

Service Learning Projects

How do the students feel?
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Senior Sarah Stampfl

"I think it was implemented with good intentions, but the way it's being carried out is frustrating to students."



Junior Korin Knutson

"It's better for juniors because we don't miss any class time, and the conditions for testing are better in classrooms than in the gym."



Sophomore Tim Racette

"It's like a field trip, but I could pretty much be doing the same thing on my own time."

Photos by Jessica Halston & Amy Knutson

Students sign up for new learning opportunities

By Karly Guldan

While the junior class is taking the Prairie State Achievement Tests, the freshman, sophomore, and senior classes will be participating in the first ever Service Learning Projects on April 23 and 24.

Teachers from throughout the school invented educational activities for these days. These activities range from a whitewater rafting trip, to watching old movies in the auditorium, to studying for the AP tests with a class. There are 48 total activities in which the students should be signed up for.

Ben Palmberg, Physics teacher, said his activity involves hiking, geology, dendrology, and even astronomy. A group of seven teachers, including Palmberg, put together this adventure. The team of teachers, along with 15 students, will spend the two days in the woods studying nature, hiking, and at night will study the stars.

The activities other teachers have collaborated on vary in content, time, money, and effort needed. Denise DiValerio and Lorean Dresser, Antioch Community High

School gym teachers, are planning to take their students bowling in the mornings of both days, and horseback riding in the afternoons. The usual cost is \$30, but each student will now only have to pay \$23. Dresser and DiValerio have 45 students attending the horseback riding sessions.

DiValerio said she likes the idea of the Service Learning Projects because "it gives the students a chance to experience different things and integrate their learning into the community and their environment."

Students also have a chance to participate in a special orientation session at the College of Lake County. Jane Abramson and Johnna Slocum, Guidance Counselors at ACHS, are taking students to CLC for an all day orientation session. It includes a tour, lunch, appointments with counselors and scheduling of classes for the students' freshmen year in college.

"Students took their placement tests before orientation to allow for more time to tour the campus and schedule classes," said

Abramson.

Some teachers were disappointed by the lack of student involvement in these projects. Many still have not signed up for an activity. Palmberg said he was disappointed by the "lack of students to sign up for it and how many seem to be planning on getting called out for those days." He said that the activities should be a fun break from regular classes and should be enjoyed by the students.

According to Phyllis Fay, ACHS assistant principal, plans for the Service Learning Projects began in October. Fay said the teachers are putting forth a tremendous amount of effort. At first, Fay said they were a bit concerned about taking students off campus, but that many have planned out two full days of activities and some even planned overnight trips.

The success of these projects will be determined by the state tests the Juniors are taking during these two days.

The projects were designed to assist in freeing up classroom space for the Junior class to take the tests in.

19
 Number of projects that are of no cost

\$75
 Cost of the most expensive project, whitewater rafting

18
 Number of projects being held on the ACHS campus

“ [The Service Learning Projects] give the students a chance...to integrate their learning into the community and their environment.”

-Denise DiValerio
 ACHS gym teacher

PSAE testing moved to classrooms

By Marta Baginski

With hopes to improve student performance on the Prairie State and ACT exams that students take each year, the Social Studies Department at Antioch Community High School has pushed to change the location of the tests. In past years, students have been taking the exams in the gym. The exams this year will be taken in classrooms on the days of April 23 and 24.

"The Social Studies Department believes that student scores will benefit from small group testing rather than the large group testing in the gyms as we have done in the

past," said Don Zeman, head of the ACHS Social Studies Department.

Changing the testing location also forced teachers to come up with a way to split up the students into smaller classroom groups. The teachers conducted a sort of 'draft', which consisted of them picking 25 students that they would like to proctor for.

All of the social studies teachers, along with many others from the English and Foreign Language departments, will be proctoring.

"All juniors will be performing with a teacher that they know and one who specifically selected them to be a part of their group," said Zeman.

Though students often do not enjoy taking

standardized tests, some realize that this is a necessary measure.

"It shows what I am capable of and what things I still need to work on," said Christina Pontikes, ACHS junior.

Fortunately for the ACHS administration, some students are pleased with the changes. They feel that it will be easier to concentrate and provide a more comfortable testing environment.

"I think [changing the testing location] is a good thing because we will be able to focus better...some of the seniors [who took the tests last year] said that the gym was very cold," said Anders Wennstrom, ACHS junior who will be taking the PSAE in April.

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