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Expanding School Mediation Program Using a Train-the-Trainer Model

Molly Patterson

mbpatterson@dons.usfca.edu

University of San Francisco - School of Management

Public and Nonprofit Administration - Master of Nonprofit Administration

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Dr. Marco Tavanti

Executive Summary

California Lawyers for the Arts has requested a plan to expand their Youth Mediators in Schools program. The program is currently operating in two schools and the administrators would like to add a school from a third district. Ideally, the program would expand statewide, and eventually become the model for a bullying prevention program nationwide.

The plan includes fundraising opportunities that will aid the program expansion.

A school district was selected to target for the initial step of adding a school, and also serves as the model for a district-wide expansion. A train-the-trainer approach was taken to implement the program throughout the district, and could be easily expanded to encompass multiple districts.

Recommendations for additional steps the organization can take to benefit the program are also included in this plan.

Objectives

The goal of this plan is to outline feasible steps the administrators of the Youth Mediators in Schools program can take to expand the program into a third school district and to create a replicable model to expand to a full district.

Mission Statement

California Lawyers for the Arts empowers the creative community by providing education, representation and dispute resolution.

Youth Mediators in Schools establishes a school based peer mediation program in Elementary, Middle and High Schools in the Sacramento region.

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Introduction

Bullying can disrupt a child's learning. It is a perceived or real threat to his or her safety. How students treat each other, and how they respond to other students' behavior, affects their performance in the classroom as well as their actions in the community. Anti-bullying initiatives in schools play a major part in ending bullying in schools. Many anti-bullying websites, including the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services operated StopBullying.gov, suggest that students who witness bullying tell an adult right away, be nice to a bullied student, and not support bullying behavior. This is all good advice. But what if bullying never occurred in the first place?

About the Program

Youth Mediators in Schools (YMS) is a program of California Lawyers for the Arts (CLA), a statewide nonprofit organization that has been serving the creative community since 1974 by providing education, representation, and dispute resolution. CLA opened its Sacramento office in 1996.

The YMS program teaches students to resolve conflict before it escalates to bullying. The 20-hour peer-to-peer mediation training is taught with a unique arts-based curriculum that includes role-play, games, and art projects. Once they complete the program, students operate a School Mediation Center at the school, under the supervision of a school administrator.

The YMS program teaches K-12 students a peaceful and productive approach to conflict resolution, offering a unique curriculum designed to train students in conflict resolution skills through role play, discussion, and artistic expression. A team of skilled

mediation teachers train students in peer mediation techniques in coordination with school personnel. YMS reduces bullying and peer violence in schools and in the community at large.

The goals of the YMS program are to improve the social and emotional learning environments in Sacramento schools and communities, to reduce school violence, to teach students to resolve conflict, to provide skills to deal with bullies, to develop responsibility, courage and character, and to develop leadership, decision making and communication skills. The curriculum gives students the skills they need to solve problems and become leaders in their schools and communities.

Background

Preliminary research on school mediation programs established a solid background in these types of programs and their results. Several program evaluations were gathered in order to learn about different types of school mediation programs and how they work. Studies show that these programs change students' behavior and attitudes in the classroom and in the community. Models like the Capturing Kids' Hearts Campus by Design model prove that when implemented correctly, these programs can be expanded to even a national or international level (Holtzapple et. al., 2011). As of 2009, Capturing Kids' Hearts Campus by Design program had been implemented in over 5,500 schools all across the country. The program is successful, in that an analysis based on school records revealed a 22% drop in discipline referrals and a 26% increase in pro-social behavior. Mediation programs can be successful on a large scale.

Further research on expansion plans reveal that a train-the-trainer approach is a suitable model for teacher training programs. According to research, pyramid models are the most basic structure for such an approach. While the number of levels within the pyramid are different depending on the audience, no other model could be found. Even when a distinct pyramid was not drawn, the basic structure remained the same within the models studied. A pyramid model is a simple, yet effective way to implement a train-the-trainer approach, and will be used for the plan to expand YMS.

Training evaluation methods were discovered when researching train-the-trainer models, and the two-pronged approach that was eventually designed for YMS was a result of that research and will be discussed in the section, The Model.

