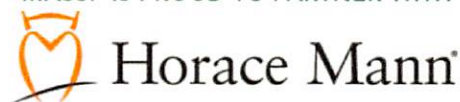




MASSP IS PROUD TO PARTNER WITH



Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals

Star of Innovation Award Application Form

School Name Oak Grove Middle School Grade Levels 6, 7, 8
Name of School District Bloomington Public School District 271
Name of Principal Anne Graner
Application Submitted By Anne Graner - Principal & John Polhill - AP
School Street Address 1300 W. 106th St.
City, Zip Bloomington, 55431
Telephone Number 952-681-6650
MASSP Division Hennepin
Name of Program Husky Help Desk

Please answer the following questions on a separate sheet/s of paper.

- Description of the program.
- How has it impacted your school?
- What difficulties did you encounter in its implementation?
- What issue/s might another school encounter in replicating this program?
- Do you have any data to show the impact of this program? If so, please share it with us.

Applications must be submitted to MASSP offices by March 1.

PHONE: 612-361-1510 • FAX: 612-361-6340
MASSP • 2 Pine Tree Drive • Suite 380 • Arden Hills, MN 55112

Questions? Please contact:
Bob Driver, Executive Director
612-361-6159

Oak Grove Middle School
Principal Anne Graner
Assistant Principal John Polhill
MASSP Star of Innovation Award Submission
The Husky Help Desk
March 1, 2024

During the 2022-2024 school year, we had a student at Oak Grove Middle School, who appeared to be head and shoulders ahead of most staff at OGM when it came to knowledge of Chromebooks and technology. The student had figured out multiple ways to bypass the Bloomington Public School District's Go Guardian system. Go Guardian is software that staff use in order to monitor students while they work on their Chromebooks. It allows teachers to shut down websites that students are on while they should be focused on the current educational task the teacher has assigned as well as allowing the teacher to monitor the work they are doing on their assignment. He had figured out how to bypass this software so that when a teacher attempted to look at what he was working on, it looked as though he was on the correct assignment. What's more, he had begun to share their expertise with other students at OGM.

After a second time of being caught bypassing the Go Guardian system, OGM administration knew that something needed to be done in order to deter the student from continuing to skirt the Go Guardian system. It seemed clear that regular school consequences were not doing the trick for this student and we had already sat down with the student and their father to try and put an end to this problem as well. As we tried to brainstorm solutions on how we could deter the student from continuing to find ways around the Go Guardian system, we solicited the help of Isaac Johnson, a three-year technology paraprofessional who manages most things technology related in our school. Isaac had a thought that was outside the box, something that we hadn't considered thus far. Isaac suggested that instead of a consequence like an in-school suspension, we have the student serve a week of lunch detention, but with a catch. Isaac wanted these lunch detentions to be served at the technology center help desk at OGM where he would counsel the student on their previous decisions while also teaching the student how to fix broken school Chromebooks. What started as a week of lunch detention soon became the birth of the Husky Help Desk.

Within just a few days of this plan in action it became very apparent that one week of work during lunch was not going to suffice for both Isaac and the student. Isaac quickly took a liking to the student and let administration know how smart they were with all things technology. The student, meanwhile, began asking both the principal and the

assistant principal if, after the week of lunch detention was over, could we consider allowing them to continue to spend their lunches in the tech center with Isaac. How could we not oblige? We decided that lunch was not the time for this partnership, though, and instead proposed that the student begin working with Isaac a few days a week during their advisory time. Both Isaac and the student quickly accepted this proposal and the Husky Help Desk was in business.

Over the remainder of the 2022-2024 school year, the student did not bypass the Go Guardian system any more. He also stopped teaching other students to do so. Moreover, this student became the leader in training Isaac on what to look for when students were doing similar things as he once did. One of our favorite interactions with this student occurred about a month into their work with Isaac. While passing the student in the hallway after an advisory session with Isaac, Mr. Polhill asked the student, "How has it been going with Isaac?" To which the student replied, "Pretty good, he's coming along!" The student clearly thought that Mr. Polhill was checking on how Mr. Isaac was doing, and not the other way around!

Description of the Program

Isaac also began teaching the student the basics of fixing broken Chromebooks and this soon doubled the productivity of the Husky Help Desk. In a school of nearly seven hundred students, Isaac was very excited to have the help in an area that previously was their sole responsibility and the student quickly took a liking to fixing their peers' Chromebooks. Soon, Isaac began finding more students who were interested in technology and, in particular, the service side of Chromebook repair.

Today, Oak Grove Middle School has five students who have become a part of the Husky Help Desk Technology Repair Team. The students start every morning at the Husky Help Desk during Primetime, OGM's homeroom time. They also come down to the help desk during various advisory classes each week. Some of the other students have had similar technology violations as our first student had, but others are there solely because they have an interest in technology and computer repair, and this group provides not only a chance to hone their skills, but it is also a place where they fit in and get that sense of belonging that so many middle schoolers look for during their time in middle school.

