Virginia Association of Counties

ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2022.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact Gage Harter.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: County of Henrico

Program Title: Kids of Promise

Program Category: Health and Human Services

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Title: Deputy County Manager for Administration

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Program Overview

The newly launched “Kids of Promise” after-school program at Henrico County Public Schools’ (HCPS’) Laburnum Elementary School is a pilot talent development enrichment program. The school division’s Department of Teaching, Learning and Innovation (TLI), along with the Henrico Education Foundation (HEF), have partnered to provide additional targeted opportunities for the program. The program seeks to increase the identification of historically underrepresented gifted students, including those from poverty environments and culturally diverse families. Kids of Promise creates grade-level student cohorts that participate in STEAM (science, technology, engineering, the arts and math) and social and emotional education programming.

The goals of the Kids of Promise program are to increase the number of students referred and identified as gifted at Laburnum Elementary School and to develop students’ potential through enrichment programming. HCPS believes that talented students exist in every school and seeks to increase opportunities for students to ensure equity and access for families. In coordination with new gifted identification tools and efforts, the Kids of Promise program develops student talents and enriches their academic experiences. We anticipate that the program will increase the number of students referred and identified for gifted programming and support academic achievement measures in the general education classroom.

Problem/Challenge/Situation Faced by Locality

A study of more than 10,000 elementary schools conducted by Vanderbilt University found that Black students are 66% less likely and Hispanic students are 47% less likely than white students to participate in gifted programs. In New York City, while Black and Hispanic students comprise 65% of the elementary school population, they make up only 27% of the elementary gifted population. In Henrico County Public Schools, 46.6% of students are Black or Hispanic, but only

17.2% are currently identified as gifted. During the 2020-21 school year, only six students were identified as gifted at Laburnum Elementary School. Failure to identify students with potential often leads to stressful school environments in which bright students may become bored, lack motivation and participate in disruptive classroom behaviors. Additionally, social and emotional problems may result in misdiagnosis of attention disorders and reduced economic opportunities later in life.

A 2019-20 audit of the school division's K-12 gifted program, conducted by Dr. Jonathan Plucker, professor of talent development at Johns Hopkins University, resulted in the creation of a new theme, "Growing the Pie," to extend programming. For Henrico County Public Schools to make significant and impactful changes to gifted services, the division must incorporate practices that expand current services and programming to address inequities and disproportionality. The Kids of Promise program was developed in the fall of 2021, following the work with Dr. Plucker to implement equity audit recommendations in HCPS. Program enrichment areas include chess, Rubik's cube, design inquiry and STEAM/coding. The selection of specific enrichment programming and curricula was based on extending opportunities beyond the after-school setting so that students may participate in enrichment year-round, both during the school year and into the summer.

How Program Fulfilled Awards Criteria

The Department of Teaching, Learning and Innovation, along with the Henrico Education Foundation, have collaborated to provide a customized program of enrichment for Laburnum third and fourth graders participating in the after-school pilot. The Kids of Promise program is worthy of recognition for its innovative approach to increasing student opportunities and improving their academic performance and access to advanced coursework through targeted enrichment, and

social and emotional programming provided by highly engaging and invested staff. It is an example of collaboration between the school division and the Henrico Education Association. The total program, as well as selected components of the program are easily replicable by other localities, schools and youth organizations.

How Program Was Carried Out

Henrico County Public Schools and the Henrico Education Foundation have collaborated to provide a pilot project at Laburnum Elementary School that includes:

- Identifying and recruiting under-represented students of promise, showing gifted potential.
- Forming third and fourth grade cohorts from families at or below the poverty line to experience high-quality STEAM and social-and-emotional-learning programming integrated into the school's 21st Century Community Learning Center, or CCLC, after-school program.
- Highly qualified teachers as well as counselor mentors trained in social and emotional learning and enrichment programming.
- Quarterly meetings with grant and school staff to assess student progress and differentiate programming as appropriate.

HCPS TLI / Gifted Department Provides:	**Henrico Education Foundation Provides:**
• Two hours of enrichment/social and emotional learning Monday-Thursday for students as a 21st CCLC vendor. • Training of gifted services staff.	• Contract/memorandum of understanding with HCPS as a vendor to provide two hours of enrichment/social and emotional learning daily. Monday-Thursday.

• Curriculum/content. • Transportation (grant partnership) • Department of School Nutrition support (grant partnership). • Department of Technology support. • Data collection and sharing.	• Program infrastructure to support the delivery of pilot programming. • Enrichment and recreation (21st CCLC). • Field trips (21st CCLC). • Collaboration in evaluation and assessment of pilot success.

