

4-H School Enrichment: A Guide for 4-H Faculty and Staff¹

Tracy A. Tesdall²

About 4-H School Enrichment

School Enrichment is a partnership between the University of Florida/IFAS Extension Service and a school district to provide educational content in various subject areas. Extension values its relationship with the schools and welcomes the opportunity to provide research-based curricula for classroom use.

A key goal of 4-H School Enrichment is also to expose youth to other 4-H experiences, such as the 4-H Club. Research shows that youth spending time in long-term, positive youth programs, such as 4-H, are less likely to become involved in high-risk behaviors, have higher school attendance and grades, better conflict management practices, and better work habits. 4-H School Enrichment can give youth and parents a picture of what a longer commitment to 4-H can provide.

Definition of 4-H School Enrichment

School-aged youth receive a well-planned sequence of learning experiences during regular school hours. A series of lessons (minimum of six hours of educational content) broaden and/or supplement the regular curriculum. Extension personnel, trained volunteers, or the regular classroom teachers conduct lessons.



The success of School Enrichment depends on effective programming that meets the academic needs of youth and satisfies the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards. The goal of Youth Development/4-H School Enrichment is to provide educational programming to enrich and supplement the formal school curriculum. Students will be able to relate their academic preparation to real world experiences through this linkage to Extension and community educators. Extension provides 4-H curricula and unique teaching methodologies within the context of the school setting.

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2. Adapted for use in Florida by Tracy A. Tesdall, regional specialized 4-H agent, South District, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Florida 4-H Youth Development Program, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611.

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Benefits of 4-H School Enrichment

1. Provides research-based curricula that are unbiased and evaluated for effectiveness by UF/IFAS Extension, other land-grant universities and/or a national jury of the 4-H National Headquarters
2. Delivered through the Experiential Learning Model
3. Uses materials that are age appropriate
4. Helps children/youth develop life skills
5. Provides an opportunity to develop/extend a cooperative relationship between schools and Extension
6. Increases the capacity of Extension to reach large numbers of youth in the community, makes 4-H available to all youth, increases the public image of 4-H, and increases the support base for 4-H

Procedures for Initiating School Enrichment Programs

A partnership with the schools extends the 4-H program to more youth through a unique delivery mode. School Enrichment may be a new experience for some Extension agents; therefore, this guide presents some strategies, both for developing a partnership with the schools, and for programming. Also, see the Appendix, “Working With Schools” (Table 2), to familiarize yourself with many education definitions and the climate of education in Florida.

Get to Know Your School District

Before introducing yourself to a school principal on behalf of the 4-H program, do your homework by researching how many schools are in your county and where they are located. Go to the Florida Department of Education website and review the “District Data” (http://www.fldoe.org/schools/schoolmap/flash/schoolmap_text.asp), which includes Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) scores and other assessment scores, so you can view the strengths of your school district and what their needs are. They also publish each school district’s accountability report at <http://schoolgrades.fldoe.org/>. This valuable information will help you market the value of incorporating 4-H School Enrichment in the classroom. In addition, determine if any of your 4-H volunteers or parents are currently teachers in the school district. They could be strong advocates for your program.

Steps for Initiating School Enrichment Programs

1. Determine the person responsible for curriculum at the school. If you do not know, begin with the superintendent of schools. Large school districts usually have a curriculum director, education director, or specific staff for curriculum management and delivery; smaller districts may not. It is important to start at the top of the organizational structure: ask for the proper channel of communication and contact the specified person. In a large school district, curriculum staff may be responsible for specific grades and/or subject matter. Contact the appropriate representative based on the curriculum that you are capable of delivering (for example, grades K–3.)
2. Identify yourself and the purpose of your call to the superintendent or administrator. Ask permission to contact the staff person in charge of curriculum management/delivery. Many school officials do not recommend contacting individual classroom teachers directly. Arrange for a meeting to explain Youth Development/4-H School Enrichment to the appropriate school official.
3. Schools have local and state mandates to meet through their curriculum. Youth Development/4-H curricula and methods should “enrich” the program of instruction offered by the schools. The curriculum director or teachers can give Extension staff advice on how programs can be integrated as part of the established curriculum. The curriculum director or teachers can also suggest how to distribute the information to teachers.
4. If the school district is interested, decide how to make the information available to teachers. Ask for guidance in determining the best approach. One good approach is for the Extension agent or other 4-H staff to present program offerings directly to staff. To obtain time during Fall’s teacher in-service dates requires asking early (February or March of the preceding school year). Other alternatives include scheduling an optional in-service sometime during the year or distributing brochures with program descriptions to teachers.
5. When contacting teachers, consider schedules for both the school day and the school calendar. Inquire about each school’s “clock time.” Principals may or may not be willing to share faculty-meeting times. Some school systems have faculty meetings by grade level (elementary, middle school, high school). Avoid busy times (such as report-card time and assessment testing periods) in the school calendar. The start of the second semester, when

teachers are looking for some fresh ideas, may be a good time to make a presentation.

