

Program Elements

If awarded a Partners for Student Success (PFSS) Master Services Agreement, LA's BEST will offer to partnering Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) elementary schools a menu of residency options that address the District's overarching goals of: Graduation, College and Career Readiness; Attendance; Proficiency for All; Parent, Community, and Student Engagement; School Safety and Positive School Climate; and, Whole Child Wellness Services. LA's BEST will deliver each of the programs described below as 10-week residencies. Each residency will meet in two 45-to-60 minute sessions delivered twice each week. Each residency will serve a total of 40 students, with 20 students attending each session.

After School Arts Program (ASAP): For about 15 years, LA's BEST has offered a visual and performing arts education program—the After School Arts Program (ASAP)—in benefit of the children served by LA's BEST, for whom structured arts-learning experiences are generally scarce or non-existent within their schools, homes and communities. ASAP is conducted through 10-week residencies led by professional teaching artists in accordance with California's Visual and Performing Arts Standards.

Content of ASAP residencies range from visual arts, dance, theatre, and music. Visual arts residency topics include Printmaking, Digital Photography, Animation, Contemporary Pop, and iPad Painting and Drawing. Dance residency topics include Aztec Dance, Traditional Dances of Brazil, Ballet, Hip-Hop, West African Dance, Collegiate Step, and Tap. Theatre residency topics include Improvisation, Story Writing and Performance, Popular Theatre, and Drama for Kids. Music residency topics include Afro-Latin Drum, Keyboard, Chorus, Musical Theatre Song, and Brazilian Beats. Moreover, ASAP residencies frequently incorporate creative writing.

In addition to ASAP residency culminating events, After School Arts Program participants have opportunities to showcase their accomplishments to their families, friends and community. ASAP students often perform at holiday and end-of-year events held at their school sites and in their neighborhoods. Artwork created by ASAP students is frequently displayed at venues attended by LA's BEST stakeholders. Further, After School Arts Program participants perform at LA's BEST community-wide events like the Community Jam for Peace, which explores and celebrates creative, non-violent avenues for emotional self-expression and promotes peace, health, happiness and a sense of belonging through dance, song, drama, and spoken word performances. In addition to performing at the Community Jam, LA's BEST students design and build props and sets, and create costumes in preparation for the exciting, energizing on-stage display of young talent for an audience of their peers and family members.

The After School Arts Program is a vital component of the enrichment activities and experiences provided by LA's BEST in efforts to wholly prepare children in need for success in both school and in life, and a prime example of the organization's innovative approach to gaining and sustaining the interests of students who can often

otherwise become disinterested in their education and future goals. Principals, teachers, and parents frequently request implementation of ASAP residencies at their schools, and ASAP enjoys consistently high student enrollment and attendance. Moreover, ASAP students often express that they are motivated to attend school because of their engagement in the ASAP residency with LA's BEST.

Digital Learning Programs: Since 1988, LA's BEST has engaged elementary school students in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) programming that inspires curiosity, instills confidence, and helps participants develop knowledge and skills necessary for academic and career success in the 21st century. In 2011, LA's BEST established a dedicated Digital Learning Department, with a mission *to provide engaging digital learning experiences to ensure that students and staff develop critical technology skills and enhance their knowledge through technology-based resources*. The Digital Learning Department delivers a wide variety of programs across the schools/sites served by LA's BEST during the afterschool hours each day, as well as in the summertime through the LA's BEST Summer Learning Program. LA's BEST will offer 10-week residencies in Coder Time, KidBot, and KidPress to partnering schools.

Coder Time

The mission of Coder Time is *to engage students with coding activities as tools for exploration and learning*. Coder Time utilizes Code.org and Scratch—two online coding platforms—to introduce students to computer science—in addition to videos, unplugged, hands-on activities, and the publications Coderzine and the Coder Time Handbook. Coder Time participants learn to identify patterns, interpret information, make joint decisions, share ideas, solve problems, create projects using coding concepts, test programs and code designs, and showcase projects to their peers, families, schools, and communities. Through Coder Time, LA's BEST introduces students to the concepts of computer science, binary code, sequencing, loops, functions, algorithms, debugging, patterns, and abstraction. As a result, at least 85% of Coder Time participants demonstrate an increase in their knowledge of the role of computer scientists and their work with writing code; 85% increase in their understanding of the purpose of an algorithm; 90% of participants demonstrate their skills in resolving at least three coding challenges; 90% write at least one coding program and test it on a computer during the course of the program; and, 90% of Coder Time students express increased self-efficacy in programming with computers.

