
Service Learning Lesson Plan

Project Title: Big/Little Buddy Mentoring Program

Grade Level: High School
Theme: Mentorship

Duration: Semester or Year-Long

Main Subject Area: 21st Century Skills

Objective/Description

The School-Based Mentoring Program matches high school students with elementary/middle students. The matches meet in the school setting on designated days of the month. The time is broken into three segments including: participating in group activities, promoting trust, cooperation and modeling positive social interaction, spending one-to-one working on academics as assigned by the Little Buddy's teacher, and having fun time to build positive relationships.

The elementary/middle school teachers or counselors refer children participating in the program. They have been identified as children who would benefit from a one-to-one relationship. The program is intended to provide support and assistance to young children to help them increase their self-confidence, social competence, grades, and empathy for others. The volunteers are carefully screened high school students willing to commit to the program for a minimum of one school year. Each volunteer is screened for appropriate communication and social interaction skills and a desire to help a younger child. (High school students are also screened for appropriate academic scores.) All mentors receive an orientation training as well as monthly advisory meetings.

Driving Question

How can high school students improve the social-emotional well-being and academic skills of elementary/middle school students?

Investigation

Research, class instruction, interviewing civic leaders and/or professionals, surveying neighbors or peers

- Students hear from elementary & middle School Counselors about their students' social-emotional and academic gaps. A need for qualified mentors is discussed.
- Interested high school students complete an application/interview process in addition to completing signed permission slip in order to participate in program. School counselor and/or sponsor give final permission to participate.
- Students and sponsors research pre/post assessment tests that are administered to mentees at the beginning and end of the Big/Little Buddy program to determine program's success.

Preparation

Collaborative problem solving, planning, and task assignment by & with the students

- Mentors receive orientation training on topics such as: roles & responsibilities, building rapport & trust, confidentiality, active listening, goal-setting and lesson planning, management & discipline techniques, communication amongst parent, teacher, sponsor, as well as assessment/evaluation.

- High schoolers meet with elementary & middle school teachers to plan appropriate educational enrichment lessons.
- Mentors develop and deliver mentee interest survey to elementary/middle school in order to elicit additional personal information to help match mentors with appropriate mentees.
- Students determine and finalize mentoring schedule and mentor pairs based on anticipated compatibility.
- Students contact local businesses or BEST Partner to ask for sponsorship to help cover expenses for end-of-year awards/graduation ceremony.

Action

Service activities or methods used to address a social issue or community need

- The high school students provide consistent on-site, school-based mentoring to at-risk elementary/middle school students for a period of one year.
- Mentoring sessions include educational enrichment activities focusing on reading and math, homework assistance, games, and relationship building.

Reflection

Frequent assessment of students' growing knowledge and developing skills; refer to driving question

- The mentors compare the pre/post test results of their mentees to determine the extent of the success of the program.
- Mentors and mentees create story board to discuss and review Big/Little Buddy program.
- Mentees and/or mentors participate in a "Four Corners" pre/post-reflection activity.

Description: The sponsor makes a statement to the group, to which students can *strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree*. Groups form around corners of the room that are labeled with responses to the statement. Members from each opinion group are asked to explain the reason why they selected that corner. Students must listen carefully, and can change/move positions if they change perspectives. Students are reminded that they are voicing their opinion—there is no right or wrong answer. Sample statements may include, "I care about school.", "I feel good about myself." or "I have a friend/someone that cares about me".

Demonstration of Knowledge

Assessment of students' knowledge/skills and project outcomes

- With support from a local business, the mentoring program hosts an awards ceremony/graduation ceremony to celebrate the accomplishments of each participant. A collage or photo board is displayed at the event. The mentors hand out certificates (or diplomas) to mentees.
- Mentors lead ceremony and provide slideshow along with a commencement speech.

Community Partners

Includes anyone who offers expertise to the project or who benefits from the project

School Counselors, Family Resource Center Personnel, Local Business/BEST Partner

Outcome

Funds or goods generated, direct or indirect service provided, advocacy or education done

Students and Teachers use reflection, process monitoring, analysis, etc. to evaluate outcomes.

Secondary Subject Areas (All that apply are in bold)

Core content areas: This service learning project would be content appropriate specifically in Psychology, Intro to Education, in content areas where both students would benefit from the work as well as FEA, NHS, and other appropriate student organizations.

- English, Reading, Language Arts
- World Languages
- Arts
- Mathematics
- Science
- Economics
- Geography
- History
- Government and Civics
- Global Awareness
- Financial, Economic, Business, and Entrepreneurial Literacy
- Civic Literacy
- Health Literacy
- Environmental Literacy

21st Century Skills (All that apply are in bold)

- **Career Readiness**
- **Creativity and Innovation**
- **Communication and Collaboration**
- **Critical Thinking and Problem Solving**
- Physical Education
- **Initiative and Self-direction**
- **Flexibility and Adaptability**
- Consumerism
- Information Literacy
- Media Literacy
- Technology Literacy
- **Productivity and Accountability**
- **Leadership and Responsibility**
- **Social and Cross-cultural Skills**

21st Century Skills

COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

- Articulate thoughts and ideas effectively using oral, written and nonverbal communication skills in a variety of forms and contexts
- Listen effectively to decipher meaning, including knowledge, values, attitudes and intentions
- Use communication for a range of purposes (e.g. to inform, instruct, motivate and persuade)
- Demonstrate ability to work effectively and respectfully with diverse teams
- Exercise flexibility and willingness to be helpful in making necessary

FLEXIBILITY AND ADAPTABILITY

- Adapt to varied roles, jobs responsibilities, schedules and contexts
- Compromises to accomplish a common goal
- Understand, negotiate and balance diverse views and beliefs to reach workable solutions, particularly in multi-cultural environments

INITIATIVE AND SELF-DIRECTION

- Set goals with tangible and intangible success criteria
- Balance tactical (short-term) and strategic (long-term) goals
- Utilize time and manage workload efficiently
- Monitor, define, prioritize and complete tasks without direct oversight

SOCIAL AND CROSS-CULTURAL SKILLS

- Know when it is appropriate to listen and when to speak
- Respect cultural differences and work effectively with people from a range of social and cultural backgrounds
- Conduct themselves in a respectable, professional manner

TEACHERS & STUDENTS:

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WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR YOUR STORY ABOUT EMBEDDING SERVICE LEARNING PRACTICES AND HOW YOU ARE CHANGEMAKERS!

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