

Fun Under the Sun 2024 Report Southridge High school

Our inaugural celebration was a great success. We spent almost two hours interacting with students and staff in a positive way, building relationships and supporting the work we have done throughout the year. We welcomed parent/guardian volunteers to make the work easier and include families in our positive culture. Community organizations who also joined our celebration included the local Army recruiters and Key Connection, who brought traffic safety games for students to think about their choices as they drive. Communities in Schools ran a station to supply students with summer resources to keep them safe, healthy, and engaged. We also had two community volunteers who brought their own equipment to supply a fun DJ and a karaoke experience. The karaoke was a huge hit with many students, especially the Life Skills students, who have significant disabilities. It was great to see these students enjoying the celebration and being an important part of the fun.

Our school had to earn 40 lbs of RISE tickets in order to earn this piece of our celebration. These tickets are awarded to any student who shows Respect, Integrity, Safety, or Engagement throughout the school day. These tickets are then turned in for random drawings. This year we decided to also include a full school reward in the form of this year-end celebration. The funding that Greater Health Now supplied was utilized to purchase food for our students. Students really appreciated the food provided and it was a big hit. I believe that having food kept more students on campus and gave them a chance to interact with each other while they ate. The funding provided by Key Connection supplied the equipment needed to run the games and activities.

We ended up with over one thousand students, one hundred staff, and about 20 parent/guardian/community members taking part in our activity. The culture that we have begun to develop in our school and the wider community is beginning to take hold. This was evident in the fact that during this almost two hour celebration all people present were able to enjoy the event as expectations were followed and interactions were positive. Students were patient and kind as we worked out the kinks in our first time issues. Staff and volunteers were positive and proactive in their support.

One comment that summed up the purpose of our celebration came from a teacher who said, "I'm sure this is the best day of many students' whole school year." We also had comments that many students who struggle to get to school came on this day. I believe that the goal of creating a positive culture and a chance for all students to be connected to the school was achieved.