



# 2015/16 School Year In-School Program Report

## Program Statistics

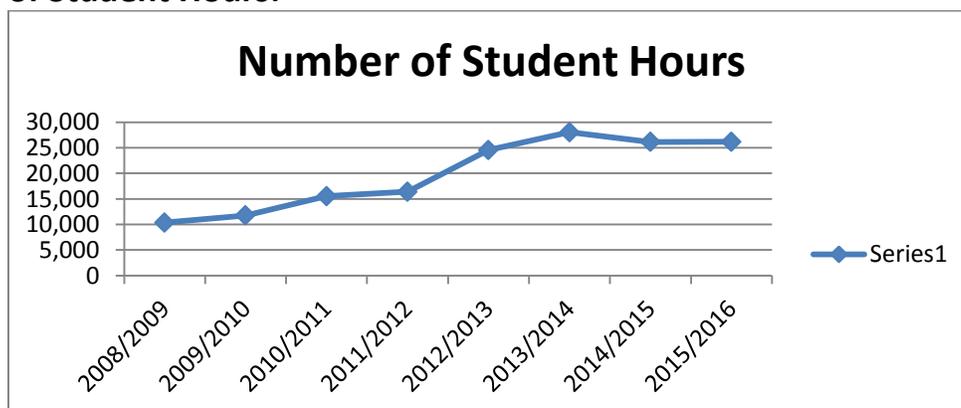
- Total Number of Students: 6,807
  - In-School 3-visit Program – 5,612 students (3% decrease from previous school year)
  - Nature Experience Field Trip (4<sup>th</sup> visit) - 926 students (45% increase from previous school year)
  - 12 week After School Program - 269 students- (23% increase from previous school year)
- Total Number of Programs Offered: 298
  - In-School 3-visit Program - 254
  - Nature Experience Field Trip (4<sup>th</sup> visit) - 22
  - 12 week After School Program - 22
- Demographics:
  - 58% Free and Reduced Lunch Program, an indicator of poverty
  - 60% minority
  - Thorne’s goal is to ensure that at least 70% of programs delivered will be to schools that meet one of two criteria: 50% minority or free and reduced lunch students; or the percent of minority or free and reduced lunch students is 50% greater than the district average. During the 2015/16 school year, 86% of programs delivered to schools met one of these two criteria.



## Participation History:

	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016
In-School 3-visit Program		2,706	3,502	4,481	6,094	6,337	5,811	5,612
Number of Students		5,625	6,911	5,329	7,105	7,491	6,669	6,807
Number of Student Hours	10,358	11,742	15,511	16,406	24,536	28,022	26,147	26,181

## Number of Student Hours:



## Major Changes in 2015/16:

- Thorne's Education Team worked to revise the Educational Philosophy through a collaborative process aimed at integrating learning from continued professional development and best practice in the field of EE. The new philosophy incorporates elements of Social Emotional Learning, Wild Play, the importance of repeated experiences with a mentor through time, and recognizes our participation in a larger continuum of EE experiences through collaboration with other providers.
- NEFT participant demographics shifted in order to reach students who would otherwise experience a gap in programming due to our transition in BVSD Field Trip programming from 4<sup>th</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. Thus, NEFT participants included 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade BVSD students who would otherwise have been skipped in the transition.
- Pioneer Elementary in Lafayette was added as a new Nature Immersion school in Fall 2015. Thorne's 3-visit In-School and After-School program were offered to all students at the school as well as Thorne's Field Trip and Summer Camp programs.
- Evaluation: Thorne expanded student evaluation during the 2015-2016 school year in both the In-School and After School programs based on industry best practice to measure Thorne's impact and understand how we are reaching our mission.



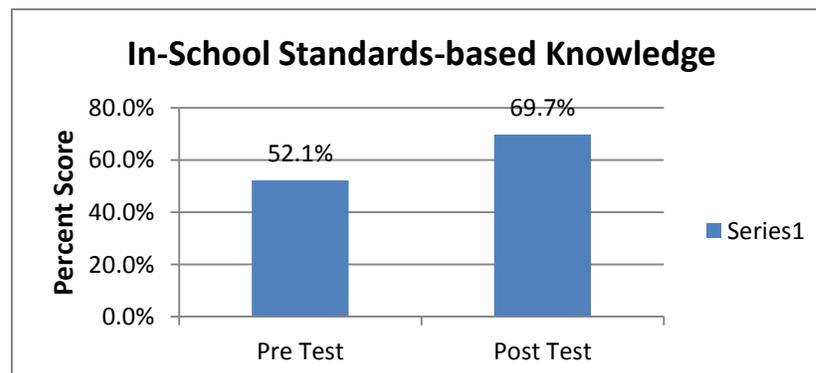
## Major Anticipated Changes for 2016/17:

