

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Street School serves teens that live in the Tulsa Public School district and are classified as 9, 10, 11, or 12 grade students. Eligible students have also completed the eighth grade. Street School does not except students who are currently on suspension from a TPS school, unless the student is suspended for drug and/or alcohol related problems.

ACADEMICS

Street School offers instruction through block scheduling, which includes two classes per day during a six-week session. Six sessions are offered each school year. Students attend school from 8:30 a.m. until 2:05 p.m., Monday through Thursday and from 8:30 a.m. until 12:45 p.m. on Friday's. Students are able to complete all of coursework necessary for a high school diploma. All core classes and electives necessary for completion of 9th through 12th grade are obtainable at the school. Street School is the only alternative school in the state that offers not only the standard diploma, but the opportunity to earn a Diploma of Distinction. Street School is a school of choice, with the majority of the students entering the program on a self-referral basis.

Best practices, such as brain-based research strategies, are used to provide non-traditional education to students. Street School teachers participate in weekly professional development to keep up to date with the latest educational research. Experts in the field of education are utilized to assist Street School staff in the development of 21st Century learning skills. These skills include critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, cooperative learning, collaboration and competencies for operating in the digital age.

“Being there activities” are also essential for the development of 21st Century learning skills. As a result of the continued visioning process, out of which “The World as Our Classroom” emerged, the school has four vehicles to transport students to expand on learning experiences. Approximately 300 field trips are taken each year by staff and students.

Street School also works in cooperation with Tulsa Tech, where many students have taken advantage of the half-day vocational programs. The Internship component at Street School works with area businesses where students are placed for on-the-job experiences. The collaborations with technical schools and businesses are essential to help instill students with a self-directed work ethic as well as to prepare them for the work place.

Unique to Street School are the Community Outreach Programs. These programs provide a valuable learning experience for students while also supporting the Tulsa area community.

Community Outreach Programs:

- **HIV/STI/Pregnancy Prevention Peer Education Program:** Street School students educate other teens about healthy choices through our award winning program. A full-time Street School LPC coordinates the program and Street School students make presentations to their peers at locations like: Street School, other alternative schools, group homes, shelters and some public schools. Presentations discuss HIV/AIDS/pregnancy and related topics providing information to approximately 300 area youth. These youth respond to pre and post surveys, which typically indicate that the students plan to apply the information they received to their future behavior and that their awareness of HIV/AIDS/STI's, pregnancy and family planning increased.
- **Reading Buddies:** Street School students help to promote literacy by reading to students at Hoover Elementary twice each week.
- **Key Club:** As the nation's first Key Club in an alternative school, Key Club provides invaluable services to assist with outreach efforts for Emergency Infant Services and Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma. Key Club students help with these and other organizations each Friday.
- **Leadership Program:** Students provide numerous services each year to a variety of organizations such as; Habitat for Humanity, Little Lighthouse, elementary schools, Kids against Hunger, as well as sponsor fund-raising drives to help various charitable organizations. They also coordinate school activities such as Diversity Fairs, Holiday Festivals and other school events.

In addition to community outreach programs, Street School also offers the following that help enhance both academic and social service aspects of the program.

- **Internship:** Street School offers a six-week internship class as part of the academic schedule. The internship instructor interviews students, administers an interest inventory and based on the student's interest, places them in an area business three days a week. Prior to internship placement, the instructor assists students in business practices, resume writing, interviewing skills and ensures students have clothing appropriate for the job. The instructor travels to all job sites to supervise their progress. When not at their internship, students continue classroom research and study job skills. At the end of the session, students present their internship experience to the Street School staff and students.
- **Wilderness Program:** The Street School science instructor works in cooperation with Camp Fire Girls, Boy Scouts of America, Tulsa County Health Department and OSU-Extension office to provide hiking, backpacking, canoeing, camping, rock climbing, ropes course activities and other wilderness experiences to students.
- **Mentoring Program:** Volunteers from the community are paired with a Street School student with whom they meet one hour each week. Volunteers are approved through a background check and then participate in mentor orientation. Annual training updates also take place. Street School typically has 35 to 40 mentors.
- **Art Program:** In addition to the two credits each student receives in art, the arts are incorporated into every aspect of Street School. Student artwork lines the halls, students create art for Street School's annual fundraiser, as well as centerpieces for other fundraisers and community events. Students also create scenery for school related events. Two "art carts" on wheels are supplied with a variety of art supplies and they move from classroom to classroom. An Advanced Placement course in art is often offered at Street School. This program allows students to earn college credit while in high school. Music is also offered through a music appreciation class, African drumming, lessons on electronic keyboards as well as opportunities to attend the Tulsa Opera, Tulsa Ballet and performances by artists brought into the school.

SOCIAL SERVICES

The vast majority of teens who attend Street School face many personal challenges such as a history of domestic violence, abuse, trauma, and lack of family support. Many students that find their way to Street School are "at-risk" for substance abuse and other illegal behaviors. These challenges and behaviors have become barriers to their success. The majority of students have dropped out of high school before entering Street School. Some are already involved in the legal system. Approximately 28% are identified as chemically dependent during the initial assessment and the majority report involvement in sexual behaviors that put them at risk. Street School is the only alternative school that offers a therapeutic, recovery oriented component in addition to the academic component.

