Windham Public Schools and Community Centers
After School Tutoring Program

2012

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Institutional Overview

Eastern Mission
Within the Connecticut State University System, Eastern Connecticut State University is the state’s designated public liberal arts college. As a predominantly undergraduate institution, Eastern attracts and welcomes a diverse community of learners, supported by a teaching faculty, staff, administrators, and a residential campus, all of which promote intellectual curiosity, integrity, and social responsibility.

Eastern’s commitment to a liberal arts education is exemplified in its Liberal Arts Core Curriculum, a sequenced, interdisciplinary program that all students share, independent of their majors and career aspirations. In its role as a public university, Eastern develops students who can become productive, engaged community leaders. Eastern also serves as a social, cultural, and economic catalyst for the region and the state of Connecticut.

Eastern Core Values

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE:
Eastern embraces rigorous academic standards and intellectual inquiry as a benchmark for educational achievement for all of its students, faculty, and staff. This expectation informs every mode of learning on campus, from individual courses and degree programs to university presentations and cultural events.

ENGAGEMENT:
Members of the university community develop intellectually, creatively and socially through active and reflective learning in and outside the classroom, interdisciplinary studies, and individual and collaborative research.

INCLUSION:
Eastern is committed to providing educational access while building a campus community that embraces diversity and differences, enriched by a global perspective.

INTEGRITY:
Members of the university community are expected to behave ethically and honorably. Learning encompasses both intellectual and character development.

EMPOWERMENT:
Eastern fosters a safe, nurturing environment that promotes intellectual curiosity, student achievement and lifelong learning. Through rigorous inquiry and personal interaction, members of the community grow confident as independent, critical thinkers.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY:
Social responsibility is promoted and encouraged at Eastern through service to those in need, being active in the community, protecting our natural resources, engaging in the democratic political process, and other socially responsible actions. Social responsibility includes an ethical commitment to oneself and the community at large.
Center for Community Engagement

CCE Mission

The Center for Community Engagement supports the mission and vision of Eastern Connecticut State University by providing resources to build a culture of civic responsibility and engaged learning. The CCE creates sustainable, effective and productive relationships with community partners that benefit students, faculty and the community.

CCE in the strategic plan

Through service learning and volunteer projects in nonprofit organizations, social agencies, and business enterprises, Eastern students can gain valuable leadership skills, develop their commitment to social responsibility, and become stewards of their local and regional communities.

Program Description

History

ASP volunteers have an opportunity to make a huge impact on the community. The Windham education system is failing and is in the process of improving the local system. For many of the students in this area, English is their second language. This makes it challenging for them to learn, grow, and succeed. These students in particular need the extra support and Tutorship that volunteers provide. Overall, many of the students also face poverty at home. 71% are on free/reduced lunches and 63% of households in Windham are not self-sufficient. Furthermore, the dropout rate in Windham is 40%. ASP volunteers can choose to work one-on-one or in groups with students to assist them with their homework.

Goals

- Increase literacy rates, math competency, and graduation rates in Windham
- Inspire academic excellence and achievement
- Educate tutees to develop social and behavioral skills for success
- Enhance healthy choice awareness among tutees
- Foster pursuit of higher education
Program Participants

*Tutees*
Any child participating in the Windham Public Schools Afterschool Program. The elementary school children are in grades Kindergarten to 5th grade. There are 190 students in the four programs: North Windham 54, Sweeney 45, Windham Center 41, and Natchaug 50.

For many of the students in this area, English is their second language. This makes it challenging for them to learn, grow, and succeed. These students in particular need the extra support and mentorship that volunteers provide. Overall, many of the students also face poverty at home. 71% are on free/reduced lunches and 63% of households in Windham are not self-sufficient. Furthermore, the dropout rate in Windham is 40%.

*Tutors*
Tutors can be any current Eastern Connecticut State University student who passes the background check. There is room for 5 volunteers at each site per visit.
The Student Coordinator Position

If you feel as though you are ready to take on a leadership role we have opportunities for Site Coordinator Positions. Student coordinators work closely with program participants and community partners to ensure a meaningful service experience and serve as a resource for your peers.

