

After School Report 2013-2014

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The 2013-2014 After School program was structured very similarly to the very successful 2012-2013 After School Program; literacy, specifically in reading and math was the overall focus of the program. The overall mission of Cities In Schools is to provide a safe, nurturing environment in which students receive one-on-one mentoring and participate in learning activities. Through several successful community partnerships and collaborations, Cities In Schools was able to broaden the After School Program, make improvements and expansions, all while maintaining very high quality standards. The 2013-2014 After School program saw partnerships with Girls On The Run, Girl Scouts, Regional Food Bank, the Oklahoma State Health Department, the Oklahoma Child Guidance Division and Ardmore Little Theater. Cities In Schools continued to maintain the long standing partnership with Ardmore City Schools allowing students access to a computer lab and have the ability to take AR tests, as well as Ardmore City Schools providing guidance on literacy activities. In order to measure the success of the changes made to the 2013-2014 After School program, Cities in Schools reviewed the RIT scores for each enrolled student.

The 2013-2014 After School program continued to use the very successful schedule previously used, enabling the creation of a safe and nurturing environment that has come to be expected of Cities In Schools and which has been proven repeatedly to induce improved behavior among the students as they know what to expect and what is expected of them. The schedule included a set time to do homework with homework help provided, and in some cases customized tutoring provided, 15 minutes a day of AR reading, a full meal and a rotation of literacy activities and play time. The AmeriCorps members continued to provide one-on-one mentoring and create a bond with each student, enabling the members to develop a personal

relationship with each child while leading daily literacy activities and helping with homework. These individual relationships allowed the staff to monitor each student, detecting slight changes which could indicate problems at home or in school. Because of this, members were able to speak to the administrative staff, who in turn worked with the parents to help the children be successful. In addition Cities In Schools was able to contract with a literacy specialist to test for reading disabilities; this addition helped countless children improve their reading to grade level, all through a simple test.

It is the belief of Cities In Schools that every child deserves a chance to a bright future. Often, that chance is limited by resources. Research continues to show that poverty is directly linked to disparities in education qualities and retention. Research also indicates that children living in low income homes who attend after school or summer programs greatly reduce the disparity and at times completely eliminating it. Cities In Schools is continuing to actively fight this by offering high quality programs to at risk youth.

While the research and data presented clearly outline the need for an after school program, this is not sufficient for Cities In Schools. There must be a method to measure the successes and failures of the program. After careful data analysis, the 2013-2014 After School program can be deemed successful. The goal was for the RIT score of each student to show that the student tested within grade level in reading and math. The scores continue to indicate that the students enrolled in Cities In Schools programs test at the high end of their grade level. These results will be used to continually better the program and continue to maintain high quality programming to the residents of Carter County.

The 2014-2015 After School program continues to maintain the structure and high quality Cities In Schools has come to be known for. The 2015 Summer Program and 2014-2015 After School program will be measured in the same manner, through a comparison of RIT scores. It is the deepest desire of the staff of Cities In Schools to provide the highest quality out of school time care with a focus on literacy to the residents of Carter County for the years to come, greatly impacting the future of the students.