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**Externship Exhibition Expectations**

**Initiating your Externship:**

It all started in January when Will formed a group of students interested in education. Our main goal was to help support schools interested in PBL. We wanted to visit schools that had come to HTH at least once already and help them integrate the High Tech High philosophy into their schools. Some of the things we would do at the schools would be observe classrooms, lead seminars, do panel discussions, present projects, and in general describe our school philosophy and answer questions about our experience at HTHI.

In January a large group of Canadians were visiting from Ontario and during one of the tours I gave I brought of my senior project. The group seemed very intrigued and invited us to Canada. We didn’t expect to leave the country, but we found that this was such an amazing opportunity we couldn’t pass up. Will was the person mainly in charge of the logistics. I was a bit more difficult to figure out because I was planning on leaving early from the trip do to prior commitments in San Diego.

One of my biggest struggles when planning the trip was trying to keep it organized. I’m very used to giving tours and I had a sense of what the schools wanted us to so, but I had to keep in mind that not everyone in the group were ambassadors. I often became frustrated because I felt like I already knew what to say and it felt unnecessary to plan. However, in Canada it was very helpful to have a structure when we had to do class panels or present in front of the whole student body.

I’ve always felt like I’ve wanted to be a teacher in some way. This trip definitely solidified my passion for education and in particular my passion for High Tech High. Will, being my mentor, helped foster my love for education and has been a huge part of making this experiencing amazing.

**Doing your Externship:**

Between schools, we had some downtime and the group enjoyed exploring the different towns. While in downtown London, we learned a very important lesson. Don’t mess with middle schoolers. We were just minding our own business at Victoria Park when a silly middle schooler threw trash on the ground. Jake, being the giant he is, walked over and asked the boy politely to pick up his trash. The boy did. For a few minutes all of the little kids were talking about us to their friends. Suddenly, out of now where a girl “falls” and spills ice coffee all over our legs and runs away. Luckily, Jake saw some police officers nearby and had them talk to the middle schoolers. That was when the group met their first mean Canadian.

The thing that surprised me the most was how well the group got along. I haven’t had the greatest experiences with group trips at school and it was really nice to have such a good group. We had a lot of fun together and it felt like we were actually making a difference. Even though I came late into the trip they still made me feel like part of the group and I really appreciate that.

Some of the schools we visited didn’t plan out our visit as much as other schools. Often with the unscheduled schools we had an option to sit in on teacher meetings with Will or just relax with some students. Most of the time I sat in on teacher meetings and I’m proud that I found a happy medium between sitting in on teacher meetings and hanging out with students.

The biggest challenge on the trip was trying pin point what each school needed from us. In particular, TD Christian High School has the right idea and the outer shell. However, they are missing the heart of High Tech High and that was really hard to figure. It was also difficult to find a way to tell them that without being rude. This school is great and it has the potential to be amazing, but it just doesn’t seem there yet.

One of the most rewarding moments on the trip was when Will and I talked to a group of 11th grade ambassadors at London High School about our school. They started asking some very good questions and after they talked to their Vice Principle about visiting our school. That was only one experience of that happening, but I feel like at each school we had a few students who we affected deeply. Those are the students who will make a difference in the future of their school.

**Reflecting on your future in this field:**

A key thing I learned about being a part of education is how hard the culture shift will be. I also need to educate myself with more styles of teaching than just PBL. I most definitely still want to go into education and hopefully with it I can do my other passions as well.

I feel like I definitely grew from this experience. Just by traveling on my own has been a growing experience. I also have grown to love and appreciate my family that lives in Canada more. Luckily, my university is very close to where they live so I can visit them more often.