

The Middle School Team Curriculum Project

Unity Public School

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The Middle School Team Curriculum Project

1. Organizational Structure of Middle school

- Name: Unity Public School (UPS)
- Belief Statement: Our mission is to provide students with a support system that helps them excel not only with school but their development as a person.
- Team Expectations:
 - Our team, both students and teachers, will establish academic and personal goals, make expectations clear for the team, have appropriate consequences for accountability, provide encouragement with positive reinforcement, discuss class progress, and establish a collaborative community.
 - No singular teacher is in charge, everyone has a say.
 - Each class will have different sets of goals/expectations. These will include long term goals, weekly goals, and daily goals.
 - As the year progresses, these goals will be amended and changed in order to make sure that the policies, goals, and expectations are the best and most productive that can be.
- Organizational structure of the team:
 - Learning times: (G: 6-8)
 - School starts at 9:00 AM and ends at 3:30 PM
 - We will implement “Late Start Wednesdays”. While our school day will start at 9, we will start Wednesday at 9:45 AM. This will provide students with some time to either sleep in or to get caught up on work. Considering we have an “unlimited” budget we will have buses that would pick up students for both start times on Wednesday.
 - Arts/Music Program: Orchestra, Band, Choir, Show Choir, Theater
 - Block Schedule: 120 minute co curricular classes (Analytics and Environmental Perspectives and Rhetorical and Historical Analysis)
 - 45 minute specials: art, physical education, wellness period, language, music, digital media, and health and nutrition
- Programs that foster health, wellness, and safety
 - Once every two weeks while the students start their “morning work” the teacher will call one student into either the back of the classroom or another room to ask personal questions about how they are feeling and what is going on in their lives. Based on these questions, the teacher can determine if the student should receive extra time on assignments, meetings with counselors, more help on assignments and any other support the teacher deems necessary.

- Free lunch/breakfast will be provided with a variety of healthy/nutritional options
- Guidance and support for students/teachers
 - Counseling services
 - Every teacher will be QPR trained
 - Hope Squad
 - Students will anonymously nominate other students they feel are trustworthy, as well as two teachers to overshadow the program
 - Anonymous drop box for students to drop any concerns they have if they do not feel comfortable coming forward directly
 - Guidance counselors: 1 guidance counselor per every 50 students.
 - 6 counselors for 6th and 7th, 8 counselors for eighth graders
 - Mental Health screenings
 - Before every teacher team meeting, begin by stating how you feel; the good and bad, what is working and what is not, ideas, etc.

2. Background of Students and Community

- Background Description:
 - Franklin County
 - 300 per grade (6-8)
 - 20% ELL Students
 - 15% LGBTQIA+ students
 - <https://www.usnews.com/education/k12/ohio/middletown-middle-school-265931#:~:text=Overview%20of%20Middletown%20Middle%20School&text=The%20school's%20minority%20student%20enrollment,students%20and%2048%25%20male%20students.>
- Description of the community:
 - 35% White
 - 25% Black
 - 15% Hispanic
 - 15% Asian
 - 8% Pacific
 - 2% Other
- Tensions and their impact:
 - Rise in LGBTQIA+ youth
 - Impact: higher risk factors related to poor mental health
 - Rise in ELL students:

- Impact: Disparity in learning and scores
 - Low/Lower-middle class family incomes
 - Cannot afford to buy lunch/breakfast every day for their students
- Connections and communications among home, school, and community:
 - Weekly newsletters (in the forms of emails)
 - Sent to students and parents
 - Highlights significant things going on in school, progress in different areas, and other positive news
 - Monthly community breakfasts organized by school for students, parents, staff, etc.
 - Discuss what is being learned in schools and community issues

3. Curriculum Course Rationale: The WHY

We are UPS: Unity Public School, and our mission is to provide students with a support system that helps them excel not only with school but their development as a person. We've developed a set of team expectations for students and teachers to follow so we have the direction needed to provide a community that thrives. When it came to our group choosing a topic, we looked back on our middle school experiences as well as the experiences we had with our field students as we observed their classes. We all found student wellness to be a topic that was of interest to all of us, which contrasts the physical, mental and psychological issues that students may face in academics and the real world that can affect their education and mental health in a negative way. We chose this because we have seen the effects it has had on us as well as our field students and feel that you cannot have a fully functioning school without true wellness of students and staff.

The community that our school is located in is very diverse, because unity without inclusivity is incomplete. In our school, roughly 40% are of white descent, 20% Black/African

American, 15% Hispanic, 15% Asian, 8% Pacific Islanders, and 2% other. There are roughly 300 students per grade, all coming from different backgrounds and class systems. Our community is very welcoming and open to everyone, so we wanted to build a curriculum with representation. We have policies to keep this idea true in our school and believe that if we promote diversity and implement ways to do so effectively, our appreciation of our differences will start in the classroom and diversify into the outside communities. We believe that, “The key to teaching a curriculum that is multicultural is to recognize the limitations of using added material to the already existing curriculum that we might think represents diversity or is multicultural” (Poetter, 2022, p. 213). For example, representation in the curriculum isn’t just briefly bringing up influential BIPOC figures as icons, but diving into their sacrifices, and commitments as individuals. We have many English Language Learners (ELLs) and members of the LGBTQ+ community. Our school will provide these groups with the resources they need to make them feel valued, accepted, and heard, appreciated.

For so long in the standard educational world, students who do not meet the majority are disregarded and ignored. It is oftentimes felt that “... The public school system was geared toward the white middle class. I see the value of it now. But back then I didn’t” (Meacham, 2002, p. 189). We have seen this in our own analysis of course texts, our field experience, and other observances. We did not understand the depth of the unfair difficulties placed on students, whether that be for their identity, gender, race, ethnicity, language, learning habits, etc.

We advocate for LGBTQ+ members because they deserve a beneficial educational experience for other students. They also need resources because on a day to day basis, they are faced with battles relating to discrimination, which results as a risk factor of suicide. UPS will provide the accommodations needed so that each individual can feel comfortable with

themselves and the school they are in. Middle schoolers as a whole are dealing with hormone and physical changes. These will not just stop the moment they enter school, and we don't want students to have students feel as though they have to hide their identity for the sake of others. Therefore, instead of silencing voices, we want to magnify them. To do so, "We cannot ignore our differences and acquiesce to the one with the loudest voice out of fear and/or spite. We cannot avoid the hard work of understanding others with different points of view and making the commitments to finding common ground, compromise, and perhaps, if democracy can truly be had, consensus" (Poetter, 2022, p. 189). We want to bring out the differences and the uniqueness of students.

As for ELL learners, we want to make sure that they are having a valued education, even if they cannot speak the language with the fluency native English-speakers do. We want to make sure that not only are our students getting an education, but also to make sure that our students and teachers are in a good mental state. We encourage our students to have a TESOL endorsement, so while they may not know the language, they can still know how to teach these students. We also want to make sure that we can communicate with students and teachers in a way in which both parties can understand what is being said. All in all, we value the cultures of our students and want to make sure that we are having a diverse and inclusive education for them. When students enter the school, we want them to see themselves on the walls, in the classrooms, in activities, discussions, and policies.

We understand the need for breaks, healthy food options, independent reading, choice, and emotional support. We also know that we cannot predict or guess students' needs, so communication will be important. Students will have opportunities to voice their opinions, how they're feeling, and influence over how the classrooms are run. We can plan the curriculum all

we want, and we have information on what has worked previously in other schools from other teacher experiences, but it will be our students that decide if it works. Our curriculum will not be an “end all be all;” there will be options to adapt and innovate policies so that they better suit the environment, current events, overall class dynamic, and other external factors. We also want our students to feel as though they are able to connect and relate to our teachers about anything and everything they are learning as well as voice their opinions about the knowledge they are receiving. This dynamic is important because “Relationships allow students to receive personal guidance that is made more and more effective with growing trust” (Poetter, 2022, p. 226). We want our students to trust and rely on teachers for questions, concerns, or agreements in regards to the curriculum and the information they are attaining that will ultimately benefit them.

We are guided by our values and devotion to our students and their overall wellbeing. In our name, we preach “Unity” and we strive to include all students and staff. United Public School sees that students are influenced by their outside environment and will not come into school every day feeling or thinking the same day as before. Because “wellness” encompasses so many different areas of life, we can cover some of the most essential aspects that decide how students will be coming to class each day. Their level of wellness decides how much they learn that day, how they interact with students, and how they perceive the teachers. “Waking up on the wrong side of the bed” can go much deeper than being in a bad mood.

