



Independent School District 625
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Saint Paul, MN 55102-3299

Office of the Superintendent
Suzanne P. Kelly
Interim Superintendent of Schools

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November 10, 2009

Rajiv R. Shah, M.D.
Chairman of the Board
ACES
1115 East Hennepin Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55414

Dear Dr. Shah:

Congratulations on the 15th anniversary of ACES. Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS) is excited to partner with ACES to increase the academic achievement of students in Saint Paul. When working with community partners, SPPS looks for organizations whose goals align best with the district's and whose activities have a positive effect on the students involved. ACES is one of those organizations, and is a model of how schools partner with community organizations to gain high academic achievement for all students.

A unique focus on the "4th grade slump" - a crucial transition point in learning - helps our most vulnerable students at a critical time in their educational development. If students fall behind in grades 4-8, it is very difficult for them to catch up once they enter high school. ACES is one of a very few organizations in the Twin Cities that focuses on academic support for these students.

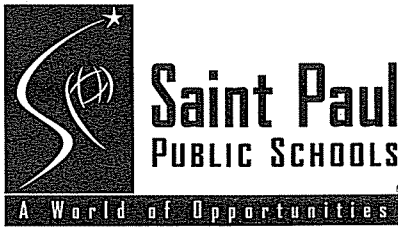
ACES academic focus extends the school day for students, and the ACES structure helps to provide students with a smooth transition from the school day to after-school time. A prime example of this is at Monroe, where Principal Unowsky has adjusted the after-school program so that all students will participate in and benefit from the ACES experience.

At SPPS, we are in the fourth year of our 2006-2011 Strategic Plan for Continued Excellence. As part of this plan, we have implemented several strategies designed to close academic achievement gaps between student groups, and build strong partnerships among students, parents, schools and the community. It is our hope that others will join us in supporting ACES in its efforts to assist the district as we work together to close the academic achievement gap of Saint Paul students. SPPS is proud to support ACES and hopes to implement the program in other schools in the district.

Regards,



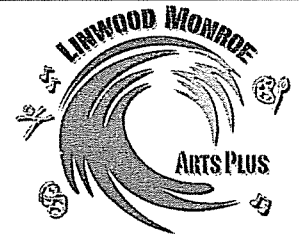
Suzanne P. Kelly



Linwood Monroe Arts Plus
Monroe Campus

810 Palace Avenue • Saint Paul, MN 55102 -3497

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November 24, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

Linwood Monroe Arts Plus is fortunate and honored to be a partner with ACES. In 2007-2008 Saint Paul Public Schools decided to merge Linwood A+ Elementary with Monroe Community School. At this time we also expanded our offerings for our students and families. The ACES program has been a willing and effective partner during this merge and during our school expansion.

Our community partner ACES works with students during school and after school to provide both academic and social support. The goal of our ACES partnership is to expand opportunities for success for all of our students and families. The specific focus of ACES is in working with our students in grades 4-8. This is particularly important as there is a drop in academic achievement that often accompanies students as they move through the intermediate grades and on to junior high.

Through ACES, the academic day is extended for students. The ACES team builds strong relationships with our students and then utilizes their time to help our students advance. One measurable outcome from our last year was that Linwood Monroe 7th and 8th grade students had the top junior high reading and math growth as measured by the MCA-2 (our state mandated testing). This type of achievement gain occurs through excellent education during the school day alongside strong after school programming. We believe that the work of our ACES program was instrumental in supporting our strong learning gains.

As a high poverty school, with over 70% of our students receiving free and reduced lunch, we look to unique ways to add value to our students' education. ACES programming is one of those valued ways that is highly thought of by our students, staff, and families. We support the ACES programming at Monroe and hope that others consider supporting ACES, specifically with its work in St. Paul Public Schools. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to personally hear supportive words regarding the ACES program.

Sincerely,

Steven Unowsky, Principal