

OVERVIEW

School District: Orange County Public Schools (OCPS)

City: Orlando, Florida

Orange County Public Schools (OCPS), currently the 11th largest school district in the nation, places an intense focus on student achievement. The district, which continues to increase in size annually, served more than 180,000 students in the greater Orlando metropolitan area in 2009. OCPS currently provides some form of before- and after-school childcare and education to students in its approximately 120 elementary schools.

Challenge

OCPS has a reputation for providing every child with a quality education and works hard to bridge learning gaps using a variety of techniques. In 2008, OCPS issued a request for proposal. The district was looking for vendors to provide extended student care and education services on school campuses before and after school. OCPS wanted programs to be safe, offer developmentally appropriate learning environments and meet the highest quality standards. Programs that offered quality enrichment and academic intervention components were a top priority. Providers selected also needed to be capable of servicing an extremely large district and be able to co-exist with other vendors and self-operated programs.

Programs Used (2008 – 2010)

- Champions® Extended Learning before- and after-school program has been used in nine elementary schools since the 2008-2009 school year.
- Champions programs offered academic intervention through its reading tutoring program in seven elementary schools during the 2008-2009 school year. Academic intervention was offered in nine elementary schools during the 2009-2010 school year.
- Champions summer camp programs are slated to begin in June 2010.

ACADEMIC TUTORING AND QUALITY ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS HELP SCHOOL DISTRICT BRIDGE LEARNING GAPS

Student achievement is a top priority for Orange County Public Schools (OCPS) in Orlando, Florida. The district strives to bridge learning gaps for all students in all its schools.

In 2008, OCPS issued a request for proposal for before- and after-school student care providers. Because of its concentration on student achievement, the district wanted to find providers who offered both quality enrichment and academic improvement components in their after-school programs.

The district was looking for programs that would do more than just provide supervision for students. OCPS wanted extended day programs with opportunities for academic enrichment and a place where students who needed help could improve academically.

As the 11th largest district in the nation, OCPS needed providers capable of servicing such a large district. The providers also would need to be able to comfortably co-exist with other vendors and self-operated programs in the district.

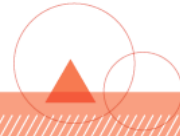
Champions® programs were able to meet the needs of OCPS and add value in the area of academic enrichment and improvement. Champions was one of five companies out of a pool of 14, approved to serve students in the district. School principals are able to operate their own extended day program, or choose one of the five providers to run an extended day program at their school.

The academic enrichment and intervention advantage

Because of its robust program and experience in providing remedial academic tutoring, Champions programs are able to enhance the school district's mission of bridging the learning gap and helping every student reach his or her intellectual, creative and social potential.

Champions® Extended Learning programs are packed with innovative, high-quality curriculum and activities that are inspiring and fun for preschool, kindergarten and students in grades one through six. Options for kids include five mind-expanding activity areas and a quiet area that enables students to read and complete homework.

In addition to enrichment opportunities, Champions also offer academic intervention. "If students enrolled in Champions Extended Learning program are identified by the school as performing below grade level, we provide a pre-test and post-test to assess skills, identify learning needs and measure growth as part of our academic program," explained Cathy Brown, Director of Partnership Development, Champions.



Results

- The academic intervention and enrichment components of Champions® Extended Learning program have helped further Orange County Public School (OCPS) district's goal of placing an intense focus on student achievement.
- During the 2008-2009 school year, Champions academic tutoring program served 163 OCPS students in grades one through five at seven schools. The academic gains in reading totaled 112 scale score points.
- The Champions academic intervention program was delivered at no cost to the district.
- The entire Champions Extended Learning program served 750 students in nine district elementary schools during the 2008-2009 school year.
- Students in Champions Extended Learning gained structured time to complete homework, supervised and assisted by highly qualified teachers.
- Champions programs has offered 80 scholarships for families in need since the program started
- Representatives from Champions served as PTA/PTSA members at all sites.
- Champions supported families by providing alternative student care solutions during school closures and offered free registration options.
- OCPS staff had access to discounts for Champions programs for their own children.
- Despite an overall decline in school enrollment in the district, Champions programs were able to increase total enrollment by five percent.

