

Reflection: EEF Grant → Pop-Up Community Play Day

The Oak Hill Community is incredibly grateful to the Escondido Education Foundation for supporting our Pop-Up Community Play Days. This grant allowed us to create joyful, inclusive play experiences for students and families, and it has had a meaningful impact on our school community.

High Points:

The biggest high point was seeing how much joy these monthly play days brought to our students. Each month, students had the opportunity to explore new games, collaborate with classmates, and engage in playful, positive activities during recess. We had bubbles, music, sidewalk chalk, blankets on the grass, and a wide variety of games for students to choose from. These days created a true sense of community and belonging on campus.

One of the most powerful outcomes was that we had no behavior problems during our Pop-Up Community Play Days. Students were engaged, active, and excited to participate. It was clear that when students have access to meaningful, structured, and joyful play opportunities, they respond in incredibly positive ways.

Another high point was the leadership opportunity this created for our Otter Club student leaders. These students helped run the games, invited others to participate, and supported younger students. This was a wonderful opportunity for them to practice responsibility, communication, inclusion, and leadership in an authentic setting.

The day we invited parents was especially meaningful. Approximately 135 adults joined us, and it was beautiful to see whole families playing together at recess. Parents were able to see their children having fun, building friendships, and experiencing school as a place of joy and connection.

Low Points:

There were very few low points. The main challenge was that students needed more time to fully enjoy the activities and try something new. We ended up extending recess by five minutes on these days, which helped students have a fuller experience.

Changes for Next Year:

Next year, we would like to invite parents and families more often. Families loved seeing their children having so much fun at school, and we believe even more parents will participate if we plan and share the dates at the beginning of the year. We hope to continue building on this momentum by making Pop-Up Community Play Days a regular, anticipated tradition that strengthens student belonging, family engagement, and community connection at Oak Hill.





