2023 Ecolab Teacher Grants Narrative Form - Team Application

Project Title: What Do Feelings Look Like?

Part One: Project Details

1. Describe your project.
   *This is the overview of your project from start to finish. What you’re hoping to accomplish and why. Think of the five W and H. There will be space for more specific details on some areas later.*

The project will run my third-grade class through the What Do Feelings Look Like? program in late 2023. If effective, it will be added to our other classes to become a standard element of our third-grade curriculum. The program was developed by behavioral specialists at the University of Wisconsin-Madison to teach elementary students emotional self-awareness and regulation. Material is presented in 45-minute lessons spread over the course of three units, or phases. Each phase includes catch up and review time to ensure all students are on the same page before proceeding to the next phase. The entire program is designed to run about 25 lessons and includes guidance on tailoring the plans for a variety of special needs (English language learners, cognitive delays, poor innate self-awareness, etc.). The program itself is available for free download as part of the Open Source Academia Movement, however, several inexpensive and simple supplies are needed to effectively run the program.

2. Describe or list what the money will purchase.
   *Funds can not be used for animal dissection supplies, computers, furniture, staff time or training, or technology hardware (computers, laptops, computer hardware, Smart Boards).*

Funds will purchase a complete classroom library of books from a curated list, including the Zen Collection by Jon Muth and A Handful of Quiet Happiness by Thich Nhat Hanh for phase one. Funds will also be used to purchase drawing materials (cardstock, sketch paper, and graphite drawing pencils) for phase two and durable mirrors for phase three of the program. We will acquire basic journaling notebooks (one per student) and a lockbox for storing student notebooks for the duration of the program.
3. Describe specifically how you will use these services/supplies.

The tools and supplies will be used by students to support their understanding of the program's content and to learn techniques they can use to regulate their emotional states. Most materials are not single-use, and will be used for future program use.

Phase one tools support student understanding of a variety of emotional states. These break down feelings into families in a visual, textual, and aural fashion to ensure all students can see the relationships between various emotions and how one can lead to another. These will also introduce students to the concept of emotional mimicry.

In phase two, students will draw expressions or icons to show how they feel at any given point.

Phase three's mirrors will allow students to see how their own feelings look on their faces and to practice changing expressions to change mood. Throughout the project, students will be encouraged to reflect on what they've learned and discovered. These will be stored in secured project-specific journals.

Part Two: Project Justification

1. Describe the need for this project.

Students at our school have a high rate of negative behavioral interactions compared to similarly sized elementary schools within SPPS. Combined with the poor felt safety and low self-worth in our student population, our low test scores and slow academic growth are unsurprising. We will be phasing in trauma-informed classroom design and management in 2023-24. What Do Feelings Look Like pairs nicely with our implementation and will build skills to speed the adjustment of our third grade students.

2. Describe how the items/services listed above fulfill this need.

The items or services should address the need stated in the prior question.

Studies have found that students with past trauma and poor felt-safety spend much of their day in a heightened state of awareness that makes learning difficult if not impossible. What Do Feelings Look Like? is a cost-effective, evidence-based program to teach elementary students to recognize emotions in themselves and others. This recognition alone can improve the felt-safety of everyone in the classroom. An intervention of this type can have a tremendous positive impact on academic outcomes.

Part Three: Relationship to Student Learning and SPPS Strategic Plan

1. Using descriptive language rather than jargon, define the classroom curriculum or MN academic standard your project aligns with.

Eg: aligns with calculus curriculum in preparation for AP STEM test; aligns with third grade physical science standards

This project aligns with the school's planned implementation of trauma-informed classroom design. While it doesn't directly align with any specific standard, it will indirectly impact students' ability to meet state standards across all disciplines.
2. How does your project support the curriculum or standard listed above?

The activities and exercises of the program directly support and enhance the practices included in implementing and managing trauma-informed classroom design. Running What Do Feelings Look Like consistently with its design, should result in an accelerated transition, achieving felt-safety ahead of other cohorts. Studies have found that when students feel safe and comfortable in their academic environment, learning is significantly heightened. Students will be able to understand and retain more information. These gains are more significant and accelerated the more time spent in the environment.

3. Which SPPS strategic focus area or long-term student outcome does the project most strongly align with?

4. How does your project support the focus area(s) and/or long-term outcome(s) listed above?

This must tie directly to the SPPS strategic plan focus area(s) and/or long-term goal(s) selected above.

Before we can develop or expand a community beyond our walls, we need to establish a community within the classroom and the school. What Do Feelings Look Like includes a mix of individual, paired, small group, and large group activities that will build relationships in the classroom and enhance a shared sense of community in the school. A feature that makes the program a perfect fit is that it includes a multicultural exploration of emotional expression. While helping our students understand their own emotions and how they are projected through their expressions and actions, the program will also teach students that these are not universal and how their classmates express their feelings.

Part Four: Measuring Project Success

1. What will success look like? (300 Characters max)

Success will result in a healthy classroom environment where the majority of conflicts are resolved peacefully. Students will show compassion, recognizing their classmates' emotional needs and acting accordingly. We'll see a drop in disruptions and an improvement in student engagement and learning.
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<th>2. How will you specifically measure that success after project implementation? What positive changes do you anticipate?</th>
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<td>We'll assess data for adverse behavioral events (both numbers and severity) from the last quarter of the prior year and the first quarter of the implementation year. This data will aid in projecting expected events for the remaining school year. We will compare projected and actual data for the cohort enrolled in the program versus the third grade students outside the program. We'll monitor each student's standard assessment (MCA, OLPA, etc.) results and compare to prior years' progress rates.</td>
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