

What is MOUSE Squad?

MOUSE Squad is a youth development program that enables students to become a tech support resource for their site while engaging their capacities for leadership and community involvement.

21st-century skills for your students

Our standards-based, 10-module certification curriculum includes lessons and activities that address everything students need to establish a student-led tech help desk: hardware, software and networking skills, troubleshooting and computer maintenance, customer service and leadership skills.

Building interests beyond the classroom

The program is rounded out with monthly and yearly projects, specialized certifications (Garage Robotics and Serious Games) and contests offered by MOUSE, which engage students in creative applications of technology and design and expose them to a wide range of tech-based careers and areas of study.

Supporting your teachers

MOUSE Squad of California provides opportunities for training and support for MOUSE Squad Coordinators on a regular basis.

What is the role of the MOUSE Squad Coordinator?

The MOUSE Squad Coordinator is the site staff member who works directly with MOUSE Squad students.

The Coordinator is responsible for:

Facilitating student certification

Coordinators lead their students through the certification curriculum, which is full of interactive activities, teambuilding challenges, and technical lessons. They also have the option to engage students with specialist strands in robotics and gaming.

Assigning help desk tickets

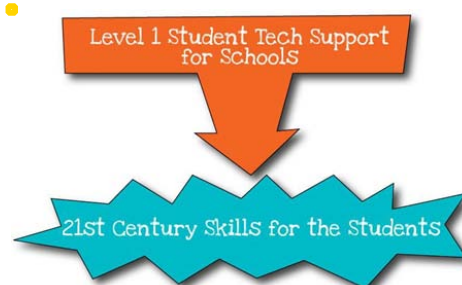
Coordinators use CaseTracker, the MOUSE Squad online ticket tracking system, to assign tech support cases to students and track their progress.

Supporting student leaders

Coordinators support their students' roles as technicians and leaders within their community.

Supporting student projects

Coordinators may advise, support and facilitate students on MOUSE Squad projects that go beyond site tech support such as mentoring, community workshops, video yearbook or A/V Club, and other independent projects in technology and digital media.



How do I pick a MOUSE Squad Coordinator for my site?

Educators of all different backgrounds and areas of expertise have been successful MOUSE Squad Coordinators—your Coordinator doesn't have to be your site's computer teacher, tech liaison, etc.

"Our MOUSE Squad kids are getting real-life experience in troubleshooting technology issues and have been extremely helpful. Our MOUSE Squad demonstrates leadership skills and technician responsibilities while communicating well with our community."

Principal, Los Arboles Elementary, San Jose

An Administrator's Guide to MOUSE Squad

Here are some guidelines for picking a Coordinator:

Tech knowledge: While your Coordinator doesn't have to be someone who considers themselves particularly tech-savvy, they should be someone with a strong interest in technology.

Focus on youth development: Your Coordinator should be someone with a strong interest in promoting student leadership and the role of students as strong resources for their site.

Availability: Your Coordinator should have around 6-8 hours per week available for planning lessons and reviewing curriculum, facilitating activities, and supervising and supporting students.

Additional support: Sites are encouraged to select more than one Coordinator to act as back-ups.



Is my site meeting MOUSE Squad's expectations?

MOUSE Squad is designed for flexibility and we don't expect the program to look the same from site to site. However, there are a few key things that every MOUSE Squad should be doing:

- Coordinators must participate in trainings and orientations provided by MOUSE Squad.
- Coordinators must create a Coordinator account and a Squad Page on mousesquad.org.
- Participating students must create student accounts on mousesquad.org.
- Coordinators and students must meet regularly and engage in training activities to prepare students to participate in tech support and/or technology projects at their site.

How can I support my MOUSE Squad Members and Coordinator?

There's a lot you can do to support your MOUSE Squad and Coordinator! Here are some suggestions:

Provide meeting space

Make sure that your Coordinator and MOUSE Squad have access to a meeting place on a regular basis. This should be a location where students can get online and store materials such as nonworking computers.

Access to technology

Make sure your Squad has access to the technology at your site. Work with your IT staff to find the right permissions, login credentials and network access so that your squad can provide basic tech support.

Spread the word

Tell staff about your MOUSE Squad's projects—i.e., if your MOUSE Squad is taking a survey of site equipment to develop a maintenance schedule, encourage staff to report on their equipment.

Facilitate communication between IT teams

Your Coordinator should work closely with your IT staff to maximize MOUSE Squad opportunities to participate in tech support, learn from professionals, and ensure that your IT team sees MOUSE Squad as a productive support team and ally.

Support MOUSE Squad outside your site

Support your Coordinators' efforts to organize students field trips, shadowships and internships.

Support your MOUSE Squad in public forums

If your MOUSE Squad helps with A/V for an assembly, give them a shout out. If they help you with a tech problem, make sure your office staff knows. Which brings us to...

Call on MOUSE Squad when you need tech support!

An Administrator's Guide to MOUSE Squad

Depending on the tech resources at your site, as well as resources such as per-session funds and staff time, you may not be able to do everything on this list. However, the sentiment behind all of these suggestions is the same, and doesn't require extensive resources: it's a shift in site culture to emphasize the importance of the work your student technicians and MOUSE Squad Coordinator are doing, to support their place alongside any other IT staff at your site, and to help them grow into student leaders who use their skills to support their communities.



Where can I go for more information about MOUSE Squad?

You will find more information (presentations, videos, curriculum overview, and more) about MOUSE Squad by visiting ca.mousesquad.org/educators/overview.

How do I sign my site up for MOUSE Squad?

Have the staff member(s) who will be your MOUSE Squad Coordinator(s) schedule a call with MOUSE's Director, Jan Half, at 408-712-5912 or email her at jhalf@ca.mousesquad.org. This should be done before your site has joined, to make sure that your Coordinator understands the commitment and to begin forming a plan for implementation at your site well in advance.

Apply for MOUSE Squad at the ca.mousesquad.org/educators/signup.html.

Pay a program fee of \$2,000, which covers licensing, training and program materials and support (the regular program fee of \$5,000 is offset by funding from California companies and foundations). Mini-Grants of \$250 to \$500 are available for qualified California schools. For more information on grants and on what is included in the fees, see ca.mousesquad.org/educators/funding.html.

Have the Coordinator(s) attend an online orientation webinar and an in-person training session. These will be scheduled once all paperwork is completed and payment is received.

You can always contact MOUSE Squad of California with questions or requests:

Jan Half, Program Director
MOUSE Squad of California (MSCA)
jhalf@ca.mousesquad.org
408-712-5912 | 650-573-6586 (fax)

"We love how MOUSE Squad fosters student self-esteem through transfer of IT knowledge and exposure to working with adults. We believe this is the key to raising future leaders and innovators in the high-tech field."

Rambus Engineer and MOUSE Squad Volunteer

