

# Cluster Program Mentorship Program

Jazmyn Castillo, Ashra Gaffor, Zain Usman

Opt4STEM Leadership Academy

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Partners Powering the Future of STEM

## Introduction

### Problem:

- Little to no interaction between students in the cluster program and the rest of the Von Steuben student body.
- Throughout our four years in Von Steuben we have noticed the segregation of the cluster program students and the rest of the Von Students.

### Our Thoughts:

Students with disabilities should have the ability and same opportunities as everyone else. In order to make sure that they do they need to be surrounded by a diverse group of students and get to know them and learn from them.

### Project Goal:

- Create a bridge between the two groups of students
- Help students with disabilities in our school feel more apart of the panther society.
- Break the ice and help each group of students to get to know each other.
- We want the cluster program students to be treated like a “normal” student, rather than a “special” needs student.

## Process

### What we did to reach our goal.

- Made a plan on how to approach the problem.
- Shared our ideas to the Special Education staff members and the administration.
- Met with the Cluster program students.
- Hung up posters and spread the word about our mentorship plan.
- Looked for volunteers to help with the show and those who were interested in being a mentor.
- Helped the staff with the Variety show.
- Brought attention to the importance of helping people with disabilities.
- Currently looking for more mentors and leaders to continue our goal in the future.

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO CREATE A STRONG CLOSE BOND WITH THE STUDENTS IN OUR CLUSTER PROGRAM?**

Help the students with simple life skills such as:



**ARE YOU INTERESTED? COME JOIN US AT OUR INFORMATIONAL MEETING!!!**

## Results

### Variety Show-

- Purpose: Allow students in the cluster program to freely express themselves and show the rest of the student body their talents.
  - We recruited a handful of volunteers who helped set up the show, worked with the stage crew and helped the cluster program students with their performances.
  - The Variety show was successful, the special education staff organized it and our hope is to bring more awareness to the show.



### Music Class-

- Purpose: Join the music class with the cluster program in order to help students get to know each other and build a relationship as they play and perform together.
  - We joined Mr. Trpkosh's music class and Ms. Cooks and Mr. Estrada's classes.
  - Students in Mr. Trpkosh's class taught their partner the basic chords (C, F, and G) to the song “You are My Sunshine”.

## Conclusions

Both the Variety show and the Music class had a huge impact on how students see each other. Our purpose was to show that we are more alike than we are different and we think we succeeded in proving this.

“They got to express themselves in song and dance, and all of the positivity during the show was a treat to see. I'm sure everyone at Von loved the show and hopefully they'll stop by their room to say hello to our awesome performers”  
-Emilia Zayas, Volunteer

“Thank you so much for helping with the show.”  
-Anna Mathews, Cluster Program Student



## Future Impact

Our hopes for the future is to help students in the cluster program feel a part of Von and help them interact with everyone in their community.

We want to develop a mentoring program for future Von kids. The mentoring program will help students in the cluster program build a one-on-one relationship with other students. Additionally it will allow the mentors to understand students with disabilities and interact with them.

We have brainstormed of starting an orientation program for Honors P.E. students next year which would introduce the students taking the class to meet and talk with the cluster kids before the class has started. Hopefully, this will allow the honors P.E. students to get to know what the class has in store for them.

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## Leadership Reflection

The Leadership Academy helped bring three students together in order to create a project that brings awareness to the segregation of students with disabilities from the rest of the student body. With their help we were able to create a bridge between both groups of students. We wanted to create a difference and raise awareness to students with disabilities. This project has had a huge impact on all of us. Creating this project has taught us more about students with disabilities and made us realize that is so much we can do to break the ice between us. Every student deserves the same chances and opportunities and we knew that the only way that can happen is by introducing them to the rest of the world. We are happy that we were able to do this. Although this project just we hope that it will impact other students as much as it has impacted us.