Third and fourth grade students were referred by Laburnum classroom teachers. The HCPS gifted screening checklist was used by staff to identify potential students for the talent development program.

Gifted students are those K-12 students who demonstrate a high level of accomplishment as well as those students who show the potential for a high level of accomplishment beyond their age/grade level peers of similar experience or environment. A gifted student's achievement and/or demonstrated potential for achievement in English, Mathematics, or the performing arts is so outstanding that the student requires a special program to meet their educational needs. Students who are identified as gifted and talented have the demonstrated potential to achieve significantly high levels of accomplishment that need to be recognized and supported. In order to meet their potential, these students require gifted education services.

HCPS students may be identified as Gifted and Talented in General Intellectual Aptitude (GIA), Specific Academic Aptitude in English (SAA- English) or Specific Academic Aptitude in Mathematics (SAA-Mathematics) by the school's Gifted Identification Placement Team. The team consists of the school's Gifted Identification Coordinator, Gifted Resource Teacher, school administrator/designee, classroom teacher, and school counselor. Members of the team review

the student portfolio which consists of evidence of a student's readiness for gifted services and make an identification recommendation. The student portfolio contains a parent questionnaire, a professional rating scale of student behaviors and characteristics of diverse gifted students, examples of student work, student grades, nationally normed aptitude and/or achievement assessments, and/or a student observation or interview if needed.

Students may be identified in the area of Visual and/or Performing Arts (VPA) if the student is found eligible for placement in the Center for the Arts Specialty Center for grades 9-12 based upon an examination of the following criteria: teacher recommendations, grades, student resume, a portfolio/audition, and a performance-based task related to the area of interest

Program enrichment areas include chess, Rubik's cube, design inquiry, and STEAM /coding. Benefits of each of these program enrichment areas are described below.

Benefits of Chess

Chess provides a wealth of academic, social and emotional benefits. These benefits include increased cognitive skills, such as concentration, pattern recognition, decision making, problem-solving and critical thinking. Research shows that chess increases student self-confidence and attention span while encouraging understanding of choice and consequences for problem-solving. Benefits that support the social and emotional needs of the gifted include increased resilience, improved communication skills and an increase in empathy and self-awareness.

Benefits of STEAM

STEAM education (science, technology, education, the arts and math) fosters ingenuity and creativity, builds resilience, encourages teamwork and collaboration, teaches

problem-solving and encourages flexibility. Specific to the needs of the gifted student, STEAM activities support acceptance of failure, increase critical thinking skills and improve communication and leadership abilities. This program will focus on problem-based learning and will lead to higher-level discussions about how technology can provide solutions to real-world issues.

Benefits of Rubik's Cube

Participating in Rubik's Cube activities has benefits that align with STEAM education goals. These benefits include improving muscle memory using algorithms, increasing perseverance and resilience, enhancing problem-solving skills, improving agility and reflexes, and increasing determination and focus. With regard to supporting gifted attributes, solving the cube helps develop cognitive abilities, enhances the ability to work under pressure, and improves concentration.

Benefits of Design-thinking

Design-thinking allows students to address real-world problems using authentic tools to arrive at meaningful solutions. As a human-centered, solutions-focused approach to creativity and design, design-thinking enables students to develop analytical skills, self-awareness, understanding of others' situations and needs, and empathy. Students learn a five-stage process that emphasizes the need to understand and empathize with the audience they are designing for, and the importance of building and testing prototypes as part of the design process.

Selected activities give students the ability to further their learning outside of the classroom. For instance, the Chess4Life program offers students the opportunity to access chess enrichment

from their classroom computers, home computers, or phones. This safe online program is available to students at any time — after school, on weekends, and during the summer. In addition, the CodeRVA school invites students from Title-I schools to participate in all programming, virtually and in person, at no cost. In this way, we introduce students to advanced enrichment opportunities with fewer barriers.

Additionally, the social and emotional support provided by the HEF program components has the potential to increase student self-regulation, and social and emotional wellness, as students participate in daily sessions with school counseling staff that deliver additional program components.

The long-range plan is to replicate and expand the program using additional funding. We hope that by providing these challenging experiences, there will be a systemic shift in the identification of our underserved gifted and talented students with significant increases in the number of Title-I students referred and identified for advanced academic opportunities including gifted programming in general intellectual aptitude, as well as specific aptitudes in mathematics and English language arts.

