

INFORMATION ITEM

Date: April 23, 2018

To: Raymond E. Lechner, Ph.D.
Superintendent

From: Mrs. Kelly Jackson, Principal

Subject: After School Programming HMS/WJHS

Background Information

For close to thirty years, Youth Connection has served fifth through eighth graders in Wilmette with supervised after-school programming at low or no cost. Programming included drop-in programs such as RAD (Recreational Academic Development) at Highcrest Middle School, the DEN at Wilmette Junior High, and Homework Club at both schools. In addition to RAD, DEN, and Homework Club, Youth Connection also sponsored art and theater opportunities for students, as well as special events such as Battle of the Bands. According to Youth Connection statistics from the 2015-2016 school year, the DEN and RAD after school programs served close to 350 students across the campus, and Homework Club served just over 260 students across the campus.

At the end of the 2017-2018 school year, Youth Connection will be dissolved as a non-profit organization, leaving a void in low-cost afternoon programming for students and families in need of involvement in fun, supervised, safe activities. District 39 has outlined a plan to help fill this void and maintain after-school programming for students and families interested in this option.

Honoring Youth Connection

District 39 is grateful for Youth Connection's support of District 39 families for so many years, and looks forward to celebrating their work with our students and their families. Plaques honoring Youth Connection's service will be installed at both Wilmette Junior High and Highcrest Middle School, and a reception will be held later this spring to honor the volunteers and staff who have dedicated so many hours of time to Wilmette youth.

After School Programming 2018-2019

As part of a rebranding process, students were surveyed about interests and names for the new spaces. Students were asked about naming these after school programs, and the consent was the "Hawk Nest" for HMS and the "Wolf Den" for WJHS. These names will be used moving forward as a part of our rebranding process for these programs.

The Hawk Nest and the Wolf Den will run on the same calendar as the Youth Connection RAD and DEN programs, and will envelop Homework Club into their activity structure. Students will be involved in helping to create the structure of activities throughout the year, including but not limited to games, recreational opportunities, and movies.

Slight adjustments have been made to the program times, the cost, and the location of the Hawk Nest and the Wolf Den as well. Both after-school programs will run for two hours after school, and will have two supervisors assigned to plan for activities and work with the students who attend. The Hawks Nest will take place in the LMC at Highcrest, and the Wolf Den will occur in the LC at WJHS. Students will pay a slight fee as they go for each drop in.

The chart below outlines plans for after-school programming at Highcrest and Wilmette Junior High for the 2018-2019 school year, as supported by District 39.

	HIGHCREST HAWK NEST	WJHS WOLF DEN
Description	After school hangout/drop in for all students at HMS to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured homework time • Board games and cards • Games/music using technology • Outside and gym play • Crafts • Movies 	After school hangout/drop in for all students at WJHS to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured homework time • Board games and cards • Games/music using technology • Recreational opportunities outside • Crafts • Movies
Times	3:40 PM - 5:40 PM	3:15 PM - 5:15 PM
Supervisors	2 supervisors	2 supervisors
Cost	\$4 a day	\$4 a day

Planning is currently underway with the HMS PTO and WJHS PTO to discuss how we might be able to support events such as the Variety Show and Battle of the Bands in the future. Potential partnerships with the Warming House in Wilmette have also been explored and may help to support these efforts. Art Club and theater experiences will be supported by the WJHS PTO.

Summary

While District 39 is excited about embarking this new design of after-school opportunities for our 5-8 students, the void that the absence of Youth Connection in our community creates is not unnoticed. As changes are made to after-school programming for the coming year, student input will play a large role. Future student surveys with respect to activities, program design, and student needs for after-school programming will be important to changes after the 2018-2019 school year. District 39 is grateful for Youth Connection’s support of our families for so many years, and looks forward to celebrating their hard work with plaques in each building, and a reception to be held in their honor later this spring.

Recommended for presentation to the Board of Education


Raymond E. Lechner, Ph.D.
Superintendent