

Huskies helping Huskies - An annual tradition continues online

Hartford Sylvia Encinas Elementary School | Chandler, AZ

"I really appreciate the tutoring you are all providing. My student feels very confident after the tutoring session!"
- A Hartford 4th grade teacher

Why PeerSquared?

Every Tuesday after school, a dozen or so middle and high school students from around the neighborhood came to Hartford Elementary School. They were here as peer tutors to help the driven student of this Title I school become even more successful! But this was before March 2020 and before schools closed...

School became quite the rollercoaster because of the pandemic. The different learning modalities left some confused after class and others behind on assignments. Parents were desperate for additional resources.

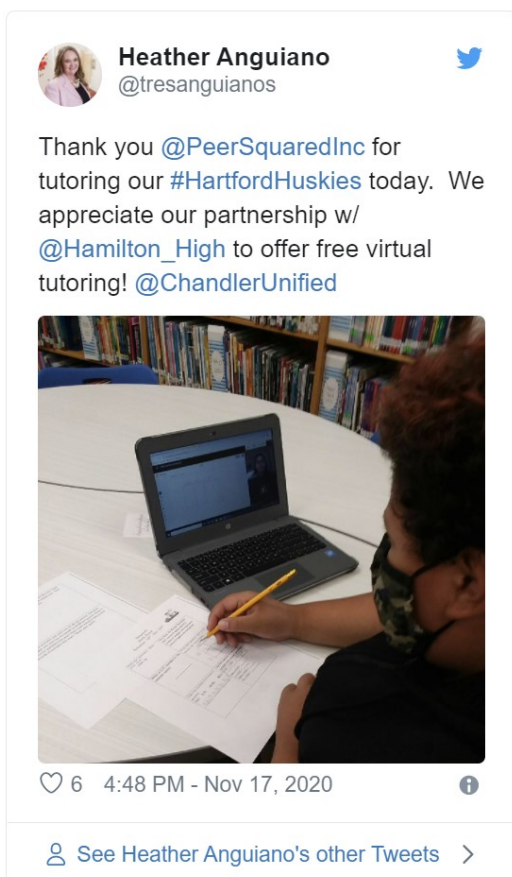
In November 2020, PeerSquared, together with the Hamilton High School Peer Tutoring Club it partnered with, reached out to Hartford's principal to see if peer tutoring could resume in an online fashion. Without any hesitancy, the principal agreed. But even so, additional accommodations had to be considered to reach the students. Around 70% of Hartford's students were Hispanic, and the Chandler, AZ neighborhood the school was located in had **a poverty rate double that of the rest of the school district**, so access to technology and the internet were potential issues. Thus, **it was crucial to provide students with accessible support while following COVID-19 mitigation protocols.**



Hartford Sylvia Encinas Elementary School
#HartfordHuskies



Hamilton High School Peer Tutoring Club
#HamiltonHuskies



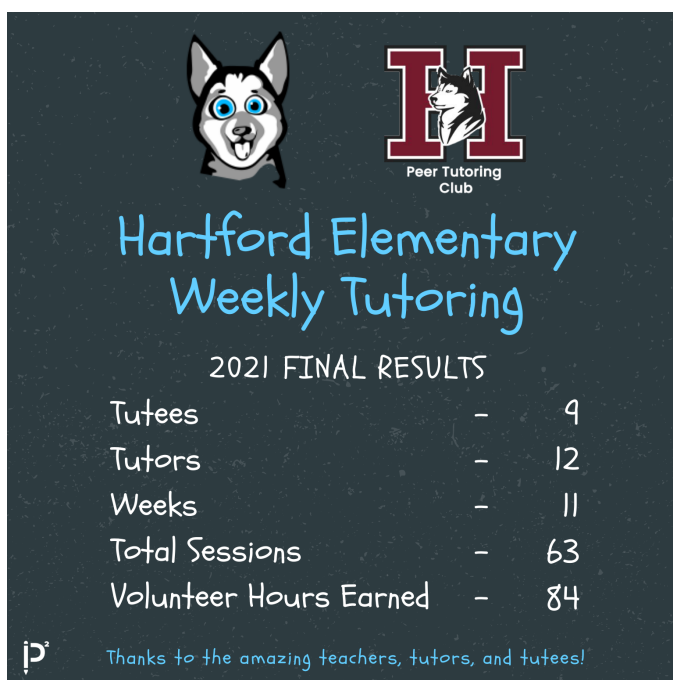
What Happened?

