

August 9, 2019

# 2018-2019 Program Report

## Horizons at San Francisco Friends School

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### Introduction

Horizons at SFFS' free six-week summer program is specially designed to curtail summer learning loss for Mission neighborhood public school children from low-income families. Horizons builds on these students' strengths and supports their confidence, motivation, and skills, thus increasing the odds they will achieve at grade level, graduate from high school, and complete a college degree. From kindergarten through eighth grade, Horizons students benefit from a 5:1 student/staff ratio and exciting project-based learning opportunities led by experienced, inspiring public and private school educators. Like our students, most staff and many volunteers are bilingual in Spanish. Our instructional program focuses on reading, math, and hands-on science, with social and emotional learning woven throughout the curriculum. Our students' favorite activity is swimming, and every student takes 2-3 lessons per week at local pools. In addition, students enthusiastically participate in arts and athletic enrichment activities and a wide range of field trips throughout the summer. During the school year, we hold six

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different learning activities for the whole community to keep Horizons' students and families connected with the program and with one another.

Horizons at San Francisco Friends School's sixth summer was filled with learning, new challenges and exciting opportunities! We welcomed a new class of Kindergarteners and celebrated our first middle school class of rising 6th Graders. These youth bounded through the gates of the San Francisco Friends School each morning of our six-week summer program eager to see their friends and start learning. We owe this success to Horizons' staff, volunteers, partners, and families; to the San Francisco Friends School for hosting the program; and to each and every one of the program's donors who make Horizons at SFFS possible with their participation and generous support.



## Program Highlights

Horizons at SFFS' 2019 program gave us a lot to be proud of.

**It was our biggest summer yet and our first year of middle school.** We added one new first grader, one new second grader, one new fourth grader, two new fifth graders, and a kindergarten class of 17. This brought our total number of students served from 84 to 100, all of whom attend local public or public charter schools during the school year. 94% of our students are Hispanic, 4% African American, and 2% Pacific Islander. 100% qualify for free/reduced price lunch and two thirds are performing below grade level academically when they enter the program. With our founding class of students entering middle school this fall, Horizons' staff conducted extensive research on best practices for summer programming throughout the 2018-19 year and we implemented much of what we learned into the 2019 summer program.

**A dedicated team** of 21 qualified, enthusiastic and diverse public and private school educators plus 15 high school volunteers provided Horizons' students with high-quality instruction, individualized attention, and a 5-to-1 student-staff ratio. 30% of the program's teachers were Hispanic, and 47% were bilingual in Spanish and English. Roughly 60% of our teachers will teach at public schools and 40% at independent schools during the upcoming year. About half of the staff from Summer 2018 returned in 2019, and two former volunteers became staff members this year as well.

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**Our students received hands-on, project-based, and culturally responsive reading, writing, math and science instruction** from experienced teachers for an average of 3 hours each day, making Horizons unique among local summer programs for our academic focus. Students with the greatest academic need benefited from individual and small group sessions with two on-staff reading specialists.

**Elective classes enriched students' learning experience.** Photography, coding, chess, cooking, drama, art, and chorus were some of the exciting opportunities students had in their elective classes. Through these classes, students had a chance to learn new skills, explore new disciplines, and express themselves in new ways. Students displayed their work and performed for families and friends at Horizons' annual Back to Program Night and End of Program Celebration.

**Students showcased their hard work and learning.** On Horizons' last day, parents and community members were invited to celebrate summer learning together. Kindergarten students answered questions about the insects they had researched and displayed the elaborate habitats they had constructed. First graders knit a community quilt that included their art and personal narratives. At the second grade exhibition, guests got to taste dishes and browse family recipe books made by students. Visitors to the third grade enjoyed a meditation room, musical performance, and multimedia graphic novels; all centered around the study of sound. In the fourth grade visitors were invited to interact with Rube Goldberg machines and learn about the history of these whimsical machines. For Horizons' 5th graders, their 6-week photography adventure with First Exposures included a trip to a dark room, pin hole cameras, street photography, and portraits of an important person in their lives. They exhibited these portraits in the SFFS art gallery, along with a writing project exploring identity, connection, and the stories of the people who have shaped their lives.