Since 2008, the academic intervention component has consisted of tutoring in reading for OCPS elementary school students in the Champions programs who met the criteria. "Each lesson in this program is designed to address the specific skill gaps of students struggling in reading through curriculum that is systematic, intensive and explicit," noted Brown.

OCPS students enrolled in Champions academic tutoring during the 2008-2009 school year made significant academic gains. Champions programs served a total of 163 students in grades one through five with academic gains in Reading of 112 scale score points. What's more, the academic intervention program was delivered at no cost to OCPS.

Programs exceed expectations

Paige Tracy has been the principal at Arbor Ridge School for eight years. In 2008, she had the option of continuing her school's self-operated extended day program or choosing one of the district's approved providers.

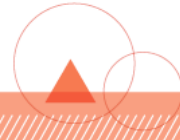
"Our self-operated extended day program was deteriorating and I decided to look into outsourcing," said Tracy. "Our program didn't have enough quality academic enhancements, parent complaints were increasing and we were losing money big time."

Tracy, who had participated in the district's RFP process, interviewed each of the five authorized companies. "Hands down, Champions was the winner," recalled Tracy. "I liked everything Champions had to offer and was impressed by the professionalism of their presentation and representatives."

In addition to the academic enrichment program available to all elementary school students, Champions also offered individualized lessons for students in grades three through five at Arbor Ridge who met certain criteria. "Champions has a huge academic intervention capability and our partnership is working out very well," stressed Tracy. "The academic intervention program offers the right support, help and assistance to students who need it most."

What impressed Tracy was that Champions was the only provider that absolutely, positively could bring academic intervention and tutoring to the table. "They had a plan in place on how to assess students performing below grade level and measure growth."

After one and a half years of using the Champions program, Tracy vouched that they have done everything they said they would do, and more. "Champions is always attuned to our student population and the needs of our school."



“Champions® academic intervention program offers the right support, help and assistance to students who need it most.”

Paige Tracy

Principal

Arbor Ridge School

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Tracy noted that Champions offered benefits that other programs couldn't match. For example, Champions was able to support Arbor Ridge School's exceptional student population (students with disabilities) and had enough trained personnel and resources to be able to start the extended day program right away.

Champions also promised that program fees would be comparable to what parents were paying in the former program. According to Tracy, that was the case from the start, and prices have remained very reasonable.

“I felt confident that Champions would be able to offer our school a quality program and qualified, trained personnel,” said Tracy. “They have lived up to all these commitments and have kept class size small and fees reasonable.” She added, “Champions is exceeding my expectations – it's all positive and there have been no disappointments.”

Stacey Merritt, principal at Union Park Elementary School in OCPS, chose Champions programs to replace the self-operated extended day program at her school. “I've been very impressed with the staff and the program,” said Merritt. “It gives our children a lot of opportunities with study time, free play and different activity stations.”

The academic components and homework assistance offered by Champions were important reasons why Merritt chose Champions. “I didn't want a provider who just was a babysitter,” she noted.

Merritt reported that Champions staff is well trained and very student-oriented. “Champions is in sync with our philosophy of making all our decisions on what is best for our students. I've been very happy with them.”

The Champions programs continue to thrive in the 2009-2010 school year. Despite an overall decline in school enrollment, Champions was able to increase total enrollment by five percent.

About Champions

Champions, formerly known as KLC School Partnerships, is the nation's leading provider of extended learning, enrichment and targeted academic intervention solutions that address specific school and community needs. Its customized education programs include Champions Extended Learning™ before and after school programs; Champions Academy™ reading and math tutoring; and Champions Science Adventures™ hands-on science camps and after school clubs for school-age children. Together, these initiatives are offered at more than 650 sites in 20 states, serving nearly 55,000 students annually. Champions is a division of Knowledge Learning Corporation, the nation's largest early childhood and school-age education and care provider. Champions' main office is located in Littleton, Colorado.