

Narrative Summary

1. Narrative Summary

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School	Fairview Middle School
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“Each educator will prepare a one-paged typed narrative suitable for publication in newspaper, newsletters, magazines, etc. This narrative should reflect on the experiences during the externship and how it will impact your individual curriculum during the school year.”

2. Narrative Summary

My name is Nick Feldner and I teach 8th grade physical science and robotics at Fairview Middle School. I have had the unique privilege of experiencing a career opposite of my own without any formal education or training in that area. This may sound like a disaster waiting to happen, but this is the problem many employers are facing each day. The pool of workers needed for ever evolving industries, such as Alabama Cullman Yutaka Technologies (ACYT), is struggling to exhibit desired qualities for employment. Though ACYT educates and trains its associates, and even promotes from within, there is often something missing from applicants. In steps Cullman Area Workforce Solutions (CAWS) to help with this issue. By placing an educator in the workplace and having them observe the skills required to succeed in that industry, we can ultimately build a relationship to better serve the community. There is a wealth of information in the real world. This is an idea that educators, like myself, incorporate into their curricula. It helps us answer those cliché student questions such as "When am I ever going to need to know this?" During my week at ACYT, I learned that beyond basic math, reading and computer skills, a person must display a variety of social skills and character attributes. A person must be a good communicator, active listener, attentive to detail, willing to learn, and able to problem solve. In this setting, people must also have good work ethic and contribute cooperatively. These are often difficult characteristics to instill in a middle school student, especially when their environment celebrates the opposite. They can't communicate because text messaging is their only tool, they can't problem solve because they rely on technology, they can't pay attention because they are multitasking, and they aren't motivated by constantly being given handouts. I was able to observe a variety of positions at ACYT ranging from associates on the floor to coordinators, engineers, and office personnel in purchasing. After conversations in each area, even up to senior management levels, it becomes clear that a great opportunity exists here to motivate students of all ages. Maybe this opportunity is not in how to learn the Periodic Table of elements or to state Newton's Laws of Motion, but instead, "Why?" Students always ask, "Where does this exist and how does it help me?" We have to make it relevant to their lives. I truly have had an invaluable experience. Thanks to this experience, my lessons for the upcoming year are slated to incorporate these local industrial connections, which are the most crucial ways to dispel the myth that plant work is for the uneducated. Not one associate at ACYT is "stuck" in an entry level position. Everyone has the opportunity to advance as far as self motivation, desire to learn, and hard work will take them. As for those hard to teach skills, how much more motivation can you give a student than a relationship to content that comes from their own backyard? A relationship that is close enough to reach all students, from the most gifted to the most at risk. Thank you to Yutaka Technologies and CAWS for providing me the opportunity to advance in my professional growth and spread this wealth of knowledge to each of my students.