



CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Statement of the Problem

78%

of states do not require middle school students to participate in any form of career development.

RHS
counselors

expressed worry about student exposure to career development topics before entering high school.

5th
grade teachers

at Rogers and Prairie View Middle Schools have concerns regarding current career development curriculums.

What was the Joblympics?

The Joblympics was a program created with the purpose of exposing fifth grade students to career exploration and the process of getting a job with an engaging, competitive Olympic theme. Throughout the six-lesson program, students explored careers they were interested in, learned how to fill out a job application, and built a basic resume. Additionally, they were taught basic interview skills.

MISSION STATEMENT

To expose students to a variety of career development topics, helping them develop "gold medal" skills.

TARGET AUDIENCE

fifth grade students
at Rogers Middle School and
Prairie View Middle School

Project Goals



Generate

a program that exposed students to career development topics.



Obtain

sponsorships to fund the Joblympics program.



Launch

the Joblympics to local fifth grade students.



Develop

"gold medal" habits in students.

Key Metrics

Increase student knowledge by **80%**

Collect **\$400** in sponsorships

Reach **50** fifth grade students

Establish an **80%** student participation rate

Joblympics Execution



MILESTONE 1

Develop

Investigated career-related concerns;
developed an engaging curriculum

Collaborated with teachers;
collected sponsorships

MILESTONE 2

Collaborate



MILESTONE 3

Implement

Implemented the Joblympics
program in fifth grade classrooms

Examined and evaluated program
results; district office meeting

MILESTONE 4

Examine



Monitoring

Schedule

- A color-coded **Google Calendar** monitored our project schedule outlining class lessons, team meetings, and more.

Budget

- Sponsorships were collected to fund the program and expenses were monitored using a **Google Spreadsheet**.

Quality

- Our team **collaborated with teachers** to ensure the Joblympics program was of satisfactory quality.

Evaluation of Key Metrics

93.5% increase in
student knowledge

\$870 obtained in
sponsorships

93 fifth grade
students reached

98.9% student
participation rate

Recommendations for Future Projects

1

*Meet with teachers during
program development*

2

*Utilize a color-coded
calendar system*

II. INITIATING

A. Statement of the Problem

Career exploration is a fundamental step in setting adolescents up for success later in life, as it can assist individuals to make informed choices regarding their professional paths and increase the chance for job success and satisfaction. However, not all students are receiving proper exposure to these ideas. While 75% of states have established career exploration in middle school as “an important component of a student’s education,” only eleven states (22%) explicitly state in their state legislation that middle school students are required to participate in career exploration in middle school (Alvarado 2024). Currently, Minnesota is a part of the 78% of states not requiring teachers to introduce students to career development materials until ninth grade.



75%

acknowledge career development as important



22%

require student participation in middle school



10%

recognize career development as a priority

The lack of career exposure has become apparent in students entering Rogers High School. Ms. Handrick, the college and career counselor, expressed concerns regarding student career development exposure before entering high school. She remarked that the number of students unsure of what they’d like to pursue after graduation has increased significantly. Ms. Handrick indicated that she was a firm believer that career exploration should be initiated prior to students entering high school, but is concerned with the efficiency of current middle school career development programs. Additionally, Ms. Shrestha, one of the guidance counselors, mentioned she’d seen an increase in students setting up appointments with her for guidance on various professional skills, including how to apply and interview for a job. She noted that in the past two years, she had seen a significant increase in these appointments. While she commented that she doesn’t mind assisting students, she is, however, beginning to infer that students are not receiving proper exposure to these topics.

Research has indicated that middle school is the peak time for students to benefit from career exploration. This past year, the fifth grade departments at Rogers Middle School and Prairie View Middle School voiced concerns regarding the effectiveness of career development in classrooms. Teachers viewed the current material provided to students as too complex and challenging for fifth grade students to understand. When speaking with fifth grade teacher Ms. Stella, she expressed how important it is for students to receive exposure to career readiness topics, especially in middle school. She also noted that in past years, various speakers have been assigned to her classroom to discuss such concepts, and while the information provided was good, students struggled to grasp it. Ms. Stella and the rest of the fifth grade teachers were looking for a better way to expose their students to career development topics.



Last year we had a speaker come into class to discuss different career development topics. The information was good, but was way too complex for students and flew right over their heads.

-Ms. Stella (5th grade teacher)



B. Project Scope

PURPOSE

As professional skills are essential, students must be exposed to career development topics at a young age. The Joblympics was created with the purpose of developing “gold medal” skills and habits within fifth grade students. This would be accomplished by exposing students to career exploration and aiding professional development through an engaging six-lesson program. Each lesson was created with an objective of enhancing a different professional skill. Lessons would include completing a career cluster activity, conducting career research, understanding the function of a job application, crafting a unique resume, and performing a mock interview while practicing proper etiquette. After each lesson, students were split into “countries,” supporting the Olympic theme, where they competed against the other countries in an activity related to topics discussed that day.

OUR MISSION

“To expose students to a variety of career development topics, helping them develop gold medal skills.”

RATIONALE

The Joblympics was developed to address the concerns voiced by teachers regarding the current lack of career development resources available to students in fifth grade classrooms at Rogers Middle School and Prairie View Middle School. Our career development team was determined to design and implement an interactive and informative program for students. Beginning exposure to career readiness topics, such as career exploration, job applications, resumes, and interviews, serves as a fundamental step in preparing students for their future careers. Initiating this process during adolescence allows students to enhance their soft skills, including critical thinking, communication, and teamwork.