6. Be creative in connecting teachers with 4-H Extension curricula. Provide information about the intended youth audience (i.e., grade level), but realize that creative teachers may wish to adopt and adapt the curriculum for other grades. The advantage of meeting with teachers is that it provides the opportunity to explain the process and instructional method used by 4-H as a “learning by doing” experiential approach.
7. Remember, immediately usable and highly adaptable programs are the most appealing. Usable means that the program does not require a lot of work on the teacher’s part. Adaptable means that the program can have many uses in the classroom or learning center, including displays, science fairs, PowerPoint® presentations, web-sites, and individual or team projects.

Presenting School Enrichment to School Personnel

Initially, Extension agents need to present School Enrichment offerings to school personnel. Agents may wish to identify a **volunteer school-enrichment coordinator**, as a part of their volunteer middle-management system.

SUGGESTED STRATEGIES FOR GAINING ACCEPTANCE IN THE SCHOOLS

- Be sure teachers understand you are not asking them to add something extra to their already busy schedule.
- 4-H Extension programming is offered to enrich what they are currently doing. Make this critical linkage by answering this question: “How does or can this material fit into the classroom curriculum?”
- Enlist 4-H leaders/members or members of previous enrichment programs/special-interest groups to help with the presentation.
- Gain support of one of the key teachers. Identify an enthusiastic teacher or contact person within the system that the other teachers can talk to.
- Visit with interested teachers on a one-to-one basis.
- Check to see if there are countywide teacher trainings where you might secure a table to promote your 4-H School Enrichment opportunities.
- Use special events like career fairs, African or Hispanic heritage month, or reading events as a way to get into a new school to introduce the program.
- Offer to do a sample program of 15–30 minutes rotating to all classes for an entire grade level. This provides an opportunity to show hands-on demonstrations using equipment a teacher may not have—examples include a black-light hand-washing demonstration or a seed-planting activity—then provide curriculum materials for the teacher to do additional lessons.
- Share previous School Enrichment successes (either your own or those of other Extension agents).

Evaluate your presentation to teachers and school administrators. Use a standard evaluation tool or devise a simple evaluation form specific to your presentation. If possible, try to get names and contact information of participants for future mailing lists.

Scheduling School Enrichment Programs

Scheduling School Enrichment programs can be handled in a variety of ways. Larger school districts may have an office (volunteer services) to coordinate schedules for/with you. With smaller schools, make the schedule arrangements with individual teachers.

Consider the following when scheduling programs:

1. Will the program be delivered to one large group of students or to individual classrooms? 4-H Staff need to be conscious of the time and travel to be invested.
2. Will schools be charged for School Enrichment programs? In many cases, the programs can be offered without cost or at-cost to schools. Schools may wish to purchase individual student manuals, but 4-H staff should provide leader/teacher guides. Most materials for the delivery of School Enrichment programs can be loaned to teachers, volunteers, or instructors and those materials can then be reused.
3. Reserve the appropriate audio/visual equipment needed for the program. Determine whether county Extension equipment or the school’s equipment will be used. Delivery, scheduling, and sharing of printed materials must also be considered.

4. Develop an appropriate orientation and training plan. Face-to-face meetings are preferable; however, other modes, such as phone conferencing, may be necessary.

Youth Development/4-H School Enrichment Curricula Resources

Florida's foundation for School Enrichment is usually a subject matter driven, focused curricula for knowledge and skills not addressed by today's school curriculum. Curricula packages are usually designed for either a particular subject area or as a cross-curricula approach for a particular grade range. Any 4-H "project" or curriculum package can be used in a school setting; however, specific curricula have been designed to be used for this delivery system, including the 4-H/Tropicana Public Speaking program, 4-H Pizza Garden (agricultural literacy,) and youth education programs in embryology, entomology, healthy lifestyles, and financial literacy. Visit the 4-H Professionals School Enrichment web page of http://florida4h.org/staff/password_protected/program.shtml for a listing of what is currently packaged.