November 17th, 2020 was the first tutoring session between a veteran peer tutor from Hamilton High School's Peer Tutoring Club and a 4th grader from Hartford Elementary School. In order to increase the accessibility of peer tutoring and ensure COVID-19 protocols were followed, peer tutoring sessions were scheduled by Hartford's teachers using **PeerSquared's online tutoring platform**, then the sessions would take place virtually between tutor and tutee while the tutee was in the school's library on campus. At this point, Chandler Unified School District, which Hartford and Hamilton were in, had already resumed in-person learning, but it was decided that **virtual tutoring** was still best out of caution. This implementation actually **allowed more tutors to participate and made 1-on-1 tutoring possible** because, in the past, not all tutors who wanted to volunteer at Hartford could make the 15-min trip from Hamilton High School if they did not already drive to school.

What was the Impact?

The implementation of this program was new for everyone. The preparation for every Tuesday session started the Friday before with teachers booking sessions and attaching worksheets to be used during the session. Hamilton's peer tutors then accepted, set up, and prepared for the sessions before finally meeting their tutees who joined the Google Meet from their school library.

For one hour, up to nine Hartford students sat spread out around the library working with their tutors on homework, getting caught up on class content, or additional review work.



2021 tutoring results between the Hamilton Huskies and the Hartford Huskies 🎉

When tutoring wrapped up at the end of April, here's what the teachers reported 🙌

✅ **Improved homework grades** 📝

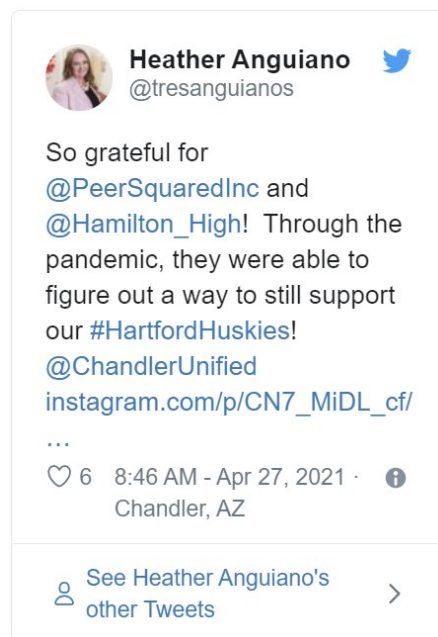
✅ **Increase confidence** 💪

✅ **Increase unprompted engagement** 🙌

What's Next?

All teachers who had students in this program agreed that peer tutoring would benefit those who need it and some were interested in involving more in peer tutoring. They said that not only is extra support always beneficial, but **peer tutoring also allows more students to receive the 1-on-1 help that they themselves don't always have time to provide.**

With the outlook that next school year will be more "normal," Hartford's library will hopefully return to the inviting atmosphere where students from across the neighborhood come together to help each other succeed, and many more teachers and students involved in peer tutoring.



About PeerSquared

PeerSquared is a public benefit corporation whose mission is to improve K-12 education through the power of students and their community. Just like in the Hartford program, PeerSquared builds peer tutoring programs where trained peer tutors provide relatable and effective academic support for students at or close to their age. Programs built by PeerSquared emphasize accessibility, sustainability, and systematic integration to improve grades and engagement.

Visit peer-squared.info to learn more.

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