Stanislaus Union School District
THRIVE After School Programs
Eisenhut Elementary School

Eisenhut Elementary School
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Stanislaus Union School District has operated the Transforming Habits, Respecting Individuality, Valuing Education (THRIVE) After School Programs since August 2007.

Through strong relationships with families, schools and communities it is the mission of Stanislaus Union THRIVE After School Programs to Engage students in healthy behaviors, to Enrich them in academic opportunities and to Empower them to become leaders in their communities.

THRIVE’s vision is to Engage, Enrich, Empower.

Site Background:

Eisenhut Elementary School is located in the northwest area of Modesto and serves students grades TK-6th. Eisenhut serves a high poverty student population that is 64% Hispanic or Latino, 15.6% White not Hispanic, 4.9% Asian, 8.7% African American not Hispanic and 6.8% other. Free and reduced lunches are offered to 83.3% of students.

Eisenhut’s THRIVE After School Program operates through the After School Education and Safety (ASES) grant. We offer an engaging, enriching and empowering after school program to more than 20% of the student population. The THRIVE program serves 105 students on a daily basis while maintaining an on-going wait list of over 100 students.

The THRIVE program operates Monday through Friday directly from school dismissal until 6 p.m. The staff to student ratio is 20:1, with a minimum of one program leader per grade. Our THRIVE program leaders are young college students who come from diverse backgrounds.

Making a Difference
Through the HBI process, we have realized the importance of being intentional in every aspect of our program and have added the following layers:

- **Cooler Conversations**:
  - By refreshing our students with infused water, we have found that our students are now drinking more water at school and requesting infused water at the dinner table.
  - By recharging our students with almonds, we have discovered that they are requesting almonds and other sources of clean fuel at home and on the weekends.
  - By reconnecting our students and parents with a daily question, we have found that students and their families are now having meaningful conversations on their way home.

- **Brain Breaks**:
  - By offering our students Brain Breaks during the academic hour, we found that our students are more engaged and focused.

- **Exercise across America**:
  - Exercise across America has increased the steps that students and staff take during the after school program day. Our community has taken over 800,000 steps during the last seven months.

- **Exercise of the Day**:
  - Exercise of the day provides multiple opportunities for increased physical activity during the after school program day.

**What We Do**

- **Physical Activity**: Students participate in a variety of activities designed to help them develop their physical skills. Students engage in at least 45 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity on a daily basis. These physical activities are aligned with the California State Standards. In addition to daily physical activity, we also offer:
  - **Brain Breaks**: During the academic hour, staff facilitates “Brain Breaks” using several techniques (i.e. gonoodle.com, staff guided physical activity, etc…). Brain breaks are physical activities that can help students refocus and improve their attention span. Brain Breaks are taken every 30 minutes during the academic hour. Energizing brain breaks help engage both sides of the brain and movement is connected to cognitive learning. When we sit for more than 20 minutes, blood pools in our body - we
need to get up and recirculate the blood back to the brain. Kids think better on their feet than on their seat! An outcome of Brain Breaks has been that our students are more engaged and focused.

**Exercise across America:** Through partnerships with Center for Collaborative Solutions and Kaiser Permanente, we were able to secure 115 pedometers for students and staff to track their steps during after school hours. In November 2015, we implemented our Exercise across America program and our students have taken 838,547 steps (and counting).

**Exercise of the Day:** In an effort to increase opportunities for kids to be physically active throughout the day, we have implemented the exercise of the day. Through student voice and leadership, students have the opportunity to select a daily exercise that increases their heart rate during transition times (i.e. restroom breaks and while in line). This allowed us to take advantage of time that was previously not utilized. Students are continually seeking creative ways to incorporate physical activity into the after school program day.

- **Nutrition Education:** Students receive nutrition education centered on the importance of developing and maintaining healthy habits throughout their lifetime.

