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## Senior Capstone Project final research report : Linking services : Lyceum of Monterey County and Monterey Bay Charter School

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**Senior Capstone Project Final Research Report:  
Linking Services: Lyceum of Monterey County and Monterey Bay Charter School**

**Key Words:** After school programs; alternative education; experiential learning; extracurricular activities, Waldorf Methods

**Abstract:** The purpose of this capstone project is to link the services offered by the Lyceum of Monterey County to Monterey Bay Charter School in order to meet the school's need for an after school program appropriate for sixth, seventh and eighth grade students. Through experiential learning opportunities in art, music, and drama children who participate will be exposed to hands-on learning experiences that will challenge them to learn by doing, encourage creative self-expression, and realize their potential to succeed.

## **Executive Summary:**

The Lyceum of Monterey County serves the youth of Monterey County by providing extracurricular educational classes in science, art, and music oriented settings. Each year, the Lyceum serves over 400 students and families from all parts of Monterey County (Lyceum, n.d.). Monterey Bay Charter School (MBCS) is a public charter school that has a student body of over 200 students in Kindergarten through eighth grade. MBCS incorporates Waldorf teaching methods into its curriculum and strongly values the well rounded development of its students (MBCS, n.d.).

This capstone utilizes the services offered by the Lyceum of Monterey County to address an issue presented to me by MBCS staff members. MBCS had existing after school clubs, and an after school program that was relatively inconsistent, but the curriculum of these programs was more appropriate for children in K-5<sup>th</sup> grades. The students in 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade had little interest in the available programs and were, as a result, going home to empty houses after school, essentially becoming “latchkey” children.

With the presenting issue being a lack of an after school program for 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students, the most appropriate solution was to work collaboratively with both MBCS and the Lyceum to develop an after school program that was fun, interesting, educational, and hands-on. I began by creating a set of surveys, one for parents and one for students, which were distributed, collected and analyzed to determine the desired direction of the program.

After all of the results were compiled, it was determined that the students, parents, and staff unanimously decided that music, drama/acting and art classes were their top

three choices for curriculum in the program. With that knowledge, I set out to work with the Lyceum to hire teachers in the appropriate subjects and schedule teachers for the program. Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances and scheduling conflicts, there were no Lyceum teachers available to teach any sessions this academic year. Therefore, I was required to create a schedule of classes for next academic year that included the names of teachers to request and subjects they taught. I then forwarded that information to an administrator at MBCS to follow through with for next year.

In order to meet the need to have an after school program for the older children, the administrators at MBCS will have to follow through with scheduling Lyceum teachers for the after school program. It is my recommendation that they contact the Lyceum's Director of School Contracts at least four weeks in advance of the start of each session in order to ensure that a teacher will be available.

**Description o Agency:**

The American Lyceum began with an association of traveling scholars who presented lectures throughout the United States to an audience of adults who wished to expand their knowledge in various academic and social subjects. Within six years of establishing the first U.S. Lyceum, more than three thousand Lyceums opened their doors throughout the nation (Lyceum, n.d.).

The Lyceum of Monterey County was established in 1960 with the goal of uniting talented instructors with children who possess a hunger for knowledge in a learning environment. The mission of the Lyceum is “to inspire a life-long love of learning...by offering enrichment classes that aim to stimulate children's individual creativity, intellectual promise, and academic motivation.” (Lyceum, n.d.).

Over four hundred classes are offered to all students attending public and private elementary, middle, and high schools located within Monterey County. The Lyceum places a strong emphasis on learning by doing in each of its courses, which are commonly referred to as SAMI (Science, Art, and Music Intensives) Programs. Along with SAMI Programs, the Lyceum offers classes for families, adults, and parents at various points throughout the year. Aside from the classes offered, the Lyceum sponsors three academic events each year: The County Spelling Bee for fourth and fifth grade students, Monterey County History Day for middle and high school students, and Monterey County Mock Trial for high school students.

Monterey Bay Charter School is a public, tuition free, school that infuses Waldorf teaching methods into its academic and social curricula for the 200+ students enrolled in kindergarten through eighth grade. MBCS staff and faculty strongly believe in the development of the student as a whole, not just his or her academic abilities. MBCS students are exposed to linguistic, mathematical/logical, intrapersonal, interpersonal, bodily kinesthetic, spatial, and musical elements in their daily activities (MBCS, n.d.). Aside from the academic requirements at MBCS, students are expected to become active community members by participating in community service projects throughout the year.

