

Running head: RATIONALE

Career Exploration Unit: Sequencing Rationale

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### **Sequencing Rationale**

The eighth grade nine-week career exploration course is designed to support current student success and encourage students to build a strong foundation for their future. The course is intentionally organized to build on students' past knowledge, context, and interests. The sequencing pattern used is learning-related and it is intended to encourage exploration and evaluation of career possibilities. Therefore, the individual units and lessons within the course are not necessarily in a chronological order, but they do challenge students to actively engage the learning process and create a plan to build a successful future.

#### **Pre-Career Exploration Unit: Skills for Success**

The groundwork for success is built at the beginning of the course as students evaluate their own strengths. The first couple of weeks focus on general skills that support student success in the classroom and will help students be successful in a future work environment (i.e. time management and organization). In the first unit students investigate skills for success and evaluate their own school habits. The second unit in the career exploration class has the majority of the career exploration content and is designed to build on the skills for success because it not only examines careers, but it also gives students the opportunity to explore how their unique skills, interests, and context can be used in different career possibilities.

#### **Career Exploration Unit**

The career exploration unit consists of five individual lessons that build on each other as they challenge students to understand real world costs, apply reality checks to career interests, analyze a career to dig deeper in the exploration, evaluate career possibilities, and create a future of possibilities by building a strong foundation now. It should take students about four weeks to complete the five lesson inquires in this unit. The first lesson, entitled Reality Check, is the most

logical starting point for this unit because it builds on the students' inquiry into responsible time management. The Reality Check allows students to investigate how they can be responsible with their finances. This lesson also matches students with careers that support a particular lifestyle. It is a fun activity and easily invites students into the exploration process. The second lesson helps students evaluate careers that match their interests; the inventory assessment builds on the reality check results because it provides students with detailed information that they can compare with their financial needs and wants. The third lesson is appropriate at this point because it gives students the opportunity to analyze a career by digging deeper into what career information is available and how to evaluate possible career options. The fourth lesson is logically placed because it builds on the students existing knowledge of their career interests and encourages students to investigate a career by conducting an interview. It is also an interesting activity because it allows students to explore the real world. The final lesson gives students another opportunity to evaluate their interests and ideas through a personal assessment. This is appropriately placed because students often find that their career results on this particular assessment are different than their earlier assessment, which challenges students to keep their options open as they gain new experiences and knowledge throughout life.

### **Post-Career Exploration Unit: Mapping Your Future**

At the conclusion of the career exploration unit, the eighth grade students take some time to develop a four year course plan for high school and sign up for their ninth grade courses. The students are able to make informed decisions about their course plan because the career exploration unit provides detailed knowledge about what courses students need to take in high school in order to be prepared for success in the future. Not only are parents involved in the course planning process, but high school student leaders also visit the eighth grade class to

answer the students' questions about high school courses. In addition to developing the course plan, the students go on a field trip to a college campus. This opportunity allows students to explore options after high school and ask a college representative what steps they should be taking now to prepare for their future.

### References

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