4. Curriculum Course Description: The WHAT and HOW

Our school name is Unity Public School. We decided on this name because our core values include student wellness and respect amongst everyone in our school, and we want to increase our community’s knowledge with social justice. Over time, false information has been

spread in our communities that have created many stereotypes and our goal is to diminish those as well as keeping our students comfortable. We want to teach carefully and be aware of all our students because, “Yes, the distortions we teach in schools last a long time. In those places we begin to hush the voices that might lead the way out of the labyrinth of our educational malpractices. That silencing ‘like a cancer grows’” (Wynne, 2002, p. 208). It is evident that we are actively making changes in our community that benefit our students and their well being.

One way we can get this culture is to have parents involved. We don’t expect to have parents in our classroom everyday, but we do expect our parents and guardians to sustain a certain level of communication. Our belief is that if we hold our parents accountable to be informed, the students will benefit so much more. When it comes to communication in our schools, we have weekly newsletters (emails) that go out to both students and parents that highlight the positives, things going on in the district and community, and the progress of the school. While our newsletters will be mostly positive, we will also talk about rising issues that either face our school, community or an isolated incident that deals with prejudice. We want involvement with the community also because, “Teacher leaders must understand that since curriculum is almost always a community endeavor, conflict and disagreement will arise while it is being developed and probably during its implementation” (Poetter, 2022, p. 188). Our school thinks that if we bring up these isolated incidents then students will be more aware of these issues and be more inclined to be accepting. Parents will have access to the phone numbers and emails of teachers during specified hours, so that they can easily talk to them. Our staff will do an excellent job to make sure that they go out of their way for the parents. We all want their children to succeed.

Our school also hosts monthly community breakfasts for students, parents, staff, etc. These breakfasts will take place on our Wednesday morning late starts. The school will discuss what is going on in the school and since students help at these events, it allows students to work together and be a part of the community. Some of these tasks may include wiping the tables, passing out food, etc.). We want our students to be involved in their school and allow them to connect with their peers and practice social and environmental wellness.

With all of the plans we have for our students to be successful, we will not be a perfect school. There are two issues that our school will be facing. With the rise of minority students and LGBTQ youth, some of the community members are voicing their dismay for the policies we are making to include them in the classroom. Our teaching group wants to talk about these issues because it has been a rising problem within the United states over the last five years. We will have situations in our school where kids are bullied for being different and if we talk about solutions to these problems now, we will be more prepared when we get to have our own classroom.

We have organized a unique schedule for our students that promotes and empathizes with student wellness. Our school will be having a blocked schedule. This means students will have two specific core classes on Mondays and Thursdays, then the other two core subjects will be on Tuesdays and Fridays. Each core block will be 120 minutes (2 Hours). So, teachers have the opportunity to provide co-curricular teaching or they are able to split up the two subjects into two different periods. Analytics and Environmental Perspectives are together on one day and Rhetorical and Historical Analysis are on the opposite days. We felt that these subjects go best with each other when teaching. Wednesdays will be a student wellness day. We will have a late start and no core classes. On Wednesdays we will have a health class and a specific language

class, such as Spanish, German, etc. We will also have two specials everyday except Wednesday since we are starting school later that day. Specials include art classes, digital media classes, and music classes. We also plan to let our students do collaborative work with each other because “More than one head focused on a task is usually better than just one” (Poetter, 2022, p. 190). Allowing students to bounce ideas off of each other eases anxiety and stressors in the classroom. Each day we will have a wellness period. A wellness period consists of students being able to have a study hall, access their phones, read, listen to music, talk to a teacher for help, chat quietly with friends, and/or just be able to relax and take a second to themselves. We will also have a gym class everyday to keep students active and their brains engaged. Studies have shown that students who are active during the day have more brain engagement when they are learning. Our school day will begin with a homeroom period to take attendance and allow students to prepare for the rest of their day. We have organized the schedule in the interest of our students and what they need throughout the day. Making sure students are comfortable with their schedule is extremely important for student attendance and engagement.

We will have multiple resources for the needs of students in both physical and emotional support. We will make sure to have ELL resources, speech therapists, psychiatrists, social workers, and tutors. It is crucial that students have the resources they need to succeed in school. We as educators need to adapt to student differences and take into account student disabilities, speech needs, and emotional needs.

Our biggest topic of interest is the wellness of our students. Student’s mental health over the last three school years have deteriorated either from Covid/school shutdowns or unrealistic expectations of students. With depression rising among teenagers we thought that student wellness would be the most important topic for our school. We have many different solutions and

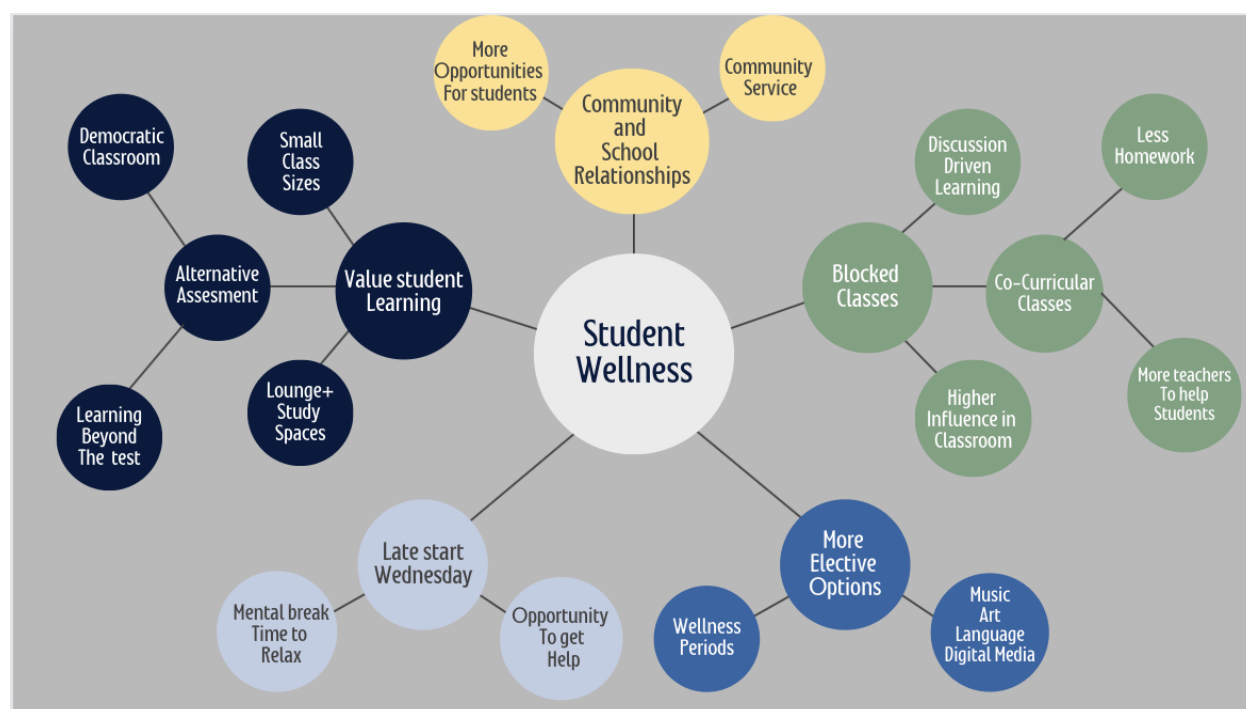
ideas to protect student wellness. Our first solution is implementing our “Wellness Wednesday’s.” Our goal for this day is for our students to take the 45 minutes that they would normally be in school, to use that time to either sleep in or use for their schoolwork. With this fresh start in the middle of the week we then have the expectation that they will be ready for the rest of the week. Another focus we are going to have is small classroom sizes. We hope to not have more than a 15:1 teacher to student ratio. If we are able to accomplish this ratio then our students will have better access to their teachers and this will help the students become more successful. When we do have class, we are going to have a democratic run class. Our teacher will be expected to have discussion based lesson plans while also holding students to high standards for school work. Our last goal is to have a choice for electives. We will hold a 45 minute student wellness/choice period everyday. During this time students will be able to go to one of their elective classes to get more work or enjoy their favorite elective class. If the teachers believe that a specific student needs more time in another class or elective then the teachers will tell the students which class to attend.

One of our goals is that we want our students to be good standing citizens. One of the ways we want to incorporate that is through the community. If the community and schools work together, this will make the community want to fund and be a part of their student’s education. One way we want to do that is by the location of the school. Our school is in the suburbs and we want the school to be located in the center, that way the things that the community has to offer will be walking distance from the school. We will have the public library walking distance from our school with hopes that once a month, we can take students to the library. We have a school library, but we also want students to understand the benefits of using a public library; which is that it is free for the community and the opportunities that the community gives, and open in the

summer. We also want to take advantage of the community and take field trips to our museums, law enforcement, and small businesses, work with our community to allow free gym memberships to students as well as student discounts to certain places such as coffee shops.

