

NELSON MANDELA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

PROPOSAL: STUDENT LIFE OFFICE – DEAN OF STUDENTS

By David Gwodziak, Ed.M.

The Nelson Mandela Student Life Office will be responsible for coordinating the extra-curricular activities program – clubs and sports. In order to meet the growing needs of a diverse student body it is essential to introduce a Student Life Office that will act as the administrative link between senior management and all parties interested in introducing on-going and new activities. Administrative duties will include managing the program, making recommendations to senior management and gaining approval to implement new activities. In addition to the organizational responsibilities of the Student Life Office, commercial fund raising and material acquisition will be initiated to expand the extra-curricular program.

It has been proposed that the Student Life Office may share office space with The Shop. Initial hours of operation being planned are Monday through Friday, 8:00 – 9:00 AM and 3:00 – 4:00 PM.

Purpose of the Student Life Office is to propagate external activities on a continuous basis and to provide proper information to parents. The office hours should be occupied in turn by representatives of the activity groups. Presently the The Shop is used only on Thursdays, 2 PM – 4 PM.

Student Life Office – Concepts in Securing the Social and Psychological Development of Young People

The social and psychological development of young people at Nelson Mandela is a very important issue. In order to meet the challenging demands in extra-curricular activities planning, Mr. Hertz and activity professionals agreed to initiating a new service that would enhance the school's commitment in maximizing activity enrichment. Successful programming design must include individual and group participation. The key to motivating young people is to get them involved. The responsibility of the Student Life Office is to coordinate a program that addresses the interests of every student and supports them in creating a sense of belonging. The passion for excellence is an invaluable lesson and the only way for young people to experience their hunger for knowledge is to guide them through the social learning process. Learning how to be part of the group in an unselfish and positive environment develops character and responsibility. Young people are highly impressionable and if their influence is negative the consequences will have long lasting detrimental effects on their educational experience. Extra-curricular activities are an important aspect in the overall psychological development of a student. Enriching their lives with a sense of belonging begins with a Student Life program. The Student Life Office is an integral component of educational development connecting students, student organizations, faculty, staff, parents and the community through a diversity of innovative and enjoyable programs, activities and events. By engaging the student and community, student activities' fosters individual and group growth, encourages the expression and appreciation of multiculturalism, cultivates leadership development and promotes life-long learning. In essence, Nelson Mandela School is taking the right approach in implementing an organized body to meet the intellectual, physical and mental health needs of their student body.

Key Program Design

Enriching young people's lives with multi-creative and multi-purpose cultural and sports activities is the Student Life Office's mission. The direction and guidance will be delivered by professionals and volunteers who have the ability to communicate effectively and responsibly. Children respond in a positive manner when they trust and respect the individual who is leading them. Constructive and enriching programs will encourage the students to want to be a member of an exciting, adventurous and welcoming Student Life Office.

Student activities range from stamp collecting to special events productions. Simply put, **Nelson Mandela Student Life Office** has something for everyone. There is no need to worry if you don't see your favorite activity on our list – just get a few friends with similar interests and launch a new club.

The Student Life Office will be responsible for coordinating, promoting and ensuring timely dissemination of information to all parties involved. A Student Life Office Weekly Calendar of events (SLO WEEK) will be posted in strategic locations and all activity up-dates will be presented in the school newsletter.

Activities & Involvement: Clubs & Sports:

Presently, the following activities are being offered - Arbeitsgemeinschaften externer Anbieter in der Nelson-Mandela- Schule 2006 -2007

Clubs:	Grade
Afrikanisches Basteln	2
Ballett	1
Chor	1 – 6
Chinesisch	2
Computer	3 – 6
Irischer Tanz	1 & 4
Leseratten	1- 6
Musikalische Früherziehung	1 – 6
Spanisch	3
Schach	2
Gitarre	4 – 6

Sport:

Aikido	1- 6
Basketball	1
Tae Kwon Do	1 - 4

Through the guidance and coordination of the Student Life Office, more activities will be generated in order to offer a full and comprehensive club and sports program for grades 1 - 6.

Future Program Development Initiatives:

Student Life Activities Fee – Program Recommendation

It is recommended that an annual Student Life Activities Fee be introduced in order to manage the extra-curricular activities program. The fee enables each student to participate in all activities offered and instructors, coaches and staff would receive stipends based on the number of students participating in their activity and/or the duties performed by staff members. The fee would support the extra-curricular program in diverse ways – purchasing equipment, materials, stipends, productions, events, etc.

For example, if each student paid a fee of Euro 200 and student enrollment is approximately 400, the annual extra-curricular activities budget would amount to Euro 80,000.

The Student Life Office Coordinator / Director or Dean of Students managing the program would be responsible for the budget and report directly to the Principal. A Student Life Office Board would be appointed to discuss and approve all expenditures and activity program budget.

Student Life Director / Dean of Students

In order to serve the organization, students and parents of Nelson Mandela School, it is recommended that a Student Life Director / Dean of Students be employed to manage the Student Life Office program. The position would also provide mental health counseling services.

The Dean of Students – Duties & Responsibilities:

Develop new opportunities for collaboration of existing partnerships with academic affairs units and among student affairs departments. Coordination will include initiating new insights into improving the access to and the convenience of the services to administration, students, parents and community projects. Directed by the Dean of Students, the synergetic thinking and collaborative team efforts of management, staff, faculty, students and parents will generate new models and approaches for the delivery of student activity programs and counseling services.

Proactively work with management and academic units in creating a comprehensive approach for identification and support of students having academic or adjustment difficulties. Refine the processes for collaboration as experience is gained and simplify the bureaucracy, in order to fully engage all participants in the visioning, planning and implementing stages.

On-site counseling services would be made available to all members of the school. No additional fees would be required by parents and/or the organization.

The Dean of Students would receive his/her stipend from the Student Life Activities Fee budget.

Counseling is an integral part of a student's development and should be viewed as an opportunity to gain support academically and socially. The counseling services offered must reflect a supportive link to the student experience.

Also, it is imperative that all referrals made by teachers regarding academic adjustment and/or discipline should be addressed through the **Student Life Office – Counseling Screening Process**. Each student should be screened by the Dean of Students at various stages throughout the school year. The majority of students spend many years with Nelson Mandela School - attending grades 1 – 12. This fact alone is evidence that student counseling and other support services, Student Life Activities – Extra-Curricular Activities Program would be effectively met through a new departmental format.

In order to fully utilize an opportunity for implementing new student services at Nelson Mandela School, the Dean of Students – Student Life Office will meet the expanding needs of our high achieving students. There is no greater tool in education than one that involves learning by participation. In order to achieve our goals as professional administrators and educators, implementing innovative learning and developmental support models will maximize the organization's effectiveness.

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