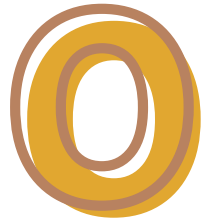
EXPECTED BENEFITS

By participating in the Joblympics program, students were expected to secure several benefits. First, students would be exposed to various career fields and careers falling into each field. Students would complete activities to learn more about a career of interest. Exposing students to potential careers can help guide their academic and extracurricular participation. Next, fifth grade students would be able to recognize and fill out a basic job application. By completing a job application, students would strengthen their ability to provide clear and accurate information by writing neatly to provide maximum clarity along with easy-to-read answers. Finally, upon completion of the Joblympics, students were expected to acquire interview skills. Students would participate in mock interviews on the last day of our program. Executing a mock interview would encourage students to practice interviewing etiquette and properly present themselves to an employer.

Career Exposure	Application Awareness	Interview Readiness
Investigate a career of interest to further knowledge	Accurately fill out a job application and identify its components	Complete a mock interview while practicing proper etiquette

III. PLANNING AND ORGANIZING

A. Project Goals



Generate.

Obtain.

Launch.

Develop.

Before launching the Joblympics program, our team established a set of goals. These goals were listed under **GOLD**, standing for *generate*, *obtain*, *launch*, and *develop*. The **GOLD** goals were created to outline the project as a whole. Each established goal was SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. To measure the success of the Joblympics, key metrics were designed to measure the effectiveness of each goal listed in the quality management plan.





The initial goal, *generate*, focused on developing an interactive and informative curriculum for fifth grade students. Our team sought to **generate a program that exposed students to career development topics**. To achieve this, we needed to effectively collaborate with teachers to design a six-lesson curriculum tailored to fit the fifth grade department's career development standards. Completing this objective would ensure that age-appropriate lesson plans had been developed to expose students to important career development concepts.

Next, the goal *obtain* refers to funding for the Joblympics program. To deliver a top-notch program, our team set out to **obtain sponsorships to fund the Joblympics program**. The money acquired from sponsors would be used to cover anticipated expenses, including a Canva Pro subscription, Olympic event classroom materials, and printing. Accomplishing this objective of obtaining sponsors would guarantee to cover the costs of the Joblympics program.

The third goal, *launch*, relates to the program's presence in schools. Our team wanted to **launch the Joblympics to local fifth grade students**. Regarding concerns with the insufficiency of current fifth grade career development programs in the Elk River School District, our team wanted to initiate the Joblympics for fifth grade students, specifically at Rogers Middle School and Prairie View Middle School. By participating in this program, students would gain exposure to various career development topics and begin setting their future selves up for success.

Develop, the final GOLD goal, correlates with students' knowledge of new topics. We set a goal to **develop "gold medal" habits in students**. Our team not only wanted to expose students to new concepts but also wanted them to build a solid foundation and be capable of practicing skills on their own. Completing this goal was vital as it would ensure the Joblympics program was successful in exposing and educating students on new material.

B. Human Resource Management Plan

Team Member	Position	Responsibilities
 Allison Mauss	Curriculum Developer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Designed career development-based educational content and activities for each week's lesson plan.• Collaborated with educators to ensure lessons align with the classroom standards.
 Parker Moen	Communication Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developed and implemented a communication strategy to promote the campaign to the teachers, parents, and schools.• Led all communication with teachers and school administrators for scheduling.
 Alexis Derichs	Graphic Designer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Created engaging content, including worksheets, presentations, and promotional materials.• Designed visually appealing graphics that are easy for fifth graders to understand.
 Brianna Slattery	Evaluation Specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developed materials to assess the effectiveness of the campaign, such as pre and post-surveys.• Measured student engagement during lessons and activities to evaluate student participation.

C. Schedule

i. Milestone



Milestone 1: Develop

The first milestone, *develop*, centered on researching issues with the lack of student exposure to career development. Our team began by meeting with two counselors at Rogers High School; both voiced concerns about students receiving an insufficient introduction to career-related topics in middle school. Then, after meeting with fifth grade teachers to discuss important concepts to include in lesson plans, our team began to craft a curriculum focusing on career exploration and educating students on how to get a job while incorporating an engaging Olympic theme.

Milestone 2: Collaborate

Next, during the milestone *collaborate*, we solidified the class we would be teaching in. Once classroom partnerships were decided, our team collaborated with teachers, ensuring the program was tailored to their classroom needs and content was age-appropriate for fifth grade students. Additionally, establishing time for teacher collaboration allowed for teachers to provide input and address any potential concerns. Finally, our team collected sponsorships to fund the Joblympics program.

Milestone 3: Implement

Our third milestone was *implement*. During implement, our team began teaching in classrooms. We visited two of Ms. Wallin's classes at Prairie View Middle School and one of Ms. Stella's classes at Rogers Middle School. Each classroom was visited six times, providing students with interactive and informative lessons regarding various career development concepts. Incorporating the Olympic theme into lessons provided students with opportunities to practice new skills while competing against each other in a fun, engaging environment.