**Cooler Conversations:** During our Cooler Conversations, we provide students and their families with a daily opportunity to refresh, recharge and reconnect. Through community partnerships with Save Mart Supermarkets and FARM to KIDS, we refresh our students and families by providing infused water, we recharge them by providing almonds and other sources of clean fuel and we reconnect them by posing a daily question to prompt meaningful conversations. Through this program we have found that students are now engaged in meaningful conversations with their parents on their way home from the program, and they are asking for infused water at home during dinner time and on the weekends.

**Garden:** Our garden provides an atmosphere that incorporates hands-on activities and strengthens academic, personal, and social skills. Working in our garden is the first time that many of our students make the real-life connection between the items they see in the grocery store and how they are grown. We have found that our garden has increased our students’ access to and interest in eating fruits and vegetables.

- **Curricula:** Our staff utilizes research-based resources and curricula that build students’ skills. The resources and current curricula include:
  - Nutrition Education
    - MyPlate
    - Nutrition to Grow On
• Healthy Foods from Healthy Soils
• CDE Resources
  o Physical Education
    • CATCH
    • SPARKS
    • United States Tennis Association’s H.I.T.S. Program
    • California After School Physical Activity Guidelines

• Food Security:

  Snack: Our program provides students with a snack each day. The snacks provided are healthy and are in compliance with state and federal laws and our district’s wellness policy. In an effort to further address food security within our community, we will be adding the CACFP Supper Program for the 2016/2017 school year.

  Food 4 Thought: Through a partnership with the Second Harvest Food Bank of San Joaquin and Stanislaus County, the Food 4 Thought program takes an innovative approach that addresses the nutrition and educational needs of hungry school children. Each student in our program is provided with a bag of 15-18 pounds of supplemental groceries, including 7-9 pounds of fresh produce twice a month. The program helps meet the basic needs of our families and gives children the opportunity to focus more on their education instead of having to worry about where their next meal is going to come from. The program not only helps feed a number of economically disadvantaged families, but it also provides an opportunity to teach children about proper nutrition and the basics of a healthy diet.

  Parent Resources: Our staff are included in the efforts to address food insecurity within our THRIVE community. We encourage our parents and students to participate in the school’s breakfast and lunch program by guiding parents through the enrollment process as well as posting and discussing the monthly menu. We have also comprised a list of community-based organizations that provide valuable services and resources for our families. These organizations include but are not limited to SNAP/CalFresh, the WIC program and local food banks.

Our Partners

A collaboration of partners has contributed to the success of the program through giving generous support to community events, training of staff and volunteers, coaching and financial donations. They include the Center for Collaborative Solutions, Stanislaus County Police Activities League, FARM to KIDS, Second Harvest Food Bank of San Joaquin and Stanislaus County, United States Tennis Association, Save Mart Supermarkets, Stanislaus County Office of Education, Sacramento County Office of Education, Modesto
Staffing for Success: Through HBI we have learned that our best and most important assets are our program staff. In previous years we had adopted a negative attitude about the ability and commitment of our staff and developed program activities that could be delivered effectively regardless of these assumptions. After years of struggling to maintain a high level of program quality, our first HBI Community Collaborative meeting changed it all! Bruno Marchesi started out the morning by stating that HBI is “Life changing!” To say we were skeptical would be an understatement. His words did not resonate with us until he said one phrase that struck our team to our core, “Empower your staff to empower your students.” We then realized that our job was to lead our staff and ultimately empower them and that our staff was responsible for leading their students and empowering them. In just seven short months, we have adopted a new attitude and goals aligned with our community need. The results have been nothing short of amazing and truly… life changing!

Through this new approach, we developed a morning session for our Site Leads to gather and work through both program and site specific challenges. Site Leads dedicate time to weekly coaching sessions in which each program leader has scheduled time to meet with the Site Lead one evening each week. This allows the Site Lead to work with their program leaders one-on-one regarding lesson plans, proposed activities, and any other relevant issues. We provided opportunities for Site Leads to coach staff within their site team and other staff from within the district. Program leaders have also been provided with opportunities to observe each other and demonstrate and share best practices.