

The Aurora After-School Evaluation Project
Amy Engelman
Doctoral Student, Child and Family Studies, University of Denver

This evaluation examined how after school program participation relates to academic achievement and youth development at three middle schools in Aurora Public Schools, Aurora, Colorado. Youth development was operationalized by examining negative and positive behaviors and attributes related to developmental characteristics.

Goals shared by all three programs included:

- 1) helping students manage their time
- 2) providing a safe place for students to go after school
- 3) providing students with a constructive and possibly novel activity after school
- 4) building “assets”
- 5) improving academic achievement
- 6) decreasing negative behaviors (i.e. fighting and drug use)
- 7) increasing school attendance

This evaluation was completed as a collaborative effort between the University of Denver and Aurora Colorado Coalition for Extended Service Schools (ACCESS), which is made up of vice principals and program directors from each of the four middle schools in “Original Aurora,” as well as representatives from the school district and the Community College of Aurora. One of the four middle schools chose not to participate in the evaluation because of administration changes that were occurring at the same time. The sample size (60 – 200 students) varied for each of the three schools based on the size of the program.

The student survey (see below) was created based on the literature with respect to the goals of the three after-school programs. The survey was piloted in December 2002 at an after-school program for middle school students in Northwest Denver. Surveys were distributed to Aurora students between February and April 2003. Response rate for surveys was 99%. Factor analysis on completed surveys yielded a loading factor of .8 or better on three critical variables: academic self-concept, quality relationship with an adult at school, and community awareness and involvement.

The final report, which included individual as well as overall analyses of the three schools combined, was given to the coordinator of ACCESS, Paula Bonell, who then provided the members with the results.

STUDENTS MATTER SURVEY

PLEASE CIRCLE THE ANSWER THAT IS MOST TRUE FOR YOU.

I. A little about you

- 1) I am a: Boy Girl
- 2) Mostly, the grades on my report card are: A's B's C's D's F's
- 3) Ethnicity: a. African-American b. Asian American
 c. Caucasian/White d. Latino/Hispanic/Mexican/Spanish
 e. Multi-Racial f. Other: _____
- 4) Are you participating now in any organized activities after school lets out (like sports, tutoring, arts & crafts)? Yes No
- 5) How long have you been participating in after-school activities?
a. never have b. just this year
c. this year and last year d. this year and the past 2 years
- 6) How many of these activities are through your school's after-school program?
All Some None
- 7) Did you participate in your school's after-school activities last session? Yes
No
- 8) How long have you been participating in your school's after-school program?
a. never have b. this year only
c. this year and last year d. this year and the past 2 years
- 9) If you participated in your school's after-school program LAST TERM, what types of activities did you *mostly* choose?
a. Academic (for example - homework help, computer/math/chess club, yearbook)
b. Recreational (for example - sports, drama, arts & crafts, martial arts, drill team)
c. Both about the same.

II. You after school lets out

- 10) Did you feel the after-school program helped you with school? Yes No
Please explain.

- 11) Yesterday, after school, I worked on my homework:
a. Not at all b. 1-30 min.
c. 31 min- 1 hour d. more than 1 hour

12) Yesterday, from 2:30-6 pm, I was supervised by an adult (parent, older relative, teacher, staff):

- a. Not at all
- b. less than one hour
- c. 1-3 hours
- d. the entire time

13) Usually, I volunteer in my neighborhood or community:

- a. Never
- b. A couple of times a year
- c. A couple of times a month

Over

>>> ☺

III. Your opinions

Please put an “X” in the box that best describes how you feel about each statement below.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
14. At least one of the adults at this school has high expectations of me, including my grades, behavior, and future.				
15. I know at least one adult at this school that I can talk to about personal things.				
16. I trust at least one adult at this school.				
17. I feel that at least one of the teachers/staff members at this school really cares about me.				
18. I would like to do well in school.				
19. I feel that I really fit-in at this school.				
20. School is important to me.				
21. I have high expectations of myself, including my grades, my behavior, and my future.				
22. I feel that there is something that I am really good at.				
23. I believe that I will graduate from high school.				
24. I have friends who participate with me in healthy, positive, and/or generally acceptable activities.				
25. There is at least one teacher/staff at this school [per subject] that I feel comfortable asking for help on my homework.				
26. My family encourages me in school.				

27. My parent/guardian/relative came to Back to School night.				
28. I frequently volunteer to help others.				
29. I have opportunities to volunteer in my neighborhood.				
30. I have a lot to contribute to my community.				

Do you have any other comments about your after school programs or after school activities?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!!!! 😊 😊 😊