

Southeast Arvada Youth Soccer (SAYS)

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SAYS Program Coordinator: German Zarate

SAYS (Southeast Arvada Youth Soccer) grew out of a soccer club in the Project Prepare after school program at Foster Elementary School.

Project Prepare collaborated with parent volunteers, German Zarate and Amanda Duncan, to create an afterschool soccer club for the students of Foster Elementary School. Soccer at Foster was very successful over the years, and it was always a dream to find a way to have the teams at Foster play against other teams.

Thanks to a **Healthy Places: Active Living Community Grant**, all the pieces began to fall into place. Strong partnerships between Jeffco Schools and the City of Arvada, Colorado Rapids Youth Soccer Club's Soccer for Success program, Arvada Soccer Association, APEX Park and Recreation and others, allowed for the creation of Southeast Arvada Youth Soccer (**SAYS**), a free soccer league for underserved kids in five low income Jefferson County elementary schools in southeast Arvada. All partner schools are designated as School-wide Title I schools. Title I is a federally funded program that targets resources to districts and schools whose needs are the greatest. The program allocates its resources based upon the poverty rates of students enrolled in schools and districts.

SAYS collaborates with the family liaisons and principals at each of our schools and has created wonderful opportunities to serve not only students, but engage their families, as well. Not only do parents serve as coaches and mentors, but they are very passionate supporters at the Saturday games. Motivated by watching their kids get healthy on the soccer field, one group of soccer moms organized a sideline Zumba class for parents.

SAYS operates for 12 weeks each fall and spring. As of Spring of 2016, SAYS had a total of 12 teams from six Jeffco Elementary schools including Foster, Secrest, Lawrence, Arvada K8, Swanson and Allendale. More than 180 students are served by this thriving and important program.



Donations to sustain this important program may be made to:

Foster Elementary School
SAYS/Project Prepare
5300 Saulsbury Court
Arvada, CO 80002