Involving School Enrichment Members in a County 4-H Program

Promote Joining a 4-H Club

At some point during the 4-H School Enrichment experience, encourage the participants to continue their 4-H experience by joining an existing 4-H club or to recruit a parent to start their own 4-H club. Share a listing of the current 4-H clubs open to membership, the steps involved in joining one, or how to become a club volunteer.

Establish an In-School Club

Florida 4-H also allows 4-H clubs to function during class time. The teacher is the organizational club leader, the students elect officers, and each month has a business meeting and an educational program. This allows the students to continue their 4-H experience throughout the school year.

Involvement in County 4-H Programming

If the school enrichment members are unable to join a 4-H club, review your county's 4-H program. How could 4-H School Enrichment members participate? Not all county 4-H activities are adaptable for School Enrichment members. Examine each county program or activity to see how it could support members of School Enrichment programs. Listed below are some suggestions for involving School Enrichment members in county 4-H programming.

The key is planning ahead and informing classroom 4-H members about their eligibility to participate in county events.

COUNTY FAIR

Some School Enrichment projects lend themselves to exhibits or displays. For example, in a horticulture class, terrariums made in the classroom could be exhibited at a fair. Inform school members of this opportunity during the classroom experience so they can plan for it. Other school-related 4-H programs lend themselves to poster or notebook exhibits. Energy Conservation or Embryology are good examples of poster or exhibit subjects. In addition, look for opportunities to "extend" projects. For example, a project on bicycle safety could involve events such as a bike unit in a parade, a bike drill performance for grandstand entertainment, or competition in a bicycle rodeo.

AWARDS PROGRAMS AND RECOGNITION

4-H School Enrichment members should have the opportunity to be considered for award programs in a project area that has awards available. The 4-H School Enrichment member must complete the same requirements as any other 4-H member. Recognition of 4-H School Enrichment members can be achieved in inexpensive ways. National 4-H Supply Service, through the *Source Book* or 4HMall.org, offers 4-H pins, certificates, or 4-H branded supplies (such as pencils and pens). If 4-H School Enrichment projects are part of a school's science fair, ribbons might be appropriate. A feature story on the 4-H School Enrichment members for the school or local newspaper provides another type of recognition.

COUNTY EVENTS

School Enrichment members may wish to participate in a public presentation contest. The teacher/leader can encourage members to participate when appropriate. Demonstrations and illustrated talks can be prepared in almost any subject area that is covered in a School Enrichment module.

CAMPS – DAY AND OVERNIGHT CAMPS

Include 4-H School Enrichment members on mailing lists to make them aware of 4-H camping opportunities. Prepare an information sheet listing the various types of summer day or overnight camps available. Provide dates, costs, and contact information for the county Extension office.

TRIPS AND TOURS

Tours are a good educational tool for 4-H school groups, just as they are for 4-H clubs. Extension staff or School Enrichment key leaders may assist the teacher/leader with

identifying and/or organizing tours or field trips. Because school systems have definite policies regarding field trips, be sure to obtain permission from school administration. Examples might include:

1. For studying chick embryology, visiting a farm or poultry operation
2. For ecology projects, setting up nature trails or conservation tours with a local butterfly garden
3. Holding an Ag Day at the Extension office and recruiting the other Extension agents and Master Gardener volunteers to teach at learning stations which the classes rotate through
4. Offering an “in-school field trip” using agents, volunteers or homeschooled teens (students like to be taught by their peers) to teach stations on various themes such as health and nutrition, environmental, or general science

Offer additional curricula for teacher classroom lessons.

DISTRICT AND STATE EVENTS

Publicize 4-H district and state events to appropriate youth audiences in School Enrichment. Some examples are Teen Leadership Conference/Junior Congress, camps, performing arts opportunities (Share-the-Fun), or other community 4-H clubs.

Guidelines For Who is Considered a 4-H Member

A **4-H'er** is an all-inclusive term referring to youth in 4-H programs (that is, community clubs, 4-H afterschool clubs, special interest clubs, short-term programs, camps, and school enrichment programs). **Note:** School Enrichment members are counted on the annual federal statistical report; currently, Florida uses the [4HOnline](#) enrollment system.

For School Enrichment participants, often referred to as “group enrollments,” the enrollment system does not require the detailed information on each participant as it would for a traditional 4-H member. For reporting purposes, particular information is requested for these groups of individuals. A sample 4HOnline group enrollment worksheet can be found under Club Resources on the 4-H website at florida4h.org/clubs/resources.shtml.