Representatives of the Capturing Kids' Hearts Campus by Design program and the Bullying Prevention Specialist for the Sacramento City Unified School District were contacted for interviews but failed to respond.

CLA provided materials about YMS, including brochures, articles, newsletters, a video, sample lesson plans, program budgets, survey questions, and a Memorandum of Understanding. These resources helped build a strong understanding of the YMS program. Additionally, the YMS program coordinator was available for any questions and for collaboration on the logic model and SWOT analysis.

The completed plan as it was presented to CLA can be found in the Appendix.

Methods

Logic Model

In order to establish a better understanding of the YMS program, a logic model was created with input from CLA staff. Figure 1 shows the resulting logic model, which outlines the resources allocated to YMS, and the current outputs and outcomes of the program. The logic model is based on the program as it currently exists, not on the program as it would exist following implementation of the expansion plan. The resources and outputs would grow. The outcomes and impacts would not change, except that they would be seen on a grander scale.

Figure 1 shows a logic model for the YMS program.

Resources	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
2 CLA Employees	20 hours of teacher training per school	2 schools currently served	Students learn to resolve conflict	Harmony and peace improves in schools and communities
1 Assistant 1 Site Coordinator 2 Interns	20 hours of mediation training in the schools : Two 40 minute sessions per week for 15 weeks per school	Approximately 26 students per school	Students learn how to respond to dispute in a positive manner	Conflict decreases in schools and communities
Technology for training and presentations	Mediation role-play exercises, art-based activities, games	Approximately 2 teachers trained per year	Students develop responsibility, confidence, and character	Violent behavior decreases in schools and communities
Materials for training and presentations		2 school districts currently served	Students develop leadership skills	Students become strong community leaders
Classroom space in 2 schools			Teachers learn mediation and conflict resolution skills	
Marketing materials				
County grant				

SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis (Figure 2) was completed by CLA staff to determine the areas of greatest need and the opportunities to address those needs. Funding was the most significant threat. The plan would definitely need to report on funding opportunities.

The need became to develop an expansion plan that would not require additional staff, as at this point CLA does not have the funding to add an assistant position. Additionally, funding strategies must be put into place. YMS is currently funded by a county grant, with additional matching funds from individual donors.

Figure 2 shows the SWOT analysis created by CLA staff that determined the need for a cost-effective expansion model.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students learn and practice positive communication & leadership skills, mediation techniques, performance, writing & vocab, and art. • Allows artistic expression • Builds student confidence • Empowers students to make positive change • Facilitates teamwork • Promotes healthier school & community climate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliance on support of administration & classroom teacher • Lack of funding for a coordinator assistant
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program implementation in multiple schools • Program expansion throughout the state • Publishing copyrighted curriculum • Additional funding opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program expansion prior to adequate personnel expansion • Withdrawal of support from school administrators • Withdrawal of support from school district • Lack of sufficient funding for expansion • Reliance on grant funding
Opportunities	Threats

Funding

The most important factor to address before going any further with the plan is funding. The SWOT analysis clearly demonstrates that funding the program and its expansion is a major concern. The YMS program is currently funded by a county grant, with additional matching funds from individual donors. In order to grow the program, it is necessary to diversify funding.

Rotary clubs offer grants depending on the chapter. Some suggested Rotary clubs to reach out to are Point West Rotary, Rotary of Sacramento, and Arden-Arcade Rotary. Additionally, Rotary clubs are always looking for speakers at their weekly meetings, and securing a speaking engagement would be a great opportunity to introduce the program to the community. CLA is encouraged to reach out to Rotary clubs for funding and marketing prospects.

The Sacramento Region Community Foundation (<http://www.sacregcf.org>) awards grants through their GivingEdge program. The website provides instructions for creating a GivingEdge account. Donors to the Sacramento Region Community Foundation are able to look through GivingEdge to find nonprofit organizations whose missions align with their passions. Creating a profile is an excellent opportunity to put the program in front of a wide audience of donors in the Sacramento region.

In addition to applying for grants, CLA should solicit donations from its members specifically for the YMS program through direct mail campaigns. In addition to members of CLA, parents of students attending Will Rogers and Natomas Middle School, as well as any future schools implementing the YMS program, should be included in the direct mail campaigns. PTA members and member of other parent clubs are a good place to

start. The appeal letters written for the fundraising campaign are the perfect opportunity to tell the story of recent successes in the current schools, and illustrate how donations will help further this work in more schools.