**We expanded our field trip offerings.** Horizons students have always enjoyed weekly field trips to local institutions such as the Exploratorium, Academy of Sciences, Roxie Theater, and the San Francisco Zoo. However, this year with a broader range of ages in the program, we added several trips, including a photography exhibit at the Jewish Contemporary Museum, outdoor education at Pt. Bonita, and a ropes course at Fort Miley. Our oldest students took risks and challenged themselves kayaking in Sausalito, and our second and third graders went climbing at Mission Cliffs. Our fifth graders had the amazing opportunity to see *Hamilton* at the Orpheum Theatre. These trips exposed our

students to new experiences and possibilities, developed their vocabulary, and inspired an attitude of curiosity and excitement about learning and the world around them.

*"The most important thing I have learned at Horizons is to have confidence and to be kind."*

*- 2019 5th Grade Student*



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**Our students shared their stories and built connections.** Many activities, both in and out of the classroom, revolved around our 2019 theme: “Sharing Stories, Building Bridges.” We encouraged our students to share their life experiences in the classroom, reflect on the important role they play in their communities, solve problems together, and build connections across grade levels. Through their art, projects, essays, and buddy relationships our students created a program culture that was fun, safe, and welcoming to all.

**Professional development** enabled our staff to make the most of the program’s six weeks. The week prior to the start of the program included workshops, team building activities, a visit to UCSF’s Science Resource Center, and prep time. Weekly staff and volunteer meetings throughout the program provided a forum to share best instructional practices and communicate about students’ progress, needs, and upcoming events. In 2019, the staff also set time aside each week for goal setting, observation, feedback and coaching by experienced educators in literacy, math, science, and classroom management.

**Volunteers provided invaluable support.** In addition to two teachers, each classroom had one or two full-time high school volunteers, the majority SFFS alums, who served as mentors, role models, teachers, and friends to our students. Over Two thirds of these high school volunteers were returning from last summer, and this summer they served a total of 1,827 hours. SFFS faculty and staff also volunteered to teach cooking and art to our kindergartners. Community members visited every week as “mystery readers” in our K-3rd Grade classrooms.



*“Swim Lessons and field trips that push kids to practice bravery and perseverance were incredibly fun and so valuable for their personal growth. Over the past two summers, Horizons has become such an important part of my life, thanks to the amazing families and staff involved.” - 2019 volunteer*

**Horizons at SFFS’ year-round activities** helped families stay connected and learning all year long. Throughout the 2018-2019 school year, Horizons organized and hosted six Saturday family learning and enrichment activities, including a trip to make bread, plant trees and explore the tidepools at Slide Ranch, math games for students, a bilingual workshop about parents’ role in helping their children develop a healthy relationship with technology, and two joint Horizons/SFFS events. Horizons at SFFS also actively sought out parent feedback and input on the program’s strategic direction and future growth.



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## Parent and Community Engagement

Horizons at SFFS continues to create a powerful sense of community, providing opportunities for connection across grade levels, between families and staff, and among our students, staff, families, volunteers, partners, and supporters. The program's strong, positive partnerships with families is reflected by a 93% student retention from 2018, a 97% attendance rate in 2019, and high levels of parent engagement, participation, and satisfaction.



**Horizons families were active partners in the program,** chatting with the program's staff each day during drop off and pick up, reading with their children, watching swim lessons, and chaperoning field trips. 100% of our families attended our Back to Program event and final Student Showcase.

**A robust schedule of visitors,** including funders, community partners, and SFFS faculty and staff, allowed our community to experience the magic of a Horizons summer for themselves. 40 board members, parents, and other guests read with our

students and heard a panel of parent speakers during our sixth annual Visitors Day, and many others came by to see the program during weekly tours and classroom read alouds.

**Our program is strengthened by our collaboration with San Francisco Friends School.** SFFS is our primary partner and fiscal sponsor, and as such provides substantial in-kind facilities, operational, and administrative support. Of Horizons' 21 board members, three are SFFS administrators and five are SFFS parents, while the rest represent a variety of organizations and professional affiliations in the Bay Area. Those SFFS faculty and staff who were in the building over the summer loved seeing Horizons' kids' smiling faces and positive energy each day.