Responsibilities include:

Program Management and Development
- Communicate with ASP site coordinators on things such as: what is going well, what can be improved, etc.
- Facilitate reflection session(s) throughout the semester
- Meet as needed with AmeriCorps VISTAs for one-on-ones

Volunteer Management
- Assist with volunteer recruitment, training and support
- Be in communication with program volunteers to address any issues or concerns
- Ensure that volunteers sign in on the CCE logs and at site

Administrative Task
- Attend weekly CCE staff meetings
- Maintain a program roster
- Represent the CCE on campus, in classes, or at events
- Monitor transportation issues

Program Participation
- Site Coordinators are expected to participate in your program at least once per week

Qualifications
- Experience working with youth in a tutoring, mentoring, or coaching capacity
- Prior leadership experience
- Ability to positively represent the CCE
- Excellent interpersonal, relationship, and administrative skills
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Strong organizational and administrative skills
- Basic computer knowledge and skill with proficiency in Microsoft Office Suite
- Ability to be independent, proactive, and creative
- Competence working with demographically diverse and traditionally underrepresented and oppressed groups (e.g. race, culture, gender, ability, and sexual orientation)
- Strong conflict resolution skills
- Willingness to work irregular and flexible hours

Commitment
- A minimum of one full semester with a preferred commitment of a full academic year
- Participation in Site Coordinator training
- 10-12 hours per week which includes weekly staff meeting, program participation, and overall program management
Tutor Position Description

Staff Coordinator is responsible to confirm those returning tutor and recruit new Tutors to have a total of 12-15 Tutors. It is preferable that Tutors are from different class years. The following tutor duties are the core qualifications and responsibilities:

Qualifications
- An interest in issues related to: education, equality, social justice, at risk populations
- Ability to manage time and balance academic life with extra-curricular activities
- Consideration to the privacy of the population you are working with
- Willingness to learn, grow, and have fun
- Knowledge of or interest in program
- Being pro-active and assertive

Requirements
- Attend a training session
- Complete paperwork (Sex Offender registry check waiver)
- Participate in the Facebook Group
- Attend a reflection session
- Participate in the Service Expo & Awards
- Keep an open communication with the CCE on your experiences

Time Commitments
- A minimum of once a week for a full semester
- Choose from the below schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Day(s)</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Windham Middle School</td>
<td>Tuesday-Friday</td>
<td>2:15pm-5:30pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Windham Elementary</td>
<td>Tuesday-Wednesday</td>
<td>3:15pm-5:30pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windham Center Elementary</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>2:45pm-5:30pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweeney Elementary</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>3:15pm-5:30pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Academic Advancement</td>
<td>Tuesday and Thursday</td>
<td>2:45pm-5:30pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windham High School</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>2:30pm-4:15pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cameo Club at Village Heights</td>
<td>Monday-Wednesday</td>
<td>3:00pm-4:45pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridges to the Future (on campus)</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>2:30pm-5:15pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tutor Support

Eastern’s Center for Community Engagement tutor and tutor programs exist because there is a need among Windham’s youth. However, the programs are equally important to its Tutors as an opportunity for learning and development. It is the job of the staff program coordinator to make sure that Eastern’s Tutors and tutors are well oriented, trained, and supported throughout their time in the program.

Tutors as Individuals
If you have individual needs please contact the VISTAs or Community Engagement Director.

Tutors as a Group
Building a group identity and sense of team spirit takes time, patience, and diligence. Casual dinners off campus in addition to regular group dinners in Hurley are a fun and easy way to get to know your fellow Tutors. Make sure to friend us on Facebook at EasternCT Community-Engagement and join the group CCE’s marvelous Tutors and tutors so we can hear your stories and offer suggestions!

It has helped me understand the communities I live in and improve it to the best of my ability. The kids I work with have helped me grow as a person and become more understanding.

I have realized that a little bit goes a long way. A little kindness can make a big difference.

Volunteering has helped me realize not everyone comes from as good a family background as I have but just having someone to look up to and talk to can make a real difference in their life.

Volunteering has helped me develop my teaching skills in Spanish language education. It will be easier for me to become an ESL teacher.

Volunteering has helped me learn more about myself. I realized that my love for helping others is something I want to continue. It has been very rewarding. I can only hope I make a difference like the kids I worked with made on me.

Volunteering has helped me stay humble. It always reminds me that my life is not all about me. There are always others that could use help. I also learn how to gain respect and show patience.
Program Structure

Setting and implementing clear expectations is the number one key to a successful tutoring program. Program coordinators have found that the structure of the day directly relates to behavior and productivity. Consequently, it is important to be consistent with rules and expectations. Remember that rules such as “Keep an open mind” and “Have fun” are just as important as “No cell phones”.