A 4-H member is one who participates in:

- A program of the Cooperative Extension Service – EXTENSION personnel have substantial control over the design, organization, implementation, and maintenance of the program (EXTENSION personnel are defined as professional staff, program assistant staff, and/or volunteer adult and youth leaders enlisted in carrying out its functions)
- A minimum of six hours of educational learning activities (teaching time, group and individual projects, tours/field trips)



Figure 2. 4-H School Enrichment increases the capacity of Extension to reach more youth in the community.

Credits: Photo by Judy Baxter / CC BY-NC-SA 2.0 / <http://flic.kr/p/5uEDi3>

Evaluating 4-H School Enrichment Programs

School Enrichment programs contain specific content designed for delivery over a specific length of time; as such, they provide a unique opportunity for pre/post evaluation. Evaluation is an essential part of the total program; therefore, it should be planned at the same time program objectives are being identified. Good program planning includes planning for evaluation. Florida 4-H provides faculty with evaluation tools for statewide classroom packages in order to document change and impact from these programs. See the 4-H Professionals portion of www.Florida4H.org for details.

Closing Remarks

Remember, 4-H School Enrichment is a part of a balanced 4-H program's multiple delivery modes: clubs, special interest/camping, and school enrichment. It is not something to simply be added to a 4-H agent's already busy plate.

Appendix

Table 1. **Checklist for Success of Youth Development/4-H School Enrichment Programs**

	Begin by contacting school officials. Ask about the proper channel of communication and contact the appropriate person.
	Work as a team. School and community partnerships are important to schools, so approach this venture as a cooperative relationship between EXTENSION and the school. Be open to various options and let the school district decide how Youth Development/4-H School Enrichment fits its program.
	Focus on the students and what School Enrichment programs will do for them.
	School Enrichment offers supplementary skills/knowledge and a unique style of instruction.
	Keep scheduling simple – weekly or monthly sessions; same day of the week; same time of day.
	Be sure teachers and students know they are participating in a 4-H program. Include the official Clover Emblem, UF/IFAS logo, and your identifying information on all printed information.
	Make student recognition a part of the program. At a minimum, recognize youth with completion certificates with proper 4-H Emblem.
	Evaluate outcomes.

Table 2. 4-H School Enrichment: Working With Schools*

4-H PARTNERING WITH SCHOOLS					
EDUCATIONAL DEFINITIONS					
PUBLIC SCHOOL	CHARTER SCHOOL	MAGNET SCHOOL	MONTessori SCHOOL	PRIVATE SCHOOL	HOME SCHOOL
Mainly local governments provide public school education, with control and funding coming from three levels: federal, state, and local. Curricula, funding, teaching, and other policies are set through locally elected school boards.	Although exempted from certain operating procedures required for regular public schools, charter schools, like all public schools, must be non-religious and non-discriminatory. Often focused on a particular approach to educating students, a charter school is authorized to function once it has received a charter, a statutorily defined performance contract detailing the school's mission, program, goals, students served, methods of assessment, and ways to measure success. They operate as autonomous public schools and make use of innovative teaching strategies.	Holding a particular academic discipline as the core focus (e.g. science, technology, arts) in order to attract students from schools in and out of the traditionally zoned boundaries, magnet schools remain part of the public school system and operate under the public school system administration. Additional monies may be available that are not available to a typical "public school" in order to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deliver a distinctive curriculum or instructional approach, • attract students from outside an assigned neighborhood or attendance zone, and • have diversity as an explicit purpose. 	A Montessori school is one whose instructional emphasis is on creating a stimulating environment for children that includes an abundance of hands-on materials with which students interact. These schools follow the philosophy of Maria Montessori, an educator who believed that children learn best when they have the opportunity to discover and learn in their own ways.	Private schools are not administered by local, state, or national government and retain the right to select their student body. They are funded in whole or in part by charging their students tuition rather than with public (state) funds. Religiously affiliated or denominational schools form a distinct category of private schools. Private schools often avoid some state regulations.	Homeschooling is the education of children at home, typically by parents or guardians, rather than in a public or private school. Currently, the majority of children in developed nations receive their formal education at a public institution. Homeschooling is an option for parents who wish to provide a different learning environment for their children than they believe is attainable in public schools. It is also an alternative for those families who are unable, for practical or personal reasons, to comply with the regulations of a public school. Homeschooling may refer to instruction in the home under the supervision of correspondence schools or umbrella schools.
					TITLE ONE – IMPROVING THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF THE DISADVANTAGED Title I, the cornerstone of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, is the largest federal education program. Students served by Title I funds include migrant children and youth; children and youth with limited English proficiency; children and youth who are homeless; children and youth who have disabilities; children and youth who are neglected, delinquent or at-risk; children in preschool activities; and any child or youth who is in academic need. Through Title I, the federal government disburses money to school districts based on the number of low-income families in each district as determined by census data. Each district uses its Title I money to supplement and improve regular education programs offered to help students meet state standards.