While we want our school to be successful, there are going to be speedbumps and questions as the school progresses with time. Our first question is “How can curriculum form student wellness?” This is a question many teachers are asked. By putting our focus on student wellness, the learning in the classroom must be appropriate for the students. This includes creating an inclusive and safe environment for our students. Teachers should be able to include diversity, cultures, languages, and other things that involve a student's identity. Having a student feel comfortable in what they are learning as well as teachers supporting them mentally is crucial for a student's academic success. Another question we have is “How can physical changes in the school's structure affect student wellness?” This can occur in a positive way by allowing students to have a space in school where they can relax. We will have a common room with couches and comfy chairs for students to lounge and do whatever they need to do on off times in between classes or before class starts. We will also have a yoga room if students would like to participate in yoga classes as another form of relieving stress. We are constructing our school around students' needs to reduce any anxieties or other mental issues. We also want to make it evident that student teacher relations also affect student wellness. This all relates back to creating a safe environment where students feel safe to learn or if they have someone to talk to in times of need.

5. Develop a conceptual map for the course



6. Text Set Graphic Organizer

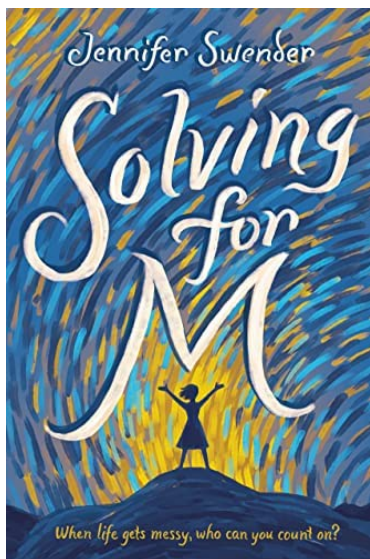


7. Text Set Selections and Rationale For Use

Solving For M

Swender, Jennifer. *Solving For M*. Crown Books for Young Readers, 2019.

(ANCHOR TEXT)

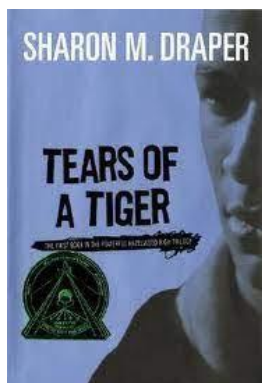


This book is about a fifth-grade girl named Mika who struggles internally with the transition to a new middle school, family challenges, and basic personal/emotional battles. She is separated from her old friends, and her mother has melanoma. All of this occurs while she undergoes inevitable changes that are not in her control, so the conflicts vary as she struggles with herself, her environment, and nature (the sickness). Her math teacher requires his students to have a journal, which goes against everyone's expectations of a math class. She uses this journal to cope with her feelings and sort her way through the messy, beautiful phase of development.

This book addresses the topic for our curriculum project of student wellness because it touches on the emotional aspect of wellness, it connects to middle schoolers, and it ties in intellectual wellness. It is directed toward young middle school students (ages 9-12). We can use this book to teach students about overcoming different kinds of struggles and how sometimes you learn more when you least expect it (similar to Mika with the math journal).

Tears of a Tiger

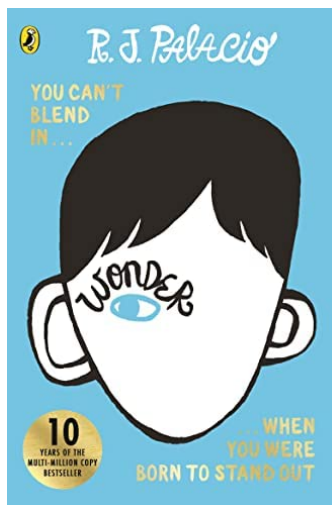
Draper, S. M. (1994). *Tears of a Tiger*. Aladdin Paperbacks.



“Tears of a tiger” is important because of the message you receive from reading the book. The story is about a group of friends and their journey after a car accident kills one of their friends. The main protagonist ends up dying by suicide because of his depression and trauma he had from a fatal accident in which he was the driver. The reason we want to include this story is because it deals with depression and brings up scenarios that our students will most likely go through during their middle school and high school lives.

Wonder

Palacio, R. J. (2012). *Wonder*. Random House.



The reason we want to include this book is because a lot of the problems that the protagonist deals with is bullying. Since our school is all about student wellness we want to put a lot of emphasis on anti-bullying. With Auggie, he is a student who had never been in a real school before fifth grade. His parents were too scared of what other kids would say to him because of his facial structure.

Love, Simon

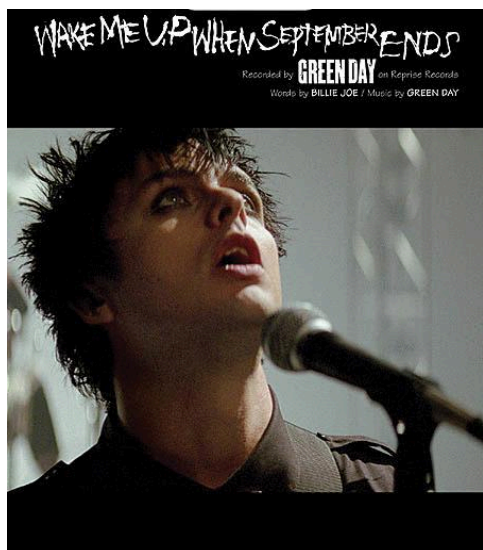
Berlanti, G. (Director). (2018). *Love, Simon* [Film].



Love, Simon is about the struggles Simon, a high school student, overcomes and goes through because he is gay. This movie helps describe one of the issues that we have as a school. Some of the issues he faces are bullying, depression and anxiety. Since these are obviously emotions we want to take care of, this movie helps show us what to look out for when we are in the classroom.

Wake Me Up When September Ends

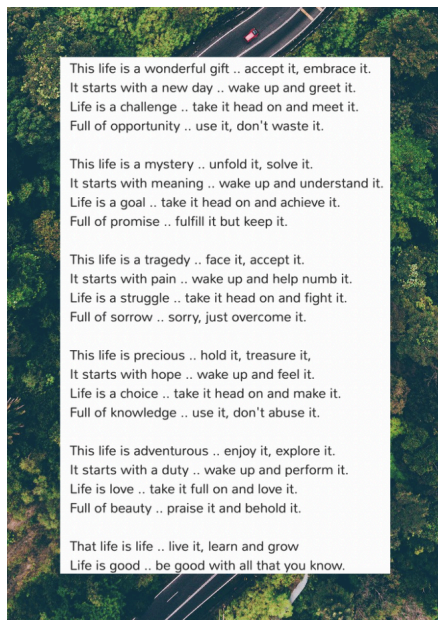
Green Day (2004). Wake Me Up When September Ends. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/NU9JoFKlaZ0>.



This song is very somber and sad because the artist is describing the loss of his father through song. We wanted to include this because we know that at some point some of our students will lose a family member and will then have to face the grief of losing that person. As the main character did in our anchor text, dealing with the sickness and/or death of a parent is confusing and will bring lots of emotions that can be difficult to manage. As distressing and heartbreaking as that can be, our students are not alone. There are ways to heal, and they can get through this.

That's Life

Patanwala, I. K. (n.d.). *Inspirational Message, That's Life, Change Poem*. Family Friend Poems. Retrieved November 17, 2022, from <https://www.familyfriendpoems.com/poem/inspirational-message-thats-life>.



This poem touches on embracing change. It brings up the hardships people face in life such as tragedy, pain, struggle, and sorrow. It also brings up the how life is precious and there is hope. This ties to our topic of the main character in our anchor text because when she faces challenges with her family and friends, she learns that there is purpose and there is a reason to keep going. Personal wellness is very prevalent in this text relating to the ability to seek self-awareness and find meaning in something larger than yourself. Mika learns to cope through this, partly because of the journal assigned in math.

Brave

Chapman, B., & Andrews, M. (Directors). (2012). *Brave* [Film]. Pixar Animation Studios.



This movie features a feminist perspective on the patriarchy. The main character, Merida, chooses to decide her own fate. She defies what is expected of her and takes things into her own hands, all while struggling with her relationship with her mother - who thought she knew what was best for her. Merida deals with family struggles and copes in her own way. Both characters undergo development in finding who they are, and who they want to be. These texts cover family dilemmas, self exploration, and the journey to adapt to these predicaments; all of which are used to help promote in a healthy way with our curriculum.

Heavy

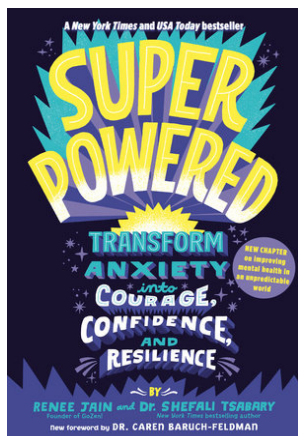
Park, L. (2017). Heavy. Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/5dmQ3QWpy1Q>.