A consistent daily schedule helps keep activities moving forward and participants aware of what is coming next.

Meeting the Van
The CCE van picks up at the clock tower usually 15 minutes prior to your program start time. Pay attention to your pick up time and try to be there early. The CCE van has a tight schedule and will leave without students who are late and did not contact the CCE ahead of time. Make sure you program the contact information of the office and your driver in your cell phone.

*Important:* Make sure to sign into the CCE Volunteer Binder every time you get in the van. This is essential for our reports, the health of our programs, and to you as well. If you ever need to refer to the amount of hours you served for class, your resume, etc. the only way we can is if you sign in!

Checking In
When you arrive at your site you must sign in their volunteer log and take a name tag if they require you to do so. Each site has their sign-in in a different location: Sweeney Room 217, Windham Center and North Windham cafeteria, Village Heights and Salvation Army in the community center, Windham Middle afterschool office, and Windham High in the main office. After checking-in report to your assigned classroom or table group.

Homework Time
During homework period, which is the first hour of each program, tutors should sit with a child or two and assist them with their assignment, but not do the assignment for them. If tutees do not have any homework they should work quietly on another project that the site coordinator has said is acceptable.

Activity Time
After homework time the children participate in activities. Some schools are more structured than others. Tutors may be asked to lead activities or create their own.

Discipline
Coordinators and tutors should all know the rules and consequences of breaking rules so that during program sessions, discipline can be consistent. Tutors are encouraged to think of this as just another way of providing support and modeling good conduct.
Program Rules

1. COMMITMENT & ATTENDANCE: Tutors are expected to commit to one day a week for a semester for the program including days for reflection and the Service Expo on April 15th. By volunteering each week tutors will form a bond and have an impact on the students in the program.
   a. Be on time or early for your van pick-up at the clock tower.
   b. If a tutor is unable to make their assigned day they must contact the CCE prior to their service time by emailing cce@easternct.edu or calling 860-465-5158 or 465-0684.
   c. If a tutor is going to be late, they must transport themselves to the site.

2. PARTICIPATION: Tutors must integrate into the group during each session meaning that tutors must participate fully in every activity and contribute to the children’s homework time.

3. LEADERSHIP & PERSONAL INITIATIVE: While coordinators will be leading every session, each tutor has leadership responsibilities to act as a role model. Tutors are expected to show personal initiative and leadership during every lesson and activity.

4. PROGRAM RULES: The rules that are described for the tutees also apply to tutors. This ensures that the program runs smoothly and that everyone feels comfortable in the program.
   a. Absolutely no photos of the children may be taken by a volunteer.
   b. Children may not be picked up or sit in adult laps.
   c. No food is to be brought in. Tutors may have a snack if offered by the site coordinator.
   d. Wear appropriate clothing i.e. no low cut tops, holey jeans, and absolutely no hats.

5. CELL PHONES: Must be on silent or off during program time. Absolutely no texting. Coordinators may use cell phones to contact parents or the CCE office. These calls are for program needs only and should not be seen as an invitation for others to use their cell phones.

6. LANGUAGE: Must be appropriate. Obviously curse words are not okay, but even “sucks,” “Oh my god,” and “dumb, stupid, idiot” are all not appropriate. Please be careful about what language you use.

7. BE SENSITIVE AND CAUTIOUS: The kids may come from different economic and cultural backgrounds. They may have educational, social, and family issues. If you notice or hear anything that causes concern, report it to the coordinator. Some of the issues can be related to hygiene, domestic violence, hunger, physical and sexual abuse, substance abuse, trouble with school members and peers, and racism, among others.

8. QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS: The program coordinators are available at all times to answer questions and help with concerns.
Risk Management

Accidents
Be alert and present the entire time you are participating in the tutor program. Be aware and attentive of the interactions and activities of the tutees. The best way to deal with an accident or unpleasant situation is to actively prevent it.