Milestone 4: Examine

In the final milestone, *examine*, the Joblympics team examined the success of our program. We began by assessing the pre- and post-survey results our team had collected. Subsequently, our team analyzed the growth in students' knowledge regarding the topics discussed. We also reviewed the numerous parent feedback emails received. Lastly, our team was invited by our district administration to speak at a meeting regarding the expansion of career development opportunities in the Elk River School District held at our district office.

ii. Timeline to Reach Each Milestone

*Timeline is not drawn to exact scale**

	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
Develop	Sep 9 - Oct 3					
Communicate		Oct 3 - Oct 9				
Implement		Oct 14 - Nov 26				
Examine		Oct 23 - Feb 28				

D. Quality Management Plan

To ensure the Joblympics program was deemed successful, our team developed a quality management plan. This plan was made up of four key metrics designed to measure the success of each GOLD goal. Within each metric, quality assurance, control, and improvements were identified to guarantee each metric was achieved. Metrics were reviewed at weekly team meetings.

Quality Assurance- procedures put in place to prevent metric failures

Quality Control- measurements taken to detect metric success and failure

Quality Improvement- adaptations implemented to ensure metrics are met

Metric #1: Increase student knowledge by 80%

Measures goal **G**: Generate a program that exposes students to career development topics

Assurance	Control	Improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created engaging, informative lesson plans Check-ins with students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-surveys Post-surveys 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased the number of activities in lessons for students to practice new skills and information

Metric #2: Collect \$400 in sponsorships

Measures goal **O**: Obtain sponsorships to fund the Joblympics program

Assurance	Control	Improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reached out to numerous businesses Discussed sponsorship opportunity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created a spreadsheet to record and measure amount of sponsorship money collected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Followed up with potential sponsors to ensure sponsorship collection

Metric #3: Reach 50 fifth grade students

Measures goal **L**: Launch our program to local fifth grade students

Assurance	Control	Improvement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connected with multiple fifth grade teachers within our school district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Calculated the number of students per class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Taught in multiple classrooms with varying numbers of students

Metric #4: Establish an 80% student participation rate

Measures goal **D**: Develop gold medal habits in students

Assurance

- Designed an interactive curriculum consisting of various activities

Control

- The Evaluation Specialist reviewed students' completion of activities weekly

Improvement

- Provided incentives to students based on activity participation and completion

E. Risk Management Plan

Absent Students

Likelihood: High

Potential Impact: Throughout our six-week program, there was a high potential risk that students would be absent during lessons. Since we designed the curriculum to build off previous lessons, it was critical that students were present for every lesson. If a student were absent one week, they would miss information covered during that lesson, which would hinder their learning and knowledge of career development topics.

Response Approach: Recognizing the risk of absent students was at high severity, our team created a response plan. Each week, a team member was designated to work with students absent from the previous lesson. This response strategy ensured all students remained on schedule with our program timeline and obtained the entire experience from participating in the Joblympics program.

Uneven Class Numbers

Likelihood: Medium

Potential Impact: Since students were competing in groups during in-class activities, uneven group numbers due to an uneven class total or absent students could create concerns about fairness. Acknowledging the competitiveness of fifth grade students, there was a potential risk that students would complain or refuse to participate in an event because a group possesses an advantage due to differing group sizes.

Response Approach: During each lesson, Joblympics team members counted the number of students in each competitive group. If a group possessed more students than others, we made sure each group received the same amount of overall turns. Ensuring groups had an equal amount of overall turns rid the possibility of students protesting because of another group acquiring an unfair advantage.

Difficulty Comprehending

Likelihood: Medium

Potential Impact: The purpose of the Joblympics program was to educate students on a variety of career development topics, however, our team understood that students may have difficulty comprehending new information. Since fifth grade is one of the first times students are exposed to career-related subjects, there is a potential that students may struggle to understand new concepts. If students struggle to comprehend subjects, they will not retain information.

Response Approach: To combat the potential issue of students not comprehending information, our team developed lessons to be interactive and engaging for students. Lessons consisted of a presentation and activities for students to practice subjects. We also made sure to include examples that were relevant to students, which allowed students to relate and ensure they fully comprehended the topics covered.

F. Proposed Project Budget

When the Joblympics program was initiated, a goal of collecting \$400 in sponsorships was set. Collecting sponsorships was vital as the money acquired would fund the program, ensuring all necessary materials could be purchased.

During the second week of October, our team met with local businesses to inquire about potential sponsorship opportunities. We were able to acquire four sponsorships. The first sponsorship was a leftover fund from the previous career development project. These funds, which totaled \$120, were stored in the Rogers One-Stop DECA Shoppe for us to use. Our next three sponsors, TruStone Financial, Allstate Insurance, and Maynards, provided the Joblympics program with a generous sponsorship of \$250 each. In total, we were able to raise \$870 for the program budget.

\$870 Fundraised



\$120



\$250



\$250



\$250

The Joblympics budget was split into two sections: curriculum materials and event props. Curriculum materials were all the items used for lessons. These materials included printing paper for lesson worksheets, a three-month Canva Pro subscription to create engaging lesson slideshows, and colored folders for students to store their materials. Event props consisted of items used for Olympic events and rewards. A basketball hoop trashcan, ring toss, and bowling pins were purchased for student Olympic events. Our team was able to borrow whiteboards and dry-erase markers from our high school, which eliminated the need to buy them. Lastly, we purchased gold, silver, and bronze medals, along with ribbons, to be awarded to students depending on their placement in their class's Olympic competition.

In total, our team spent \$273.12 throughout the Joblympics program. Since we were able to stay within our allotted budget amount, the remaining \$596.88 was put into the Rogers DECA Shoppe account to be stored for future career development projects.