- Thorne will add two more Nature Immersion Schools: University Hill in Boulder (BVSD), and North Ridge in Longmont (SVVSD).
- Thorne will restructure our staff to account for continued growth, adding a new full-time School Programs Manager and second Americorps position.
- Evaluation: Thorne plans to add to our In-School evaluation techniques in order to enhance our understanding of the type of impact our programs have by implementing coding of teacher survey comments and instructor notebooks.

## Student Evaluation Results:

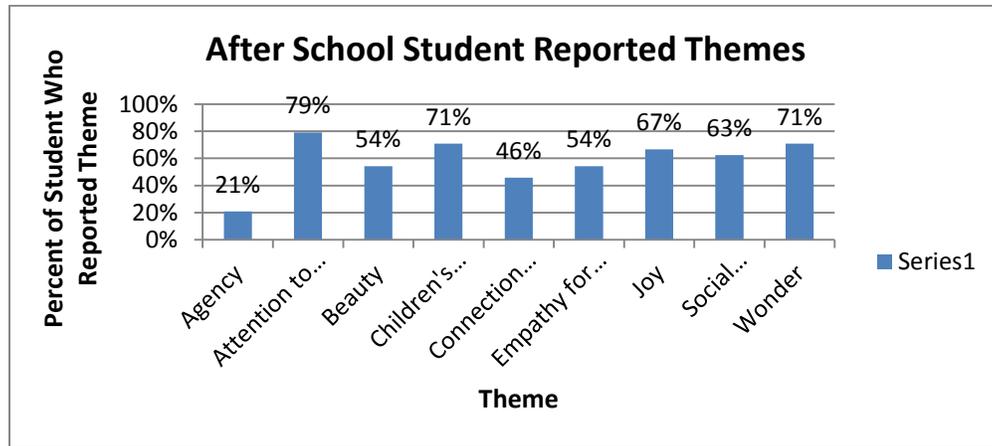
Thorne's goal with the In-School Program is to increase knowledge of standards based science content for students. Thorne determines change through a pre/post test that measures knowledge of specific standards we are addressing in our programs.

- Thorne's In-School Program increased students' standards-based knowledge by 17.6%. The statistical analysis of the pre/post-test scores provides Thorne staff the opportunity to say with confidence that their **In-School programming is having a positive impact on student knowledge of standards-based content.**



Thorne's goal with the After School Program is to meet our mission by providing access and affordances for youth to develop personal connections to nature through joyful experiences. Thorne determines the nature of participants' experiences through a process called Photo Elicitation, wherein students take photos and describe them to an interviewer. Student responses are coded for themes.

- Thorne's After School Program connects kids to nature by fostering awareness, wonder, and joy. Allowing children to engage with their passions such as running, hiding, jumping, and exploring helps them to engage and therefore connect with the world around them.



## Teacher Evaluation Results (n=88, 41% response rate)

**Rating the In-School Program:** (not at all, somewhat, mostly, completely)

- 92% of teachers felt the content was completely appropriate for the grade level (94% in 14/15); 8% felt it was mostly appropriate (6% in 14/15).
- 92% of teachers felt the delivery of the material was completely appropriate for the grade level (94% in 14/15); 8% felt it was mostly appropriate (5% in 14/15).
- 83% of teachers felt the students were completely engaged during the program (81% in 14/15); 15% felt they were mostly engaged (18% in 14/15).
- 84% of teachers completely felt the students learned something new from the program (87% in 14/15); 16% felt they mostly learned something new (13% in 14/15).
- 58% of teachers completely felt their students are more connected to nature after the program (62% in 14/15); 32% mostly felt their students were more connected to nature (30% in 14/15).

**Rating the value of the program:** (no value, some value, a lot of value)

- 90% of teachers felt the program had a lot of value in correlating to science standards (91% in 14/15), 9% felt it had some value (7% in 14/15).
- 64% of teachers felt the program had a lot of value in helping students prepare for CMAS science questions in 5<sup>th</sup> grade (70% in 14/15), 36% felt it had some value (28% in 14/15).



