

Local Students Prepare for the Workforce

By Ben Lovell
Education Associates

Project Discovery 'Job Ready' Curriculum from Education Associates is improving the odds of successful employment for students in the Crosby-Ironton School District. This past fall, the Special Education Department at Crosby-Ironton High School received a grant in the amount of \$25,000 from Hallett Charitable Trust to invest in 10 Career Exploration Kits from the Project Discovery Series. These vocation-specific kits are robust, hands-on curriculum packages that utilize evidenced-based practices such as visual schedules and video modeling.

Pam Stock and Minnie Fischer are seasoned teachers with the Special Education Department at C-I. As committed educators, they are excited about any new curriculum that will keep their students' interest and impart critical skills.

"We purchased Project Discovery hands-on curriculum as a way to engage with a wide range of students, including those who struggle with traditional, lecture-style learning", stated Fischer, Special Education Teacher, Crosby-Ironton Schools.

As special education teachers in a small, rural high school (approximately 600 students, grades 7-12), Stock and Fischer face a daily challenge of juggling the myriad needs of the student body, both special and general education. It's common for a single teacher



- Brenda Booth photo

RUSTY MILLER and Ariel Croatt place their sample in the petri dish from a cloth that was used to wipe off a table. Results from this test will be available to the students in about a week.

to be shepherding multiple groups of students at once. One group might be reducing fractions, another working on independent study for credit recovery and a third serving in-school suspension. The nature of special education makes this sort of mixed group unpredictable. Some days, just as the teacher develops an instructional rhythm, the bell rings for the next period.

One of the major advantages

of the Project Discovery curriculum is its versatility. Teachers are able to adapt lessons to different sized groups, diverse learning environments and students with a wide array of disabilities. While the entire scope and sequence of each title constitutes weeks of material, individual activities can be implemented during class periods of varying lengths.

Stock and Fischer are at the helm of a diverse and dedicated

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department. The team collaborates extensively to inventory Project Discovery kits, finding the best fit for groups even individual learners. The special education department has a system to disseminate materials and share best practices across the entire team.

“The kits are comprehensive, dynamic and really enjoyable to implement. Our students stay engaged, gain valuable vocational abilities and practice crucial life skills”, said Pam Stock, Special Education Teacher, Crosby-Ironton Schools.



- Brenda Booth photo

MINNIE FISCHER, Ben Lovell, Pam Stock, and Heidi Johnson review the contents of one kit from the Project Discovery curriculum.



- Brenda Booth photo

JACKIE EBERLY and Joanie Rudolph swab the door handle to see how many germs are on it. The results will be available to the students in about a week.

The teachers at C-I are encouraged by nationwide results from other educators who have used curriculum from Education Associates. Schools, youth providers and adult organizations have shared remarkable stories of success from students and other learners who have found productive employment and enjoy fulfilling, independent lives. From Food Service and Small Engine Repair to Retailing and Emergency Medical Services, special education teachers are using this curriculum to pique interests and open doors.

The end-game for Crosby-Ironton’s Special Education department is to graduate its students and give them the best shot at becoming contributing members of the community. With Project Discovery from Education Associates, they’re excited to demonstrate the capabilities of their students and share their stories of success.