Selecting the School District

Creating a Train-the-Trainer model is the most effective solution for CLA's expansion goals. CLA could reach more people without having to add any additional staff. The first step to creating the model is determining the right school district to target.

As YMS is already active within the San Juan Unified and Natomas Unified School Districts, the plan should be geared to a different district. There are 15 school districts in Sacramento county. The districts boast many strong initiatives, including nutrition, providing homelessness services, special education programs, and anti-bullying programs. Galt Joint Union Elementary School District, Robla School District, Folsom Cordova Unified School District, and Sacramento City Unified School District each provide anti-bullying resources on their websites. Of these districts, Sacramento City Unified serves the largest student population, with Folsom Cordova Unified in a distant second.

Ultimately, Sacramento City Unified School District was selected as the model district for this plan. The Sacramento City Unified School District (SCUSD) is the 11th largest district in the state and serves 75 schools and 42,000 students (<http://www.scusd.edu/our-schools>). The SCUSD was selected to approach because of the district's commitment to anti-bullying initiatives and the numbers of students served.

The district so values bullying prevention and intervention that a strategic plan was created to focus on tackling the issue (http://www.scusd.edu/sites/main/files/file-attachments/bullying_prevention_strategic_plan_-_final_0.pdf). The introduction to the strategic plan amplifies the superintendent's commitment to prevent bullying: "Contrary to what many believe, bullying is not something we have to tolerate and is not a rite of passage. Quite the opposite: bullying is something we know how to stop and have a responsibility to address both as educators and citizens" (2011). The plan includes several strategies for implementing bullying prevention and intervention programs in each of the schools in the district. Strategies include the creation of the Bullying Prevention Specialist position to oversee the anti-bullying tactics throughout the district. Other strategies include creating a Youth Action Team to report on anti-bullying efforts and the school climate from a student's perspective, and creating partnerships with the city, county, and community at large. YMS is a great fit for implementing these two strategies. As the goal of the program is to establish a student-run School Mediation Center at each school, there is a built-in Youth Action Team at each campus. Additionally, a partnership with California Lawyers for the Arts would benefit both parties who are dedicated to bullying prevention.

In addition to providing a complete definition of bullying or harassment, the district's anti-bullying policy (http://www.scusd.edu/sites/main/files/file-attachments/anti-bullying_policy.pdf) places the responsibility on school administrators and staff to "provide services or supports to students who engage in acts of bullying and/or harassment to educate them on the impact of these behaviors on others. Administrators should ensure that appropriate services or supports are provided to students who report

being victims of bullying or harassment” (2012). The YMS program supports the district’s call to provide services both to those who are bullied and to those who exhibit bullying behavior.

Each school within the district is required to develop a bullying prevention plan that includes designating a site administrator at each location (http://www.scusd.edu/sites/main/files/file-attachments/final_ar_5145_4-anti_bullying_accepted_00244116.pdf). Currently, the plan requires staff and administrators to report bullying and to stop bullying behavior. Every two years, faculty and staff participate in a mandatory two-hour bullying intervention and prevention training program. Similar training programs are offered to parents and guardians six times throughout the school year. The plan encourages each school to develop additional strategies to teach students to respect one another. SCUSD will be a great district to target not only for implementing YMS in an additional school, but also for transitioning to a train-the-trainer model to serve the whole district.

Expanding to private schools was discussed, but as the program is currently funded by a government grant, it does not make sense for CLA to use government resources for private purposes. Once funding is diversified, energy may be put into expanding into private schools, which may even become a revenue-generating partnership if private schools are willing to pay for the program. Additionally, because of the goal to expand statewide, moving at a district level makes more sense than expanding private school by private school. A plan could be created for Catholic schools, designed to grow by diocese rather than district, but ultimately the expansion

models would likely be very similar. For the purposes of this paper, only public schools were researched.

The Model

A pyramid model will best serve the large number of people CLA hopes to reach with the YMS program. As Figure 3 illustrates, one highly qualified trainer from CLA would teach the program to a district staff person (eventually more staff from more than one district), who would then train the selected teachers from each school, who would oversee the students in the program.

