

2019 Tuckerton Seaport Proposed After-School Program

There's a new after-school program being considered for Tuckerton Seaport, and it is scheduled to start in February if all goes according to plan. The Seaport is partnering with the nonprofit Family Resource Network's Kids' Korner Program and plans to provide after-school activities for three days a week for students with developmental disabilities in grades 7 through 12 from Pinelands High School. The program will be offered every week for the balance of the current school year on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 2:15PM to 5:15PM (follows the school calendar regarding vacations and holidays, etc.). The program will serve approximately eight children ranging in age from 13 to 20 and will be structured in 30 minute blocks of activities.

On a scheduled after school day, an assigned caretaker will arrive at the Seaport at 2PM and ready the room in the Decoy Shanty and be there when the kids arrive after school by bus. At this time, the program organizers envision the kids will have a short orientation period, time to socialize, maybe have a snack and be ready to start the day's after-school program at 3PM. The children do best with a consistent routine, so it is planned that a decoy carver will present a program on Monday's from 3 to 3:30, then PSAA might do the Wednesday session from 3 to 3:30, and the Friday session will probably be an 'open day' where the kids might have a music program, or if the weather is nice, they might go for a walk on site or work on a garden-type of activity from another local expert.

After the short programs, the students would then visit the Rutgers 'Life on the Edge' program on the second floor of the Visitor Center, then maybe do some craft project from 4 to 4:30. From 4:30 to 5 would be another activity (to be decided), followed by time to do homework or journaling until the children are picked up by their parents at 5:30. There will be a three to one student to staff monitoring ratio at all times.

Program presenters would be required to undergo a background check by the Family Resource Network group, a process that will take about a week to complete. It was indicated that this program is being made possible by grant money, and that there was an undisclosed (small) amount of dollars available to pay program presenters for their weekly sessions (I will investigate whether we can utilize some of our County grant money to subsidize any participating PSAA instructor).

Looking ahead, interest has been expressed in forming a summer camp-type of program for these children, and if the after-school program is successful, there may be a desire to offer the sessions Monday through Friday during the coming school year. Please contact me should you have an interest in participating in this program or if you have any questions (email is psaaregistrar@gmail.com or call 609-597-3557). - Paul Hartelius