



Delivering

4-H in Schools

A fact sheet on integrating 4-H into your school

The Benefits on the 4-H and School Partnership:

North Carolina schools are being inundated with change: new expectations for what youth should learn, new technologies for delivering instruction, new proposals for how to define and govern public schools. North Carolina has the fourth fastest growing enrollment in public school systems in the country. Students enter the system speaking more than 180 languages (Action for Children North Carolina, 2008).

4-H understands that all youth need to acquire 21st Century Literacy . . . the ability to read, write, and compute with competence; think analytically; adapt to change; work in teams; and use technology. Learning 21st century skills, enhancing the standard course of study, and providing opportunities for youth to grow personally and further connect to their communities are just some of the benefits 4-H offers schools.

4-H partners with schools in an effort to engage students. Through these partnerships with schools, students enhance their ability to self-regulate and their ability to define their own learning goals and evaluate their own achievement.

Delivering 4-H in Schools:

When working with schools, we have three delivery options: School Enrichment, Special Interest, and Clubs. Each delivery strategy provides opportunities for the development of essential life skills. Each delivery strategy has specific characteristics that can adapt to different lengths of commitment for youth as well as volunteers.

1. School Enrichment:

4-H has a variety of curricula that have been designed to develop essential life skills in alignment with the NC standard course of study. Along with personal learning benchmarks, the curricula align with specific objectives of grade level standards. 4-H offers training to school professionals on the curricula and can provide materials to support the classroom lessons. Teachers teach the lessons while the 4-H professional provides support to ensure a positive learning experience.

2. Special Interest:

4-H has a wide variety of opportunities for youth both in and out of the classroom. Special Interest programs offer a minimum of six hours of content-specific programming, giving youth an opportunity to experience 4-H before making a decision to commit to long-term club work. All Special Interest participants are considered 4-H'ers, no matter what the special interest subject or delivery format. In addition to the curricula that support the standard course of study, there are also curricula that support short-term learning experiences. From Food and Nutrition to lessons on leadership and civic engagement, 4-H offers a large selection of opportunities that can be adapted to help grow your formal as well as non-formal learning experiences.

3. Clubs:

The 4-H club experience provides an opportunity to explore content while building skills such as responsibility, citizenship, and leadership. 4-H clubs are offered in schools as well as in the community and are led by 4-H volunteers. Within the school setting, teachers can advise 4-H clubs that meet during scheduled class time or outside of school hours.

The 4-H club plan can be built around specific subject matter (science clubs, drama clubs) or can work specifically on community service and outreach. 4-H clubs follow specific guidelines and are required to obtain a charter. Local 4-H professionals provide training and support to develop clubs and to assist with 4-H club work. *(Continued on next page.)*



In-School Clubs:

A 4-H club that meets during the school day, meets NC 4-H Charter requirements with at least one school staff member, volunteer led and utilizes 4-H Curriculum.

* Logistics

- In-school clubs can operate in several ways. Clubs can meet during school-designated club time, during class time, or before and/or after school.
- 4-H Clubs that operate on school grounds are covered by school liability.
- All 4-H In-school clubs must meet the NC 4-H chartering guidelines and operate on the NC club year of October 1 through September 30. Clubs that will not be re-chartering each year must submit the appropriate paperwork to the 4-H county professional before disbanding.
- 4-H Volunteers must complete the application process. If the volunteer leader is a paid school staff member, he or she does not need to have an additional background check through 4-H. School professionals acting as 4-H volunteers must provide a letter from school administration stating that the volunteer's background check has been conducted, the date the check was conducted, and that there are no infractions.

The 4-H & School Partnership:

Working together, schools can benefit from myriad resources available through local 4-H professionals and their connection to NC State University. From curriculum kits to participation in local, district, and state 4-H activities, youth engaged in 4-H have a wide range of opportunities available. The local 4-H professional will provide training and resources to implement the program. We hope that once involved, youth will be encouraged to participate in all that the world of 4-H has to offer. The specific opportunities available locally depend upon your local 4-H program.

Becoming a 4-H Volunteer:

Volunteers are critical to the success of 4-H clubs and activities. For in-school programming, we can operate with several different models of volunteer involvement to successfully and efficiently manage 4-H participation. Teachers, teacher assistants, counselors, or other school employees may participate in training to become 4-H volunteers. In other models, community volunteers who are carefully screened through the 4-H volunteer application, may come into the school to work with school personnel in offering 4-H programming. County youth development professionals are prepared to help school personnel design a volunteer system appropriate for local, unique needs.



Getting Started:

Does 4-H programming sound like a fit for your school? Contact your local 4-H professional to learn more about developing an implementation strategy to bring these outstanding learning experiences into your school system. Together, we can contribute to an optimal learning environment for your students.



For more information, please contact your local 4-H representative.

Did You Know?

Compared to other youth, 4-H'ers excel and are:

- 25% more likely to contribute to their families, themselves, and their communities;
- More likely to see themselves going to college; 41% less likely to engage in risk/problem behavior; and
- When assessed on life skill development, achieve higher scores on goal setting and goal management.

The 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development also shows that youth involved in high quality, structured out-of-school programs are more likely to develop the "five C's" (competence, confidence, character, caring and connection). With these assets and as their participation in 4-H programs increase, they are more likely to make the highest levels of contributions in their communities.

Results from *Waves of the Future, Positive Youth Development research study, Lerner, R. (2009).*

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