Murray County Schools

Providing Opportunities in Workforce Employment Readiness
The POWER Program
What is the POWER Program?

An alternative transitioning design for Exceptional Students ages 18-22 that focuses on life and job skills training after academic requirements have been met.
So, How did we get to here?
The Program began with a simple question:

“What could Murray County Schools offer the older population of students participating in the Special Education program at the high school level that would enhance their post-secondary lives?”
These are the skills we defined that are needed for a young adult to succeed in post-secondary life:

- Independence
- Adult Living skills
- Self-advocacy
- Work-related skills

Additional Focus needed:

- Assistance in completing any referral process appropriate
- Assistance in study skills for remaining academic requirements if needed.
What resources are needed?

The program would need a basic operating format. Other than basic supplies, it would also need access to transportation during the school day with staff trained to drive.

What resources do we have?

The program would inherit the contents of a resource trailer that was not going to be used any longer. The supplies included basic office equipment such as copiers, printers, booklet makers, and several computers, along with paper supplies.
Where would the program be housed?

Because the county was building an additional high school at the time, there would be room for us to be housed at Murray County High School for the following year. This would also give us access to bus services and food services for our participants.

What paperwork would be needed for participation of the students and the business partners?

In collaboration with the legal advisor of the school system, the paperwork from the previous Community Based Vocational Instruction (CBVI) and Career Technical Instruction (CTI) programs was adapted to fit the new design of the program.
What could we call our program that would set it apart?

The potential students for whom the program would serve for the next year were allowed to determine the name. Along with collaboration with their teachers, the name was chosen.

Providing Opportunities in Workforce Readiness
According to the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA)

The term “transition services” means a **COORDINATED SET OF ACTIVITIES** for a child with a disability that:

- Is designed to be within a **RESULTS-ORIENTED PROCESS**, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child’s movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment); continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation;

- Is based on the **INDIVIDUAL CHILD’S NEEDS**, taking into account the child’s strengths, preferences, and interests; and

- **INCLUDES** instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living **OBJECTIVES**, and, if appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

[34 CFR 300.43 (a)] [20 U.S.C. 1401(34)]
The beginning...

The POWER Program officially began in 2010

6 Exceptional students aged 18 or over

1 Certified teacher

1 Paraprofessional with her Commercial Drivers License (CDL)
What do we stand for?

Rules:

POWER Responsibilities

- Show Respect. Listen
- Be on Time
- No Food or Drinks around Equipment
- Practice Personal Hygiene
- Dress Appropriately
- Promote Teamwork
- Be Organized
- Show Responsibility for Actions
- Talk in an Appropriate Manner
- Work out Problems

Motto:

We Hold Within Us the POWER to Succeed
**Workplace Readiness**

CCA-E-CCA II-8. Students will demonstrate positive work ethics through job shadowing of mentors.

**Personal Responsibilities**

CCA-E-CCA II-6. Students will demonstrate the benefits of meeting obligations and the consequences of not meeting obligations.

**INTERPERSONAL SKILLS**

CCA-E-CCA II-5. Students will develop strategies for meeting and completing responsibilities.
Responsibilities:

The POWER Program is in charge of:

- Running the Murray County Schools Skills Center.
- The Positive Behavior Intervention Supports at MCHS (running the store and making the Indian Coins)
- Creating the Emergency Cards for the County School system.
What do we study?

WORK ETHICS  SELF-DETERMINATION
MANNERS  MONEY
LETTER WRITING  MEASUREMENT
RESUMES  TEAMWORK
JOB INTERVIEWS  SEWING BUTTONS
SELF-ADVOCACY  DISABILITY RIGHTS
CHARACTER EDUCATION  COMMUNICATION
CURRENT EVENTS  RESPONSIBILITIES OF A CITIZEN
DEFINITIONS OF WORDS LIKE: WISDOM, RESPECT, HONOR, DETERMINATION,
PERSEVERANCE, LOYALTY, CHARACTER, INTEGRITY, COURAGE
We study current events and local news.
Then what?