\$273.12 Spent Throughout Program

Curriculum Materials	
Printing paper	\$9.24
Canva Pro	\$60.00
Folders	\$39.99
-	-
-	-
-	-
Total: \$109.23	

Event Props	
Medals & ribbons	\$69.94
Basketball trashcan	\$19.99
Ring toss	\$33.98
Bowling pins	\$39.98
Whiteboards	\$0
Dry-erase markers	\$0
Total: \$163.89	

Amount Raised
\$870

Amount Spent
\$273.12

Remaining Balance
\$596.88

IV. EXECUTION



Develop

Investigate career-related concerns; develop engaging curriculum

Investigation [Sep 9 - Sep 18]

Before establishing our chapter's career development project, we investigated concerns regarding career development in our community. First, our team spoke with two counselors at Rogers High School. Ms. Handrick, the college and career counselor, noted that she had seen an increase in students unsure of what they'd like to pursue following graduation. "I believe this stems from the lack of career exploration happening prior to students entering high school," she commented. Mrs. Shrestha, one of the guidance counselors, added that in recent years she had seen a rise in the amount of students meeting with her regarding guidance on how to apply and interview for a job. Throughout our meeting, both counselors made it clear to us that they felt students needed more exposure to career development subjects before entering high school.

Following our meeting with Ms. Handrick and Mrs. Shrestha, we conducted research online. From this research, we found that many middle school students are not receiving proper career development exposure, contributing to students lacking career exposure when entering high school. Additionally, our team discovered that fifth grade-aged students present the best opportunity to begin exposure to career-related topics as their brains can begin initiating critical thinking to process abstract information.

Fifth grade Department Meeting [Sept 23]

After deciding that fifth grade would be the appropriate age group for our program to concentrate on, we reached out to the fifth grade department at Rogers Middle School and Prairie View Middle School. Our team then met with five fifth grade teachers, two from Prairie View and three from Rogers Middle School, on September 23, 2024, at Rogers High School. During this meeting, our career development team explained the intention of the meeting: to better understand the current fifth grade career development curriculums and identify areas of improvement. Each teacher shared their classroom experiences and areas they felt could be explained. This meeting gave our team insight into creating the best-suited curriculum for fifth grade students.

Joblympics Development [Sep 24 - Oct 3]

After consulting with fifth grade teachers, our team wanted to create a curriculum that addressed teachers' concerns about students not receiving adequate career exposure and introductory steps on acquiring a job. We inquired with Ms. Handrick regarding recommendations for career development resources, along with how to properly construct lesson plans. With her guidance, our team created a six-lesson program to educate students on career development skills. Lessons would build off each other with the ultimate goal of preparing students to complete a job interview for a job of their choice. From there, we decided to incorporate an Olympic theme into our program; titling our program The Joblympics.

To embrace the Olympic theme, students would be divided into groups known as "countries" to compete in various events against other groups in their class. Events were designed to embody topics discussed during that specific lesson, providing students with the opportunity to practice applying new information. During the final lesson, countries would receive gold, silver, or bronze medals depending on their country's placement within events throughout the six weeks.



Collaborate

Collaborated with teachers; collected sponsorships

Consultation with Ms. Wallin and Ms. Stella [Oct 3]

Before in-class lessons began, we held a final consultation meeting with fifth grade teachers. During our initial meeting with teachers from the fifth grade departments, Ms. Stella, from Rogers Middle School, and Ms. Wallin, from Prairie View Middle School, expressed great interest in having our team visit their classrooms.

Once teachers had been established, our team set up a final consultation meeting with each of them. During this meeting, we thoroughly discussed the outline of the Joblympics program to ensure it fit both teachers' standards and finalized classroom times and lesson dates. Our team would visit Ms. Wallin's classroom on Mondays and speak to her fifth and sixth-hour classes. For Ms. Stella, we would teach her fifth-hour class on Tuesdays.

Sponsor Recruitment [Oct 7 - Oct 9]

To cover all expenses of the Joblympics program, our team decided to collect sponsorships from businesses in our community. Over three days, our team spoke with multiple businesses; we explained our program and the benefits it would provide to students. In total, our team received \$870 to assist in funding the program. Sponsors included TruStone Financial, Maynards in Rogers, and Allstate Insurance. Additional funding had already been set aside in the Rogers DECA account from last year's career development project for us to use.



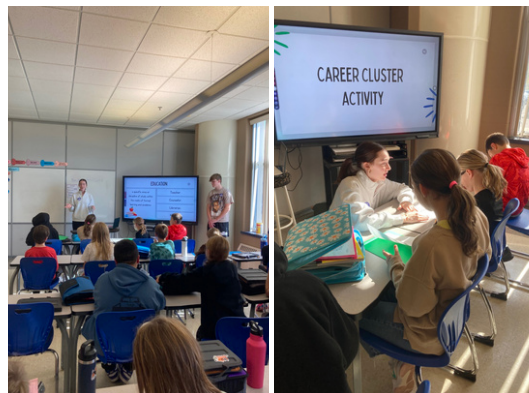
Implement

Implement the Joblympics program into fifth grade classrooms

Lesson One [Oct 14 & Oct 15]

Lesson one began by hosting the opening ceremony of the Joblympics: introducing ourselves to students and explaining the program they would be participating in over the next six weeks. Students were then divided into four even groups; these groups represented 'countries' competing in the Joblympics. Students were given time to choose their country name (e.g. Australia, Mexico, Brazil, etc.). After establishing country names, students received colored folders corresponding to their country color to store materials they received throughout the program. Once students had all the materials, we officially started the first lesson.