The University of Florida IFAS Extension Service and 4-H and Youth Development should work to be partners with local school systems in the education of youth, as both have the successful development of youth as a priority. Because of Extension's position with the Land Grant University System, Extension can provide resources to teachers that no other group can provide.

CLIMATE OF EDUCATION	
This is information about Florida and national educational trends. On the local level, Extension agents may want to check with schools, 4-H volunteers who are employed in the schools or serve on the school board, or ask when making school contacts for their strategic plan (may be on their website) or vision to learn more about trends & effects.	
Age of Accountability	We see this trend in all parts of society. Taxpayers and citizens want to know that their money is spent in a way that accomplishes the most.
Assessment Testing/End-of-Course (E-O-C)	Florida EOC Assessments are for the purpose of increasing student achievement and improving college and career readiness. In the 2011–12 school year, students enrolled in Algebra 1, Geometry, and Biology 1 will take EOC assessments aligned to the following high-school-level courses: Algebra 1, Geometry, Biology 1. Plans are also underway to implement a new EOC assessment for U.S. History, which is a high-school-level course, and a new EOC assessment aligned to a new middle school civics education course.
At-Risk Students	This term, trended in the 1980s, is used to describe youth who are at risk of not reaching their full potential.
Bullying	Schools are trying to make youth safe, not just from physical violence, but emotional violence. (See also: entry for School Violence below.)
Brain Research	Many of the schools are planning and using curriculum that exercises the brain or focuses on right- or left-brain functions.
Character Education	Describes the teaching of children in a manner that will help them develop variously as moral, civic, good, mannered, behaved, non-bullying, healthy, critical, successful, traditional, compliant and/ or socially acceptable beings.
Conflict Resolution Education (CRE)	A strategy to prevent and/or reduce school violence.
Cooperative Learning	A teaching strategy in which small teams, each with students of different levels of ability, use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject.
Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT)	The FCAT began in 1998 as part of Florida's overall plan to increase student achievement by implementing higher standards. When in full implementation, the FCAT was administered to students in grades 3–11 and consisted of criterion-referenced assessments in mathematics, reading, science, and writing that measured student progress. During the 2010–11 school year, Florida began the transition to FCAT 2.0 and Florida End-of-Course (EOC) Assessments.
Home Schooling	Parent teaches their children at home. Sometimes these families are organized in cooperatives where families work together to play on the knowledge or teaching strengths of parents in the group. Current law does not prescribe a curriculum or course of study for home education programs.
Multicultural Education	A set of strategies and materials in U.S. education developed to assist teachers to promote democracy while responding to the many issues created by rapidly changing demographics of their students. It helps students develop a positive self-concept by providing knowledge about the histories, cultures, and contributions of diverse groups.
Next Generation Sunshine State Standards	The common core of Florida's standards for public education for (English) Language Arts/Reading and Mathematics; also includes literacy in History/ Social Studies, Science, and Technical subjects.
"No Child Left Behind"	Signed into law in 2001, it encompasses Title I, the federal government's flagship aid program for disadvantaged students. Includes a number of measures designed to drive broad gains in student achievement and to hold states accountable for student progress.
School Choice	Ability for parents to choose where their child attends schools, rather than youth being required to attend the school closest to their home.
School Violence	Includes bullying, fighting (e.g. punching, slapping, kicking), weapon use, electronic aggression, or gang violence on school property, at a school-sponsored event or on the way to/from school or a school-sponsored event.
Special Needs	In the education setting, "Special Education Needs" come into play whenever a child's education program is officially altered from what would normally be provided to students through an Individual Education Plan, also known as an Individual Program plan.
* Adapted for use in Florida from 4-H Fast Facts: <i>Assessing and Working with Schools</i> , developed by AgrILIFE Extension, Texas A & M System, 2008.	