This song radiates the need for emotional wellness. It discusses how life's obstacles weigh down on a person and can be overwhelming, but describes holding on. This is what Merida had to do, and this is what we will encourage our students to do. When things get to be too much, there are ways to cope and sort out all the feelings thrown at students. Our wellness-based focus will provide resources for those that feel that way, and those that want to help others that do.

Superpowered: Transform Anxiety into Courage, Confidence, and Resilience

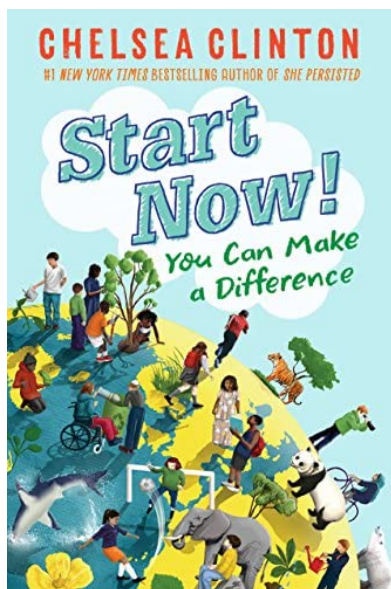
Tsabary, D. S., & Jain, R. (2020). *Superpowered: Transform Anxiety into Courage, Confidence, and Resilience*. Random House Children's Books.



This book is about how kids can battle emotional issues while going through middle school. Some of these battles may include anxiety, stress, worries and insecurities. This book follows students and teaches them ways to overpower their anxiety and helps them become connected and analyze the underlying roots for their worries when transitioning into a new school. This relates directly to our anchor text because they both address these challenges when going into a new school. Both texts provide strategies for helping students overcome anxiety and practice mindfulness and resilience practices.

Start Now! You Can Make a Difference

Clinton, C. (2018). *Start Now! You Can Make a Difference*. Penguin Young Readers Group.



This book works to inspire students to be democratic in school and help them make creative decisions. This helps students feel like they have a voice and a platform in their schools. This book serves as a guide for students to make smart and healthy choices in school while they are going through a difficult time of transitioning in middle school. Although this book deals more with abstract issues outside of middle school, it connects back to the anchor text because of how the students learn strategies to combat struggles and use their voice to help the greater good.

Hidden Figures

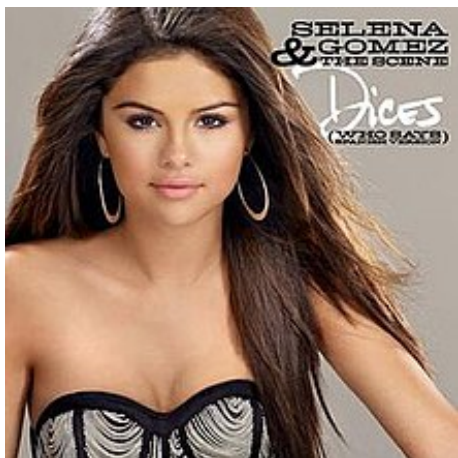
Melfi, T. (2016). Hidden Figures. Twentieth Century Fox.



Hidden Figures is about three women that begin working at NASA despite the challenges prevalent of their time. They begin work on launching rockets and making history while attacking discrimination in the workplace and showing their worth and intelligence and proving themselves as bigger than their stereotypes. This is just some of the challenges that these strong women face that they overcome throughout the entirety of the movie. They learn to not listen to the bullies around them and critique themselves on the content of their character, not the color of their skin.

Who Says

Selena Gomez & The Scene - Who Says. (2011, March 4). YouTube. Retrieved November 17, 2022, from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BzE1mX4Px0I>



This song is about overcoming insecurities and bullying around you and finding your beauty and confidence from within. It revolves around the idea of loving yourself for who you are and not letting others define you and change you into someone you don't want to be. This is heavily related to our anchor text because we want to inspire students to be their most authentic selves and to overcome their greatest challenges and insecurities and to love each other for the way they are.

Gold

Britt, N. (2012). Gold [N, Britt]. [Gold Album]



The song Gold is about knowing your worth and for when you are having a bad day. For the people to keep rewinding the negative thoughts in their head, this is the song about loving yourself and finding the confidence of being who you are; That being who they are is worth more than gold. She also admits that it is ok to make mistakes by saying, "Yeah there are days that we all feel like we are messed up/ but the truth is that we're all diamonds in the rough/ so don't be ashamed to wear you crown". This connects to the anchor text because it talks about how life can be rough and that everyone is dealing with problems in their lives. The main character is starting middle school and is dealing with problems in her life. This

is a song that shows that everyone has problems, but think of the positives and know that you are worth more than gold.

I'm Still Good

Montana, H. (2010). I'm Still Good [M. Cyrus]. [Hannah Montana Forever].



This song is from the television show "Hannah Montana", and the song "I'm Still Good" is about never giving up when life gets hard. She says, "So I might slip again, let it in now and then, that doesn't mean anything, I'm still good." This song is a motivating, positive example of how to think about things - including middle school. The lyrics "I look around me/ how did I get here?/ not part of my plan/ I ended up in a situation/ wasn't in my hands" describe the anchor text because it talks about how it was not her plan for her parents to get divorce, her mom to be sick or to be separated from her friends.

Andi Mack

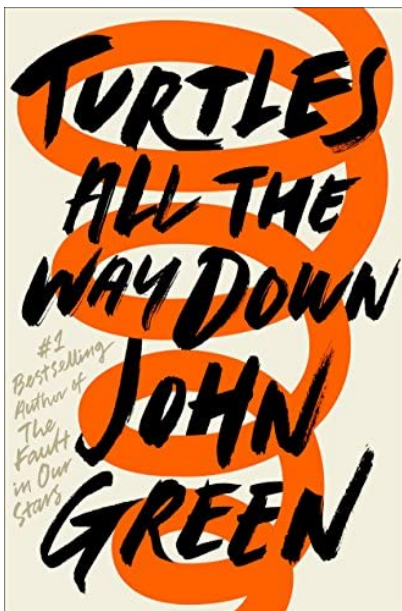
Minsky, T., & Song, E. (2017, March 10). *Andi Mack*. episode, Disney Channel.



The television show *Andi Mack* is a show about a girl named Andi who is trying to fit in in middle school. She learned that her older sister Bex is actually her mother, who had her at 15. She is trying to understand herself and her life after this huge discovery with her friends Cyrus, Buffy, and her crush Jonah. Overtime, the show talks about LGBTQ+, Gun safety, diversity, family conflicts, feminism, racial issues, military families, learning disabilities, physical disabilities, dress codes, social and economic gaps, anxiety/panic attacks, puberty, religion/cultural traditions, and financial problems. This relates very well to our anchor text because it talks about family challenges such as divorce, which is talked about in *Andi Mack*. Both books also talk about the separation of old friends, the transitions into middle school and the mom problems that they have.

Turtles All the Way Down

Green, J. (2019). *Turtles All the Way Down*. Penguin Books.



Turtles All the Way Down is about Aza who suffers from anxiety, OCD and other mental health issues. She is on a search to find a fugitive billionaire who happens to be the father of an old friend of hers. Her relationship grows with the son as they can both relate on the grief of loss of their own fathers. The novel also shows her relationship with her friend Daisy, which is put on the line with this whole investigation. This relates a lot to the anchor text because it talks about the struggles with anxiety and OCD as well as being able to transition from a tragic event happening. It also talks about the conflicts of friendships and how she overcame them through old and new friends.