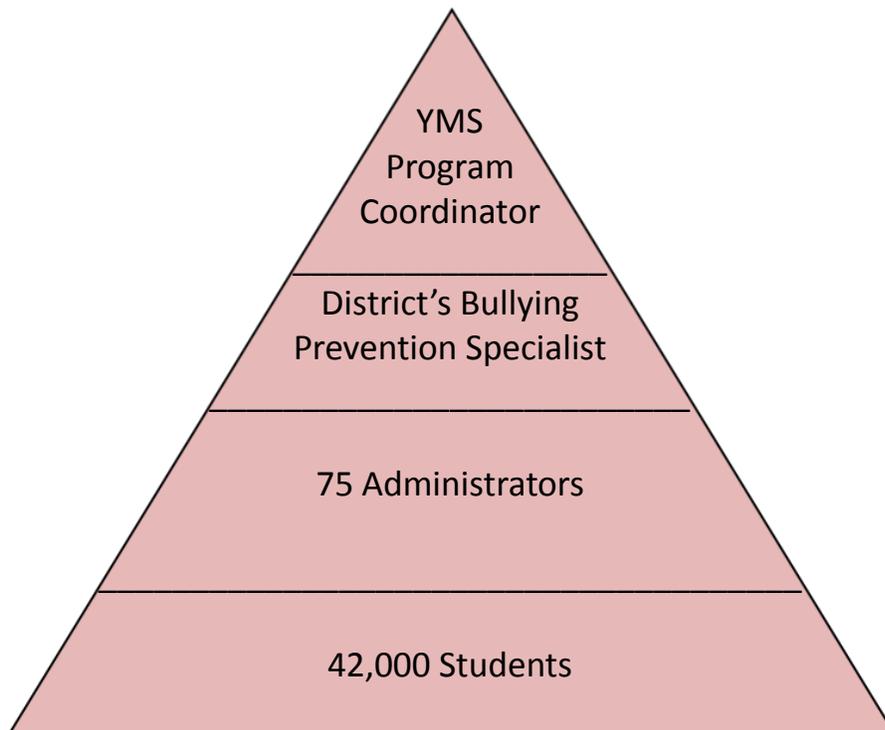
Ultimately, an online training model would be most effective for reaching the greatest number of participants, as local staff traveling statewide to lead trainings does not make sense. However, this plan will focus on creating a hands-on teacher training program within one district. As previously explained, because of its current anti-bullying programmatic structure, the Sacramento County Unified School District is an ideal example of how a train-the-trainer approach could work in Sacramento. For the purpose of this plan, SCUSD will be used as the sample school district.

Defining Positions

The lead trainer for this model would be the YMS Program Coordinator, staffed by CLA. The Program Coordinator must be a trained mediator. He or she must also adhere to all legal requirements of the school district for personnel working with students, and follow the policies and procedures of the district. The Program Coordinator is responsible for training the Bullying Prevention Specialists.

Following the mediation training, the Bullying Prevention Specialist would be qualified to lead the training sessions for the administrators. Once the program expands statewide or even county-wide, the Program Coordinator would be responsible only for training the districts' designated Bullying Prevention Specialists. However, when working with one district, the Program Coordinator could work with the Specialists to train the school administrators.

Figure 3 shows the pyramid plan that was created for the Train-the-Trainer model.



Each school within the SCUSD designates a site administrator for bullying prevention, per the district's anti-bullying policy. If there is not already a staff person designated for a given campus, school counselors are ideal candidates. These

individuals would serve as the school administrators for the YMS program. They would be responsible for leading the mediation sessions for the students, implementing the YMS curriculum, and overseeing the School Mediation Center.

Curriculum

The training sessions will occur once all the trainers are selected at each level. In addition to being trained in mediation, each level of trainer must be given the lesson plans and taught how to teach the curriculum. CLA staff will design the training sessions based on their arts-centered curriculum.

Training Evaluation

Borrowing from a model used by ArtsConnectEd which utilized a three-pronged approach (Sayre & Wetterlund, 2000), a two-pronged approach will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the YMS training sessions. First, a pre- and post-test will be administered to the trainees at each level to determine the degree to which the participants' knowledge of mediation has grown. Second, trainees will write reflections based on what they learn in each session. The results will be compiled and recommendations made to adapt the training as necessary.