Financing and Staffing

Henrico Education Foundation funding, along with funding from the HCPS Department of Teaching, Learning and Innovation, and Gifted Programs Office, provided the means to start this program. The continuation and expansion of the program is dependent on the continuity of funding. The shared expense approach has made this program possible, with HEF covering the salary of staff and Teaching, Learning and Innovation, and Gifted Programs Office covering the curricula, professional development training and materials. We foresee exciting potential to grow

this program at additional Title-I schools and to provide an à-la-carte approach for other schools to adopt one or more enrichment program offerings as after-school or extracurricular activities for additional students. Specific costs for each component of the program are as follows:

Chess

- The cost of the program is $2,500 per school per calendar year.
- Teacher salaries: 48 instructional hours x 2 instructors at $29.46/hour including FICA: $2,828.
- Professional development: 10 hours x 2 instructors at $29.46/hour including FICA: $589.
- Estimated total cost: $5,917

STEAM

- The cost of the Eureka program is $5,000 per school per calendar year (two classes/20 students per class/one day per week).
- Teacher salaries: 48 instructional hours x 2 instructors at $29.46/hour including FICA: $2,828.
- Professional development: 10 hours x 2 instructors at $29.46/hour including FICA: $589.
- Supplies: Two 3-D printers at $400, filament $200, “Makey Makey” kits — six at $50: $1,300
- Estimated total cost: $9,717

Rubik’s Cube

- 50 Rubik's cubes for speed competition. Cubes must have a "Rubik's" sticker to be used in competition. 50 cubes x $10: $500
- 100 cubes used for mosaics: 100 cubes x $1: $100
    - Teacher salaries: 48 instructional hours x 2 instructors at $29.46/hour including FICA $2,828.
- Professional development planning: 10 hours x 2 instructors at $29.46/hour including FICA: $589.
- Estimated total cost: $4,017

Innovation and Design

- Various art supplies and classroom materials: $500
- Teacher salaries: 48 instructional hours x 2 instructors at $29.46/hour including FICA $2,828
- Professional development and planning - 10 hours x 2 instructors @$29.46/hour including FICA: $589
- Estimated total cost: $3,917

Estimated total cost of the program: $23,569

Program Results

The preliminary results of this program already indicate a significant increase in the number of economically disadvantaged students referred by teachers for gifted identification this school year. For 2021-22, we have received 65 referrals at Laburnum Elementary School. This number includes 10 third graders and 16 fourth graders. Of these, seven third graders and nine fourth

graders participate in the Kids of Promise after-school program. For comparison, six Laburnum students were referred in 2020-21 and 20 students were referred in 2019-20.

Additional data will be collected and analyzed at the end of each school year. These metrics for program success include:

- Number of gifted referrals initiated by parents, guardians and teachers.
- Number of students identified as gifted.
- Number of students accessing advanced academic opportunities.
    - Number of students participating in advanced Math 5 and 6 classes.
    - Number of applicants to middle school International Baccalaureate and middle school Gifted Young Scholars Academy programs.
    - Number of students accepted to middle school International Baccalaureate and middle school Gifted Young Scholars Academy programs.
- Career cluster survey results.
- Grade data.
- Discipline and attendance data.

Brief Summary

The “Kids of Promise” after-school program at Henrico County Public Schools’ (HCPS’) Laburnum Elementary School is a pilot talent development enrichment program. This program, a collaboration between the school division’s Department of Teaching, Learning and Innovation and the Henrico Education Foundation, seeks to increase the identification of historically underrepresented gifted students. These students engage in four afterschool enrichment areas, as well as social and emotional education programming. Program enrichment areas include chess, Rubik's cube, design inquiry, and STEAM /coding.

The pilot project includes:

- Identifying and recruiting under-represented students of promise, showing gifted potential.
- Forming third and fourth grade cohorts from families at or below the poverty line to experience high-quality STEAM and social-and-emotional-learning programming integrated into the school's 21st Century Community Learning Center, or CCLC, after-school program.
- Utilization of highly qualified teachers as well as counselor mentors trained in social and emotional learning and enrichment programming.
- Quarterly meetings with grant and school staff to assess student progress and differentiate programming as appropriate.

Kids of Promise provides challenging experiences to our students with the potential to expand their academic opportunities as they move through the upper elementary grade levels and transition into their secondary school years in middle and high school, as well as increasing equity in the gifted identification process. Results from the pilot program are most encouraging. This programming has the ingredients and capacity to bring about greater awareness of gifted characteristics in multilingual students, students with disabilities, and students experiencing poverty and to provide expanded opportunities for students who have been historically underrepresented in gifted and advanced education experiences and programs.