In order to meet the needs of our students and their families, Street School offers a therapeutic counseling program. Counselors offer individual, family and group counseling. Additionally, they support, provide treatment planning, goal setting and case management. Street School students meet each morning with their counselor in a group setting called "homeroom" which takes place from 8:30 to 8:45 a.m., Monday through Friday. Homeroom provides the counselor an opportunity to meet with his or her entire caseload, set goals for the day, assess student mood and provide support and assistance to any student who may have endured a crisis situation overnight

A First Offenders' Program is offered to families referred by the courts. A Street School counselor coordinates the program through the juvenile bureau. Once intake information is taken on participants, two Street School instructors provide classes each week after school.

Every Friday, counselors provide group sessions that focus on women's issues, substance abuse prevention, grief issues and anger management. Counselors also work in collaboration with instructors to provide "Tribes" activities. These activities consist of "community circles" which help build inclusion and instill a sense of belonging. This program offers students the chance to relate on a personal level with their peers and staff while encouraging healthy choices. Street School has five Master's level counselors who each have an average caseload ratio of 15-to-one. An intake counselor is dedicated to intake and assessment services.

Counselors meet with their students/clients throughout the school day (as needed) and conduct at least one hour of individual counseling each week. Research shows that therapists who teach their clients effective methods to control anxiety, depression and anger can achieve successful therapeutic outcomes more readily. Street School counselors incorporate these strategies into the treatment planning when the need is presented and can assist clients in the use of these techniques through any occasion that might arise during a school day.

Cognitive, strength based, client centered, reality and rational emotive therapeutic techniques may be used in counseling sessions. Approaches such as cognitive restructuring, reframing, psycho-educational techniques, cognitive and behavioral homework assignments, journaling and other techniques may be used in the counseling sessions to assist students in changing basic core philosophies that may underline emotional disorders. Service delivery models and strategies are based on accepted practice in the field and incorporate current research, evidence-based practice, peer-reviewed scientific and health-related publications, clinical practice guidelines and/or expert professional consensus.

SOCIAL SERVICES (CONTINUED)

All service providers are knowledgeable regarding biopsychosocial dimensions of substance abuse, evidenced based practices, cultural competency, age, gender specific issues, recovery oriented care and co-occurring disorder issues. Street School also has “Trauma Informed Capability,” which means that each staff member is trained to recognize and respond accordingly to the presence of the effects of past and current traumatic experiences in the lives of the students. All staff members receive training in “Trauma Informed Care.” Counselors address past and current trauma in individual sessions and all staff members are informed of any information, such as possible triggers that might be pertinent while the client is enrolled in Street School.

Street School is committed to providing a recovery oriented atmosphere along with treatment. Students are informed during orientation, the initial biopsychosocial assessment and the comprehensive intake with the assigned counselor of Street School’s Substance Abuse Policy. Instructors continue to maintain the recovery atmosphere in classrooms after enrollment through such techniques as adhering to the “no drug talk” rule. This is outlined under “Mutual Respect,” which is one of Street School’s guiding principles. These guiding principles and Street School Core Values are reinforced continually throughout each school year in classrooms and counseling sessions. During weekly staff meetings, staff members discuss the best ways to address any reported violations of Street School’s Principles, which may include treatment team meetings, classroom discussions or individual counseling sessions.

Street School counselors, who provide services to those who are identified at “chemically dependent,” receive annual trainings in cultural competency, trauma informed care and co-occurring capable services. Continued progress on Street School’s co-occurring capability, trauma informed services, culturally competent services, recovery oriented services, and overall social services are monitored and evaluated through: staff report, record, review, successful completion of treatment plans, review of critical incidents, grievances, complaints, surveys, and comparisons of entry and exit data. These are reviewed in the quarterly management team meetings and recorded in the outcomes management report.

Parents/guardians gain support from Street School before their child is enrolled. Family counseling is available for any parent and/or guardian who has a student on the waiting list. An intake counselor meets with the student and his or her parent or guardian when the request to enroll is made. The intake counselor provides orientation and a tour of the school. If the student is interested in enrollment, the intake counselor then schedules an appointment to complete a biopsychosocial assessment as well as academic testing and screening for chemical dependency and at-risk behaviors. The intake counselor also provides referral services to those who contact the agency, but who are ineligible for services.

After orientation, a tour, the intake and assessments are completed, the student/client is assigned to a Street School counselor, who meets with the student and parent(s) and or guardian(s) to complete the enrollment process. The Street School Registrar requests the student’s cumulative records, records all completed credits on a graduation checklist, and schedules the student into the classes necessary for graduation.

Street School’s funding sources at the state and local levels are committed to the youth served. The board of directors understands the need to actively participate in fund raising efforts to ensure that all services are in place for the youth served. Steps have been taken to ensure the longevity of the of the agency’s services through building monies in reserve accounts and the creation of an endowment.