**Issue to Be Addressed:**

Because of budget cutbacks in the early 2000's, many of California's schools have eliminated extracurricular programs in arts and music (Witt, n.d.). According to Mr. Witt, programs in arts, music, and drama are all too often absent from "test-score driven school curricula." He feels that these programs broaden children's experiences and allow them to participate in academically fulfilling activities that match their own interests,

rather than the interests mandated by the school. Because many California schools can no longer afford to offer such classes, the reliance on outside agencies to provide these enriching experiences has increased.

Although funding cuts have directly affected Monterey Bay Charter School's ability to infuse the ideal level of artistic influence into their curriculum, this was not the most significant contributing factor to the development of this capstone project. What was, however, is the fact that MBCS did not have an after school program available that was appropriate for children in the upper grade levels (6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades). The programs that were available were either directed towards the younger age groups, or were too inconsistent to merit the older student's participation in them. As a result, many of the older children were becoming "latchkey" children, returning home after school to spend the afternoon alone. With their idle time, these students were spending hours watching TV, playing video games, or surfing the internet; all things that contradict the mission and goals of the Waldorf teaching methods used at MBCS.

**Project Description:**

Research has shown that "participation in after-school and summer programs- whether they are activity focused, narrow tutoring sessions, or some combination- can help raise grades and scores on standardized tests and encourage positive attitudes toward school and learning" (Noam, G. & Miller, B., 2002). This capstone is intended to develop an after school program that will allow MBCS 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students to have the opportunities to grow and develop as mentioned above.

I wanted to ensure that all stakeholders had a hand in the creation of this program; therefore, I developed a survey for both students and parents of MBCS. The surveys

served as a tool to gain insight into the desired aspects of this program; specifically the desired session topics, the length and frequency of each session, and whether or not the parents and students wanted to have time allotted for homework completion in the program.

I surveyed each of the three classes directly by taking a small amount of time to share with the students the idea of the after school program and then passing out the surveys for completion. After the classes finished filling out the surveys, I had a small open forum-type discussion with the students to give them time to voice any thoughts, suggestions, or concerns that they perhaps did not feel like writing down. These interview sessions lasted approximately twenty minutes per class (one class per grade).

Because the class sizes are so small at MBCS, I decided that I would survey all of the MBCS parents, not just the parents of the older children. I created a survey that was very similar to the one distributed to the students. With this survey, however, I decided it would be easier and more productive if I used an online survey tool ([surveymonkey.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com)) to design, distribute, and analyze the parent survey. I sent out the parent survey in an email with a small introduction explaining who I was and what I was trying to accomplish. This email was sent to approximately 115 people, and I received 78 completed surveys. After analyzing both the parent and student surveys, I arranged to have a small amount of time at a weekly MBCS staff meeting so that I could share the results of both surveys and interview the staff to understand their thoughts on the after school program.

Surprisingly, the staff members agreed with the parents and students on the most important part of the surveys: the desired subject matter for each session. There was a

unanimous decision on having the classes focus on music, drama, and art in one form or another. With this information, I returned to the Lyceum to begin lining up instructors who were available to teach a six to eight week session on one of the desired topics. I contacted several potential instructors, but had difficulties getting through to them. I left detailed messages, and the director of school contracts also spoke with some of the teachers, but each person we contacted never returned our phone calls, or they were completely booked through the summer.

Because there were no teachers available to teach in the after school program, my plan of starting before the end of this academic year was interrupted. As a result, I was forced to change direction and compile a list of teachers, and the subject(s) they teach into a letter that I distributed to my contact at MBCS. In this letter, I explained the situation, and outlined the necessary steps for MBCS to begin this program at the start of next academic year. I was very sad to know that I would not be able to see this program develop into a flourishing opportunity for MBCS children and their families. However, I know that the staff at MBCS will absolutely continue where I was forced to leave off. Assuming that this program does start up next year, the program will consist of several six to eight week long sessions, with each session containing a different subject matter. Students will be allowed to pick and choose which sessions they would like to sign up for, which will allow them to be in a program that gives them the opportunity to learn something they are truly interested in. At the end of each session, a survey will be distributed to assess the positive and negative attributes of that particular session. Following the analysis of completed post-surveys, changes will be made to the program accordingly by both Lyceum and MBCS staff members.



