

Lights Are On After School!

Three o'clock might bring the end of the school day, but the lights burn bright until 4:30 in several rooms at MOE and CMS where students are busily engaged in Afters activities. Both academic and enrichment activities are offered in Afters. Afters is free of charge to participants, a snack is served, and transportation is provided for all Afters activities.

TARGET Afters:

Chelan's Academic Afters program, *TARGET Afters*, is designed to help students meet standards in core academic subjects. Students in 1st through 8th grade are referred to *TARGET Afters* by teachers and /or parents for hands-on assistance in reading or math. Over 250 students are involved in *TARGET Afters*: Two hundred students participate at MOE and 50 at CMS. Thirty-four different groups of students attend two days per week, September through May. Students work hard in *TARGET Afters*, and their work is paying off! According to Lesley Van Over, Program Director, statistics show that the program is helping kids exceed the academic growth of their grade level peers at MOE and CMS in standardized tests and is improving their grades at most levels.

Imagine Learning Afters:

Students who speak English as a second language are given a boost in understanding and speaking English through the *Imagine Learning Afters* program. Over 70 students practice language skills during Afters using in this interactive computer-based program. Students learn both basic and academic vocabulary, including valuable words common to social studies, science, and math. Classroom teachers can access reports that show them where students have made improvements and where to focus additional instruction.

Afters Enrichment:

This fall, students explored everything from science to art in the 31 *Afters Enrichment* classes at MOE and CMS. MOE students tried their hand at 27 different classes such as Marimba Band, Ooey Goopy Science, Clay /Ceramics /Collage, Sewing or Chess Club. One exciting partnership sends MOE students to Regency Manor to do crafts with residents. "This is a win-win-situation," according to Debbie Housley, who facilitates the class with Dani McCrady from Regency Manor. "Regency Manor supplies the crafts and instructor, which allows Afters to make this opportunity available to kids each session." On average, 100 MOE students attend Afters Enrichment each day.

At CMS this fall, *Afters Enrichment* classes gave students a chance to develop new skills and make new friends. Students took Photography, Bowling or Junior Chef. An average of 12 students attended Afters Enrichment each day at CMS.

Afters Enrichment classes are offered in six week sessions. They are often taught by community members. Registrations are sent home two weeks prior to classes and students prioritize their class choices. Every effort is made to give students at least one class of their choice.

Jeff Peck, MOE Principal, believes that *Afters Enrichment* is important for students for several reasons: 1) Afters builds positive, meaningful relationships with school and

caring adults, 2) Afters activities build confidence /self-esteem and can teach planning, decision-making and problem-solving skills, 3) Afters allows students to explore new activities and develop new skills.

Van Over says there are many things that community members can do to support the Afters program. Community members could:

- Volunteer in the Afters program – whether to read with kids, teach them a craft or help with logistics
- Advocate for community and school policies and funding that will continue to make Afters available to children and increase these opportunities for Chelan youth.
- Build business partnerships with the Afters program - give time or dollars to help operate these quality programs
- Include Afters in ongoing discussions of community improvement

Afters classes are jointly funded by the 21st Century Community Learning Center grant and by Lake Chelan School District levy funds. MOE PTA, WSU Extensions of Chelan and Douglas County, Regency Manor, Columbia Valley Community Health and the Army Corp of Engineers are also program partners.

There will be another *Afters Enrichment* session offered at MOE from February 7 through March 24 and April 18 through May 5 followed by Missoula Children's Theater from May 9 – 14. TARGET Afters is ongoing through May 5.

Community members who have program ideas or are interested in participating are invited to call Lesley Van Over, Program Director, at 682-4031, extension 310.