

## The East Boston YMCA and the Mario Umana Middle School Academy, Boston

The East Boston YMCA has partnered with the Umana and other East Boston schools for many years to provide after-school, school vacation week, and summer programs for students in grades K-8. Throughout the 2005-06 school year the YMCA participated in the ELT planning process with the Umana and created a new model for YMCA programming where some activities and classes that were previously offered after school were incorporated into the expanded day. A team of 13 YMCA staff, managed by a school-based Site Coordinator, come to the school daily to lead enrichment and academic support classes. Umana students also travel to the YMCA facility four days a week for "Personal Fitness" electives. In addition, the YMCA provides optional programming for Umana students beyond the expanded day and runs a licensed childcare program for elementary school students in the Umana building. This is a deep, long-standing school-community partnership which has evolved over the past 3 years with the advent of Expanded Learning Time.

### Content

- **YMCA staff-led Academic Support:** Some YMCA staff lead afternoon academic support blocks, mainly around literacy, with groups of 10-15 students. These staff members attend common planning time and professional development with Umana teachers, and arrive at the Umana at noon each day.
- **YMCA staff-led Enrichment Electives:** Some YMCA staff lead enrichment electives, including a hands-on environmental education class, which is a partnership between the YMCA and the Urban Ecology Institute.
- **Umana teacher-led Personal Fitness Electives:** Two groups of students walk to the YMCA twice a week for a "Personal Fitness" elective, which is led by three Umana teachers with an interest in fitness, with the guidance of the YMCA Fitness Director.
- **Drop-in After-school Program:** Students can choose to stay at the Umana with YMCA staff from 4:15 – 6:00 PM Monday – Thursday for homework help and drop-in activities, and from 12 noon – 5 PM on Fridays.
- **Licensed Childcare Program:** The Umana houses a YMCA licensed childcare program for elementary students from neighboring schools, which is entirely separate from ELT but operates in an Umana classroom during the expanded school day. Some of the children enrolled in this program have older siblings attending the Umana.

**AT A GLANCE:**  
**Mario Umana**  
**Middle School Academy**

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**Principal:** Jose Salgado

**Grades served:** 6-8

**Number of students:** 640

**School Schedule:**

- ☐ M-TH, 7:20 AM - 4:10 PM
- ☐ Fridays, 7:20 AM - 11:40 AM

**School Demographics:**

- % **Special Ed** – 27.6
- % **Limited English** – 17.4
- % **Low-Income** – 86.6

**Other partners include:**  
East Boston YMCA, East Boston Neighborhood Health Center, Citizen Schools, Museum of Science, The Trauma Center, Tenacity

### Conditions for Success

- The Umana and YMCA have worked together for many years, including around a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center grant, and began discussing an ELT partnership a year prior to implementing the expanded school day.
- The YMCA Site Coordinator has a dual role – she is a Boston Public Schools employee who serves as the Umana librarian and a member of the school's administrative leadership team from 8 AM-1:30 PM, and the YMCA Site Coordinator from 1:30 – 4:30 PM.

- The YMCA facility is close enough to the school that students can walk there with their teachers for the Personal Fitness electives. It is brand new and features facilities the school lacks, like a virtual gym, climbing wall, and weight room.
- In year 2 of ELT (2007-08), YMCA staff has been further integrated into the Umana through common planning time, professional development, and increased staff-teacher communication.
- The YMCA brings in additional partners – like Urban Ecology Institute and Museum of Science – and leverages additional resources, including grants from two local foundations and a collaborative grant with other community partners from the Ford Foundation and US Tennis Association.

### **Staff**

- One school-based YMCA Site Coordinator, who is a member of the Umana leadership team and works closely with this team to manage the partnership.
- 12-14 part-time YMCA staff, who typically work ~11:30 – 5:30 PM depending on their roles and responsibilities.
- Staff are recruited, trained, and managed by the YMCA, and all are certified in 1<sup>st</sup> Aid and CPR. Some participate in Umana-led professional development as well.

### **Funding**

- For the 2007-08 school year, the entire package of YMCA programming (excluding the licensed school-age after-school program) cost \$156,000.
- A combination of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center and ELT funding pays for the YMCA programming.
- The YMCA had to fundraise for an additional \$10,000 to cover all costs beyond the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and ELT grants.

### **Contact**

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