Our participants go out to jobsites for 2 hours daily. They are left with mentors at the businesses so that they can see what a real job would be like.
Community Partnerships

Bi-Lo
Murray County Recreation Department
Murray County
Food Lion
RTK Veterinarians
Red Cross
McDonalds
Clips and Cuddles

Keller Outdoors
Sav-a-Lot
Saucy Bones
Salvation Army
D&W Paper Tubing
And then?

Our days are filled discovering who we are, what our strengths are and the many lessons we need as young adults.

We also complete jobs given to us by various sources.
Just a few jobs we’ve done:

Name tags for the 75th Murray County High School Reunion.
Candy reward cards
Buttons
Training manuals for the county
Assisting teachers in rooms
Set up of a conference room
Set up for the book fair.
Emergency cards for the county
Die cut
Table decorations and place cards for STUCO banquet
Ballgame posters
Teacher brag board
Cheerleading tryout forms
Creating booklets for teachers’ Masters Certification
Teacher jobs
Homecoming parade signs
Powerpoint Presentations
5k Run poster
Farm Bureau and Murray County Ag posters
WHO IS IMPACTED BY OUR ACTIONS?

Ryan returned to us following his graduation ceremony from MCHS. He was very nervous about working in the community because he had never had that experience. He began working at Bi-Lo and has had a constant increase in his self-esteem. He enjoys returning from his jobsite daily with stories of how his day went. He hopes he can be hired by them by the end of the school year, which is a very distinct possibility.
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Hi, My name is Ryan Smith and I have never had a job my whole entire life but thanks to the POWER Program, I have been able to get working experience which can help me get a job at Bi-Lo. The POWER Program has been able to help me get working experience and I love it. Thank you.
WHO IS IMPACTED BY OUR ACTIONS?

Jennifer has been in the POWER Program for 3 years. She is now working at Ingles and McDonalds. She loves to share her experiences with the class.
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Alright...I surprised everybody in the POWER Program that I came back to school in the POWER Program. Why I came back? Because it feels like something is holding me back when I'm at home.
Jordan is returning to the POWER Program for his 2\textsuperscript{nd} year. He is an extremely hard worker and has discovered that he has leadership abilities in his daily interactions.
WHO IS IMPACTED BY OUR ACTIONS?

Jordan is returning to the POWER Program for his 2nd year. He is an extremely hard worker and has discovered that he has leadership abilities in his daily interactions.

The POWER Program has helped me with making friends, hygiene, being friendly, being kind to other and learning to make new friends and being kind to people even if that person is not kind to you. It's also helped me with job experiences and work experience and it might help me get a real job in the future.
Who is impacted by our actions?

Before coming to the program, Will wouldn’t walk in the school hallways by himself. Now, he not only moves within the school independently, but he also works at a local BBQ restaurant.
Who else is impacted by our actions?

Delyn Lusk, teacher at Murray County High School

“The POWER program has given students a place to go after graduation to prepare them for the real world. It offers the opportunity to teach these students work skills and on the site training for jobs that will allow them to earn a living after graduation. This program helps students work toward being independent and productive citizens using skills that are not addressed in the regular school setting. It focuses on real world tasks that are non existent in the traditional school setting. Students get excited about their job and responsibilities during the POWER program.”

Tammy K, parent of former POWER Program participant,

“The POWER program gives the students tools they need and access to on-the-job training that they may have not gotten.”
Results oriented?

**Results oriented?**

**Since its inception in 2010**

*27 Participants*

*All but 5 of those are employed* either in independent or sheltered work places or currently participating in the Power Program.

*Only 5 are unengaged. (They left the program due to family responsibilities before they completed their semester after turning 22).*
The design for the program has grown from a simple concept to a constantly adapting design in answer to the transitioning needs of students in Murray County.

Plans are currently in the works to expand the program into a Career and Future Exploration course for the underclassmen.
You may never know what results come of your actions, but if you do nothing, there will be no results.

— Mahatma Gandhi
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