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Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals



Star of Innovation Award Application Form

School Name Redwood Valley High School Grade Levels 9-12
Name of School District Redwood Area Schools
Name of Principal Rick Jorgenson
Application Submitted By Rick Jorgenson
School Street Address 101 Crestview Drive
City, Zip Redwood Falls, MN 56283
Telephone Number 507-644-8112
MASSP Division Southwest
Name of Program Law Enforcement Program

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



*Independent School
District 2897
Redwood Area School District
Redwood Valley High School
Support. Challenge. Learn. Achieve.*

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To: MASSP Star of Innovation Committee
From: Rick Jorgenson, RVHS Principal
Subject: Star of Innovation Award Application
Date: 26FEB24

Description of program:

In the 2023-2024 school year, Redwood Valley High School implemented a law enforcement program. This consists of two parts: A 16 hour exploratory experience, and a 3 credit college course "Intro to Criminal Justice." Both programs are open to students in grades 10-12, and were offered after school.

The 16 hour exploratory experience was taught by our SRO (School Resource Officer). Involved in the program were officers from the Redwood Falls Police Department and the Redwood County Sheriffs Department. A \$15,000 LYFT grant was awarded to our program to purchase equipment. Included were duty belts, flashlights, handcuffs, dummy guns, taser simulators, and training service pistols. This is equipment that is used by police departments in their training.

We offered the exploratory experience twice. The first time, 7 students took part, and the second was 3 students. Students learned how to respond to different situation. First, they were brought into the wrestling room which was dark. Students were told the situation, such as "There is a person who appears to be intoxicated" or "A man with a gun is in the park." The HS Principal played the role of the "bad guy" and wore a taser suit (purchased through the LYFT grant). This suit would protect the actor from dummy bullets or barbs from the taser simulator. Students would come into the wrestling room with their duty belts, and equipment. They had to determine if they talk to the suspect, or use the taser or lethal force. Each student also wore a Go-Pro so they could record a first-hand account of the encounter. Afterwards, the class watched each video and the SRO gave suggestions and critiques. Another scenario was outside. The HS Principal was in his vehicle and a police car was behind it. The SRO sat in the police car with each student, one at a time. The student was given a scenario, such as "This vehicle was seen at Walmart after a theft of a coffee maker" or "the vehicle was swerving." The students turned on the lights on the squad car and then simulated a traffic stop. Props such as beer cans, stolen items, or a weapon were planted in the car.

In both 16 hour experiences, students received no credit for classes, yet almost all students made it to every class.

Secondly, a 3 credit Intro to Criminal Justice class was conducted at the school. Fall semester, we had 5 students, and Spring semester had 2 students. This was paid for with a MDE Expansion of Rigorous Programming grant. All students passed the class in the Fall (Spring is still ongoing).

How has it impacted your school:

It is amazing how the students are talking about this program and appreciating law enforcement. Some have done ride alongs with the local PD, while others have volunteered to be participants in SWAT trainings. 4 students from the classes have indicated that they are considering a career in law enforcement. Our local police department is very much in favor of the program and we are hoping this becomes a pipeline for law enforcement officers in our community.

What difficulties did you encounter in its implementation?

The biggest difficulty is recruiting students. Law enforcement is a niche career. Unlike business or medicine, which can affect many businesses and industries, for a student to join this program they need to be interested in law enforcement in some respect.

What issues might another school encounter in replicating this program?

Funding could be an issue for other schools, but we had access to grant funding making this a lesser concern for us. We also have a very supportive police and sheriffs department, and a community that values the police. Other communities where the relationship between law enforcement and the citizens is not as strong, may have more hurdles with implementing this program in a school.

Do you have any data to show the impact of this program?

As stated earlier, students attended the 2 hour sessions for the exposure experience without earning credits. Almost all students made it to all of the sessions for a total of 16 hours. Two students are attending the 16 hour experience twice.

Secondly, all of the students in the Fall College Course passed and earned three college credits.

Finally, the students took it to the next level, going on field trips (toured the security department at the Mall of America), went on police ride-alongs, and volunteered at SWAT training. Again, this was time that the students gave up without any sort of credit or monetary reward.