

January 23, 2006

To Tracy Desrocher

Fr: Steve Basch

Re: Kids Row Too Program at KIPP Sunshine Peak Academy, Denver, Colorado

KIPP Sunshine Peak Academy

KIPP Sunshine Peak Academy is a Denver Public charter school that serves 293 students, nearly all of whom come from Denver's inner city neighborhoods.

In its fourth year, KSPA has four grades 5th through 8th with the average student achieving two grade levels of growth in one year.

In December 2005, a state-wide school report card noted that KSPA was one of three Colorado schools with more than 75% of its students qualifying for federal lunch assistance.

KIPP stands for the Knowledge is Power Program introduced by the KIPP charter school organization that now has 45 schools nationwide. A cornerstone of its program is the learning time devoted to students – Mon.-Thurs.:7:25am-5:00 pm Mon-Thurs; Fri: 7:25am to 4pm; twice monthly classes on Sat. 9:15am-1:05pm and 18 days of summer school.

Kids Row Too Program

KPSA Athletic Program offers organized team sports in football, basketball, soccer, lacrosse and field hockey as well as a varied intramural program.

Indoor rowing and the Kids Row Too Program is part of the daily intramural program from Monday through Thursday from 3:45 pm to 4:50 pm.

In late October, indoor rowing was introduced to KPSA seventh and eighth students as part of the intramural program. Of the 65 youngsters who initially rowed, 20 of them have elected to return on a frequent basis at least three times.

I regard October and November as introductory months with December and January appealing to students who like rowing. These are students who are not on organized teams and I believe rowing appeals to them as a physical activity that gives them sense of competing against themselves. Because of the abilities and comfort zones of the youngsters, I find catering to their individual physical makeup and temperament most beneficial for the students.

For example, one youngster is motivated by the number of meters he has rowed (31,000 meters to date with having done 15,000 in one week). He rows on a daily basis. His routine contrasts to most of the boys and girls who enjoy rowing the 1:40/1:00 pieces either 5x or 3x a couple of times during the same hourly period.

They like improving on their own times and/or their distances in different types of pieces. Ideally, I like working with six to eight youngsters per hourly daily session. With two machines the means approx 15 minutes per person.

Breakdown: Frequency and Total Meters

Frequency:

- 9x – One
- 7x Three (all girls)
- 6x Four (three girls, one boy)
- 5x Two (both girls)
- 4x Six (four girls; two boys)
- 3x Four (two girls; two boys)
- 2x Six (four boys; two girls)

Total Meters:

9x Overweight youngster – 31,751

7x C. 15,000
N. 7,130
M. 4,153

6x S. 16,760
R. 5,797
C. 4,972
R. 3,326

5x B. 4,823
K. 3,701

4x O. 4,445
I. 6,762
M. 2,650
A. 3,009
D. 3,119
A. 2,275

3x F. 6,690
B. 3,040
D.
L.

2x A. 2,368
H. 2,500
A. 2,000

E. 3,451
I. 3,271
T. 4,000

Time Examples:

Some examples of recent times include:

O.: 500 meters 2:21
C.: 2,000 meters: 12:28
F.: 1:40 3x --- 296m, 317m and 320. Also same session 1,000m 5:30
N.: 1,000m 5:10m
C.: 1,000m 5:22

I do not push them for time. At this point, I want them to work toward good form, frequency and total meters. If they consistently row 3,000 m per 15-20 minutes while varying the pieces, I will be satisfied. The Phys. Ed. director, Floyd Ellis and his assistant Kurt Slaughter tell me they get very positive feedback from the kids. Again, these are seventh and eighth grade youngsters most of whom are Latino.

The boys, with three exceptions are not as diligent as the girls to improve by rowing more frequently.