The first lesson objective was to expose students to careers and career fields. Following a short presentation describing career fields, students completed a career cluster activity. For this activity, students were given a worksheet split into six boxes. Within each box were five different statements, such as 'I like to help people, I like to build things, I like to create art.' If students felt the statement applied to them, they made a checkmark next to the statement. Then students were asked to count the number of check marks in each box and record the box containing the most, as each corresponds to a specific career field.



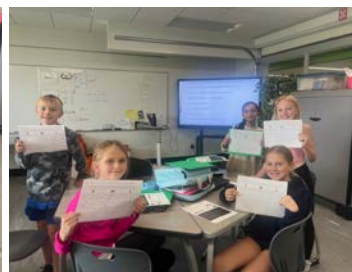
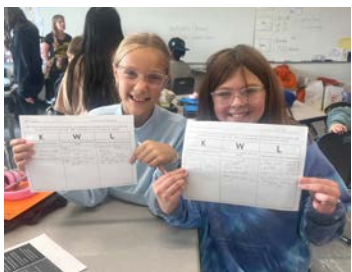
Team members elaborated on career fields to students and careers within each. Students were then tasked to choose a job that interests them. This job would be used throughout the remainder of the program. Popular careers included police officers, nurses, and engineers.



The first event was "Career Charades." Each country was given a bag with jobs listed on eight pieces of paper. On a team member's go-call, one student was to act out a career listed on the piece of paper, and the remaining group members attempted to guess the job. Once someone guessed the career correctly, they crumpled the paper and attempted to throw it into a basketball hoop trash can in the middle of the room. The group that finished first won. This event tasked students to work together to think of the careers their group members were acting out.

Lesson Two [Oct 21 & Oct 22]

Lesson two's focal point was on conducting career research. Our career development team wanted to provide students with resources to learn more about their chosen career of interest. Students were tasked with completing a KWL chart; split into three sections: Know, Want to Know, and Learned. To begin, students listed what they already know about their chosen career in the "Know" column. Then, students were asked to think about questions they had surrounding their career and list them in the "Want to Know" column. Finally, to complete the "Learned" column, each student received a sheet of paper containing various information about their career, including average salary, education requirements, job tasks, and responsibilities. Students then recorded new information in the "Learned" column. This activity allowed students to further explore a career of interest and initiate exposure to potential career pathways.



The second event in the Joblympics was "Guess The Job." For this event, a Joblympics team member read aloud the job description while students, in their countries, worked together to guess the described job and wrote it down on their whiteboard. Once time was up, students revealed their whiteboards and were awarded points if they answered correctly. Guess The Job consisted of three rounds with increasing points awarded each round. Countries' placement was recorded based on their point totals.

Lesson Three [Oct 28 & Oct 29]

The next step in preparing students for their final mock interviews was filling out a job application. During lesson three, our team highlighted job applications and their importance. Students were asked to describe a job application and explain its significance. After listening to students share, team members explained the purpose of an application and presented students with the application they would complete. With the assistance of the Joblympics team, students were guided through filling out a job application, starting with personal information to their final signature. Students complete application forms more often than they may realize, whether it's applying to be in student council, National Junior Honors



Society, or any club, so learning to properly fill out an adequate application is essential as it assists students in creating a positive first impression and raises their potential for job or club consideration.

The third event in the Joblympics was "Application Bingo." Instead of traditional bingo, Application Bingo consisted of bingo squares containing objects needed for an application and various Olympic events. Each country received a different bingo card and competed as a team member called out objects until they got a bingo.



Lesson Four [Nov 11 & Nov 12]

The fourth lesson focused on students learning how to craft a resume. Our lesson began just as the others did, reviewing the topics covered in the previous week. Students were then asked to share their familiarity with a resume. Few students responded, encouraging our team to elaborate

on resumes and their purpose. Once students understood a resume's role, each received a resume template. Students crafted their unique resumes, keeping their career choice from lesson one in mind. Understanding how to effectively communicate one's qualifications and identify within a resume assists in helping an applicant stand out against other candidates and highlights skills and past experiences.



"Resume Ring Toss" was the fourth event. Each student was asked a question regarding a topic on their resume, such as abilities, achievements, and work experience. If answered correctly, the student would receive three things to toss at three cones, evenly spaced out, worth different point values. After every student got the chance to answer a question, all points were added and recorded to rank against the competing countries.



Lesson Five [Nov 18 & Nov 19]

Lesson five was the final step before students' final mock interviews. This week's lesson concentrated on teaching students proper interview etiquette, prepping interview question responses, and designing a unique business card. To begin, two team members demonstrated an interview in front of the class to provide a stronger understanding of what they'd be participating in. We then asked students to share what they had noticed throughout the demonstration. Students noted the firm handshake between demonstrators and their maintained eye contact, good posture, and confident speaking tones. Next, we shared a list of questions an interviewer

may ask an interviewee and explained that each student would be asked two questions during their interview, taking place the following week. A sheet with six potential questions was passed out to students to prepare a thoughtful response to each question. Students would use this sheet as a resource during the interview.



Once the interview prep sheet was completed, students began to create their business cards. Before creation, the Joblympics team elaborated on the importance and usefulness of a business card. Students received a blank business card and were tasked with creating a card unique to their career. On their business card, students were to include their first and last name, address, phone number, career title, and an image that correlates to their chosen career. All students enjoyed designing their business cards and showing them off to classmates.