The third prong used by ArtsConnectEd was having an observer present during each training session recording the effectiveness of the teaching techniques. This could be beneficial to YMS, but with the program's limited resources, it might be too much of a financial burden to staff an observer at each level of training.

Once the program is up and running in the district, regular evaluations must be completed at all levels to ensure the standardization of the curriculum and measure the effectiveness of the training.

Further assistance with evaluations can be sought when expansion is underway.

Recommendations

It is highly recommended that CLA diversifies funding. If the county ever eliminates the grant that currently funds YMS, there is currently no other option. That would mean the end of the program. A direct mail campaign is also beneficial for developing a donor base for an annual giving program.

In order to start building a database of addresses and e-mail addresses of parents at the participating schools, CLA should consider setting up a booth at Back to School Nights. That way the administrators can talk to the parents about the program and ask them for financial support. Additionally, both Will Rogers Middle School and Natomas Middle School have newsletters. Having an article in the newsletters at the beginning of the school year would be a good way to introduce the program to the students and parents. Placing ads in the newsletters throughout the year could remind parents of the work CLA is doing in their children's schools and encourage them to make donations to the YMS program. Securing funds from additional sources would allow for opportunities for growth while also providing a safety net in case other funding falls through.

With additional funding secured through fundraising efforts, CLA should develop a website for the YMS program, highlighting program details and offering resources to

students. If funding cannot be secured for this purpose, websites like Weebly.com, Wix.com, and Stikingly.com offer free domains with professional, easy-to-use templates. A link to a secure online donation page should be included on the website.

Once funding is diversified, CLA should look into marketing the program to private schools, especially because they may pay for the implementation of such a program.

CLA may want to consider organizing a complete program evaluation for the YMS program as it currently exists. The evaluation could consist of a pre- and post-test, surveying the students' knowledge of alternative conflict resolution methods before and after participating in the program. Surveys could also be distributed to teachers and school administrators to measure changes in behavior at school. Parents could fill out surveys to determine changes in behavior at home. Focus groups could be used to gather more qualitative data from the students, parents, and administrators. Additionally, a designated staff person could observe the behavior of students at the school before and after program implementation. An analysis of the resulting data could provide beneficial information about the effectiveness of the curriculum in relation to such factors as gender and age. This evaluation could also serve as proof of program success that many grants require.

It is recommended that these suggestions be implemented before any work toward the expansion begins. It is important to establish a solid funding and marketing program before attempting to grow the program much further.

Conclusion

California Lawyers for the Arts faces an exciting opportunity: to be able to expand a program that could help thousands of school children each year. In order to accomplish such a task, funding streams must be established and strengthened. Partnering with a school district like Sacramento City Unified School District will help both parties on their journeys to end school bullying. Implementing a train-the-trainer model will allow CLA to carry Youth Mediators in Schools into additional schools and benefit the community at large.

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Appendix A



Youth Mediators in Schools

Expansion Plan

Prepared by Molly Patterson in
conjunction with the University of San
Francisco School of Management

mbpatterson@dons.usfca.edu

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Executive Summary

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A school district was selected to target for the initial step of adding a school, and also serves as the model for a district-wide expansion. A train-the-trainer approach was taken to implement the program throughout the district, and could be easily expanded to encompass multiple districts.

Recommendations for additional steps the organization can take to benefit the program are also included in this plan.

Objectives

The goal of this plan is to outline feasible steps the administrators of the Youth Mediators in Schools program can take to expand the program into a third school district and to create a replicable model to expand to a full district.

Mission Statement

California Lawyers for the Arts empowers the creative community by providing education, representation and dispute resolution.

Youth Mediators in Schools establishes a school based peer mediation program in Elementary, Middle and High Schools in the Sacramento region.

Description of Program

The Youth Mediators in Schools (YMS) program teaches K-12 students a peaceful and productive approach to conflict resolution, offering a unique curriculum designed to train students in conflict resolution skills through role play, discussion, and artistic expression. A team of skilled mediation teachers train students in peer mediation techniques in coordination with school personnel. YMS reduces bullying and peer violence in schools and in the community at large.