8. Learning Plans

Learning plan 1:

Unit: Colonization of the US & The 1619 Project Reading

- a. **What might learning look like in a classroom that allows students to engage with the curriculum? What is the purpose of the learning plan?**
 - One of the factors that our group wanted to put in is the concept of student-teacher, teacher-student relationships. We do not want a classroom environment in which teachers are lecturing the students because it keeps them unengaged and not a part of the curriculum. We want our students to be hands-on and understand how the lessons could be put into real world concepts. The purpose of our learning plan is to allow student interactions with the content presented.
- b. **What activities will you do and how are these connected to the larger goals for the curriculum? What will students do? What will teachers do?**
 - For the Rhetorical and Historical Analysis lesson plan, we are focusing on 8th grade American History and how the colonies were created to the events which lead to the United States becoming a country. We will have to lecture students a little bit in order for them to retrieve the content. We will do an edpuzzle then, in which will allow the students to be a part of the content that they are learning. Then for the historical analysis portion of it, our students will be reading ‘*The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story*’ and students will analyze the text, so when they are in a socratic seminar, they can debate about the topic discussed and how that relates to the historical portion of the class.
- c. **How are the learning needs of your students (as described in #2 Background of Students and Community) being met?**
 - The 1619 Project book brings a different narrative to the standard American History that is taught in school. It allows some minority groups, specifically those of African American descent to have a part of their past in our history today. This will also allow students to look at how there are different perspectives of history.
- d. **How will you assess learning? How will you include students in planning and assessment?**
 - We want our students to be engaged in our topic, so a lot of it will be based on participation. Now of course, not every student feels comfortable speaking in public, so students can email their questions and responses on the topic. As long as they are critically thinking about what is presented to them, that is all that matters. Students will need to back up what they are saying. We also have an edpuzzle, which is also graded based on participation.
- e. **Are the method(s) of assessment appropriately aligned with the nature of the learning plan and goals for the curriculum course overall?**

- Yes, our main goal is student wellness and having co-curricular classes. We want to make sure that our students are being represented in our content. This is one way to add African American history into our curriculum. This will allow students to be able to see that while they are not taught about their ancestor's past in Ohio Standards, their ancestors are a part of US history and that will allow students to see themselves in the topic. Allowing students to be able to learn and debate about the topic allows students to have their voices heard, which aligns with Rhetorical and Historical Analysis.
- f. **Include themes and/or standards from professional organizations (i.e. NCTE, NCSS etc.; see more information on EDT 252 canvas site Project Resources module)**

NCSS:

- **Why to support NCSS:**
 - “We set the tone of the conversations about social studies education, recognizing that against a complex social, economic, political, and geopolitical backdrop we must work to ensure that the voices of an increasingly diverse membership are heard and that distinct perspectives are shared, welcomed, and understood.”
 - “Critical thinking and civil discourse are essential to all components of social studies and must be central for our community to flourish: our ability to connect members and to provide platforms to promote ideas, impart knowledge, share problems, suggest solutions, advocate best practices, and build personal networks are fundamental to our value and success”
- **Standards:**
 - “We strive to unite, equip, and mobilize our community to research and educate, to influence the development of social studies education, and to inspire students for lifelong inquiry and informed civic action. To fulfill these goals, we will continue to set and raise standards for professional excellence. We will maintain our support for the development of effective, successful, and qualified professionals as together, we strive to build a culturally diverse, accepting, and democratic society in an interdependent world”.
 - Validating Professionalism:
 - **Enhance existing member resources to develop**—and deliver—new services that reflect emerging trends and priorities in all aspects of professional life.
 - **Ensure our education program is world-class**, relevant, accessible, and valued by individuals and their employers alike, and respected by policy makers and school boards.
 - **Align our education program with our members’ career paths** at early, mid, and senior levels.
 - **Support our affiliates** through proactive work with our members in district, state, and national networks to drive the changes required to

realize impactful delivery of social studies in modern classroom environments.

- **Seek collaborations with strategic partners**, aligning our priorities, learning from each other, and working together to define—and benchmark—common purposes, language, and professional standards
- NCSS Position statements:
 - **A Vision of Powerful Teaching and Learning in the Social Studies**
 - The social studies disciplines are diverse, encompassing an expansive range of potential content. This content engages students in a comprehensive process of confronting multiple dilemmas, and encourages students to speculate, think critically, and make personal and civic decisions on information from multiple perspectives.
 - College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework
 - This framework encourages the development of social studies curriculums that support students in (1) developing questions and planning inquiries; (2) applying disciplinary concepts and tools; (3) evaluating sources and using evidence; and (4) communicating conclusions and taking informed action. Each of these components represents skills that students will use in their roles as student, employee, and most importantly as informed and engaged citizens of the world.
 - A powerful and rigorous social studies curriculum provides strategies and activities that engage students with significant ideas, and encourages them to connect what they are learning to their prior knowledge and to current issues, to think critically and creatively about what they are learning, and to apply that learning to authentic situations.
 - Meaningful curriculum includes extensive and reflective study of the histories, religions, and cultures of the United States and other nations.
 - Students play an integral role in the formulation of goals, the selection of activities and instructional strategies, and the assessment of curricular outcomes.
 - Exploration of social studies should focus on the social world as it is: its flaws, its strengths, its dangers, and its promise. It should include the **study of human achievement, but also of human failure.**
 - Emphasis should be placed on pervasive and enduring social issues and connections to the lives of students. Local, regional, national, and global issues should be investigated for how these issues connect on many different levels. Such investigations of social issues should not solely

focus on the issue, but also look at and analyze attempts to formulate potential resolutions of present and controversial global problems.

- Students should be provided with an intensive and recurring cross-cultural study of groups. This should include opportunities for students to interact with members of other racial, ethnic, and cultural groups.
 - The social studies curriculum is integrative, addressing the totality of human experience over time and space, connecting with the past, linked to the present, and looking ahead to the future.
 - In promoting critical, creative, and ethical thinking on problems faced by citizens and leaders, educators must take care to balance the immediate social environment of students and the larger social world, through examining multiple viewpoints.
 - The use of a variety of primary and secondary sources should encompass a wide range of reading abilities, interests, and historical viewpoints.
 - Students engage in experiences that develop fair-mindedness, and encourage recognition and serious consideration of opposing points of view, respect for well-supported positions, sensitivity to cultural similarities and differences, and a commitment to individual and social responsibility.
 - Students should be challenged to understand the role that values play in the decision making process and be afforded opportunities to think critically and make such value-based decisions about social issues.
 - Students should be encouraged to develop a commitment to social responsibility, justice and action, and demonstrate that in 'real life' situations.
 - The curriculum should promote critical, creative, and ethical thinking on problems faced by citizens and leaders.
 - Social studies educators and students alike should be perceived by one another as fellow inquirers in the exploration of social studies content.
 - Students should be stimulated to investigate and respond to the human condition in the contemporary world. Encouragement of active participation in community service opportunities is an essential component of this understanding.
- **Academic Freedom and the Social Studies Teacher**
- Academic freedom means that both social studies educators and students have the opportunity to engage in intellectual debate without fear of censorship or retaliation.
 - Academic freedom for social studies educators and students includes the right and responsibility to study, investigate, present, interpret, discuss,

and debate relevant facts, issues, and ideas. Academic freedom means that the political, religious, or philosophical beliefs of politicians, administrators, and members of the public cannot be imposed on students or faculty.

- The study of controversial issues should develop the following skills and attitudes:
 - The desire and ability to study relevant problems and to make intelligent choices from alternatives.
 - The desire and ability to use rational methods in considering significant issues.
 - The willingness to recognize that differing viewpoints are valuable and normal.
 - The recognition that reasonable compromise is often an important part of the democratic decision-making process.
 - The skill of analyzing and evaluating sources of information—recognizing propaganda, half truths, and bias.
- The Supreme Court has delineated a three-step test for First Amendment cases brought by public employees, which includes the academic freedom cases of elementary and secondary teachers.
 - 1. Is the conduct of the teacher “protected expression,” which must be both: concerning a public issue, and not unduly rocking the boat?
 - 2. If so, was this protected expression a substantial or motivating reason for the school district’s adverse action against the teacher?
 - 3. If so, would the district have taken the action against the teacher regardless of the protected expression?
 - To prevail on the constitutional grounds of academic freedom, an educator must successfully clear the first two hurdles and not be beaten by the school board on the third one.
- Academic freedom is neither easily defined nor can it always be protected. Academic freedom, like the freedoms of speech, press, and religion, is not absolute. However, it is recognized by NCSS as a fundamental element in teaching excellence and in the maintenance of our culture and government.
- The social studies curriculum can avoid intentionally reifying this narrative if it includes accurate representations of specific cultural groups. It is important to avoid presenting the histories of these cultural groups within the paradigm of victimization—for example, by framing India’s history only through British colonialism, Indigenous peoples only through European colonialism, Jews only through the Holocaust, African Americans only through slavery, or LGBT+ people only through Stonewall.