- 86% of teachers felt the program had a lot of value in working effectively with ESL students (86% in 14/15), 14% felt it had some value (13% in 14/15).
- 89% of teachers felt the program provided a lot of benefit to them as a teacher (93% in 14/15), 11% felt it provided some benefit (6% in 14/15).
- 78% of teachers felt eBooks had a lot of benefit in incorporating literacy into science and/or helping to meet their literacy goals (76% in 14/15), 22% felt they had some benefit (24% in 14/15).

- 84% of teachers felt eBooks had a lot of benefit in encouraging students to reflect on their learning (86% in 14/15), 22% felt they had some benefit (14% in 14/15).
- 88% of teachers felt eBooks had a lot of benefit in giving students a sense of ownership over the content learned (90% in 14/15), 10% felt they had some benefit (10% in 14/15).
- 92% of teachers felt eBooks had a lot of benefit in providing students with lasting documentation of students' learning (92% in 14/15), 8% felt they had some benefit (7% in 14/15).

**Rating the Nature Experience Field Trip:** (not at all, somewhat, mostly, completely)

- 100% of teachers felt the field trip content was completely appropriate for the grade level (100% in 14/15), 0% felt it was mostly (0% in 14/15).
- 89% felt the delivery of the field trip material was completely appropriate for the grade level (100% in 14/15); 11% felt it mostly was (0% in 14/15).
- 100% of teachers felt their students were completely engaged during the field trip (100% in 14/15); 0% felt they were mostly engaged (0% in 14/15).
- 89% of teachers felt their students learned something new from the field trip (90% in 14/15), 11% felt they mostly learned something new (0% in 14/15).
- 89% of teachers felt that the field trip was a good extension of the In-School Program (90% in 14/15), 11% felt it mostly was (0% in 14/15).
- 78% of teachers felt their students were more connected to nature after the field trip (100% in 14/15), 22% mostly did (0% in 14/15).
- 89% of teachers felt the topics covered on the field trip completely met their expectations (90% in 14/15), 11% mostly did (10% in 14/15).
- 100% of teachers who responded to the survey said they would schedule another Nature Experience field trip in the future (100% in 14/15).



**Overall Program Metrics:**

- 99% of teachers who responded to the survey said they would schedule an In-School program again in the future (99% in 14/15).
- Fees paid by schools totaled only \$51,731 or 27% of the programs total \$194,118 in expenses. By fundraising for more than 73% of program costs, Thorne is able to ensure its programs are delivered to the students with the greatest need, rather than the schools with the most money for outside programming.

### Praise for Thorne's In-School Program

- Our children gave up their traditional Halloween party to attend this field trip because 10/30 was the only date available. We traditionally trick or treat around the University campus. Afterwards, parents emailed to say their children said the Sombrero Marsh experience was more fun than trick or treating. Now that's a compliment!
- The students are so engaged with the hands-on activities and games. I've heard them using vocabulary from your lessons.
- Wind and solar energy fit right into content standards in Earth Science. The students gain a lot though hands-on experience in the Thorne Project.
- The kids loved the in-school program. They looked forward to it each week and continued talking about it afterwards. They cheered when their books arrived.
- I'm so grateful to Thorne for bringing lessons on plants to our classroom that teaches rich content and concepts in a fun way engaging students and reaching them with important learning about science and the natural world.
- This fits perfectly with a unit we do on the Colorado Life Zones! The hands-on approach is perfect for our ESL students... and ALL students!
- I think the books are also a valuable tool for the students to share and re-visit their learning with their parents.
- We are doing a project right now where the students design a new insect. Each of the students knows what the insects must have to be considered an insect (6 legs, exoskeleton, 3 body parts, compound eyes, etc.) Go Thorne!
- They all loved it. One of my students went to one of your summer camps and shared this connection with our class.
- Some of the kids worked through their fears of holding worms. They loved the experiment with the light. It's a great program and I have loved it for years.
- They loved the worms and the owl pellets. It was really cool because a couple weeks after Thorne, Eco-Cycle came to make paper. Her lesson started with a food web and the impact of taking the producers out. The kids made the connection to our Thorne work... it was like the stars aligned!
- The students were using bird names and noticing birds on the playground.
- The students are still making connections with the books we have and what they learned from Thorne. The



children enjoy looking at the few little books that were left over from last year. They were particularly interested in the bats when we went to the zoo. Great vocabulary expansion!

- We are still referencing her lessons, and the experience gave students a true understanding of the information she taught. They were making fossil predictions and I had kids mentioning the shape of the teeth and telling me if it was an herbivore, carnivore or an omnivore. So much retention!
- The staff did an excellent job mixing up the experiences and the instructional modalities.