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# SYSD Enrolling Students in No-Cost After-School Program

## Program Features Academic Enrichment, Recreational Sports

San Ysidro School District has partnered with the Boys & Girls Clubs of South County to provide a community-based, youth-oriented after-school program, tailored to meet the needs of students with working parents. The program combines academic assistance and enrichment activities with a lively and social atmosphere.

The program is available at all six SYSD elementary schools and San Ysidro Middle School, beginning when the school day ends – 2:22 p.m. on regular school days and 1:22 p.m. on minimum days – until 6 p.m. Parents wishing to register their children are encouraged to fill out and submit an enrollment package at their school. Enrollment is limited and based on need. There is no cost.

“The Boys & Girls Club provides the District with an effective and caring environment in which our children can continue their academic, social and emotional growth under the guidance of a highly qualified and state-certified instructional staff,” SYSD Superintendent Dr. Julio Fonseca said. “This is a great resource for the community and illustrates the District’s commitment to our students’ health and well-being.”

The Boys & Girls Club offers a wide range of theme-related activities and curriculum, focusing on keeping students engaged in an array of subjects. For example, in this month’s Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) project, students learned the chemical process for making “slime,” modeled after the material used in the popular Nickelodeon television program.

“We try to be more than a homework club,” South County Boys & Girls Club Program Coordinator Theresa Davis said. “In many ways what we do is ‘learning in disguise,’ and the students respond very well to that. They have lots of energy and we want to channel that into a fun and educational experience.”

The Boys & Girls Club has a 20-1 child-to-staff ratio, with a site supervisor overseeing the group leaders. All staff complete a rigorous certification training regimen that focuses on behavior management and professional practices, as well as CPR and First Aid certification.

In addition to the certified staff, the after-school club has recently formed a partnership with San Diego State University, bringing in graduate students to assist in STEM curriculum instruction.

After-school program students also have the option of participating in soccer and flag football sports leagues – in coordination with South Bay Community – and children with creative interests can immerse themselves



in the Fine Arts program, which in August featured a week-long tutorial on Georgia O'Keefe watercolor landscapes.

A typical day for the Boys & Girls Club program begins with a healthy snack, which precedes a student assembly in which staff members conduct a mini-pep rally, singing songs and reviewing respect rules. Then comes the "Power Hour," which is dedicated to homework study, followed by a half-an-hour of fitness. One hour of enrichment activities ensues, before a short clean-up period ends the day.

On minimum days, the schedule expands to include club activities, such as cooking, gardening, scrapbooking and comic book groups.

"I'm so happy with this program," said Juana Escobedo, whose daughter Yajaira Hernandez is a fourth-grader at Willow Elementary. "I really enjoy seeing all that my daughter is learning beyond the regular school day."

**PHOTO CAPTION:** Students enrolled in San Ysidro School District's after-school program show off a recent project in which they learned the chemical process to create "slime."