The goals of the YMS program are to improve the social and emotional learning environments in Sacramento schools and communities, to reduce school violence, to teach students to resolve conflict, to provide skills to deal with bullies, to develop responsibility, courage and character, and to develop leadership, decision making and communication skills.

Legal Entity

YMS is a program of California Lawyers for the Arts (CLA), a statewide nonprofit organization that has been serving the creative community since 1974 by providing education, representation, and dispute resolution.

Location

CLA opened the Sacramento office in 1996 and is currently located at 2015 J Street, Suite 204, Sacramento CA 95811.

YMS is currently operating in two schools from two school districts, Will Rogers Middle School in the San Juan Unified School District and Natomas Middle School in the Natomas Unified School District.

The goal of this plan is to expand the program to a third school district, Sacramento City Unified School District, with recommendations for further, long-term expansion and the transition to a train-the-trainer model.

Why Youth Mediators in Schools?

Bullying can disrupt a child's learning. It is a perceived or real threat to his or her safety. How students treat each other, and how they respond to other students' behavior, affects their performance in the classroom as well as their actions in the community. Anti-bullying initiatives in schools play a major part in ending bullying in schools. Many anti-bullying websites, including the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services operated StopBullying.gov, suggest that students who witness bullying tell an adult right away, be nice to a bullied student, and not support bullying behavior. This is all good advice. But what if bullying never occurred in the first place?

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The curriculum gives students the skills they need to solve problems and become leaders in their schools and communities.

Expanding the Program

Sacramento City Unified School District

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Train-the-Trainer Approach

If CLA wishes to expand the YMS program to full school districts and eventually become a statewide program, it would be best to transition to a train-the-trainer model for program implementation.

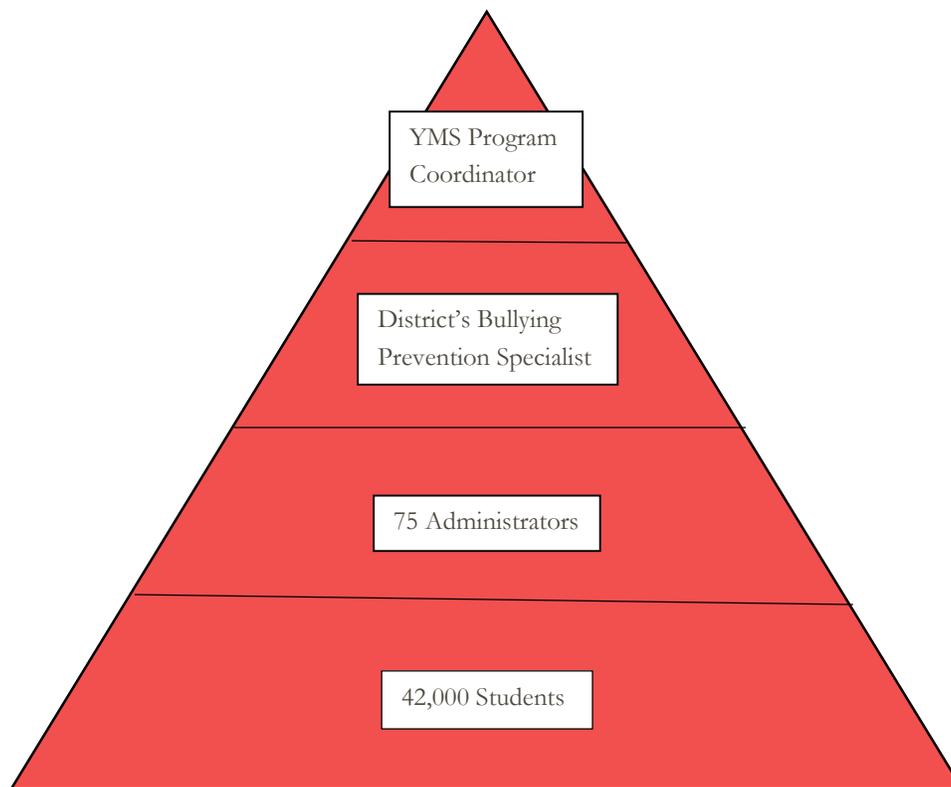


Table 1 shows the basic structure of a pyramid model for a train-the-trainer approach to expanding YMS.