### **Application to Academic Requirements:**

This capstone will assist in the mastery of several Major Learning Outcomes (MLOs) for the Collaborative Health and Human Service major (Collaborative Health and Human Services, 2006). The following MLOs will be incorporated throughout the implementation of the proposed capstone project:

- Collaboration- between myself, the Lyceum staff, schools, community members, children, parents.
- Information Management- technology will be incorporated throughout this capstone through the use of email, Excel, Word, Power Point, the internet, etc.
- Statistics and Research Methods- two surveys, one prior to the implementation of the course(s) and one following, will be created, distributed, and analyzed to assist in the completion of this capstone.

Along side of the MLO's that this project addresses, this capstone directly incorporates several values taken from the California State University Vision Statement (1994). These values include:

- “The campus will be distinctive in serving the diverse people of California, especially the working class and historically undereducated and low-income populations.”
- “...seek ways to contribute to the economy of the state, the wellbeing of our communities, and the quality of life and development of its students, faculty, and service areas.”
- “To build a multicultural learning community founded on academic excellence from which all partners in the educational process emerge prepared to contribute productively, responsibly, and ethically to California and the global community.”

## **Conclusion:**

Initially, I was hesitant to begin this program because a person I had spoken to had informed me that Waldorf schools generally frowned upon after school programs. This person explained that this was a result of the Waldorf belief that students should go home and “are children” after school, not stay and do more school work. However, after surveying all parties who would be impacted by this program, I observed an overwhelming excitement over the possibility of this after school program. Parents, especially, were thrilled with the thought because they had wanted a program for so long, but none of them had the time to develop one.

The survey process helped me work collaboratively with a large group of people, and it gave the stakeholders a sense of control and empowerment in the development of the after school program. I was able to understand which subject matter the students, parents, and staff members wanted, as well as their desire for an allotted homework time, with a tutor available for assistance.

Although this program did not become a reality this academic year, I have high hopes for its success in the future. If the appropriate parties follow through with the plan that I have left them, both the students of MBCS and the Lyceum will benefit. This program will meet the need for an age-appropriate after school program for MBCS students, and it will help the Lyceum of Monterey County fulfill its mission to inspire a lifelong love of learning in children throughout Monterey County.

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## Appendix

- A. Student Input Survey
- B. Resulting survey graphs
- C. List of Teacher Contacts/Subject Matter
- D. Letter to Megan Havens