MANDATORY REPORTING: If at ANY TIME a tutee implies that she may be in danger or being harmed or harming someone else, tutors must tell a program coordinator. If you have suspicions that any of the tutee is in danger or harm their personal health, security or emotional being:

a. Do not come to any conclusions or promise not to tell.
b. Report the incident immediately to the program staff in charge
c. Complete an incident report with the staff

Contact Information

Center for Community Engagement 860-465-0090  cce@easternct.edu
Kristina Scherber 860-465-5158  scherberk@easternct.edu
Brit Cava 860-465-0684  cavab@easternct.edu
Driver 860-230-3878

Windham Center Hector Gonzalez 860.465.2584  gonzalezh@windham.k12.ct.us
North Windham Luis Rivera 860.465.2580  Lrivera@windham.k12.ct.us
Sweeney Desiree Parciak 860-933-3996  Dparciak@windham.k12.ct.us

Salvation Army Lt. Torres 860-423-0977  Johanalexis.Torres@use.salvationarmy.org

Village Heights Nicole Ortiz 860-456-1518

Project AA Lory Villril 860-456-2601
Supporting Children and Youth

DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

“Developmental assets” are factors—both external and internal—which decrease the likelihood that young people will engage in risky behavior and increase the chances they will grow up to be healthy, caring, and responsible adults. The following framework, developed by Search Institute (a research and training organization in Minneapolis), identifies 40 assets or factors that are critical for young people’s growth and development. The first 20 of these assets are external—positive experiences that children and youth should be receiving. The next 20 are internal—qualities that young people should (with the help of adults, communities, and institutions) be developing within themselves.

EXTERNAL ASSETS

The first 20 developmental assets focus on positive experiences that young people should receive from the people and institutions in their lives. Four categories of external assets are included in the framework:

1. Support
   Young people need to experience support, care, and love from their families, neighbors, and many others. They need organizations and institutions that provide positive, supportive environments.

2. Empowerment
   Young people need to be valued by their community and have opportunities to contribute to others. For this to occur, they must be safe and feel secure.

3. Boundaries and Expectations
   Young people need to know what is expected of them and whether activities and behaviors are “in bounds” or “out of bounds.”

4. Constructive Use of Time
   Young people need constructive, enriching opportunities for growth through creative activities, youth programs, congregational involvement, and quality time at home.

INTERNAL ASSETS

A community’s responsibility for its young does not end with the provision of external assets. There needs to be a similar commitment to nurturing the internalized qualities that guide choices and create a sense of purpose and focus. Four categories of internal assets are included in the framework:

1. Commitment to Learning
   Young people need to develop a lifelong commitment to education and learning.

2. Positive Values
   Youth need to develop strong values that guide their choices.

3. Social Competencies
   Young people need skills and competencies that equip them to make positive choices, to build relationships, and to succeed in life.

4. Positive Identity
   Young people need a strong sense of their own power, purpose, worth, and promise.

Search Institute. Copyright © 1997. All rights reserved. This list is an educational tool. It is not intended to be, nor is it appropriate as, a scientific measure of the developmental assets of individuals.)
http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/30_publication.pdf
Elementary Literacy

Five Finger Rule-
Select a page from the book you have chosen to read. Every time your student sees a word he or she doesn’t know, put up one finger. When you have finished reading, see how many fingers are raised. 1-3 fingers is “just right” reading. 4 fingers is challenging reading. 5 fingers is difficult reading. If your student is at a 3 or 4, it is still possible for him or her to read the book but he or she will rely on you for more guidance. If it is a 5 finger book, you may want to choose another option as the student will more than likely become frustrated with this text.

Some ways to read together-
Here are a few different ways tutors can read with their student to add some variety to each session. Remember to ask questions along the way! Be sure to show not only words but punctuation as well and always read in an excited and expressive way!

Echo reading: The tutor reads a phrase or sentence to the child while running a finger under each word. Next, the child reads the same text, echoing the tutor. Use for beginning readers.

Unison reading: The child and the tutor read aloud together. The tutor’s voice and finger pointing to the words lead the child in the beginning. As the child becomes more confident and more proficient, the child’s voice leads and the child runs his/her finger under the text.

Alternate reading: The tutor and the child take turns reading aloud. When a child is able to read material but is reluctant to begin, the tutor can build interest in the text by being the first to read.

Back-up reading: The child reads aloud, pointing to each word, and the tutor pronounces all the words the child doesn’t recognize.

What can you say besides “sound it out”-
Most of us were taught to “sound out” words when we came across one we didn’t know. Looking at the complexity of the English language has made us realize it is not always so easy to sound things out. Here are some different ways you can help your student through challenging words without asking him or her to “sound it out.”

