

After-School and Summer Programs in Rural Areas

Why YOUR DISTRICT Should Staff and Fund Them


Jill Underly, PhD: Pecatonica Area School District

Outline


- Pecatonica's Story: Open Enrollment and Strategic Planning
- What the Research Says...
- How We Got Started
- The Impact on our Community
- The Impact on our Kids
- The Impact on our School
- Conclusion

Pecatonica's Story

- Where is Pecatonica Area School District?
- Distance to and from major employers
- Population Trends
- Open Enrollment Trends
- Open Enrollment Survey
- The Problem That Emerged....



Where is Pecatonica?



A map of the Pecatonica, Illinois area. The town of Pecatonica is circled in red. Surrounding towns include Bergland, Fishburg, Madison, Sublette, New Grove, Argyle, Waukegan, South Wayne, and Winnebago. Major roads like I-55 and I-90 are also visible.

The Research Says...

- First of all, there is a LACK of:
 - Summer Programs in Rural Areas
 - After-School Programs in Rural Areas
 - Day Care in Rural Areas
 - Access to field trips or extra curricular or enrichment activities in Rural Areas
- What we noticed is:
 - Unaccompanied Children
 - Quality
- What we desire for our kids is

How We Got Started

- After-School Program
 - Space Concerns
 - Other Concerns
 - The Opportunity
- The Summer "Camp" Program
 - Space Concerns
 - Staffing Concerns
 - Funding and Programming



A photograph showing a group of children and an adult standing outdoors. The children are wearing colorful shirts, and the adult is in a dark shirt. They appear to be in a park or schoolyard setting.

What We Learned

- Staffing
- Programming
- Financing



Community Impact

- Feedback



Kid Impact

- How did these programs impact the kids?
- No longer unsupervised
- Finishing “homework” before parents picked them up
- Summer is “funner.”
- Good program for teens interested in working with youth
- Mitigate the summer slide and screen time.


School Impact

- Enrollment "Out" vs. Enrollment "In"
- We lose money on it, but...
- Kids are healthier and happier.
- Families are happier.
- It's a great career exploration program for teens.
- Relationship building between students.
- Social skill development for younger and older students.
- Great PR for our school.

In Conclusion & Lessons Learned

- The community cannot imagine life without these programs now. Why:
- It's a selling point now.
- Parents depend on it now.
- Kids enjoy it
- Each year it grows and changes
- It's an investment in community and in kids.
- Bottom line: Keep it Affordable. You will lose more money (through OE, for example) than you would if you carried a loss with these programs.

One Last Picture...



A photograph of three children (two girls and one boy) wearing goggles and leaning on a red sign that says "NO DIVING" in white letters. They are in a swimming pool with blue water and lane lines.

Contact Information
Jill Underly, PhD
Pecatonica Area School District
PO Box 117
Blanchardville, WI 53516
