



Overview

K.E.Y. Zone is a collaborative after-school program offered by the Duluth YMCA and ISD 709 Community Education. K.E.Y. stands for Knowledge, Enrichment, and Youth Development.

Program History

- The YMCA and ISD 709 have offered Out-of-School Time programming for over 30 years. Former program names have included Kid Connection, Adventure Connection, School's Out, COMPASS 21st CCLC Program, and BRIDGE.
- 2010-2011 – Following the close of the 21st CCLC grant, the YMCA and Community Education piloted the first merged program, Kid Connection Plus at Lowell School.
- 2011-2012 – With Rockridge and Lester Park schools combining, Kid Connection Plus was expanded to Lester Park School.
- Spring 2012 – The leadership team participated in a number of meetings and decided to expand programming as well as deepen the collaboration.
- July 2012 – A 21st Century Community Learning Center was secured for six Title One Schools including Myers-Wilkins Community School Collaborative, Stowe, Laura MacArthur, Piedmont, and Lowell elementary schools, as well as Lincoln Park Middle School. Program was designed as a school-community connectedness model, employing a family liaison to connect the school day with the after-school program for at-risk students.
- Fall 2012 – K.E.Y. Zone was implemented at all 9 Duluth Public Schools elementary schools and Youth Corps was implemented at Lincoln Park Middle School.

Philosophy

The philosophy of K.E.Y. Zone and Youth Corps, as collaborative programs, is to offer a safe and engaging out-of-school time program that complements the school day and creates an enriching environment that fosters positive youth development and academic success.

Key Program Components

- Quality School Aged Care guided by the Center for Youth Program Quality
- Character Development/Leadership
- Academic Enrichment
- Health & Wellness
- Academic Support/Mentors
- Family Engagement
- Clubs (STEM, Creative Arts)
- Service Learning Opportunities

Enrollment

K.E.Y. Zone and Youth Corps currently serve over 1400 students at all nine elementary schools and one middle school during the school year and summer.