

Running 4 Change

Tamalpais Union High School District
Tamalpais High School

Isaias Franco

@Running4Change



Running 4 Change is an afterschool youth empowerment program for at-risk teens at Tam High. The program encourages students to push themselves beyond their expectation and comfort zones through running. By training our students to run in marathons, students have demonstrated amazing transformations in attendance, behavior, grades, and overall well-being. The program was created by special education teacher, Isaias Franco, in his first year teaching at Tamalpais High School. The intention of the program is to engage student in the learning process through extracurricular activities and goal setting. Students who had been reluctant to participate in their academics were targeted to participate in collaborative trainings to prepare both their bodies and minds for the rigor and necessary endurance required to complete a run. The belief that physical training could carry over to the classroom was forefront in the motivation for creating the program.

The Running 4 Change program helps students develop a sense of teamwork, community, confidence, and accomplishment. The program also helps students connect to the school community through fundraising events, race participation, and speaking engagements.



Running 4 Change is exemplary because it truly attempts to address the needs of the whole child. While the focus of the program is at-risk students, any student at Tam may participate in Running 4 Change to the degree s/he sees fit. The program helps students achieve personal academic success, and helps build a sense of trust and camaraderie among students and teachers. Students make the connection between achievement and a training regime. Students learn to tap into their physical and mental reserves as they break through barriers and prove to themselves that with great effort and hard work comes great success.