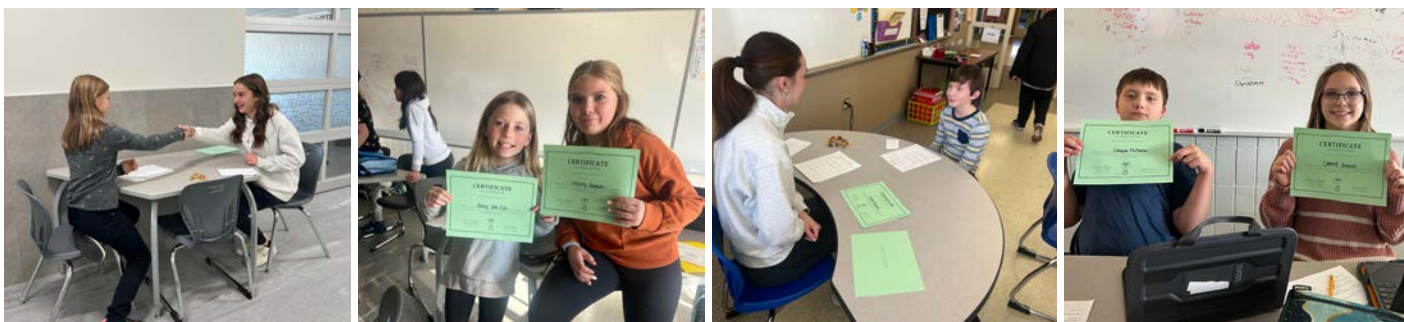


The fifth and final event of the first-ever Joblympics was "Interview Bowling." Interview Bowling was set up similarly to Resume Ring Toss. Students were asked an interview question and needed to answer it thoroughly and if answered correctly, they earned the chance to bowl. Countries recorded the number of pins knocked down after each student participated to determine the ranking for the day.

Lesson Six [Nov 25 & Nov 26]

During the sixth and final lesson, it was time for students to go for the gold in their final mock interviews. In our previous lesson, we had encouraged students to dress for success for this week's event and were pleasantly surprised to see most students dressed up for the occasion. Students were given ten minutes at the beginning of class to practice, prepare, and gather all materials together; which included their job application, resume, question prep sheet, and business card. While students were not participating in an interview, they would engage in an Olympic-themed Kahoot, a multiple-choice quiz platform, game in class.

Each student participated in a one-on-one job interview with a Joblympics team member. To initiate the interview, students shook hands with the interviewer and handed them their materials. Throughout the interview, students were prompted by the interviewer to provide information about themselves, explain the job they were applying for, and answer two questions from their prep sheet. Although students did have the question prep sheet as a resource to use during the interview, most did not, and responded to questions confidently and assertively. Upon completion of the interview, each student receives a certificate of completion and a piece of candy along with a survey for students to review and share thoughts on the Joblympics program.



Once all interviews had been concluded, it was time for students to take the podium as the closing ceremony of the Joblympics was held. Our team began by distributing a yellow paper slip for students to give to parents containing information about our program and the topics covered.

Students were also instructed to take home their folders and encouraged to show their parents all the impressive materials created. Finally, our team held the medal ceremony. The countries in first, second, and third place received the corresponding gold, silver, or bronze medals, while the country in fourth place got a ribbon. The energy in each classroom was electrifying as students were ecstatic to learn if their country had taken home the gold medal.



Bittersweet feelings arose during our final week with students. Our team was sorrowful as this was our last week in the fifth grade classrooms, but was incredibly impressed with the confidence students had to present their materials and complete interviews. We were thankful for the time spent in all classrooms and were overjoyed to receive an abundant amount of handmade cards from students.



Examine

Examine and evaluate program results; district office meeting

Evaluation [Dec 2 - Dec 13]

We began the last stage of our career development project by evaluating our program's results. Our team examined the ninety-three surveys collected from students where students ranked their confidence in filling out a job application, creating a resume, and completing an interview on a scale from one, equaling not confident, to five, equaling very confident. Before beginning our in-class lessons, teachers distributed a questionnaire to students with the same questions. This allowed us to effectively identify the increase in student confidence. Students were also asked if they enjoyed the Joblympics and to share their favorite parts. Additionally, our team analyzed the positive feedback from Ms. Wallin and Ms. Stella; both remarking on students enjoying the program and grasping the new material, acknowledging it was a great addition to their curriculums. Finally, our team received numerous positive, complementary parent emails.

District Office Presentation [Feb 28]

News of our unique career development campaign spread throughout our school district. Troy Anderson, the Director of Instructional Technology for the Independent School District 728, reached out to our team and invited us to speak at a Profile of a Graduate meeting, held at our district office in Elk River, Minnesota, on February 28, 2025. Troy shared that the purpose of this meeting was to discuss the expansion of career development opportunities in our school district. At the meeting, the Joblympics team presented our project and took part in an open discussion with school district administrators sharing personal experiences and discussing potential areas of expansion. It was incredible to be included in conversations that can have a great impact on future students. During the Profile of a Graduate meeting, our team presented to the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Director of Teaching & Learning, Career and Technical Education Coordinator, and many more (see appendix page 20).

