



# Bienestar

Building housing, hope and futures

## **Homework Club Montebello Outcome Report**

### **Term 1 and 2, 2010-2011 School Year**

#### **Background**

Homework Club has been operating at Montebello apartments since September 2008. The club has been held at the Montebello Community Room located on 220 SE 12<sup>th</sup> Ave. Hillsboro, Oregon, Monday and Wednesday from 3:00-4:45 PM excluding holidays and other school breaks. The club is available to all resident youth from Montebello and Sierra West, enrolled in grades 1-6. The students come from Lincoln Street Elementary and W. Verne McKinney schools.

During the 2010-2011 school year, the club has been staffed by Program Coordinator Elena Barreto, and part-time staff member Debi Myers. The Montebello Homework Club depended greatly on outstanding volunteers like Carrie Miller. During this term the Montebello Homework Club also had three volunteers come as part of a PCC Service Learning Project for their Spanish class taught by Stephanie Yorba Zink. The PCC students completed the optional project by working at least 10 hours at the Montebello Homework Club. Rachel Ruffin and Jessica Ferreira continued to come after their 10 hours and completed 20-25 hours. Zink will continue to give her Spanish students the option to volunteer with Bienestar to fulfill project requirements in the coming scholastic year. The volunteers at Montebello worked notably hard to make the program a success. We had 23 students on the roster at the end of the second term for the 2010-2011 school year. Snacks were provided for the students every session through our partnership with the Oregon Food Bank during the first term. We began giving the students healthy snacks, such as cheese and crackers, peanut butter sandwiches, and carrot sticks, as we await approval for the Child and Adult Care Food Program through the USDA to provide these healthy snacks for the remainder of the year.

We focused on ensuring the children complete their weekly school work assignments. At the Montebello Homework Club it was a rule that the students must bring their backpacks and homework. We were successful in making sure the children completed their school work at Homework Club. With consistent volunteers we were able to assign a volunteer to the first, second, and third grade tables to help the students with homework and reading and build relationships with them. Other Bienestar staff members and volunteers circulated the room, assisting children who had questions and checked their work for accuracy. All staff and volunteers worked hard to make sure kids were able to comprehend what they were being asked to do. At Montebello the use of flash cards, and manipulatives in a group setting was very beneficial to the students.

The group setting and repetition of these learning activities helped the children to strengthen their basic math skills as well as increase their confidence among their peers. The students showed marked improvement in small addition and subtraction; it helped many students to memorize multiplication tables, and helped the first graders learn to read.

If the students did not have homework they worked on the worksheets that we provided. During term one and two, worksheets were geared toward reviewing the materials the students had learned during the year. Each student had a folder where they could put their worksheets at the end of homework time if they were unfinished so they could continue working the next time they did not have homework.

Students arrived at 3:00 and washed their hands before sitting down and eating their snack for 15 minutes. During this time we would announce "Achiever of the Week," the student who was the most cooperative, and did all his or her homework and reading the previous week, among other announcements. At 3:15 students started working on their homework. After 30 minutes of homework time, there was 30 minutes of reading time. During reading time the students could read one of the books they brought from school or a book provided by Bienestar. Thanks to Catlin Gabel School's donation of hundreds of books to our library, the students can take a book home if they see one they become interested in during reading time to help bolster their motivation to read. Students could read independently, with a partner, or with an adult. The volunteers and staff each sat with one or more students reading aloud or listening and coaching a student to further develop their reading skills. Our volunteer Carrie Miller brought a trained therapy service dog that the students take turns reading to. The students enjoyed reading to the dog and it was a great motivational tool for them. When reading to the dog the students were focused and engaged.



The last half hour is free time for the students and they were able to play an array of educational games that were provided. The students were also given the opportunity to make beaded bracelets with materials donated by Carrie Miller. Each month Debi Myers would provide different craft opportunities depending on the holiday that month. The students looked forward to making these crafts such as skeletons, turkey hats, bracelets and frames for Christmas, Valentine hearts, and Easter bunnies and eggs.