LA's BEST delivers comprehensive training to program staff who engage students in Coder Time. Program staff gain a clear understanding of the Coder Time program, leave with an understanding of the terminology used in the program and prepared to implement the five chapters of Coder Time curriculum, become familiar with the websites utilized by Coder Time, and develop ideas for helping students with their final Coder Time projects. LA's BEST utilizes Traveling Program Supervisors—staff who receive training in specific content areas and travel among multiple LA's BEST

schools/sites within the regions of Los Angeles—to assure program compliance and quality.

The Coder Time curriculum was developed in partnership with the Los Angeles Public Library. The curriculum is designed to familiarize elementary school children with writing binary codes and creating their own mazes and having robots navigate through these. The culminating events help students showcase their talents by having their products perform routines based on the work they created. Each of these elements are part of the Point-of-Service Quality Standards for Expanded Learning Programs as set forth by the California Department of Education’s Expanded Learning Division. The quality standards promote high quality in afterschool programs by assuring that students are actively engaged in creative and critical thinking activities of their choices in a safe and supportive environment. Coder Time incorporates these basic standards through its various lessons designed to build coding skills and the application of these skills via the creation of art, games, music or literature.

KidBot

Through KidBot, LA’s BEST offers students opportunities to engage in hands-on computer science and engineering experiences that introduce basic components of robot technology and elements of robot design. LA’s BEST provides comprehensive training to program staff to effectively facilitate KidBot and guide participants through the process of utilizing LEGO Mindstorms Kits to work in teams to design and program a robot. This training also supports the development of skills coveted by today’s workforce among LA’s BEST program staff.

LA’s BEST program staff support KidBot participants as they explore mechanical and electrical engineering, as well as computer science, increasing their knowledge of robotics engineering and robot functions. Students collaborate to build and design their robot, and apply problem-solving and critical-thinking skills to program the robots.

The LA’s BEST KidBot program is innovative in how it offers ways for children to use technology in a workshop-like environment. For many children who attend LA’s BEST, engagement with technology at home is limited to game-play, while, at school, computer use is often limited to test preparation or reading and math intervention. Through KidBot, LA’s BEST offers students the opportunity to explore technology creatively through the collaborative process of programming, designing, and building robots. As a result of participation in KidBot, 75% of students demonstrate an increase in knowledge of the variety of technology tools available to them, and 75% express increased self-confidence in using more than one digital media or computer technology tool.

KidPress

Through KidPress, LA’s BEST introduces students to journalism and technology as they create news magazines using graphic design software and digital photography, in addition to creating video broadcast news segments using video editing software.

KidPress students learn how to film and edit news clips to produce broadcast news pieces. Through KidPress, LA's BEST challenges students to investigate the world around as they become writers, reporters, directors, photographers, camera operators, and editors. Students research and report on activities at their schools and events within their community. This process of inquiry expands children's perspectives as they hear experiences, preferences, challenges, and successes of their peers. Participants then construct their findings into messages to share with their chosen audience. The youth-produced news shows and magazines provide an inside look into how children perceive world. This process facilitates youth participation, creativity, and self-empowerment.

Garden Program: LA's BEST is in the process of installing gardens at partnering school sites as possible and as resources permit. The gardens include edible plants children nurture and grow for use in nutrition workshops. In addition, in partnership with the Theodore Payne Foundation for Wild Flowers a Native Plants, LA's BEST incorporates plants that are native to California, creating natural habitats that attract birds, butterflies, and insects that pollinate the edible plants, helping the gardens to thrive. LA's BEST often places benches in the gardens, as resources permit, on which children may read for pleasure while enjoying nature. As possible, picnic tables are added, allowing for outdoor lessons that connect students to the environment.

The gardens help LA's BEST promote proper nutrition among children who are prone to poor diets and developing associated health problems. Many children served by LA's BEST do not know how food is produced, and the gardens present ideal venues for hands-on, engaging programming that facilitates an understanding of and appreciation for this process. Children plant seeds and nurture the gardens, learn about the different parts of plants, harvest fruits and vegetables, and use them in nutrition workshops. When the children are involved in growing and preparing fruits and vegetables for consumption, they are more likely to eat them. Moreover, by incorporating native plants and lessons on the environment, children learn about the circle of life, and how native plants are necessary for the survival of local insects and animals, just as edible plants are necessary for human health.