A pyramid model will best serve the large number of people CLA hopes to reach with the YMS program. As Table 1 illustrates, one highly qualified trainer from CLA would teach the program to a district staff person (eventually more

staff from more than one district), who would then train the selected teachers from each school, who would oversee the students in the program.

Ultimately, an online training model would be most effective for reaching the greatest number of participants, as local staff traveling statewide to lead trainings does not make sense. However, this plan will focus on creating a hands-on teacher training program within one district. As previously explained, because of its current anti-bullying programmatic structure, the Sacramento County Unified School District is an ideal example of how a train-the-trainer approach could work in Sacramento. For the purpose of this plan, SCUSD will be used as the sample school district.

Defining Positions

The lead trainer for this model would be the YMS Program Coordinator, staffed by CLA. The Program Coordinator must be a trained mediator. He or she must also adhere to all legal requirements of the school district for personnel working with students, and follow the policies and procedures of the district. The Program Coordinator is responsible for training the Bullying Prevention Specialists.

Following the mediation training, the Bullying Prevention Specialist would be qualified to lead the training sessions for the administrators. Once the program expands statewide or even county-wide, the Program Coordinator would be responsible only for training the districts' designated Bullying Prevention Specialists. However, when working with one district, the Program Coordinator could work with the Specialists to train the school administrators.

Each school within the SCUSD designates a site administrator for bullying prevention, per the district's anti-bullying policy. If there is not already a staff person designated for a given campus, school counselors are ideal candidates. These individuals would serve as the school administrators for the YMS program. They would be responsible for leading the mediation sessions for the students, implementing the YMS curriculum, and overseeing the School Mediation Center.

Curriculum

The training sessions will occur once all the trainers are selected at each level. In addition to being trained in mediation, each level of trainer must be given the lesson plans and taught how to teach the curriculum. CLA staff will design the training sessions based on their arts-centered curriculum.

Training Evaluation

Borrowing from a model used by ArtsConnectEd which utilized a three-pronged approach (Sayre & Wetterlund, 2000), a two-pronged approach will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the YMS training sessions. First, a pre- and post-test will be administered to the trainees at each level to determine the degree to which the participants' knowledge of mediation has grown. Second, trainees will write reflections based on what they learn in each session. The results will be compiled and recommendations made to adapt the training as necessary.

The third prong used by ArtsConnectEd was having an observer present during each training session recording the effectiveness of the teaching techniques. This could be beneficial to YMS, but with the program's limited resources, it might be too much of a financial burden to staff an observer at each level of training.

Once the program is up and running in the district, regular evaluations must be completed at all levels to ensure the standardization of the curriculum and measure the effectiveness of the training.

Further assistance with evaluations can be sought when expansion is underway.

Recommendations

It is highly recommended that CLA diversifies funding. If the county ever eliminates the grant that currently funds YMS, there is currently no other option. That would mean the end of the program. A direct mail campaign is also beneficial for developing a donor base for an annual giving program.

In order to start building a database of addresses and e-mail addresses of parents at the participating schools, CLA should consider setting up a booth at Back to School Nights. That way the administrators can talk to the parents about the program and ask them for financial support. Additionally, both Will Rogers Middle School and Natomas Middle School have newsletters. Having an article in the newsletters at the beginning of the school year would be a good way to introduce the program to the students and parents. Placing ads in the newsletters throughout the year could remind parents of the work CLA is doing in their children's schools and encourage them to make donations to the YMS program. Securing funds from additional sources would allow for opportunities for growth while also providing a safety net in case other funding falls through.

With additional funding secured through fundraising efforts, CLA should develop a website for the YMS program, highlighting program details and offering resources to students. If funding cannot be secured for this purpose, websites like Weebly.com, Wix.com, and Stikingly.com offer free domains with professional, easy-to-use templates. A link to a secure online donation page should be included on the website.

CLA may want to consider organizing a complete program evaluation for the YMS program as it currently exists. The evaluation could consist of a pre- and post-test, surveying the students' knowledge of alternative conflict resolution methods before and after participating in the program. An analysis of the resulting data could provide beneficial information about the effectiveness of the curriculum in relation to such factors as gender and age. This evaluation could also serve as proof of program success that many grants require.

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