

Alameda County Office of Education Health & Nutrition Education Program

Combining Service-Learning and
Nutrition Education at Rock La Fleche
Community School

Rock la Fleche Nutrition Program Features of Target Population

- Highly transient low-inc./minority population in court and community school (up to 90 students annually);
 - Students in continuous transition through foster care/groups homes/juvenile hall/expulsion;
 - Students from local Bay Area and other parts of Ca.;
 - Students attend for weeks/months.
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From Traditional Nutrition Program to Service Learning

- "No matter how many fruits and vegetables I eat, I can't feel healthy as long as the murder rate keeps going up in Oakland" – William, Jan. 2004;
 - Challenged to create a nutrition program that is personally meaningful to students and that addresses issues related to health in a relevant and interesting way.
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Rock La Fleche Nutrition Program Service-Learning Solution

- 6 Elements of High Quality Service-Learning:
 - Integrated Learning
 - High Quality Service
 - Collaboration
 - Student Voice
 - Civic Responsibility
 - Reflection
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Rock la Fleche Nutrition Program Service-Learning Solution

- Integrated Learning
 - Nutrition program already integral element of school culture and values (organic school garden, weekly nutrition/garden classes);
 - Support from teachers to use S-L as teaching approach and to collaborate with nutrition program to develop classroom/garden lessons;
 - Modular programming so that students can enjoy full participation from their first day of attendance;
 - Characterized by emphasis on preparation so that students feel ready to succeed in community-based activities;
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Rock la Fleche Nutrition Program Service-Learning Solution

- High Quality Service
 - Used research-based inquiry (Alameda County Public Health, California Department of Health Services, newspaper articles) to select annual initiative to address;
 - Students worked with teachers and partners to create intervention strategies appropriate for target populations.
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Rock La Fleche Nutrition Program Service-Learning Solution

- Asks students to *engage* as citizens;
 - Holds students *responsible* for uncovering and addressing community health issues;
 - Trusts students to see what need to be done;
 - Collaborates with students to *create a challenging learning environment* in which they can question, understand and apply their learning;
 - Transforms the work from an academic requirement to a *personal commitment*;
 - Prioritizes the contributions students make rather than their personal circumstances.
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Rock la Fleche Nutrition Program Service-Learning Solution

- Nutrition education service-learning projects clearly demonstrate how students of all backgrounds can act as authentic partners in the nutrition education movement.
 - They need us (adults) to trust their ideas and the different ways they see their world and to be willing to end up with a viable but different outcome than the one we may have initially planned.
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Rock la Fleche Nutrition Program

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