**Horizons' three partner public schools** are the Mission Preparatory School, Marshall Elementary, and Buena Vista Elementary. Administrators and teachers at each school work together to identify and refer children and families to the Horizons program, supply academic and attendance data, and provide us with feedback. When they can, they visit Horizons during the summer as mystery readers and guests.

**SF Recreation and Parks, the San Francisco Boys & Girls Club, and the Chinatown YMCA provided swim instruction and support for our students and families.** Kindergarten through second grade students swam at Mission Pool for the sixth summer in a row, our third and fourth grade students learned to swim at the Don Fisher Clubhouse's competition-size swimming pool, and our fifth graders had recreational swim time at the Chinatown YMCA. We are lucky to have supportive partners in our community to provide swimming opportunities for our students! Through our partnership with the Columbia Park Boys and Girls Club, we were also able to provide aftercare every afternoon to students whose parents were working.

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**We are grateful for the strength of our ongoing and new community partnerships.** UCSF's Science and Health Education Partnership loaned materials for our hands-on science program and our partnership with the Bay Area Teacher Training Program facilitated the hiring of qualified educators in training as the program's assistant teachers. Horizons at SFFS was once again selected by San Francisco's Department of Children, Youth, and Their Families to receive a nutritious lunch and snack from Revolution Foods at no cost as part of the city's summer meals program. Our students benefited from music instruction provided by an experienced choral instructor from the SF Community Music Center, dance classes led by Ms. Nagata of Nagata Dance, and kayaking trips through Environmental Travelling Companions. And new community partnerships with First Exposures, David Flores, and Bytes for Bits opened the door to high quality photography, chess, and coding classes for our students.

## **Funding Updates**

**Horizons participated in the Fundraising Bright Spots 2018/19 cohort training program.** This high quality professional development opportunity offered through CompassPoint Nonprofit Services allowed the staff and board to develop, share, and implement new ideas and systems based on progressive fundraising principles and best practices. During the year, we improved integration of Horizons' data and communications systems, established more personalized outreach to and stewardship of funders, and substantially increased in the amount of money raised from grants and events.

### **We met our revenue targets in every area, raising almost \$600,000 from diverse sources**

We received several substantial foundation grants, such as \$15,000 from the Warriors Foundation, \$10,000 from Gilead Sciences, \$10,000 from the Saunders Family Charitable Fund, \$10,000 from Farallon Capital Management, and \$7,500 from the Ross Stores Foundation. We continued to raise awareness for the program both within and outside of the SFFS community, and individual donations provided almost 55% of our operating revenue this year. Our total fundraising in 2018-2019 included \$267,000 in grants, and \$327,000 in individual donations. We also benefited from approximately \$85,000 of in-kind support.

**Horizons completed its first year of a five-year grant** from San Francisco's Department of Children, Youth, and Their Families for our out of school time programming. Becoming a DCYF grantee has brought new opportunities. During 2018-19, we worked closely with SFFS and DCYF staff to efficiently and accurately meet the fiscal, data, and programmatic expectations for new grantees. We took advantage of the new partnerships, training opportunities, and resources available to DCYF grantees and we launched our first ever School Age Youth Program Quality Assessment (SAPQA) process in the summer of 2019.

**Horizons raised \$180,000 at our February 2019 Benefit.** This exceeded our fundraising goal of \$175,000 and represented an increase of 25% over last year's total. The event was held at SOMArts gallery and featured speakers Alejandra Rincon, Chief of Staff at the UCSF Office of Diversity and Outreach, and Debby Rosenthal, a Kindergarten teacher at Horizons' partner school Buena Vista Horace Mann.

*"I learned to always say to myself when I have a new challenge in front of me 'I am up for the challenge!'" -2019 3rd Grade Student*



## Organizational Development

Horizons at SFFS has continued to build positive relationships with SFFS, partner schools, families, DCYF, and local CBO's based on a sense of shared purpose and to leverage new partnerships, opportunities, and resources to best meet our students' evolving needs.

