



River Forest
Public Schools

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March 3, 2021

Dear Parent/Caregiver,

I am contacting you today to inform you about a complementary learning program for which your child is eligible. River Forest District 90 and the West Cook YMCA are collaborating in a partnership to provide selected students from District 90 with a research-based, immersive summer learning program sponsored by the YMCA of the USA, entitled “Power Scholars Academy.” We are excited to share that this year, the program will be offered in District 90. The program is intended for students who may benefit from the academic “boost” that can occur by participating in additional summer learning experiences.

The Power Scholars Academy will be offered for five weeks during the summer of 2021 for up to 40 qualifying students from River Forest. The program will serve rising 1st-4th graders and will take place at Roosevelt Middle School. The program will be held for five weeks on Monday–Friday (8:30 am - 3:00 pm) beginning on June 21 and ending on July 23, 2021. Programming will be provided for 6.5 hours at no cost to the family and will include lunch, and a combination of virtual and in-person field trips. The YMCA will also make available extended care for families that need additional programming to 5:00 pm.

Modeled on the BELL (Building Educated Leaders for Life) summer learning program, each day will include segments of time dedicated to literacy instruction, math instruction, community building, recreation, and enrichment activities. Teachers will be certificated and licensed, and efforts will be made to source them initially from River Forest. The curriculum is based squarely upon the Illinois Learning Standards, uses Fountas and Pinnell assessments to monitor and assess student progress over time, and is based on the Eight Standards of Mathematical Practice. In addition, the ancillary books that will be used are a strong complement for our students’ current literacy instruction. Students will also have the chance to keep the reading resources that are provided.

If you are interested in having your child participate in the Power Scholars Academy summer learning program, please complete the online registration by clicking this [link](#). Please review the attached materials that will share some background about the program, how it is structured, and how it can help students strengthen their academic skills in preparation for the future. If you have any immediate questions, please feel free to contact Christine Gerges, Elementary Assistant Principal, at gergesc@district90.org. I hope that you will find this program to be a positive opportunity for your child and family!

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ed Condon".

Ed Condon, Ph.D.
Superintendent
Enc.



CONGRATULATIONS!

YOU'RE INVITED!

Your child has been selected to participate in Power Scholars Academy™, a program collaboration between the West Cook YMCA, District 90, and BellXcel.

**POWER SCHOLARS ACADEMY | A SUMMER LEARNING PROGRAM
WEST COOK YMCA**



REACHING YOUR CHILD'S FULL POTENTIAL

Power Scholars Academy™ is a five-week summer learning program run in partnership with West Cook YMCA, District 90, and Building Educated Leaders for Life (BELL). This program is designed to help advance students' academic achievement through a full-day summer experience that combines small group, rigorous literacy and math instruction, with hands-on enrichment activities, field trips, and service projects. Power Scholars Academy™ will help your child discover their inner scholar.

FIND THE GENIUS WITHIN

WHY MY CHILD?

Your child has been selected by your school to participate in this amazing experience based on his/her current academic need. At the Y, we believe students need equal access to necessary resources to realize their potential. With the support of our community, this summer experience will help your child be successful at school and beyond.

DOES IT REALLY WORK?

On average, 75% of youth who participate in this program across the nation maintain or gain reading and math skills through the course of the summer. Check out our impact report on the following pages from the 2019 summer session.

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?

This program is offered at no cost to you. You must commit to the following items in order to participate:

- Students are required to attend the program every day. He/she may not miss more than 2 days throughout the course of the 5-week program. If your child must miss more than 2 days, he/she is not permitted to participate.
- Parents/caregivers should read with their child for at least 30 minutes each night
- Parents/caregivers must attend the Parent Information Night.
- Parents/caregivers must attend the Closing Ceremonies event during the last week of the program.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU AND YOUR CHILD THIS SUMMER!

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the West Cook YMCA Youth Development Department at 708-657-0701 or powerscholars@westcookymca.org.

REGISTER HERE BY APRIL 9:

westcookymca.org/psa-register

VIRTUAL PARENT INFO NIGHT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PROGRAM & MEET THE STAFF

Thursday, April 22nd at 6:30 pm Link to Zoom to follow

POWER SCHOLARS ACADEMY DATES & TIMES:

Monday-Friday	8:30 am – 9 am	Community Time
June 21-July 23	9 am- 12 pm	Academic Instruction
	12 pm- 1 pm	Lunch/Recess
	1 pm- 3 pm	Enrichment Activities
	3 pm –5 pm	Extended Care (cost applies)



2019 SUMMER IMPACT REPORT

POWER SCHOLARS ACADEMY
THE WEST COOK YMCA IN
PARTNERSHIP WITH D90 & D91

86

GRADE K-5
SCHOLARS

5

WEEKS

5

DAYS PER
WEEK

+1

AVERAGE MONTHS
GAINED IN MATH

0

MONTHS LOSS
IN LITERACY

92%

ADA

37.5

HOURS OF
MATH

37.5

HOURS OF
LITERACY

256

HOURS OF
PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT



Program Goals

- Increase literacy and math skills
- Strengthen self-confidence, social emotional learning
- Increase parent engagement
- Build a stronger connection with schools and the community

88%

of parents reported an increase in their eagerness to learn



Enrichment courses foster critical 21st Century skills like teamwork and leadership, increase self-confidence, and expose scholars to new subjects, opportunities, and career paths. Scholars rotated through the following courses:

Art | Reader's Theater | Dance | Music | Spanish | Cake Decorating



100%

of teachers said scholars exhibited growth mindset



Field Trips & Community Engagement

Field trips, special events, and guest speakers supported learning by exposing scholars to diverse ideas, people, places, and opportunities while nurturing increased tolerance and critical thinking skills.

Experiences included:

Brookfield Zoo
Field Museum
Adler Planetarium
PSA Open House
Closing Ceremony



Financial Supporters

River Forest School District 90
West Cook YMCA
John G. Symons Trust Charities
BellXcel



The 2019 Rising 5th grade class showed enthusiasm and excitement as they collaborated and learned throughout the Power Scholars Academy." PSA Educator