- **Developing State and Local Social Studies Standards**
 - Some states direct local schools and districts to determine social studies outcomes for their students while others utilize state-adopted standards to drive the state instructional, assessment, and accountability plans to which school districts must align.
 - Both the *National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies: A Framework for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment*, published by National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) in 2010, and the *College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards*, published by NCSS in 2013, engaged social studies experts, including professional organizations, scholars, teachers, and state department of education personnel, in the development process.
 - In many states, the state defines the academic standards and it is up to local districts and teachers to select the curriculum to meet those standards
 - The work should begin by developing an advisory council or planning group. This should be made up of a variety of stakeholders, and, at a minimum, should include social studies educators, content experts, higher education partners, and others (such as representatives of state social studies councils). This group and other state social studies organizations could help shape the process, establish clear guiding principles for the standards development, determine the structure of the document based on the guiding principles and give feedback along the way.
 - **Equity/Diversity:** Are the standards/indicators written for all students? Are students able to demonstrate performance in multiple ways?
- **Toward Responsibility: Social Studies Education that Respects and Affirms Indigenous Peoples and Nations**
 - NCSS recognizes the diversity of Indigenous lands, languages, cultures, governments, and religions and takes seriously the responsibility of social studies education to respect and affirm Indigenous lives and sovereignty. Further, social studies education has a responsibility to oppose colonialism and systemic racism that impact Indigenous Peoples.
 - According to Brayboy and Castagno, “Educators must pay more attention to the ways colonization, racism, and power matter in educational settings and work towards more effective and longer-term pre-service and in-service training that helps educators understand and strategize about their role as agents for social change and greater educational equity.”²
 - “to the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories and aspirations which shall be appropriately reflected in education and public information,” and places an obligation on states to “take effective measures, in consultation and cooperation with the Indigenous peoples concerned, to combat prejudice and eliminate discrimination and to

promote tolerance, understanding and good relations among Indigenous peoples and all other segments of society.”

- As leaders in the social studies, we reflect on our nation’s past as people in the present and we acknowledge that our school systems were at one time organized with the intent to assimilate Indigenous Peoples, and strip them of their unique tribal identities.¹
- In an era where the authenticity of information is in question, educators have an ethical responsibility to modify our practices, and critically examine our curricula, so that we might interrupt these destructive practices as we move to a more culturally responsive chapter in our nation’s history.

○ **Revitalizing Civic Learning in Our Schools**

They are also more likely to vote and discuss politics at home, to volunteer and work on community issues, and are more confident in their ability to speak publicly and communicate with their elected representatives. Schools with civic learning programs are more likely to be safe, inclusive, and respectful, and in addition, experience fewer high school dropouts.

- In a society such as ours, where citizens have been divided and diverse throughout history, it is essential that schools and communities foster a reasoned commitment to the founding principles and values that bind us together as a people. It is time to demonstrate our commitment to democratic principles, our willingness to engage in the democratic process, and our core values that join us as "We the People" to promote civic learning policies and programs that will guarantee "the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity."

○ **Revised Code of Ethics for the Social Studies Profession**

- It is the ethical responsibility of social studies professionals to provide to every student the knowledge, skills, experiences, and attitudes necessary to function as an effective participant in a democratic system.
 - A. Social studies professionals have an obligation to provide instruction which instills commitment to democratic values and faith in the dignity and worth of the individual. Social studies professionals should respect the dignity and integrity of every student regardless of color, race, creed, sex, sexual orientation, ethnic background, disability, or socioeconomic level, and should aspire to help each student to achieve effective citizenship.
 - B. Social studies professionals should strive to achieve the full range of instructional goals recognized by National Council for the Social Studies. They should make every effort to use and develop the use of: (1) rational processes in analyzing social situations; (2) consideration

of alternatives; (3) processes of rational valuing; and (4) active social participation.

- C. Social studies professionals should use a system of evaluation that enables students to assess more accurately both their strengths and weaknesses, thereby fostering the kind of self-knowledge requisite to effective citizenship. The evaluation process should be broadly based, encompass all of the recognized goals of the social studies, and provide useful, systematic, and comprehensive assessment of student performance while affirming the worth and dignity of each individual. The purposes and uses of the evaluation processes, the instruments, and the results obtained should be clarified and explained to students and to their parents or guardians.
- A. Social studies professionals have a special obligation to make students aware of the nature and extent of their rights and responsibilities as citizens of the United States. Social studies instruction should provide opportunities for students to examine and assess critically those principles and assumptions that provide the theoretical and legal bases of citizenship under the Constitution of the United States.
- B. Social studies professionals have the obligation of assuring that students will receive the benefits and bear the burdens of citizenship within the individual classroom, the school as a whole, and the society at large in accordance with their level of social and intellectual maturity. Within the social studies classroom, fundamental constitutional rights should be protected and their exercise encouraged. Likewise, similar opportunities for the acceptance and discharge of citizenship responsibilities should be emphasized.
- C. Social studies professionals have the obligation to recognize, and to foster respect for, the diversity of cultures represented by their students, and by the myriad of cultures in an increasingly interdependent world.
- Effective social studies instruction necessitates an environment in which social studies professionals and students are free to study, investigate, present, interpret, and discuss relevant facts and ideas. Those engaged in social studies instruction have a responsibility to accept and practice the democratic commitment to open inquiry and to approach controversial issues in a spirit of inquiry rather than advocacy.
- D. Social studies professionals have an obligation to establish classroom climates that support student rights to know, to doubt, to inquire freely, to think critically, and to express openly.
- **Human Rights Education**
 - the National Council for the Social Studies calls for a comprehensive commitment and a coordinated plan of action to (1) recognize the importance

of human rights education; (2) integrate human rights education into social studies curricula, schoolwide policies, and classroom practices; (3) develop impactful human rights educators; (4) foster youth engagement and voice; and (5) infuse human rights education into local, state, and national policies.

- As of 2016, 42 U.S. states referenced human rights in their social studies curriculum standards. Human rights education is also referenced in the C3 Framework and in the NCSS National Standards for the Preparation of Social Studies Teachers. Effective human rights education is an integral and necessary area of study that can enable young people to understand human rights principles, apply those principles to daily life, and engender informed action to defend and advance dignity and justice.

- **NCTE**

- Mission is to improve the teaching and learning of English and the language arts at all levels of education.
- “The Council promotes the development of literacy, the use of language to construct personal and public worlds and to achieve full participation in society, through the learning and teaching of English and the related arts and sciences of language.”
- Involve families and communities to be activity involved.
- Supports diverse learning to become critical thinkers, consumers, and creators who advocate for and actively contribute to a better world.
- NCTW and its members' efforts will deepen every student's consciousness of worth and widen possibilities for all students' access, power, agency, affiliation, and impact, across a lifetime.

- **AMLE**

- Core values are that all young adolescents deserve an education that is: response, challenging, empowering, equitable, and engaging.

- g. **Include connections to Learning for Justice: Social Justice standards**

- Students will develop language and historical and cultural knowledge that affirm and accurately describe their membership in multiple identity groups.
- Students will recognize that people's multiple identities interact and create unique and complex individuals.
- Students will express comfort with people who are both similar to and different from them and engage respectfully with all people.
- Students will develop language and knowledge to accurately and respectfully describe how people (including themselves) are both similar to and different from each other and others in their identity groups.
- Students will respond to diversity by building empathy, respect, understanding and connection.

- Students will recognize unfairness on the individual level (e.g., biased speech) and injustice at the institutional or systemic level (e.g., discrimination).
- Students will analyze the harmful impact of bias and injustice on the world, historically and today.
- ID.6-8.2: I know about my family history and culture and how I am connected to the collective history and culture of other people in my identity group
- DI.6-8.5: I interact with people who are similar to and different from me, and I show respect to all people.
- DI.6-8.8: I am curious and want to know more about other people's histories and lived experiences, and I ask questions respectfully and listen carefully and non-judgmentally.
- DI.6-8.9: I know I am connected to other people and can relate to them even when we are different or when we disagree.
- DI.6-8.10: are treated today, and the way they have been treated in the past, shapes their group identity and culture.
- JU.6-8.12: I can recognize and describe unfairness and injustice in many forms including attitudes, speech, behaviors, practices and laws.
- JU.6-8.14: I know that all people (including myself) have certain advantages and disadvantages in society based on who they are and where they were born.
- h. What Ohio Learning Standards do you address through this learning plan and as a part of the curriculum?**
- In the eighth grade English Language Arts Ohio Department of Education standards, on RI.8.9, the objective is "Analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation" (pg.7).
- W.8.9 -Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. (pg.8)
 - b. Apply grade 8 Reading standards to literary nonfiction (e.g., "Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced").
- SL.8.1- Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. (pg. 9)
 - A. Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe and reflect on ideas under discussion.
 - B. Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision-making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.

- C. Pose questions that connect the ideas of several speakers and respond to others' questions and comments with relevant evidence, observations, and ideas.
 - D. Acknowledge new information expressed by others, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views in light of the evidence presented.
- SL.8.2- Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.
- SL.8.3- Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and relevance and sufficiency of the evidence and identifying when irrelevant evidence is introduced.
- L.8.1- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
 - a. Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences.
 - b. Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.
 - c. Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood.
 - d. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.
- L.8.3- Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.
 - a. Use verbs in the active and passive voice (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action).
 - b. Use verbs in the conditional and subjunctive moods to achieve particular effects (e.g., expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact).
- L.8.4-Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on grade 8 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. (pg.10)
 - A. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
 - B. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., precede, recede, secede).
 - C. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or part of speech.
 - D. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).
- In the Eighth Grade Ohio Department of Education History Standards: (pg.31)
 - 1. Primary and secondary sources are used to examine events from multiple perspectives and to present and defend a position.

