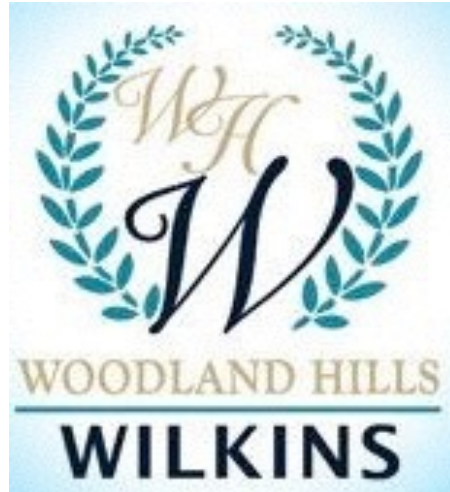


Junior Achievement Day

By Mr. Erik Meredith



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Focus/Purpose of Assessment Project: The focus of this project is to increase student achievement using a hands-on learning approach. The hands-on learning takes the principles of the basic skills taught in the grade level and allows the student to use those skills to demonstrate mastery in a non-traditional setting.

Budgeting: There are no budgetary requirements for this plan, as the teachers supervising the student volunteers are working during their normal contractual period and the students are volunteering during the school day.

Alignment to the Leadership Standards:

- 1.1 Develop a Vision
- 1.2 Articulate a Vision
- 1.3 Implement a Vision
- 1.4 Steward a Vision
- 2.2 Provide Effective Instructional Program
- 2.3 Apply Best Practice to Student Learning
- 3.1 Manage the Organization
- 3.2 Manage Operations
- 3.3 Manage Resources
- 5.1 Acts with Integrity
- 5.2 Acts Fairly
- 5.3 Acts Ethically
- 6.1 Understand the Larger Context
- 6.2 Respond to the Larger Context

Scheduling: Scheduling will not need to be adjusted. The teacher will remain in their classroom with their students during the day, while the student volunteers facilitate the actual lessons. Special area teachers will go to the classroom of their designated class for a certain period in order for that teacher to be relieved for a prep period. No lunch changes need made, as the student volunteers will eat with their respective classes.

Analysis of Student Achievement Data: The student volunteers will facilitate the learning for the periods. The homeroom teachers will circulate throughout the room during the activities to assist students in recalling vital information to performing the tasks. While circulating, the teacher will also informally assess each student's performance to determine mastery of the subject material. This will give a more real-world sense to the application of the subject matter and assess students on the fifth and sixth level of Bloom's Taxonomy, which is Synthesis and Evaluation.

Woodland Hills School District Mission Statement

Woodland Hills School District makes students its first priority. The District provides each student with an excellent educational experience that is driven by the highest expectations and prepares students for meaningful participation in all facets of society.

Woodland Hills School District Core Values

Safe and secure environment
Challenging curriculum
Permission to dream

Vision Statement for Assessment Project

To put into practice real-world learning situations to allow students to perform on the highest levels

Goals for Assessment Project

To increase student achievement using real-world, scenario based application of skills
To allow students to cooperatively work together using proper social and emotional skills

Research/Literature Review

How Teaching Matters: Bringing the Classrooms Back Into Discussions of Teacher Quality (Harold Wenglinsky)

In this report, teacher's classroom practices are examined and compared with the effectiveness of their instruction. One of the underlying themes through this study was that students overwhelmingly performed better when challenged to think at higher levels.

These levels can be looked at through Bloom's Taxonomy. Students are almost always assessed at the lowest levels of recalling information. However, once students truly understand and comprehend the information, they can then interpret it and apply it to everyday situations. This is when students demonstrate the best understanding of concepts. So, it is safe to see that teachers who challenge their students at high levels can expect better results from their students.

Teaching Science Through Inquiry (David L. Haury)

In this article, we see how the Department of Education and national science organizations endorse a hands-on approach for teaching science. It discusses how students need to have opportunities to practice and test different things in science and hands-on learning is the best approach to conduct this. It also discusses that teachers do not have a uniform method for conducting this type of instruction.