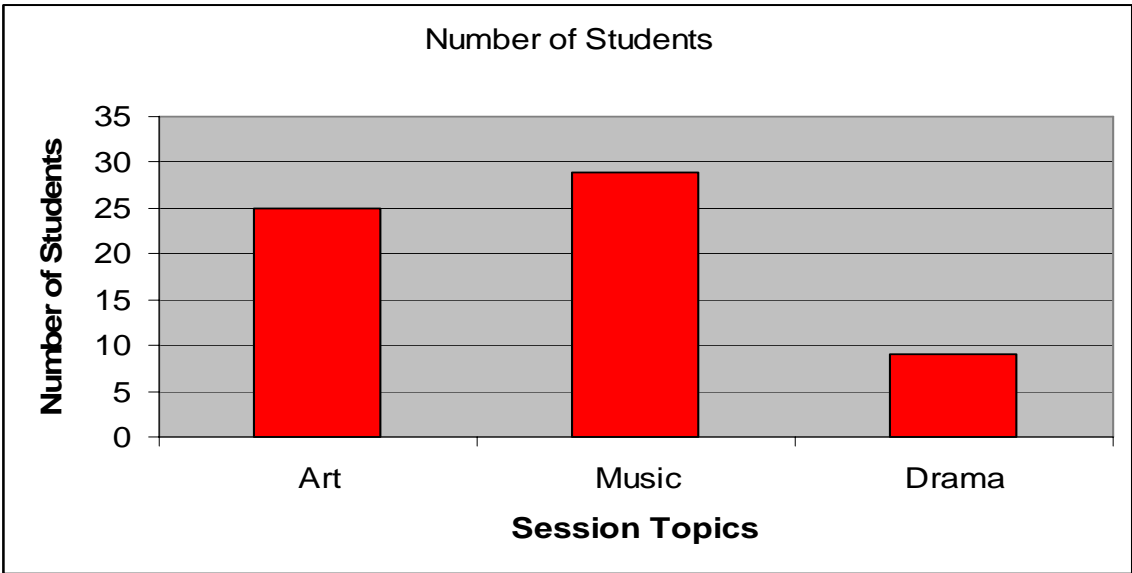
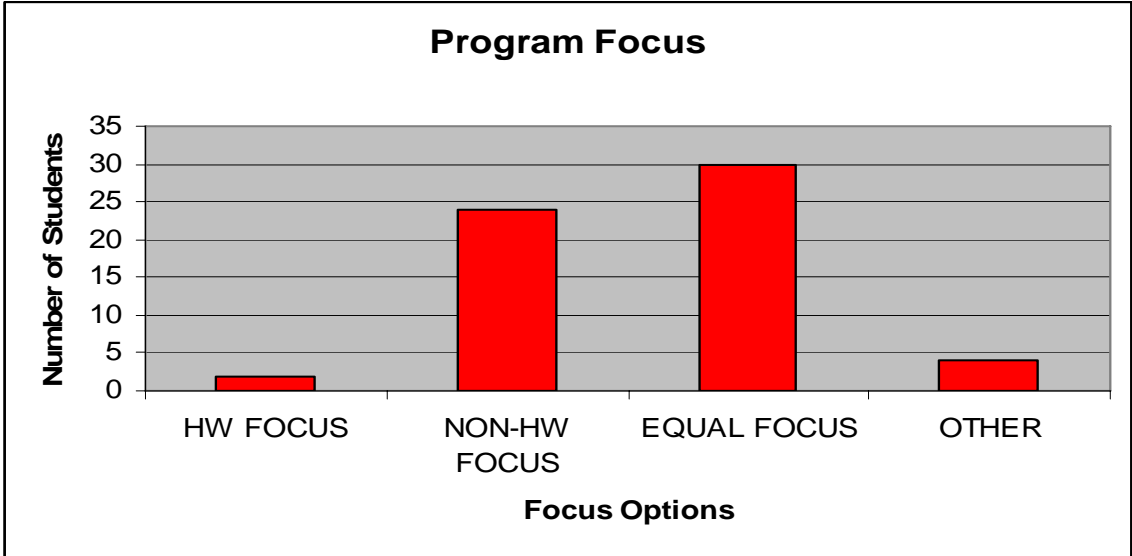
STUDENT INPUT SURVEY  
Grades 6-8  
Monterey Bay Charter School

Dear Student,

My name is Christa Tibbitts and I am a senior at CSU Monterey Bay. I am currently working on my Capstone project, which is the final project needed in order to graduate. The goal of my Capstone is to work with the students, parents, and staff of Monterey Bay Charter School to design an after school program for students in 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Because you are going to be most influenced by the outcome of this project, I would really like to incorporate your thoughts, desires, and interests into the development of this program. If you would please take a moment to fill this questionnaire out, I would greatly appreciate it. **Your answers will remain anonymous and will be strongly taken into consideration wherever possible.**

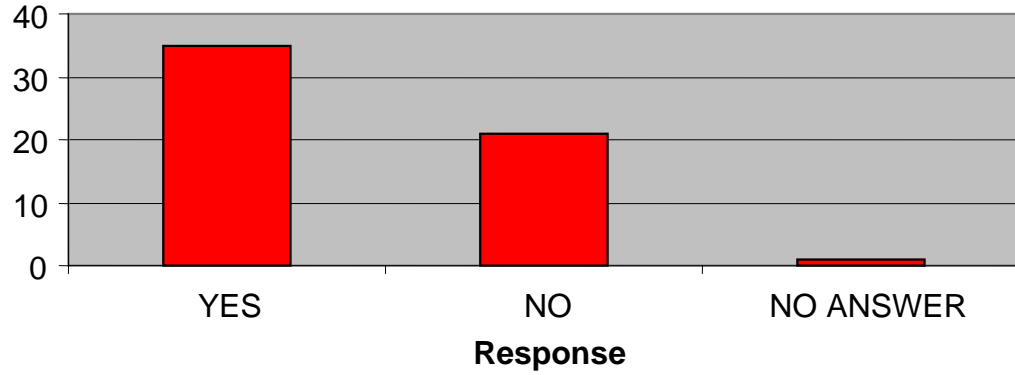
Thank you!

