



## FAQ: Hosting America SCORES Cleveland Programming

**Mission** - America SCORES inspires urban youth to lead healthy lives, be engaged students, and have the confidence and character to make a difference in the world.

**Vision** - America SCORES Cleveland's vision is to engage and support our Cleveland poet-athletes, to develop healthy, civically engaged students and leaders within our communities.

### What is the history of America SCORES?

The America SCORES model was developed in 1994 in Washington, D.C. by Julie Kennedy, a teacher who recognized that her students lacked safe afterschool options. She used her own experience as an athlete to teach her class soccer after school. In inclement weather, she turned to her other passion, teaching her students to write and perform poetry. The model was quickly replicated throughout D.C., and 5 years later America SCORES became a national organization.

### How long has America SCORES been in Cleveland?

In 2004, America SCORES Cleveland was founded, serving 120 students in its first year. Today, over 2,000 youth in Cleveland and 15,000 youth in urban public school districts nationwide are positively impacted by SCORES programming.

### How many schools are currently involved with America SCORES?

America SCORES Cleveland provides programming in 16 schools within the Cleveland Metropolitan School District.

### What are the age ranges of the students (poet-athletes)?

America SCORES first offers programming for grades ranging from 1<sup>st</sup>- 5<sup>th</sup> with all schools being required to have 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade program. The programs are divided into two categories: Jr. SCORES for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders; and Core programming for 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> graders. After a few years of successful programming, SCORES and the school can discuss Middle School expansion.

### How many days a week would programming be held at my school? How many students does the program support?

Core programming (3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade) meets M-TH with soccer games on select Thursday afternoons.

Jr. SCORES programming (1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> grade) meets four days a week.

All teams use a 1:16 ratio (any co-ed team is ideally 8 male/8 female)

### What are the hours of the Program?

All America SCORES programming is after-school with specific times ranging from 2:30-5:30pm depending on a school's dismissal time. Each practice ranges from 75 minutes to 90 minutes.

### How long is a season?

Seasons (fall and spring) are 10-12 weeks long, for 20-24 weeks annually.

### Who operates the America SCORES program at my school?

The day-to-day operation of the America SCORES program is ideally done by school staff, striving hire at least 80% of "coaches" from your school. In addition, one school staff is paid as the SCORES liaison to support the relationship between SCORES staff, the school leadership, and the families.

### Are daily lessons/curriculum provided? What about supplies and equipment for coaches and participants?

Yes, writing and soccer coaches are provided with SCORES curriculum, supplies, and equipment, and are supported by SCORES staff to ensure standardized, flexible, and contextual daily lessons.

SCORES supplies all participants with socks, shin guards, shorts, and a jersey for weekly soccer games.

### Do coaches get paid? And are they trained?

Yes, coaches are paid \$40 per session as well as compensated for trainings and special events.

Yes, we provide training at the beginning and in the middle of each season for both Soccer and Writing coaches. Coaches will be trained in all the curricula and lessons to be delivered during programming. Please note that all training and coach meetings are mandatory.



## Overview of Curriculum:

Our mission requires us to execute an innovative curriculum that demonstrates to young people how physical activity, creativity, and teamwork promote a sound body, mind, and character. All SCORES curricula are age-appropriate and aligned to Ohio's Common Core English Language Arts standards and Ohio Physical Education Content standards, address all five of the Social and Emotional Learning Core Competencies, and meets The Ohio Afterschool Network guidelines for providing quality afterschool programming. Integrated team-building exercises, reflective writing assignments, and an emphasis on community and unity are integrated throughout the curricula.

### **Jr. SCORES Program (Grades 1-2)**

*Playing with Poetry (Fall)*: Introduces students to poetry while building reading comprehension. Curriculum objectives include building foundational reading skills focusing specifically on phonological awareness, word recognition, fluency, expanding knowledge and exposure to diverse texts, and developing social and emotional core competencies.

*Playing with Words (Spring)* - Focuses on developing social and emotional core competencies. The team completes two mini-projects, one half-way through the season and one at the end of the season that ties together the previously learned social-emotional lessons. Curriculum objectives include awareness of other people's emotions or perspectives; expressing their feelings, opinions, strengths, and weaknesses verbally or in writing; managing emotions; showing good judgment when making decisions; accepting responsibility for their actions; building confidence through public speaking and sharing writing samples in front of peers.

### **Core Program (Grades 3-5)**

*Power of Poetry (Fall)*: Teaches students to read and comprehend poems that promote creative thinking. Curriculum objectives include recognizing differences between poetry and prose; understanding basic poetic terminology and conventions; identifying a variety of poems; using these different poetic styles as templates for their own works; understanding and executing the writing process; and developing public speaking and communication skills. The fall Power of Poetry season culminates with our community-wide Poetry Slam event where each team and one individual per team performs an original poem on stage in front of 500+ family and community members.

*Writing for the Community (Spring)*: Uses multidisciplinary texts and writing prompts to learn about their communities. Teams complete a meaningful, student-led community service project to help meet an identified need in their community. Together, each team will create a solution and implement a project to address the targeted need. Curriculum objectives include using writing as a positive tool to discover, celebrate, and improve their community; using teamwork and communication to facilitate positive change; setting goals and developing strategies to achieve those goals; and completing meaningful and relevant community service projects.

### **Soccer Curriculum (all grade levels)**

Soccer, as a popular sport requiring minimal equipment, is accessible to youth regardless of economic status. Coaches utilize the America SCORES Soccer Coach Manual, which emphasizes character-building skills such as leadership, teamwork, and commitment while providing progressive instruction in skill-related activities, ensuring that athletes at all levels are both challenged and supported. Daily curriculum-based practices incorporate activities that focus on healthy behaviors, self-esteem, goal setting, discipline, and resilience.