**We brought a new AmeriCorps VISTA member on board** through Horizons National. A recent graduate of Boston College and a former AmeriCorps teaching fellow at Citizen Schools, Liam McCarthy will work full time from July 2019 through June 2020 building our organization's resources and capacity and planning for Horizons' next phase of growth and impact.

**We're adding both summer and year-round staff.** As we continue Horizons at SFFS' expansion towards 153 K-8th grade students in 2022, we have created new positions on our team. This summer, we added a second Reading Specialist to help coach teachers, work with small groups, provide teaching resources, and ensure the highest quality for our literacy programming. We also added a Wellness Coordinator who provided support to students in need. This past spring, our new part-time Academic Program Director joined the year-round team to help build Horizons' middle school component and to provide instructional leadership in Math and Science. Expanding Horizons' year round staff will allow for us to provide more support and programming during the school year to our students and families.

**Our board is expanding.** In the Spring of 2019, several of the Horizons at SFFS' founding trustees rolled off the board and we welcomed four diverse and committed new members for 2019-2020: Katie Eller, Sangita Forth, Lynda Sullivan, and Jim Hansen. These new members bring a passion for Horizons' mission, expertise in finance, education, communications, and nonprofit governance, and broad connections in the Bay Area that we hope will support Horizons' continued success in the years to come.

**Planning for the organization's future.** In 2018-2019 the Horizons board and staff worked together with the help of a strategic planning expert to reflect on the organization's first five years, solicit feedback from a wide cohort of stakeholders, and articulate strategic priorities for the program's growth and development in the next three to five years. As Horizons serves an ever growing number of students and families, a new finance committee of the board also worked in partnership with Horizons' Director and fiscal sponsor to develop several key fiscal policies to support the organization's increasingly complex operational needs.



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## Outcomes and Measurement

A wide variety of measures reflect the positive impacts of Horizons' program.

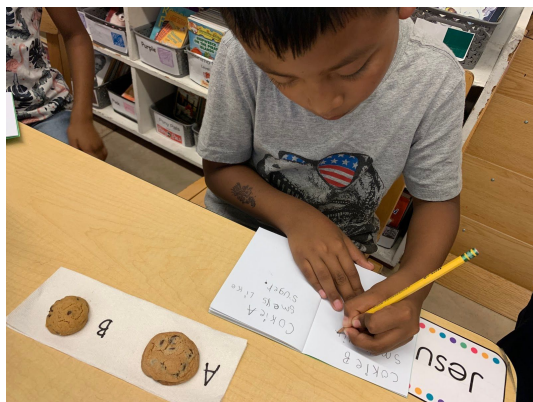
**Assessment data for 2019 are expected to show literacy and math gains for our students, especially for those youth with below grade level skills.** Each summer, program staff at each Horizons affiliate assess students in Kindergarten and first grade using the STAR Early Literacy pre- and post-test methodology. Students in grades 2-8 are assessed by STAR Reading. STAR Math is employed to assess math skills for students in grades 3-8. Horizons National maintains the database of assessment results and provides post-summer analysis to each affiliate.

In 2018, Horizons students' scores rose on average by 2.8 months for children in grades K-1, 1.8 months in reading for children in grades 2-8, and 1.6 months in math for children in grades 3-8. Those students who began the summer below grade level experienced two or more months of growth.

Concentric Research and Evaluation conducted a 2018 national retrospective study exploring the long-term effects of Horizons on school outcomes.<sup>1</sup> The findings of this study for elementary aged children who participated in Horizons from pre-K or kindergarten through grade 4 or 5 had the following statistically significant results:

- higher annual school attendance rates,
- lower rates of chronic absenteeism, and
- higher proficiency rates on standardized math and science assessments

<sup>1</sup> [FINAL REPORT: Examining the Long-Term Effects of the Horizons National Student Enrichment Program on Student Academic Outcomes, Concentric Research and Evaluation \(October 2018\)](#)



*"Watching a student who often did not participate become very connected to activities that focused on art was a huge success. Creating math activities that infused art gave that student an opportunity to engage and learn." -2019 Teacher*