This can be easily transferred to any subject area. Where science seems like the basic hands-on subject area, many other subject areas can benefit from it. In mathematics,

students could practice applying skills to everyday life, such as checkbooks. They would be practicing basic skills such as adding and subtracting. In social studies, students could create communities in their classroom and see how the social connections build a community. The possibilities are endless when it comes to practicing skills in the classroom with hands-on learning.

Plan of Action

Steps/Tasks	Person Responsible	Timeline	Resources Needed
1. Discuss Junior Achievement Day with building principal	Erik Meredith	August	Junior Achievement program summaries
2. Contact high school Interact Club sponsor to arrange for volunteers	Erik Meredith Kevin McGuire	September	Program summaries and basic itinerary for day
3. Develop potential list of student volunteers	Kevin McGuire	Fall	Interact Club members
4. Develop schedule for daily activities	Erik Meredith	December	Class room numbers and copy of Master Schedule
5. Align Common Core standards to activities in each lesson	Erik Meredith	December	Common Core standards, program summaries
6. Finalize student volunteer list and assign student volunteers to classrooms	Erik Meredith Kevin McGuire	April	Interact Club members
7. Host training from Junior Achievement staff to train student volunteers	Kevin McGuire	April	Junior Achievement staff trainer, classroom kits for distribution
8. Confirm classroom assignments for student volunteers	Erik Meredith	April	Classroom assignment sheet
9. Perform dry run rehearsal to make sure student volunteers are prepared	Kevin McGuire	May	Classroom kits, student volunteers

Steps/Tasks	Person Responsible	Timeline	Resources Needed
10. Conduct in-service training for classroom teachers on assessing student learning on Junior Achievement Day	Erik Meredith	May	Program summaries, classroom kit for each grade level
11. Conduct Junior Achievement Day	Erik Meredith	May	Classroom kit for each classroom, student volunteers for each classroom
12. Conduct debriefing when done to evaluate	Erik Meredith	May	

Reflection

This project has given me the opportunity to work with faculty from my own building to organize a task through completion, as well as faculty from another building. I have learned coordination of resources for the good of the students and how best to organize those resources once they have been identified. Communication is key. It cannot be said enough. Without clear and concise communication between the different levels, no task can ever be successful. A leader has to be clear with every direction that is given. The directions have to be understood the first time, otherwise, they could be interpreted differently and failure is sure to follow. Good leaders effectively communicate with their staff regularly and check-in regularly to ensure every task is being executed with the precision that is expected. It becomes very important when communicating with a faculty member in another building. You may not be able to see them regularly, so it is important to check-in via email, phone conference, or Skype to ensure each step is

being completed. The most valuable skill I learned through this process is communication.

Potential Challenges and Changes

Throughout the process, the project had challenges and opportunities for change for the next time. One challenge was the communication between our school, the high school, and Junior Achievement. The high school did not always communicate back quickly, making it difficult to make decisions without all of the information available to me. This is a challenge that administrators face- lack of communication on one end and having to make a decision without always having all of the necessary information.

Another challenge was on the day of the event. As the bus pulled up with the high school students and staff chaperones, I am told that two of the volunteers did not show up for school- and they were both assigned the same classroom! So, I had to quickly close the class for the day and spread the students out between the two remaining third grade classrooms. Luckily, the teacher had also taken the day off, so coverage had to be limited due to this move. Next year, I would have involved more students so we could have substitutes without worrying about if a student or two did not show up.

Results

It is difficult to gauge the results on a project based activity, however, the reception from staff and students was phenomenal. During the day as I walked from class to class, students were actively engaged in the lessons and processes and demonstrating deep practice of material learned throughout the year. Teachers also commented to me as I was in their rooms that they hope we have a day like this

scheduled for next year because they believe it helped their students with application of the skills. The high school students were also just as excited when they left, describing how the day was a great experience for them and how they enjoyed working with the younger elementary students. The high school students learned just as much about the application of skills as the elementary students involved, allowing for a mutual learning experience for all involved.