- Colonization to independence:
 - 2. North America, originally inhabited by American Indians, was explored and colonized by Europeans for economic and religious reasons.
 - 3. Competition for control of territory and resources in North America led to conflicts among colonizing powers.
 - 4. The practice of race-based slavery led to the forced migration of Africans to the American colonies and contributed to colonial economic development. Their knowledge, skills and traditions were essential to the development of the colonies.
 - 5. The ideas of the Enlightenment and dissatisfaction with colonial rule led English colonists to write the Declaration of Independence and launch the American Revolution.
 - 6. Key events and significant figures in American history influenced the course and outcome of the American Revolution.
- A New Nation:
 - 7. The outcome of the American Revolution was national independence and new political, social and economic relationships for the American people.
- Spatial thinking and skills
 - 15. Modern and historical maps and other geographic tools are used to analyze how historic events are shaped by geography.
- Human Systems:
 - 16. The availability of natural resources contributed to the geographic and economic expansion of the United States, sometimes resulting in unintended environmental consequences.
 - 18. Cultural biases, stereotypes and prejudices had social, political and economic consequences for minority groups and the population as a whole.
- As you can see, there are many ways in which we can add Ohio's standards into our lesson. For this lesson plan, we used the English Language Arts and Social Studies Ohio Standards. We found that our topic focuses mostly on Colonization to independence, but there are other topics that focuses on economics and geography (which can be brought up in the Edpuzzle) that are also used to explain why African American slaves were a big part of the US independence from Great Britain (goes towards the book that is read for the class). To incorporate the English Language Arts portion that the Ohio Department of Education is looking for, our lesson plan will be focusing on RI.8.9, which is "Analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation". From there, we will incorporate W.8.9, SL.8.1, SL.8.2, SL.8.3, W.8.9 and L.8.1 (etc). When it comes to our

students being in the socratic seminar, explaining their findings and debating their opinions, they will use L.8.3. Overall, there are many Ohio standards that can be used in this lesson plan.

- i. **Describe in your own words what you believe are the enduring understandings (overarching ideas/big ideas) related to the standards you have selected. What understandings will endure (eventually/ultimately)? This is you saying in your own carefully constructed words what you think your students will take with them as a result of the experiences you provide.**
- We also want us students to understand that there are different perspectives to history. That while it may not be in the history book, everyone has a piece of history. Allowing us to read the book will allow students to see how the author got to her point as well as allow students to be able to state their own opinion on the issue (with evidence of course) without criticism. We want to teach them that as citizens, it is important to see different points of view and be respectful and educated on the topic discussed.

Learning Plan 2:

- a. **What might learning look like in a classroom that allows students to engage with the curriculum? What is the purpose of the learning plan?**
 - i. In our intro to cumulative analysis classrooms you can expect to see a lot of group work to ensure that our students build the skills necessary to be a beneficial member in our society. Our belief is that if we can get our students to figure out difficult math and science problems then they can become closer as a community for our class.
- b. **What activities will you do and how are these connected to the larger goals for the curriculum? What will students do? What will teachers do?**
 - i. While our school will take a lot of pride in our work for the state written curriculum, we also want to have a big emphasis on our ability to build up our community. When it comes to math and science we think we would be able to think about our environment and our relationship with nature. If we are experiencing a high increase in temperature, we want our future scientists to find out how we can fix this problem. This is one of many issues we are sure our students would be willing to experiment with.
- c. **How are the learning needs of your students (as described in #2 Background of Students and Community) being met?**
 - i. The learning needs of our students are being met in our intro to cumulative analysis classes by creating a culturally inclusive classroom as well as being able to accept each and every student's differences and needs in the classroom. Since we will have two teachers in every classroom, if not more, this allows ELL students, students with diverse abilities, or just students who need extra help will

be given that opportunity to have extra time with the teachers in class or even during the wellness periods throughout the week.

d. How will you assess learning? How will you include students in planning and assessment?

- i. We plan to have a project based assessment style. We feel as though having standard tests do not accurately show the knowledge of students and the information they have attained. We will also be giving participation quizzes for participation points. At the end of each day students will receive these quizzes to give the teacher an idea of what they are succeeding in or struggling with. There will also be a section where students can ask questions. We think this will decrease the stress and anxieties students have about test taking.

e. Are the method(s) of assessment appropriately aligned with the nature of the learning plan and goals for the curriculum course overall?

- i. Yes, our assessment style is appropriately aligned with our co- curricular teaching style. Our project based assessments allow students to show the information they have learned in creative ways as well as improving their communication and social skills with their classmates. Our overall goal is to focus on student wellness, which is why we are implementing this learning and assessment style.

f. Include themes and/or standards from professional organizations (i.e. NCTE, NCSS etc.; see more information on EDT 252 canvas site Project Resources module) https://www.nctm.org/uploadedFiles/Standards_and_Positions/PSSM_ExecutiveSummary.pdf

- i. The website of NSTM holds six different types of principles for school mathematics.
- ii. Equity
 1. All students, regardless of their personal characteristics, backgrounds, or physical challenges, can learn mathematics when they have access to high-quality mathematics instruction. Equity does not mean that every student should receive identical instruction. Rather, it demands that reasonable and appropriate accommodations be made and appropriately challenging content be included to promote access and attainment for all students.
- iii. Curriculum
 1. In a coherent curriculum, mathematical ideas are linked to and built on one another so that students' understanding and knowledge deepens and their ability to apply mathematics expands. An effective mathematics curriculum focuses on important mathematics that will prepare students for continued study and for solving problems in a variety of school, home, and work settings. A well-articulated curriculum challenges students to

learn increasingly more sophisticated mathematical ideas as they continue their studies.

iv. Teaching

1. Students' understanding of mathematics, their ability to use it to solve problems, and their confidence in doing mathematics are all shaped by the teaching they encounter in school. To be effective, teachers must understand and be committed to students as learners of mathematics. They must know and understand deeply the mathematics they are teaching and be able to draw on that knowledge with flexibility in their teaching tasks. Teachers must be supported with ample opportunities and resources to enhance and refresh their knowledge.

v. Learning

1. Research has solidly established the important role of conceptual understanding in the learning of mathematics. By aligning factual knowledge and procedural proficiency with conceptual knowledge, students can become effective learners. They will be able to recognize the importance of reflecting on their thinking and learning from their mistakes. Students become competent and confident in their ability to tackle difficult problems and willing to persevere when tasks are challenging.

vi. Assessment

1. When assessment is an integral part of mathematics instruction, it contributes significantly to students' mathematics learning. Assessment should inform and guide teachers as they make instructional decisions. The tasks teachers select for assessment convey a message to students about what kinds of mathematical knowledge and performance are valued. Feedback from assessment tasks helps students in setting goals, assuming responsibility for their own learning, and becoming more independent learners.

vii. Technology

1. Students can develop a deeper understanding of mathematics with the appropriate use of technology. Technology can help support investigation by students in every area of mathematics and allow them to focus on decision making, reflection, reasoning, and problem solving. The existence, versatility, and power of technology make it possible and necessary to reexamine what mathematics students should learn as well as how they can best learn it.

g. Include connections to Learning for Justice: Social Justice standards

- i. **<https://www.learningforjustice.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/LFJ-Social-Justice-Standards-September-2022-09292022.pdf>**

- ii. Each and every student will be allowed to be themselves in the classroom. As said in the Social Justice Standards, “0 DI.6-8.10: I can explain how the way groups of people are treated today, and the way they have been treated in the past, shapes their group identity and culture.” This is a fantastic example of how we will be educating our students about them and their peers.
 - We will be creating a culturally inclusive environment that promotes diversity and is accepting of each and every student. We will also allow students to voice their opinions in respectful ways as they are now learning different social skills and beginning to see opportunities of debate.
 - iii. Identity 1 ID.6-8.1 I know and like who I am and can comfortably talk about my family and myself and describe our various group identities.
 - iv. Identity 2 ID.6-8.2 I know about my family history and culture and how I am connected to the collective history and culture of other people in my identity groups.
 - v. Identity 3 ID.6-8.3 I know that overlapping identities combine to make me who I am and that none of my group identities on their own fully defines me or any other person.
 - vi. Identity 4 ID.6-8.4 I feel good about my many identities and know they don’t make me better than people with other identities.
 - vii. Identity 5 ID.6-8.5 I know there are similarities and differences between my home culture and the other environments and cultures I encounter, and I can be myself in a diversity of settings.
 - viii. Justice 11 JU.6-8.11 I relate to people as individuals and not representatives of groups, and I can name some common stereotypes I observe people using.
 - ix. Justice 12 JU.6-8.12 I can recognize and describe unfairness and injustice in many forms including attitudes, speech, behaviors, practices and laws.
 - x. Justice 13 JU.6-8.13 I am aware that biased words and behaviors and unjust practices, laws and institutions limit the rights and freedoms of people based on their identity groups.
 - xi. Justice 14 JU.6-8.14 I know that all people (including myself) have certain advantages and disadvantages in society based on who they are and where they were born.
 - xii. Justice 15 JU.6-8.15 I know about some of the people, groups and events in social justice history and about the beliefs and
- h. What Ohio Learning Standards do you address through this learning plan and as a part of the curriculum?**
- i. One of the first tasks we had as we began the project was to set a schedule. We wanted to have a balanced routine that best suited our students as well as our teachers. We found out that we should have a 6.5 hour day in order to account for

the total time we should spend in school. This time would also account if we were to have an abnormal amount of snow days/days off in a school year.