**All of our students learned new swimming skills.** From Kinder through fifth grade, Horizons at SFFS' students had a fun, safe, and structured opportunity to learn swimming skills and overcome their fears of the water this summer. Many of our students' parents shared their pride in their children's progress with us, noting that they had never had the

opportunity to learn themselves. Our children in just 6 weeks developed critical water safety skills and discovered the joy of swimming, which they will carry with them into the future as they continue to grow and explore. Many teachers noticed that swimming helps shy students gain self-confidence and fostered a growth mindset. Across the program's six grade levels, Horizons' students listed swimming as one of their



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favorite activities of the summer.

*"I think swimming is by far the most important and enriching part of the program. It is always awesome to see how students' confidence levels grow in swimming and then to see how that translates to other aspects of the program." -2019 teacher*

**Our families' commitment to Horizons shines through** in their positive feedback, volunteerism, and high levels of attendance at Horizons events throughout the year. Our 93% student retention rate from 2018 and 97% daily attendance rate during summer 2019 also show how much our families value our program.



**Valuable feedback from staff, volunteers, students, and parents.** End of program surveys and focus groups provided us with useful qualitative and quantitative feedback about the direction in which to take Horizons at SFFS' programming next year. 100% of our rising fourth through sixth grade students, 80% of our families, and 95% of our staff responded to the surveys in their entirety, and those results highlighted wonderful outcomes from our summer program. Our students overwhelmingly said Horizons has helped them to make new friends and feel good about themselves. They also shared that through Horizons, they had opportunities to try new things (68%), participate in activities they do not get to do anywhere else (64%), and work hard to improve (76%). 82% of our students reported that they liked or strongly liked the program. Parents/caretakers, volunteers, and staff particularly expressed appreciation for the quality and commitment of Horizons' team, the skills and confidence the children developed, and the rich opportunities provided to try new things in the course of just six weeks. At the end of summer, 2019:

*92% of parents said Horizons' students do things they don't get to do anywhere else*  
*79% of parents said their child learned to push themselves at Horizons*  
*97% of parents want to send their kids back to Horizons in 2020*  
*85% of staff reported an increase in their students' reading ability*  
*95% of staff reported an increase in their students' math ability*  
*85% of staff observed an increase in students' science knowledge and skills*  
*100% of staff reported an increase in students' friendships and social emotional skills*

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## Looking Ahead

We have many aspirations for our seventh summer.

**Our oldest students are at a crucial point in their academic lives.** This year, our focus will be on expanding our year round and middle school programming, tailoring math and science curriculum and instruction in particular to meet students' developmental and academic needs. We plan to continue systematizing structures and practices for quality, sustainability, and retention of qualified summer teaching staff, streamlining enrollment process for new and returning students, and deepening communication, data sharing, and collaboration throughout the school year with Horizons' public school partners.



### **Horizons is hiring a new Development and Communications Coordinator for 2019-2020**

In Spring, 2019 our Development and Communications Coordinator moved on, and we are currently seeking an experienced nonprofit professional to join our team. This person will play a key role in sustaining the success of Horizons' ongoing development efforts, honing and expanding communications about Horizons' impact and value at SFFS, and working with the board to develop and implement a strategic development plan aligned with Horizons' newly articulated strategic priorities in the Spring of 2020.

**Our fundraising target will necessarily increase as our program grows,** and we'll continue strengthening our donor base and development plan to reflect this. We are always looking for ways to build relationships with donors and to connect with other organizations. Now that our program is seven years old, Horizons' board and staff will be focusing on longer term development strategy and organizational sustainability, a process that will be grounded in and guided by all that we learned through our participation in Compass Point's *Fundraising Bright Spots* cohort last year.

**Our focus this coming year is on ensuring ongoing program quality, growth, and sustainability,** strengthening our organization's governance and leadership, deepening Horizons' relationships with its families and community partners; aligning staffing, board development, and fundraising with key strategic priorities, and enlisting other private schools in the San Francisco Bay Area to start their own Horizons programs.

Thank you for your support as we continue this journey!