In addition to nutrition promotion, the gardens offer opportunities for children to take part in engaging, hands-on math, science, and language arts activities. Children read seed packets and take measurements to help create the gardens. They track the growth of plants in journals, and take part in science inquiries. LA's BEST children in all grade levels benefit from student lessons on metamorphosis, pollination, natural habitats, plant adaptation, water conservation, harvesting, and worm composition.

The gardens offer a foundation for overall better understanding of and respect for local and global ecosystems. By incorporating native plants, the gardens are water tolerant and low maintenance. Finally, gardens beautify public elementary school campuses located within Los Angeles neighborhoods that generally lack green spaces, providing natural oases in the midst of urban centers. In addition to all other benefits, the gardens offer peaceful and calming settings for student populations that

experience high levels of stress related to living within communities plagued by crime and poverty.

LA's BEST will offer 10-week Garden residencies to partnering schools. The Garden residencies will incorporate hands-on lessons in nutrition education and ecology, addressing health and wellness in addition to science concepts. Students engaged in Garden residencies will also have many opportunities to develop and reinforce their language arts and math skills as well, as they read seed packets, take measurements, track plant growth in journals, and participate in science inquiries.

Young Authors Program: LA's BEST partnered with award winning authors and experts in transformative pedagogy, Alma Flor Ada and F. Isabel Campoy, to create the LA's BEST Young Authors program, which utilizes transformative education pedagogy to motivate students to reflect on and share their life experiences through the written word. The Young Authors program was initially developed for upper grade elementary school students, with participants creating ("publishing") their very own book. LA's BEST has adapted the program for kindergarten-through-second grade students, with a focus is on developing and expanding language skills, including word recognition when listening and speaking. The younger group of students produces a "single-site" community book.

Over the course of a 10-week period, students in the LA's BEST Young Authors program read published stories and participate in a variety of literacy-based activities focused on exploring their own identities. The LA's BEST Young Authors program includes journals for each student's story notes, folders, and other reading-themed materials such as word and literacy books, children's thesauruses, chipboard letters, one set of KidzLibrary books—a student leisure library to be read during rotation time—and one set of read aloud books that correlate directly to Young Authors book themes. Highly trained LA's BEST program staff coach students through the process of exploring stories relevant to participants' cultures as they create their own book. LA's BEST program staff are deeply connected to the communities served by the organization, and serve students with a ratio of 20 students to each staff person per Young Authors session. The program staff work with their students in 45-to-10 minute sessions two times per week. During this time, program staff guide students through the book creation process, starting with developing an initial idea and producing images that correspond with their story.

The research in the book *Authors in the Classroom: a Transformative Education Process*, written by experts in transformative pedagogy Alma Flor Ada and F. Isabel Campoy lays the foundation for the LA's BEST Young Authors program, which focuses on four specific goals: anti-bias, self-esteem, self-expression and reflection. These goals highlight the importance of respecting the differences among all people while understanding oneself and the importance of speaking one's social truth through the written word. Inspired by these goals, the LA's BEST Young Author Club offers five book themes to nurture self-expression and guide participants to transform their personal experiences into inspiring books. The "I Am" and "Where I Come From"

books initiate the process of self-discovery through reflection on current and past events that have shaped their identities. The “ABC” book explores the idea of community through the use of the alphabet or a counting format as a tool for structuring a book. The “Acrostic” book focuses on building a vocabulary of appreciation as a method to cultivate positive values of others and the self. Lastly, the “Book of Feelings” encourages students to reflect on and identify emotions.

LA’s BEST program staff begin the writing process with prewriting, guiding students through establishing an idea with a focus and clarifying a purpose. Brainstorming activities include reading examples of the selected book theme while noting and discussing its distinguishing characteristics and working with bubble maps that allow students to organize their thoughts. Drafting starts with independent work where students write in their journals to expand various ideas without focusing on spelling and grammar. Program staff may employ writing countdowns to encourage students to write as much as they can in an allotted time. Some students work quietly by themselves or with a partner. Program staff may add music to inspire students’ creativity as part of the writing process.

As part of the editing process, students read aloud portions of their completed writing to their peers in smaller groups or as a whole club activity while sitting in a designated “Author’s Chair”. Students listening are encouraged to ask questions and give feedback on what they heard. Program staff provide techniques to students on appropriate listening and speaking behavior. Providing feedback is a crucial component to the editing process as it offers opportunities for students to engage in authentic decision making and problem solving about issues that affect them or others. Students and program staff offer “stars” to mark what was done well and “wishes” for what may need improvement in students’ stories. Finally, students assemble their book using book maps as a guide to the book’s structure and layout. The final construction of the book consists of a cover, title and dedication page; pages containing the story and illustrations; and a page about the student author. LA’s BEST Young Authors supplies students with all materials needed to bind their books and program staff encourage them to be creative with the size, shape and design.