A variety of motivational tools were implemented to create more of a community in the Homework Club and to encourage the students to be more respectful and kind to the staff, volunteers, and each other. As a group, students could receive up to 4 pom-poms a day if everyone was respectful, cooperative, and did their work. Once the club received 30 pom-poms the students could vote on a party. So far the students have had a pajama/movie party, and a pizza party in which they were allowed to bring their



Nintendo DS systems during game time. The students can also receive "Kindness Tickets" for helping someone without being asked, like pick up trash or a game, help someone with homework, saying "please" and "thank you", or saying something nice to someone. At the end of the month those who got a ticket get a prize.

We just started a monthly newsletter for the parents of Homework Club. This is a way for the parents to have a better idea what is going on in Homework Club, get reminders for upcoming events, and encouragement on how to continue to help their children outside of Homework Club.

We take a holistic approach to correcting and improving behavior and grades in the Homework Club. This term we visited one of the parents whose child was having behavioral problems with some of the other students. We talked to both child and parent about what was happening and executed a plan to help correct the situation.

### **Attendance**

There were 20 students enrolled in our Montebello Homework Club at the end of the first term, and 23 at the end of the second term of the 2010-2011 school year. Attendance was consistent with an average of 18 students per day the first term and 21 the second term. This term a few of the sixth graders arrive late on Monday due to after school tutoring, but attend the full day on Wednesday.

**Grades Outcome:** (see analysis on website for specific results)

The children submit their report cards at the conclusion of each term. We analyze them and check for improvement in individual subjects, overall GPA and homework grades. This term the collection of report cards was more difficult than the first term because report cards were sent home a few days before Spring Break, during which time Homework Club is not in session. We collected report cards from all 20 students who were enrolled in Homework Club for term one and all 23 from term two. We used the previous term as the base to measure student performance. As mentioned, improvement is monitored in individual subjects. We use "net improvement" to determine this in our analysis. For example, if a student improved in 2 subjects but declined in 1, they would have a (+1) score under net improvement.

In Term 2 the average net improvement was 1.73; one student improved his homework grade and 3 lowered theirs. The group GPA increased this term from 2.37 to 2.51 with 14 students increasing their individual GPA, one student's remaining the same, and only 6 slightly decreasing. Those 14 students not only improved their GPA's, but also had positive net improvement in subjects, and one student improving in 5 subject areas. Oddly, one of the students who lowered her homework grade increased her GPA and

the one who increased his homework grade lowered his GPA. Most students received dramatically better grades for term 2 than term 1, and the 6 students who lowered their GPA are continuing to do well in school.

In Term 1 three students improved their homework grade from the last term of the 2009-2010 school year. Four of the students lowered their homework grade from the previous term, however one of those students increased his in term 2 while the others remained the same. Unfortunately, after comparing the students' GPA from term 1 to term 3 of the previous school year 17 students' GPA went down, while 2 students' increased, with the group GPA decreasing from 2.82 to 2.37. We believe the main reason for this is due to summer learning loss. The students rarely practice reading or other math during summer vacation leading to a loss of academic skills at the beginning of the following school year. However, by the end of the second term the group GPA increased from 2.37 to 2.51 and 14 students raised their individual GPAs.

Of the 21 students who were registered the first year of Homework Club in 2008-2009 school year, ten of the students continue to come to Homework Club. On average the group GPA has increased since then; for term one and two of 2008-2009 the GPA increased from 2.01 to 2.39, and as aforementioned for 2010-2011 it improved from 2.37 to 2.51.

The staff and volunteers worked together to improve the effectiveness of Homework Club. Every day volunteers and staff stayed after Homework Club to discuss and write notes about student progress and what improvements needed to be made. Each person who worked at this Homework Club was very dedicated to seeing the program and the children involved succeed.



Students showing off their new Catlin Gabel books!

Respectfully,

Elena Barreto  
Program Coordinator