To help children monitor their reading (I think about what I am reading while I read):
- Give the student “wait time”
- Try that again
- Are you right?

To help children use meaning (I use my prior knowledge):
- Look at the picture. Can it help you?
- Does that make sense?
- Think about what would make sense.
- Start that sentence again.
- Make a good guess then keep going.
- Does that sound right?

To help children use visual information (I use what I know about letters and their sounds):
- Does that look right to you?
- Get your mouth ready to say it.
- Look at how the word begins.
- Do you know another word that starts that way?
- Do you know another word that has that chunk?
• It could be _____, but look at _____ (first letter, a chunk of letters...etc)

To help children problem solve independently (I try to figure it all out):
• What can you do to help yourself?
• Readers keep trying- good for you!

Questions to guide reading-
There are a few different types of questions you can ask your student while reading with them. Try to mix in both types of questions so your student comprehends the story fully.

Comprehension/summary questions:
• Who is in the story?
• Where are the main characters in the story?
• What are they doing?
• When does the story take place?
• What is the important thing/event that has happened in the story?
• What is your favorite part so far?
• Would you change anything so far in the story? If so, what?
• What do you think will happen next?

You can also ask “thick” questions. Thick questions are questions that require more than a “yes” or “no” answer.

“Thick” questions:
• What if...?
• How did...?
• Why did...?
• What would happen if...?
• What caused...?
• What might...?
• How would you feel if you...?
• What character traits describe...?
• Why do you think...?
• Why is...?

Resource: www.sppsfoundation.org  ©Saint Paul Public Schools Foundation 2010
Middle School Behavior

When working with Middle School students it is important for us to look at where they are developmentally. Most students may seem more mature than those in Elementary School but they still lack judgment and reasoning skills. Most of their focus is on social aspects and the present rather than future goals. Remember, being the top of the class may have been cool in Elementary School (it meant praise, more rewards...etc) but being at the top of the class in Middle School is “nerdy” or seen as much less cool than being funny instead of smart. Middle school students would much rather have approval from their peer group than from the adults that are around them, because they are concerned with their social lives. Many of them have cell phones and Facebook and various other social networking gadgets that steal their attention and ask them to be present virtually, rather than in the classroom. Please be mindful that students are only students for 6-7 hours a day. After they go home, they often become adults in their families. Some of them work or babysit and find it difficult to complete their homework. For other students there is no support at home as far as academics are concerned. These home-life situations are reality for some of our students, but they are not an excuse for consistent bad behavior. Please create an environment where a student feels supported and has fun with learning.

Potential Types of Difficult Behavior/Tutor Responses-
These are some of the types of difficult behavior you may be faced with in a tutoring session. We can’t always know the cause behind a student’s behavior, and it isn’t necessary to know. What is important is that the tutor provides the appropriate response and intervention and moves the session forward.

Difficult behavior-
- Ignoring- The student is ignoring you, being in-attentive, seems disinterested.
- Challenging- The student is questioning your authority or being evasive.
- Refusal- The student is not complying, being argumentative or bullying.
- Release- The student is acting out, having emotional outbursts or venting.
- Intimidation- The student is verbally and/or nonverbally threatening staff or other children.

Tutors responses-
- Ignoring- Tutor ignores the behavior in order to move the session along.
- Marking- Behavior can’t be ignored but timing or situation is not appropriate to address.
- Redirecting- Tutor redirects student to work on a different activity or focus on something more positive.
- Intervene- DESI Describe the behavior, Express your concern, Suggest ways to correct the behavior, involve other staff.
- Interfere- When behavior is dangerous to the student, self, environment or others.

It is important to note that the scales above are an escalation model, meaning students will start by ignoring and will work up to intimidation. Rarely do students attempt to intimidate their tutors, but we feel it is important to make you aware that it can happen.

Resource: www.sppsfoundation.org ©Saint Paul Public Schools Foundation 2010
Activity Time

After homework time each school provides times for students to get involved in different activities. Every site encourages tutors to talk with the site coordinators to create their own activities to lead.

Activity suggestions include, but are not limited to:

- Crafts
- Photography
- Lessons on respect and not bullying
- Holiday activities
- Dancing
- Cultures
- Nutrition
- Exercise
- Music
- Self Esteem
- Anti-Bullying