

Higher Ground Youth Center Fact Sheet

Higher Ground's after-school program in Wakefield Middle School provides social-emotional learning (SEL) and skills building for at-risk youth in TUSD and Tucson community. This youth center has strong partnerships with TUSD schools such as Hollinger K-8 with majority of its students coming from principal and school referrals. In addition to after school programming, staff from Higher Ground goes to regular meetings with school principals, teachers, and other staff members to provide additional support to students ranging from in school mentoring, SEL techniques, family support, and school staff support all at no cost to TUSD.

Monday through Friday, students participate in homework help, archery, art, basketball, boxing, coding, dance, digital design, drumline, jiu-jitsu, judo, music, outside sports, and robotics--all at no cost to the family. Based on research by Dr. Adele Diamond and Dr. Angela Duckworth, our student activities are used as a delivery mechanism to teach communication, creative problem solving, emotion management, mindfulness, self-control, and Grit in an environment of social inclusion and belonging.

The Need:

- 84% On free or reduced Lunch
- 73% Have experienced 1+ traumatic events
- 67% Come from dysfunctional families
- 61% Have parents who did not complete high school

The Higher Ground Difference

- 97% Student satisfaction
- 97% Parent satisfaction
- 90% Retention rate over 3 years
- 84% Learned grit and self-control
- 83% More physically active
- 81% Improved perseverance skills
- 80% Improved grades
- 80% Gained better control of their emotions
- 70% Experienced taking on a leadership role