**Externship Exhibition Expectations**

**Initiating my Externship**

Back in January when we started to work on our externships, we gathered a little group of education-interested people. Will had come up with the idea of going to other schools and tell them about project based learning, HTHI, our philosophy, help them take the next steps, and become aware of how they could improve their educational systems. I’m really interested in education and progressive learning and would like to become a teacher, which made me decide to join Will and five other education interested.

That same month, a group of Canadians from different Christian high schools in Ontario came down and visited us in San Diego. During their tour, lead by Jonathan and Mara, they heard about our ideas for senior project, and invited us to come to their schools. They funded our trip and after a little hard work  on getting everything planned and ready - mostly from Will’s side to be honest -, we got our tickets, decided on the itinerary and were ready to go to Canada.

As mentioned I’ve thought about becoming a teacher. I don’t know what I want to teach, but I believe that a great teacher can change the experience of school upside down and if you want to change the world, the classrooms of our high schools are a good place to start. As to what makes a good teacher there’s a bunch of different theories, but after coming to HTH and going on this trip, I have realized that I really like our philosophies and ideas, and I believe that this is the way to go. During this project, I’ve learned a lot about HTH, but it also got me start thinking about education in other ways and gave me a unique view into the world of education and the tasks of being a teacher, and kicked me out of my sometimes a little too traditional way of thinking of school. Our trip to Canada really got me inspired and I truly realized how interesting education can be.

**Doing my Externship**

The trip to Canada was an amazing experience, and I really enjoyed our three weeks there. I had the best times the weekend we spent wandering the streets of Toronto, which turned out to be a great city. We had a ton of fun, and I just really enjoyed walking around Toronto. As to the more serious parts of our trip, I was really impressed by how open minded the administrations and staffs were to our way of looking at education. Before we left I was thinking a lot about how we should handle teachers who just thought that this whole PBL thing was stupid and a waste of time, or administrators who didn’t want to spend their time and money or just wouldn’t take the chance and try it out. But all these thoughts turned out to be pointless because I do not recall talking to a single person, who was not interested, curious and in the end often convinced of the HTH principles and way of educating. At every single school they were thankful for our visit and appreciated our help. It made me realize that though I often looked at “old-fashion teachers” in a bad way and thought that they just didn’t wanted to change their styles or didn’t care, it is often because they just don’t know that there’s is other and better ways of teaching, and that they ALL really want their kids to succeed.

I can’t really tell the most important thing I learned during this externship, simply because I learned so much. I got a look into the world of education, learned a lot about teaching and it really got me to think differently about what the values and point of school actually are.

Before I left I was really nervous and was struggling a bit in the beginning of the trip with still being pretty new to the HTH system. Compared to the other members of my group, who started in middle school there was just a lot of things about HTH I had a hard time explaining and simply didn’t know. In the beginning I was nervous and focused on all the topics where I didn’t have the same knowledge as the others, but after I listened to them talk, I caught up and learned a ton of new things about HTH and education in general. Through meeting and talking to a lot of different people, I also realized that I had a lot of experiences myself and the fact that I could look at HTH from the outside and actually had experienced the differences was just as valuable to share. I’m proud of all the stuff I learned, how I later on the trip could explain these things to other people with confidence, and how much I grew from this experience.

The most rewarding part of our time in Canada was definitely to see how our trip affected the schools. We visited six schools which all were very different; One school had 82 students, another 450, some schools were already doing PBL and just wanted feedback and help to improve while other barely knew what PBL was and had no idea how to start. But no matter size or type of school it was amazing to see the excitement our visit brought, and how our visit actually made a difference. This was definitely the most rewarding part of the trip, because even though we didn’t directly influence any changes, I think we got the wheel to start spinning and helped especially a lot of teachers realize that what we do at HTH can happen other places too. I think it was helpful for the teachers to be able to ask us their own specific questions, and though it might still take some years before they really will feel a difference, I think the teachers from now at least will be aware of what they are doing and hopefully start experimenting with PBL.

**Reflecting on my future in this field**

Prior to this trip I already had a pretty good understanding of what a teacher does, what the work include etc - my mom is a teacher and I obviously often get to see what a what the work as a teacher includes. So overall I didn’t get a different understanding of the actual career, but I really got a different understanding of educating. I have always thought I would like to become a teacher because I first of all like teaching, I love working with people, and I believe that the value of a good teacher is so much more than what people think. After this trip though I have realized that something has to be changed in the way we think of school and I would love to be a part of that change. I had an interest in education before this trip, but now I would say that I have have a passion. I find education really interest, and besides from giving me a deeper understanding, this externship really got me inspired to go even further into it. So yes, I definitely believe that I have a future in this field.