

## **Yampa Valley Science School 2012 Improvement Plan**

The staff and board of Rocky Mountain Youth Corps have recognized that the Yampa Valley Science School program has several issues that need addressing, as identified by school faculty, parents, and YVSS staff. They have therefore set outcomes and objectives to address these concerns.

### **I. Curriculum Development**

#### **Issue:**

The current curriculum needs updating to enhance and clarify connections to current CDE content standards and to generally improve the overall experience for the students.

#### **Outcome:**

Staff will adopt an updated curriculum of lessons and activities that specifically describes required State of Colorado Department of Education Sixth Grade Content Standards.

#### **Objectives:**

- YVSS Staff will research other similar programs in Colorado and other states that demonstrate best practices in curriculum development, implementation and evaluation.
- YVSS Staff will visit best practice programs during operation and meet with relevant program and administrative staff to fully understand and prioritize lessons and best practices to adopt.
- YVSS Staff will incorporate specific curriculum lessons, including the content standards and Prepared Graduate Competencies they address, into the existing YVSS curriculum.
- YVSS Staff will incorporate other best practice aspects of other programs into YVSS.
- YVSS Staff will present the new curriculum to school faculty for review/approval by the end of April, 2012.
- New curriculum is adopted by the end of May, 2012.

### **II. Curriculum Implementation and Delivery**

#### **Issue:**

YVSS staff recognizes that the program needs to have more experienced staff members that manage the curriculum implementation and delivery. In the past, Partners School Based Mentors have been responsible for facilitating the academic components of the program, regardless of their expertise, and with minimal training.

#### **Outcome:**

The curriculum will be delivered with fidelity to the design of the program resulting in a high quality experience that achieves the academic goals of the program and the schools.

#### **Objectives:**

- New Resource Specialist positions will be established that manage all key components of the academic programs.
- YVSS will hire people that have experience facilitating outdoor-based environmental education activities for the Resource Specialist positions.
- The Partners School Based Mentors will be engaged as true mentors for the sixth grade students in the "Senior Leader" role and will accompany the sixth grade students and the high school "Junior Leaders" throughout all program activities.
- Under the supervision of the Resource Specialists, the Senior and Junior Leaders will assist with facilitating the academic activities.
- Training for all YVSS staff positions will dedicate more time to focus on preparing the academic activities.

### **III. Program Costs: Tuition and Scholarships**

#### **Issue:**

The cost of the YVSS program tuition is too high for many parents of sixth grade participants. While many families can pay, some can not. While some schools have successfully operated scholarship programs, others have not been able to manage a scholarship fund program.

#### **Outcome:**

All students in need of tuition assistance will receive their desired assistance with minimal administration from the schools that do not currently have a successful scholarship program.

#### Objectives:

- YVSS staff will create a Scholarship Fund Process that will be used for any participant that is unable to access a scholarship on their own or through their school.
- YVSS Staff will work with the School Grant Writer to identify and generate Scholarship Fund Donations.
- YVSS Staff will generate a base of at least \$7,500 in the Scholarship Fund by September 2012.
- YVSS Staff will create a Scholarship Fund Process in cooperation with participating schools' generally accepted policies by September 2012.
- YVSS Staff will facilitate all requested scholarships from student participants as needed for the 2012-2013 school year program.
- Students choosing to participate in reduces portions of the YVSS program schedule (such as day only) can utilize the Scholarship Fund Process to subsidize a portion of their tuition.

#### **IV. Program time away from school**

##### Issue:

The Steamboat Springs Middle School (SSMS) has identified that the time spent away from the classroom and at the YVSS program disrupts the necessary lesson activities that teachers are required to address during that time of the school year.

##### Outcome:

The time that students spend at the YVSS program will include the dissemination of necessary educational content that teachers are required to provide during that time of the school year. All students will maintain the educational requirements that would be taught in the classroom during the YVSS program. All students will also experience identified team-building and school-bonding activities that typically take place at the school at the outset of the school year.

##### Objectives:

- YVSS staff will work with SSMS teachers, with Kerry Kerrigan as the point person, to streamline collaborations between YVSS staff and the school.
- YVSS staff will incorporate lesson activities identified by teachers that are essential to the students during that time of the school year.
- YVSS staff will incorporate flexible time in the YVSS schedule for teachers to address any educational content that they identify as outside the scope of the YVSS curriculum.
- YVSS staff will work with the SSMS teachers to schedule the program in a manner that maintains the integrity of both the YVSS program and the school educational requirements.

#### **V. Communications**

##### Issue:

Communications of expectations between YVSS staff, school personnel, and parents needs to be more comprehensive and timely. Program paperwork is received very late for YVSS staff to accurately and effectively process prior to the start of the program.

##### Outcome:

YVSS staff, school personnel, and parents are all well aware of the program process, expectations, and operations in the first week of school.

##### Objectives:

- Program dates will be set by the end of May and communicated to all schools by YVSS staff.
- Program preparation meetings between YVSS staff and school personnel will be scheduled to occur in early-mid August, set by the end of May.
- Program paperwork will be available via on-line systems, as well as hard copies, for parents by August 1. School personnel will assist with disseminating the paperwork to parents.
- School personnel will schedule ample time for YVSS staff presentations to parents during spring and fall meetings as appropriate.
- All program paperwork will be received by YVSS staff no later than two weeks prior to the program start date.

## Fund Development Plan 2012

### I. Scholarship Fund

The purpose of the scholarship fund is to provide sixth grade student participants with full or partial scholarships towards tuition. The scholarship fund is raised by RMYC and stakeholders (parents, teachers, students, etc) and the scholarship process is managed by RMYC staff. Any participating student can apply for a scholarship regardless of the school they attend. The goal is that every student applicant receives a scholarship. Annual fund raising goal: \$7,500 [60 full scholarships at \$125 each].

Potential scholarship fund sources:

- a. Banks. Request \$750 per bank. Goal: \$4,000.
  - i. Wells Fargo
  - ii. First National Bank of the Rockies
  - iii. Alpine Bank
  - iv. Mountain Valley Bank
  - v. Bank of the West
  - vi. Vectra Bank Colorado
  - vii. Yampa Valley Bank
- b. Service Clubs. Request \$750 per club. Goal: \$3,500.
  - i. Rotary Club of Steamboat Springs – Morning
  - ii. Rotary Club of Steamboat Springs – Lunch
  - iii. Optomists Club
  - iv. Kiwanis Club
  - v. Ski Town Lions Club
  - vi. Steamboat Springs Lions Club

### II. Program Fund

The purpose of the Program Fund is to provide necessary revenues to supplement tuition fees to operate the program. The annual estimated total expenses are approximately \$64,000. Estimated income from tuition-including scholarships (\$31,250); Education Fund Board (\$20,000); Special Event Fundraiser (\$8,000); Corporate/Individual Businesses (\$1,250), Yampa Valley Community Foundation (\$1,000), Routt County United Way (\$2,500).