



Community Based Program

Background Information

Institution: Escuela Bolivia

Program address: 2801 Clarendon Blvd. Suite 216 Arlington, VA 22201

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Contact Person

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Title: Executive Director

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Languages/dialects taught: Spanish and English

Grades taught: Pre-K-12, Adult Classes

Program Description

Purposes and goals of the program: Our goals are to ensure the academic and career success of heritage language learners and non-native speakers of Spanish. We seek to promote and strengthen family and community bonds. We achieve these goals through providing Latino families with a supportive environment; enabling them to share their culture with others through traditional music, dance, theater, a guest speaker series, and other cultural immersion programs; providing language and cultural immersion experiences for Spanish heritage language learners; teaching students the necessary linguistic, computer, and mathematical skills that will enable them to succeed

in school, seek gainful employment, and contribute meaningfully to their family and community.

Type of program: Saturday academy, heritage language, bilingual program

Program origin: In 1998, a group of Bolivian parents met with the Superintendent of Arlington Public Schools to establish a Saturday School. That fall, to meet the needs of Arlington's growing immigrant Latino population (primarily Bolivian students) and to address the achievement gap between Latino and other students, Escuela Bolivia, Inc. was established as a 501 (c)(3) organization.

Parents

Parents' expectations for the program: Parents expect their children to increase their academic achievement through our programs, and to be involved. They expect their children to learn about and be proud of their culture and heritage. They also expect our programs to increase their children's chances of continuing on to a post-secondary institution.

Parents are very much involved in our programs. We encourage families learning together, and therefore parents are welcome into our Saturday School to learn English, Spanish, and Computer Literacy. At one point, we also offered free 1-hour instruction in Quechua. We also specifically target parents through our Family Involvement Initiative, which trains parents to become facilitators of their children's education. Parents also volunteer in the classrooms.

Staff

Instructors' and administration's expectations for the program: Staff expect our students to improve their Spanish language skills and learn about Latin American history and culture, including Bolivia's history.

Students

Students: The vast majority of our students are first- or second-generation immigrants. Approximately 60% of the students are Latino. We also serve Caucasian, Asian American, and African American children, as well as children of other immigrant groups.

The majority of our students are from Bolivia or have parents from Bolivia. Others are from Peru, Guatemala, El Salvador, Mexico, and other countries in Central and South America. We also have students whose parents are from Haiti, Asia, and other African countries.

There are 167 students currently enrolled. Students take a pre-test at the beginning of the program to assess their Spanish language proficiency.

Students' expectations of the program: In our Saturday School, students expect to participate in cultural activities and lessons, which allow them to learn Spanish and get in touch with their heritage.

Instructors

Number of instructors in the program: 9

Languages in which instructors are proficient: Spanish, English

Proficiency level: Native

Credentials: All instructors are certified teachers in the US or their country of origin.

Instruction

Total contact hours per week: 3

Example of a typical day at Escuela Bolivia:

9:00am – 10:15am Language teaching

10:15am – 10:30am Break

10:30am – 11:00am Language teaching

11:00am – 12:00pm Culture teaching

Student grouping: By grade level and by program

Language skills

Skills developed by the program: Listening, speaking, reading, and writing

Culture

Aspects of culture taught: Arts and Dance, Identity, Geography, History, and Customs

Methodologies

Methodologies and instructional strategies used in the program: Escuela Bolivia utilizes the Santillana curriculum and also a cultural curriculum that incorporates history, geography, literature, arts, music, and dance.

Materials

Other materials used for instruction: Santillana Bravo Bravo textbooks.

Assessment

Assessments used to evaluate students' progress: Weekly quizzes, chapter tests, mid-term tests, final exams, teacher's observations, and performance based-tests

Articulation

How the program develops home/school connections or promotes parent involvement: Our organization partners with Arlington Public Schools. We especially work with students at Key Elementary School and Claremont Immersion School. Our school is located in Arlington, Virginia.

What the program has in place

Financial support the program receives: Home government (e.g. embassy) – partnership support, foundation, individual donors

Other support the program receives: We receive in-kind donations from various local organizations, restaurants, the Bolivian Embassy, and other individuals.

Special Challenges

Challenges the program has experienced: Like any organization, we face challenges in funding and also do not have our own building. While we are fortunate to partner with the school, at this time we can only provide services on Saturdays.