

Grayson County High School Transition Team Accomplishments: The Steps We Took To Get There

School Store

1. Team meetings to discuss ideas for school-based enterprises and create action plans; support from principal sought and received.
2. Scoured school and grounds for store site. Found small space for initial location.
3. Looked for available grant funding to supply building materials for a stand-alone building to be situated on school grounds.
4. Discussed plans with Building Trades class and received their support for building the store.
5. Applied for a grant through Lowe's, the Toolkit for Educators for \$5,000.
6. Applied for and received a mini-grant from VDOE TTAC at Radford University to purchase cash register, mobile cart, store supplies and store inventory.
7. Developed a business plan with our local Job Development Director.
8. Had a grand opening ceremony with ribbon cutting for the store in the initial indoor space. Invited press, division superintendent, administrators, Lowes personnel, teachers and students.
9. Received the grant from Lowe's. Students in the Building Trades class built the store.
10. Held a school-wide contest to name the school. Winning name: Devil's Den, after the school team, the Blue Devils.
11. Once school was built, we staffed it with two dedicated teachers, one who opens and helps run the store each day from 8:00 to 8:30 AM and from 3:00 to 3:30, and one who manages the mobile cart with a student each day in the gym, where students gather before classes begin for the day.
12. Created School Store \$1 Coupons to give to teachers to give to students for rewards/motivation.
13. Conduct special contests and games for the holidays.
14. Two students in special education are involved in setting up Corn Hole games outside the Devil's Den each morning when the weather is nice.
15. Our store is in its 3rd year of operation. We have had approximately 15 students in special education directly involved in running the store. Most students have Specific Learning Disabilities or Other Health Impairments. We also have students with more significant disabilities assisting in store duties.

Coffee Business

1. During team meetings to brainstorm ideas for school-based enterprises, a coffee business was discussed and researched, After launch of the Devil's Den, we put our efforts into getting this idea up and running.
2. Original plan was to serve coffee/tea/smoothies out of the Devil's Den to both students and teachers, but our principal would not approve including students. We felt we would not get enough business from teachers alone to come into the store and buy coffee.

3. Further discussions and research led us to decide upon the involvement of students in our study skills classes and students in self-contained classrooms to deliver coffee within the building on a weekly basis. We elicited the support of school staff to commit to purchasing coffee once each week at \$2 a cup. We received ample support.
4. Our Special Education Director supported us by allocating funds to purchase heavy-duty dishwasher safe coffee mugs with lids.
5. The study skills teacher and the self-contained classroom teacher worked together to come up with a schedule for students:
Monday – deliver menus/order papers to the teacher’s boxes; Tuesday – with an adult, collect money and order papers; Wed – make and deliver coffee during 2nd block. Teachers drop off their empty mugs on a tray in the teacher’s lounge where they are collected and loaded into the dishwasher; Thursday – arrange cups for next week’s order, count money received, prepare next week’s menu. No coffee business activity on Friday.

STUDY SKILLS CLASS

1. We were looking for a way to have time to engage with students and conduct transition assessments and work on the core components of self-determination.
2. We approached our principal and guidance counselor about creating a Study Skills class where we could emphasize transition and self-advocacy. They gave their consent and support.
3. We worked out our schedule so one special education teacher could teach the class with the addition of an aide if one was needed.
4. Our plan was to have all 8th grader special education students requiring extra motivation/guidance as they entered high school take the Study Skills class. Classroom space was limited to a maximum of 12.
5. Study Skills Class Progression is as follows:
6. 8th & 9th Grade - Guest Speakers/videos from the community, use of VDOE’s I’m Determined project tools and other self-determination materials;
7. 10th Grade – develop/explore employment interests, I’m Determined project work continues, students perform school-based jobs;
8. 11th Grade – students concentrate on school-based jobs;
9. 12th Grade – job preparation, actual hands-on job skills learning and experience in a community business.
10. We developed a brochure about our program to give to local businesses as we discussed the possibility of our students getting job experience in the community.
11. Our original 8th grader Study Skills students are seniors. Next semester, they will go out into the community to work. We are in the process of planning that with their future employers now: Food City, florist, Subway, Willing Partners (2nd hand shop), and a food bank.