1. Current grade level (6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, or 8<sup>th</sup>): \_\_\_\_\_
2. Gender: \_\_\_\_\_
3. How much after school time do you spend on homework on an average weeknight?  
Please select from the following approximations:  
0-30 minutes    30-45 minutes    45-60 minutes    60+ minutes
4. Do you feel that finding time to do homework is sometimes difficult?    Y    N
5. Would having an allotted time to do homework in the after school program be beneficial to you?    Y    N
6. Would you prefer that the after school program be (please select one):
  - a. more focused on homework completion
  - b. more focused on non-homework activities
  - c. equal focus on homework and non-homework activities
  - d. other: \_\_\_\_\_
7. Please list your top three choices of activities you would like to see during the after school program (ex: guitar lessons, painting lessons, robotics, etc.)
  1. \_\_\_\_\_
  2. \_\_\_\_\_
  3. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Which weekdays would you like to have the after school program available? (select all that apply)    M    T    W    Th    F
9. How many hours should the after school program run each day? (please select one)  
1 hour    1-2 hours    2-3 hours    3-4 hours
10. If you have any other ideas or thoughts that you would like to share with me regarding what you would like to see happen in the proposed after school program, please make use of the back of this paper to do so.

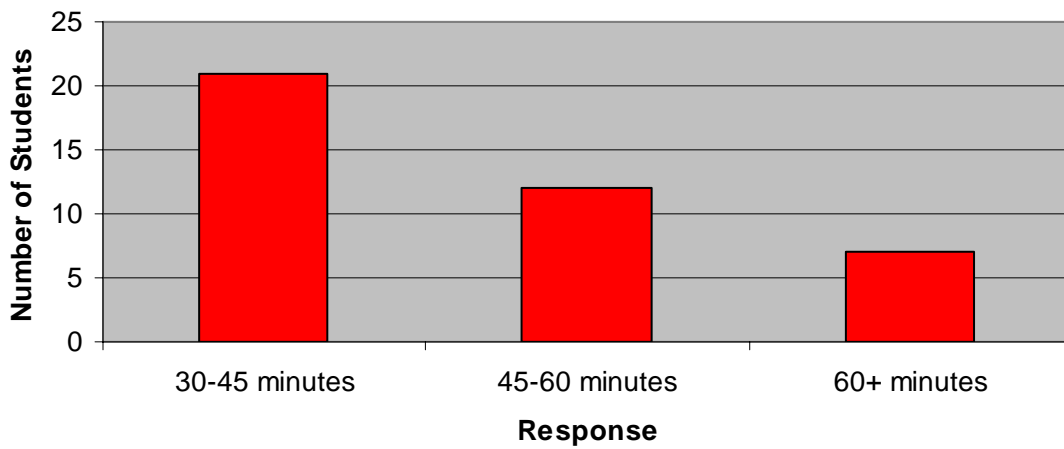


### Is finding time to do homework sometimes difficult?

Number of Students



### Time Spent on Homework





Teacher's Name:	Subject Taught:
B. Jones	Art/Photography
R. Segal	Intro to Guitar
G. Thompson	Drawing/Poetry
K. Hanstick	Drama
P. Lightfoot	Art
I. N'Gom	African Drumming
K. Damron	Music
J. Yelda	Music (all types)
J. Davis	Art

Megan Havens  
Monterey Bay Charter School  
1004-B David Avenue  
Pacific Grove, Ca 93950

Dear Megan,

First of all, I would like to thank you (again) for everything you have done to help me complete my capstone project this year. You have been a saving grace for me; I mean it!

I would like to update you on the progress of the after school program. As you know, I was unable to find an instructor that teaches any of the discussed subjects that was also available to teach a session this academic year. As a result, my ability to start the program this year has been eliminated and I am forced to leave the program in your hands. I have compiled and attached a list of teachers that I think would be a good fit for MBCS sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students, and feel that the subjects they have to offer will be a perfect match to the subjects the students, parents, and staff expressed an interest in.

After speaking with Jennifer Vendela, it has been recommended that you contact the Lyceum at least four weeks in advance of the date you wish to begin the after school program. This is to ensure that a contract can be written between the Lyceum and Monterey Bay Charter School, and so that the likelihood of the desired teacher being available is greater. The list of teachers that meet the desired subject matter should be long enough to get you through the next academic year, especially if you decide to make the session lengths a bit longer than the original six week sessions we discussed.

It is my greatest hope that you continue where I have been forced to leave off; especially after reading the enthusiastic comments left by parents and students who will participate! I wish you, and all of the MBCS students, parents, and staff nothing but the best in all you do!

Good Luck!

Christa Tibbitts, Lyceum Intern '07-'08