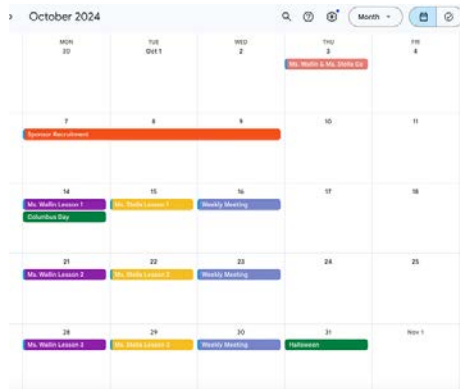


V. MONITORING AND CONTROLLING

A. Monitoring

Schedule

To monitor our career development project schedule, we enlisted a team Google Calendar. All team members, along with our chapter advisors, possessed access to the calendar, allowing for it to be checked frequently and to add events if needed. Within our Google Calendar, events were color-coded; Ms. Wallin's lessons on Mondays were purple, and Ms. Stella's lessons on Tuesdays were yellow. The use of a color code system created an easy-to-read calendar. To ensure the Joblympics remained on schedule, our team held meetings every Wednesday to reflect on Monday and Tuesday's lessons and identify if changes were needed. Additionally, we would discuss upcoming events and delegate necessary tasks. Holding weekly meetings was a useful tool to ensure the Joblympics team was aligned on all aspects throughout the project.



Budget

To begin, our team connected with local businesses and collected \$870 in sponsorships from TruStone Financial, Allstate, and Maynards to cover all costs associated with our program. The project money was stored in the Rogers DECA bank account managed by our advisors. To effectively manage and track the Joblympics budget, we used a Google Spreadsheet. Our team began by purchasing items we knew were essential for the completion of our program and allotted the remaining money to cover any additional expenses that appeared. Throughout the project, we aimed to reduce expenses by using materials we already owned if possible, and only purchase items deemed necessary. At weekly meetings, our team and advisors discussed our project budget to ensure we had all the required materials but also stayed under budget. The leftover sponsorship money will be stored for future career development projects to use.

Project Quality

To ensure a top-quality career development project was produced, our team utilized multiple resources. First, to create high-quality, informative presentations and lesson materials, we purchased Canva Pro to access premium templates and advanced features. Next, our team collaborated with Ms. Handrick, the college and career counselor at Rogers High School, to construct the best educational program for fifth grade students. After speaking with Ms. Handrick, we held meetings with Ms. Wallin and Ms. Stella, where we discussed the Joblympics program to guarantee it aligned with fifth grade standards and its quality was satisfactory. Lastly, our chapter advisors oversaw the Joblympics providing feedback when necessary on potential improvement strategies. Utilizing these resources ensured certain our career development project was top quality and overall a success.

B. Controlling

Throughout the Joblympics program, two issues arose: a lack of research materials and a new student joining the class. However, our team carefully crafted a response plan for each issue encountered. Listed on the next page are the two issues and our resolution to each.

Issue: Research Materials

Issue Encountered: The second lesson focused on students completing career research. Our team had initially planned to visit our school and local library to pick out books that related to each student's chosen career. However, after visiting multiple libraries, we found only a few career books.

Response Plan: Our team urgently needed to find an alternate way for students to research. After brainstorming, we decided to search for articles related to students' careers. Our team found articles appropriate for fifth grade students and got them printed. Although it was not our original plan, this alternative option was perfect as the articles were concise but informative and easy for students to comprehend.

Issue: New Student

Issue Encountered: During week three at Prairie View Middle School, a new student joined Ms. Wallin's fifth-hour class. As our program was in the third week of lessons, the new student had missed vital instruction and content from the two previous lessons.

Response Plan: After learning of the new student, a team member worked with the student for the remainder of the class. The previous two lessons were reviewed, and corresponding worksheets were completed. Working one-on-one with the student mitigated the student's feeling overwhelmed with new material and ensured they were on pace with the rest of the class.

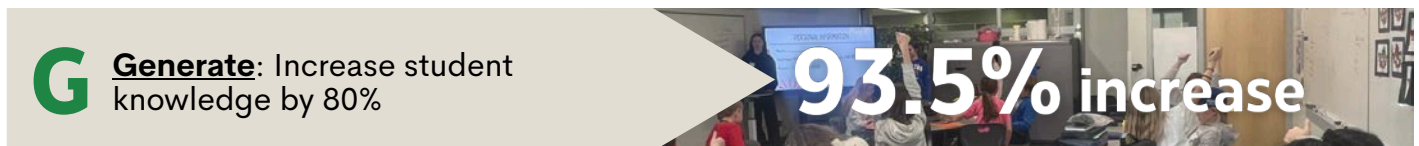
VI. CLOSING THE PROJECT

A. Evaluation of Key Metrics

At the conclusion of the Joblympics, our team evaluated the four key metrics we set at the beginning of our project. Listed below is an evaluation of each metric:

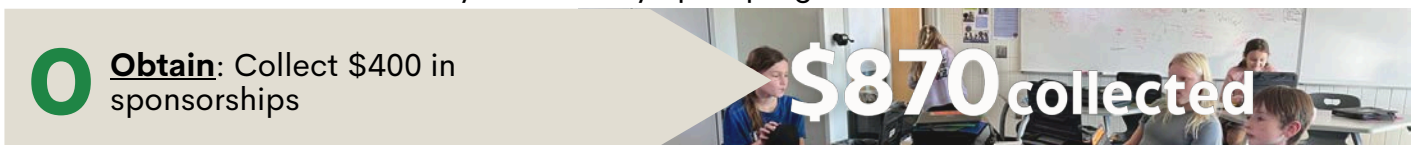
Student Knowledge

Our team set an initial goal for our program to raise student knowledge by 80%. Students completed a pre-program questionnaire to gauge current knowledge and completed a post-program questionnaire upon completion of the Joblympics program. From this, our team identified a 93.7% increase in student knowledge, surpassing our original goal significantly.