LA’s BEST also invites local authors to visit the Young Authors program to discuss writing processes and how to become a published author, and to inspire students to continue with their storytelling. Students share their books with authors, and authors read aloud their own published works before donating an autographed hardcover to the organization. When resources permit, LA’s BEST hosts culmination events, “book launch parties” that offer attendees opportunities to take part in literacy promotion activities, including visits and presentations by published children’s book authors. In fact, award winning children’s book authors Alma Flor Ada and F. Isabel Campoy have attended several of the culmination events, participated in literacy activities, and assisted in the celebration of the students in becoming authors.

Alignment with LAUSD's Strategic Plan & Partners for Student Success Goals: All residencies offered by LA's BEST will support students to think critically, communicate clearly, and possess the standards-based knowledge and skills and resilience to tackle real-life challenges. Through participation in LA's BEST, students become life-long learners and engaged global citizens with the motivation and tenacity to pursue their dreams.

LA's BEST strives to help children achieve grade-level reading proficiency through the Young Authors program, as well as through the integration of literacy and language arts in ASAP, Digital Learning programming, and the Garden program. LA's BEST aims to help children achieve math proficiency through Digital Learning, as well as through the integration of math in the Garden program.

The proposed residencies will support students to build their critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and digital skills to help achieve the District's graduate profile so that all students are efficacious, influential, worldly-wise, adaptable, and ready to activate their goals in the 21st century. Students in LA's BEST are encouraged and supported to envision and create their college, career, and life pathways.

A primary value of LA's BEST is student choice and community voice. All LA's BEST programming is aligned with the needs of students. Participation in LA's BEST helps ensure a well-rounded education, including access to visual and performing arts via After School Arts Program residencies. Highly-trained LA's BEST program staff who serve as youth developers, mentors, and coaches to the children who rely upon LA's BEST every day cultivate healthy relationships with their students, raising their aspirations towards college and career success. LA's BEST is intentional in utilizing participants' strengths, interests, culture, and experiences to engage students in deeper learning and to persist through challenging tasks and text.

During the afterschool hours each day, LA's BEST offers a safe, welcoming, nurturing environment with appropriate tiered resources to support student success. LA's BEST focuses on the whole child, social-emotional learning, and building resilience through all programming and activities. LA's BEST cultivates emotional safety among participants, and students feel respected and valued, confident to ask questions, seek help, and advocate for themselves. LA's BEST trains program staff to build resilience among students, and provides services that support physical and mental health among participants. LA's BEST cultivates personal and community safety among participants where students can learn in an environment free of physical and online bullying, hazing, and violence.

LA's BEST offers many opportunities for parent/caregiver and family engagement at culminating and community-wide events. Moreover, LA's BEST site coordinators and program staff engage parents and caregivers each day when they retrieve their children. LA's BEST site coordinators and program staff are uniquely positioned to receive feedback from parents and caregivers, relay information about students,

lessons, and activities to parents and caregivers, and ensure LA's BEST programming and services are responsive to the needs of the families and communities served.

Examples of Past Programs Successfully Executed at an Urban K12 Public School: LA's BEST has successfully executed all the above-described programs at multiple Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) elementary schools. Nearly all 200 schools currently served by LA's BEST have hosted After School Arts Program residencies and the Young Authors program. LA's BEST has successfully implemented various digital learning programs at the majority of schools currently served. LA's BEST has installed gardens and delivered associated programming at about 40 schools.

Price Schedule

LA's BEST will offer the following menu of residency options to partnering schools. Each residency will operate over the course of 10 weeks in two 45-to-60 minute sessions delivered twice each week. Each residency will serve a total of 40 students, with 20 students attending each session.

Below, please find the fully-burdened fixed unit rate for each type of residency LA's BEST will offer.

- After School Arts Program (Visual and Performing Arts) Residency: \$2,860

- Digital Learning - Coder Time (Coding) Residency at schools that already have the necessary computer equipment: \$3,443

- Digital Learning - Coder Time (Coding) Residency at schools in need of the necessary computer equipment: \$35,433

- Digital Learning - KidBot (Robotics) Residency: \$3,466

- Digital Learning - KidPress (Media + Technology) Residency: \$3,460

- Garden Residency (Health & Wellness + STEM) Residency at schools that have a garden: \$2,860

- Young Authors Residency (Literacy & Language Arts) Residency: \$2,860