the general education setting. Students are referred for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to academic and behavioral struggles; recommendations for possible expulsion/exclusionary discipline, repeated suspensions and chronic truancy. The purpose of the program is to provide academic, social/emotional/behavioral and career based support to all enrolled students. In order to provide an academic environment that supports student success through grade advancement and academic credit accumulation to high school graduation, a variety of instructional modalities are employed using on-line coursework, direct instruction and community agency support. The Black Hawk Academy provides a structured educational environment that meets individual student needs through fostering the growth of age appropriate coping strategies. By doing so, students develop an increased sense of self-worth and pride, which in turn promotes their motivation to attend and become an active participant in their education and life decisions. To support this mission, scheduled physical activity will become a vital component.

Specifically, Blackhawk Academy has a room designated for physical activity. It holds ten pieces of previously used cardio equipment, an in-kind district donation. Please see the picture below. Currently each classroom has a capacity for 22 students. Given the increased enrollment, additional cardio equipment is needed to grant each student access.



2. Describe the applicant's experience in the administration of this or similar projects/programs including the qualifications of the personnel that will be directly involved in the management of this project/program.

West Aurora School District 129 is recipient of numerous grants from state and federal agencies. Cherie Esposito, a grant application and accountability manager was hired this school year (2018-2019). Ms. Esposito has extensive experience with handling federal grants under Title I. She was a former school administrator with a history of successful funding applications for federal grants and international foundations. As result, the District holds extensive experience with managing projects and with accountability processes. Federal grants currently underway include the following: Perkins CTE grant, Pre-school Expansion Grant, Healthy Community Investment Grant, Preschool for All, Preschool for All Prevention Initiative (0-3), Career and Tech Improvement Grant, Title I-ESSA, IDEA Part B Preschool, 21st Century Continuation Grant, IDEA Part B Flow-Through, IEP, LIPLEPS, and Title IIA-ESSA. A Dun and Bradstreet number (DUNS) and a System for Awards Management (SAM) number is required for the allocation of these grant-funding sources. This requirement is updated annually by the district to remain in good standing as a grant recipient. The district also effectively manages a large grant from the Dunham fund for Science and Literacy. The district also participates in the National School Lunch program as a school food authority.

Mr. Ryan Abrahamson is the director of finance. He is responsible for budgets, purchasing, auditing, financial reporting, bids, request for proposal (RFP) procedures, tax levy questions and the accurate reporting and monitoring of the financial health of West Aurora School District 129. Crowe Horwath LP located in Oak Brook, Illinois completes an annual single point audit of the internal control over finance reporting and compliance of the school district. This audit was conducted according to government auditing standards. Specific procedures for an internal control narrative includes specific procedures for grant, property tax and governmental revenue; financial compensation management, disbursements, capital assets, general accounting, financing, fund balance, investments and IBNR.

Joy Howard, MSW, M. Ed., a school social worker for West Aurora School District, is an integral member of the Blackhawk Academy team. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Illinois at Chicago. She received a Master of Social Work degree from Aurora University. In addition, Mrs. Howard acquired a Master of Educational Leadership for Governors State University. She has extensive background and practice knowledge in meeting the holistic needs of youth from a whole child perspective. She is a co-trainer and facilitator for the Whole Child Professional Development Badging Strand for West Aurora School District. She has also worked as human services administrator managing intermediate care facilities with operational budgets exceeding \$ 400, 000 annually. Her experience in alternative education setting includes but is not limited to serving students' social emotional needs, instituting rewards and incentive based programs, developing service learning projects, and data collection and accountability for the Regional Safe Schools program and Alternative Learning Opportunities grant. She successfully applied for funding through local area foundations. Through her past work, a grant award from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSA) was allocated to introduce social emotional learning and staff training district wide.

3. Is this project/program a collaborative effort with other entities? If so, please elaborate.

West Aurora School District provided an in-kind donation of ten pieces of previously used of cardio equipment. Other funding sources will be investigated in order to secure the remaining balance of \$ 29,967.000. This program is a collaborative effort between Blackhawk Academy, Careers and Technical Education and the District's physical education program, managed by Mr. Todd Gingerich, Curriculum Coordinator for Physical Education.

Organization Questions

1. Briefly describe your organization and its history. Include website and/or Facebook page if applicable.

Blackhawk Academy (formally known as the SUCCESS Academy) is a West Aurora School District 129 alternative school. Blackhawk Academy 's roots began with twenty high school students and one high school teacher at West High School during the 2010- 2011 school year. Since then, Blackhawk Academy has grown to include four regular education high school classrooms, two special education high school classrooms, one regular education middle school classroom, and three Transition's classroom (a special education post high program for students 18 – 21). The Academy also houses the Career and Technology Education programs and with plans to support West High School's blended physical education program. Projections for the 2019 – 2020 school year will approximate 400 students.

Current research speaks to the need for physical activity to support healthy lifestyles and positive life outcomes for students. West Aurora School District 129 invests in the success of all young people. This commitment not only nurtures academic achievement, but also addresses the connection between the physical fitness and social/emotional health. In an alternative education environment such as Blackhawk Academy, providing options for improved physical health and enrichment, will provide our students the same opportunities as their mainstreamed peers. West Aurora School Districts supports the whole child approach to education and healthy living for all.

Our website is located at www.sd129.org. The social media platforms are:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/westaurora129

Facebook Espanol: www.facebook.com/WAurora129/?fref=ts

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/129>

Instagram: www.instagram.com/west-aurora-129

Youtube: www.youtube.com/user/WestAuroraSD129