- ii. We will also ensure that each student has the opportunity to reach out to a counselor or anyone qualified to help with mental or social issues. Our theme of this school is student wellness and we will have the appropriate accommodations for students at any given time.
- iii. <https://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/Social-and-Emotional-Learning/K-12-SEL-Standards-Full-Final.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US>

1. A3. 1.c Seek appropriate support from a trusted adult when help is needed academically, socially or emotionally
2. A3. 2.c Develop and implement a plan of action, based on support or constructive feedback, that addresses challenges and builds on strengths
3. A3. 3.c Identify and utilize appropriate processes for reporting unsafe behaviors or situations for self and others
4. A4. 1.c Describe how personal responsibility is linked to being accountable for one's choices and behavior
5. A4. 2.c Recognize the importance of confidently handling tasks and challenges, while reframing negative thoughts and engaging in positive self-talk
6. A4. 3.c Demonstrate basic self advocacy academically and socially
7. B1. 1.c Describe the relationship between thoughts, emotions and behavior and apply strategies to regulate response
8. B1. 2.c Analyze positive and negative consequences of expressing emotions in different settings
9. B1. 3.c Apply productive self monitoring strategies to reframe thoughts and behaviors

- As said, we are here for students and their well being during their educational journey. Not only will these standards be applied in our school but we make it evident that we want students to succeed in our district in their educational and social development.

- i. **Describe in your own words what you believe are the enduring understandings (overarching ideas/big ideas) related to the standards you have selected. What understandings will endure (eventually/ultimately)? This is you saying in your own carefully constructed words what you think your students will take with them as a result of the experiences you provide.**

- i. Our end goal has always been and will forever be about the wellness of our students. The experiences we provide our students will carry through the rest of their lives because they will know how to find resources to help themselves and

the people around them. They will learn that while school is very important our health as a human is just as important.

- ii. Our goal for our students as they learn math and science is how they can learn the same way. Both subjects are a product with their ability to read and their literacy. As far as how math and science are related, with math you are being counted on for your ability to look at data and find possible solutions for a problem. With science you are expected to find solutions through the universal language of math. This is why we teach the classes during the same time period. Our goal when our students leave our school is for them to find the relation between both math and science.

9. Rationale for Assessing Students

Our rationale for our students' assessments relies on our core values for the wellness of our students. While we want to ensure that our students are learning the curriculum, we also want to prioritize our students when it comes to their mental health. We can all recall times throughout our school career where tests and exams simply became too much for one person to handle. Knowing we don't want our students to go through the stress, pressure and anxiety that comes with testing, we wanted to create a change.

We will have informal assessments on what our students learn every day. Some assessments will be worth more than others, however we will have an exit slip asking students three questions about the information given that day and two questions asking them about how they are doing in their personal lives. We want to ask the students about the content discussed so that our teachers can gauge what they need to review for the next day. Students could be discouraged from asking questions during class so having the ability to ask questions or express concerns on the exit slip is an extremely beneficial tool for students. This ensures that students are able to keep up with the rest of the class while feeling confident about their schoolwork. We

also prioritize asking students about their mental health progress because that is our primary focus as a school. Having these exit slips assures students that no one will see their paper other than their teacher, or a trusted adult that the teacher deems necessary. Plus, for every exit slip you turn in, you also will receive participation points so that we are constantly giving them opportunities for a higher grade. Students will never be awarded a 0.

On top of this, we will also have weekly formal assessments for our students. These weekly assessments will go over any material from the week or the prior week. These “check ups” will have at least 10 questions about the material with blank areas for them to ask their own questions. Since the weekly assessments will be a larger assessment than the daily exit slips, they will be worth more points since they are content based and have more questions on them as well. The point of this is to track students' academic progression, on top of their learning styles. We want all of our students to feel comfortable and secure in their academics and we have found that this is the best way to ensure this development.

Another form of assessment we will be implementing is project-based learning. Students will be asked to meet up with their classmates and work on projects that have been assigned to them in class. We anticipate that group projects will be assigned at the end of a unit, and students will be asked to present their findings before the beginning of the next unit. We will have specific rubrics and progress reports to make sure that students are staying on track and can have optimal opportunities during class time to ask questions. Some of these group projects may include something as simple as creating a slideshow presentation, or bringing in “Hot Wheels” tracks to show acceleration and an explanation of findings. The bottom line is that as long as the students can show that they are learning through their projects, they will be evaluated fairly on their progress.

Not only are we big proponents of alternative assessment, but one of our core values includes immersing students in our community. We want our students to become well rounded citizens as well as show an introspective viewpoint on the society around them. Because of this, we plan on getting our students to understand the world around them in which they live. This includes partnering with local businesses for school projects, hosting workshops with business owners and local officials, and working with local community service organizations.

Overall, Unity Public Schools has a large focus on delivering students with the necessary skills to make them excellent well-rounded citizens while promoting their mental health awareness.

10. Standards for Educators

1. “Teachers understand student learning and development and respect the diversity of the students they teach.”

At Unity Public School, we hold high standards for every student and provide appropriate accommodations to make sure every student’s needs are met. We encourage diversity, for it is shown in our demographics. We establish community partnerships to learn from each other and make sure all voices are heard. We want each student to be represented and respected.

2. “Teachers know and understand the content area for which they have instructed responsibility.”

We value our teachers and trust that they are masters of their content area. To make sure this holds true, we talk about what we are teaching students at community gatherings and teacher meetings to keep others informed and on the same page. Because the core classes are

co-curricular and blocked, two teachers will be in the room to help the other and observe to make sure everyone is on track and has a good understanding of what is supposed to be taught.

3. “Teachers understand and use varied assessments to inform instruction, evaluate and ensure student learning.”

We have exit slips every day and group projects at the end of each unit to assess student learning. The slips are graded for participation, asks about teacher performance, their understanding, and if they have questions at the end that were not answered in class. This is a less stressful, more involved, and inclusive way of evaluation. It also fosters creativity and critical thinking and strengthens relationships.

4. “Teachers plan and deliver effective instruction that advances the learning of each individual student.”

It is our goal to ensure that our teachers can properly deliver instruction at any given time and are provided with constant feedback from administration as well as students. At the end of each class period, teachers will hand out an exit slip to see what the teacher excelled on, as well as what the teacher could improve upon. This will help teachers gauge the precise knowledge of students and see where they can help each individual student with their needs.

5. “Teachers create learning environments that promote high levels of learning and achievement for all students.”

It is our mission to ensure that all students can display their learning to their instructor by providing them with a space where they feel safe and comfortable to ask questions, a time to get to know their peers and their teacher, and a place where they can get fairly assessed on their knowledge. All of our classrooms are heavily accommodating towards all of our students, and

our teachers' biggest driver of success is our students' passion for learning. The environment is safe and welcoming for student learning and critical thinking.

6. “Teachers collaborate and communicate with students, parents, other educators, administrators and the community to support student learning.”

Our teachers share occasional newsletters home to parents to discuss what is happening within not only our school as a district but the community as a whole. We like to immerse our students in the community around them as much as possible, so we like to keep them included and always invited to any events that may be of interest to them that the community is holding. All teachers also collaborate with one another to ensure that we are all on the same page in terms of student learning and specific standards, and we try to communicate that to our students on a daily basis.

7. “Teachers assume responsibility for professional growth, performance and involvement as an individual and as a member of a learning community.”

Our teachers are highly motivated by the passion, motivation, and commitment of our students. It is the teachers' number one priority to ensure that all students take away new knowledge and abilities from their class to ensure that they become critical thinkers and well-rounded individuals. Our students' personal growth and development are of utmost importance, and our teachers will do everything possible to accommodate their needs in the classroom to help them grow in our community.

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Link to slides:

https://www.canva.com/design/DAFRrXqVanM/3gdn7vyV0bLaX_dxppy1PA/watch?utm_content=DAFRrXqVanM&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=publicsharelink