Sponsorships

The next metric measured the amount of sponsorship funds our team collected. Any sponsorship funds acquired would be used to purchase necessary items for the Joblympics program, therefore, our team needed to collect as much as possible. Our starting objective was to collect \$400 in sponsorships; instead, through the support of local businesses, we were able to collect a total of \$870 to fund the entirety of the Joblympics program.



Students Reached

Our third metric is related to the number of students the Joblympics program reached. Initially, our team planned to teach in two classrooms, one at Prairie View Middle School and Rogers Middle School, estimating twenty-five students per class, teaching 50 students. However, Ms. Wallin requested for our team to teach in two of her classes, so we reached 93 students total.



Launch: Reach 50 fifth grade students

93 students reached

Participation Rate

The final metric measured student participation. To ensure students were grasping new concepts introduced to them, our team incorporated activities throughout each lesson. Student participation was measured by evaluating engagement and participation in lesson activities and following classroom lessons by reviewing progress on weekly worksheets. Our initial objective to establish an 80% participation rate was exceeded, achieving a 98.9% participation rate.



Develop: Establish an 80% student participation rate

98.9% participation

B. Lessons Learned

During the initiating stage, our team was successful in quickly identifying a need for increased career development in the Rogers community through various research methods. Speaking with counselors at Rogers High School and fifth grade teachers, and conducting online research allowed us to collect feedback and initiate our program.

Throughout the planning and organizing process, our career development team had never worked together before, so we needed to learn how to work together effectively, causing a few setbacks in the initial planning process. However, once we established roles and responsibilities, our team was very successful in identifying metrics and preparing for potential risks.

In execution, our team was successful in implementing the six-week Joblympics program in three fifth grade classrooms. Teachers also displayed excitement for our team teaching in their classrooms. However, our team encountered an issue when finding research material for students. We should have reviewed the research materials sooner than we did.

To assist in monitoring and controlling, we learned that implementing a color-coded system within our team calendar allowed us to identify daily events. We were also successful in managing our program budget using a Google Spreadsheet to break down expenses and maintain top project quality by collaborating with teachers. Additionally, our team was successful in adapting and creating response plans to issues encountered.

C. Recommendations for Future Projects

1. Meet with teachers during program development

During the development of the Joblympics program, we met with fifth grade teachers multiple times. Meetings allowed our team to generate a program that covered age-appropriate career development topics and aligned with fifth grade standards. At meetings, Ms. Wallin and Ms. Stella provided input and addressed any concerns. This program development approach allowed our team to create a program tailored to classroom needs and fit within grade standards, so we would recommend future projects take this approach.

2. Utilize a color-coded calendar system

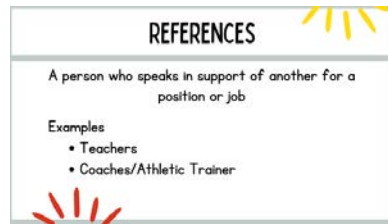
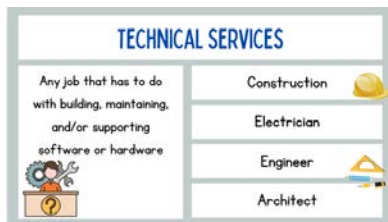
Throughout the Joblympics program, our team utilized a shared Google Calendar to monitor the project's schedule. Within our calendar, we employed a color-coded system; different activities were marked using different colors. Developing a color code system ensured it was easy to identify events on our calendar, so our team recommends this strategy to future projects.

VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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VIII. APPENDIX

Lesson Slideshows:



Class Pictures:



Ms. Wallin 5th Hour



Ms. Wallin 6th Hour



Ms. Stella 5th Hour

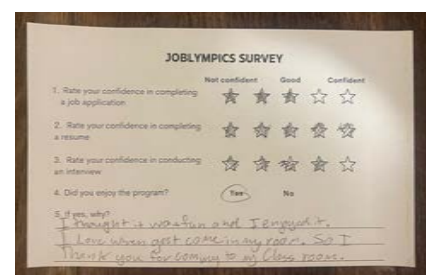
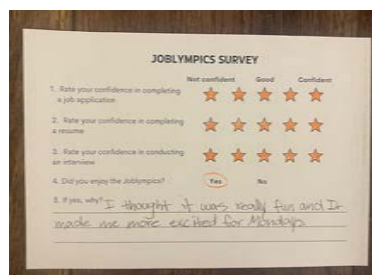
Parent Emails:

Hi Allison!

I just wanted to say thank you so much for coming into Olivia's class with Joblympics! She looked forward to it every week. She came home and told us all about it! Her favorite part was the games after the lessons. Thank you Rogers DECA for making such an interactive learning experience!

Hi! I just wanted to reach out regarding the Joblympics program. My daughter Avery loved your guys program. She came home every Monday night talking about it. I was also really impressed with the worksheets she showed me! I loved that she was able to learn about these topics. Thank you!

Thank You Cards & Student Surveys:



District Office Meeting Post-Email & Photo:

Alexis, Parker and Allison,

Thank you so much for setting the stage for our Profile of a Graduate work today by sharing your project with ISD 728 leadership. Your project and insights were referenced often as we talked about the opportunities we want to ensure students have. In case you are curious, you have now presented your project to ISD 728 Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Director of Teaching and Learning, Director of Instructional Technology, Career and Technical Education Coordinator, Safety and Prevention Coordinator, Digital Learning Specialists and Curriculum Specialists. We were all impressed by your thorough project planning, identification of need and implementation of relevant and engaging opportunities for students. Bravo! 🌟 I have no doubt you will continue to impress in your future endeavors; best of luck to you each at State and beyond!