How Has it Impacted Our School

While working with Isaac, the students get the opportunity to learn the technical side of computer repair, but they also get something even more valuable. Mr. Isaac uses a social emotional learning approach to counsel the students. During their time together, Isaac checks in with the students and asks them how they are doing in other

classes and in other facets of middle school. If they are having issues, Isaac can help them navigate through their issues. If they need further support within Oak Grove Middle, Isaac can help them find time to see a counselor or social worker or can alert support staff of their needs.

Another amazing side of the Husky Help Desk has been the decrease in student wait time for Chromebook repairs. Because the Bloomington Public Schools are a 1:1 student to Chromebook district, students need a working Chromebook at all times while in school and at home. Because of the Husky Help Desk and the student-led team that run this program, there is no longer a long wait time for students to have their Chromebooks repaired. In a school of nearly seven hundred students, the wait time for a Chromebook repair can top out at almost a week in some cases due to having only one tech para in the building servicing the computers. Now, with the Husky Help Team, students are getting their Chromebooks back in the same day and, in many cases within the hour. This team has become so efficient in making the repairs at OGM that we have begun to accept Chromebooks from the other middle schools within the Bloomington Public Schools. The Husky Help Team is so hungry to do the work that we have had to think outside the box to keep them busy. This program has really taken off! Recently, we found out that other schools within the Bloomington Public Schools are working on establishing their own, in-house help desk programs similar to what we are doing at OGM.

Difficulties We Have Encountered While Implementing This Program

The main difficulty we have encountered with the Husky Help Desk has been with scheduling student work times. Because we are offering this opportunity to all grade levels, the times of which students have advisory classes differ. We've had to get creative with the scheduling of student helpers to make sure that fits into Isaac's schedule as well. Thus far, we have made it work and hope to continue to explore all options for future growth of the program. We believe there are opportunities for this program to exist as an after school program. We know that we are only scratching the surface of the opportunities we can give our students around technology and this program has shown us that there is a need within OGM to support students who are interested in fixing technology as well as building computers.

One other difficulty we have seen is probably more of a good problem to have. The students that are part of the Husky Help Desk are hungry to do more surrounding technology at OGM. We are working to become more creative with the opportunities we are providing these students and to bring in more students who are interested in this program as well. Overall, we realize we have only scratched the surface of what Mr. Isaac can do with our students and we want to continue to explore the avenues that the Husky Help Desk can provide in the future.

Issues Another School May Encounter When Replicating This Program

Issues that another school may have in implementing this program would be similar. They would have to make sure that the timing works in order to find times for students to volunteer without getting in the way of any of their education. Another issue that other schools may have would be with finding a quality staff member to manage their program. At OGM, we are very lucky to have Isaac Johnson facilitating the program. Although technically only a paraprofessional in our building, Isaac is an amazing resource for both our staff population as well as our students. A large part of the success of our Husky Help Desk program is how it is managed on Isaac's end, and thus, another school would want to make sure that they have someone as amazing as Isaac to manage their program as well.

One other issue another school or district may encounter is how they support technology repair. Some districts have a central repair hub that is not within the individual schools, but rather repairs are done at the district level. This would be an initial challenge for those schools because they may not have a staff member in place that understands the nuances of device repair.

Data to Show the Impact of this Program

As far as data is concerned when helping to show the validity of our Husky Help Desk program, there are two areas that we have garnered some very successful data from. The first area is the turnaround time on fixing and returning broken Chromebooks to students. Prior to establishing the Husky Help Desk, the wait time for a student who turned in a broken Chromebook was generally 3-5 school days wait time until it was fixed and returned. Since the inception of the Husky Help Desk, students are now getting their fixed Chromebooks back, in the vast majority of cases, on the same day!

The second piece of data that supports the impact of The Husky Help Desk is that it has completely cut down on repeated incidents with technology misuse. When we have a student who has an issue misusing their Chromebook, we use the The Husky Help Desk to support positive technology use at OGM. In multiple cases when a student was referred to The Husky Help Desk after a behavior incident, not only did they not have a repeat incident in this same area, but they continued to volunteer for The Husky Help Desk after their support time was over.

Summary

The Husky Help Desk has provided our school a way in which to vastly improve the productivity of our Chromebook fixing solutions while providing an opportunity for students interested in technology an opportunity to bond and work cooperatively towards a common goal. The Husky Help Desk has also positively impacted students who have incidents of technology misuse at OGM by allowing them the opportunity to run diagnostics on broken Chromebooks, identify the problem and fix the Chromebook for their peers. We are very proud of what the Husky Help Desk has provided both students interested in Chromebooks and those who need technology support and we look forward to growing this program in the future.