Comparison of Access Resources

Sample table for rating resources.

	Resource 1: Virtual Field Trips	Resource 2: Living Classrooms Field Trip	Resource 3: Howard University Tour	Resource 4: Arena Stage Play	**Resource 5: Math Literacy Night**	Resource 6: Coding on Code.org
Short-Term Impact	**3**	3	2	3	**4**	3
Long-Term Impact	**3**	2	3	2	**1**	3
Availability	**2**	5	4	4	**5**	5
Regional Obviousness	**4**	2	1	2	**5**	1
Challenges	**5**	3	3	1	**5**	5
Student Interest and Engagement	**4**	4	3	2	**3**	2
Average	**3.5**	3.1	2.6	2.3	**3.8**	3.2

Reflection

I selected the virtual field trip and the math literacy night for my scholars. When selecting resources, I simply took the average of the short-term impact, long-term impact, availability, regional obviousness, challenges, and student engagement and saw which two resources had the highest averages. Since I knew I would be biased towards which activities simply required the least amount of work on my end, I was determined to use a fairer method of determining what was in the best interest of my students. Additionally, my selected sources increase both student and family engagement, which should lead to the most optimal student outcomes (Usher and Kober, 2012, p.5).

A virtual field trip is a great way to increase student engagement, expose them to new careers, and apply their knowledge to a new context (Scholastic). Exposing students to new careers and what those careers entail helps them start to visualize their own futures (Adams, 2013). Students from low-income households typically have low self-confidence in their own future prospects (American Psychological Association) and little knowledge of what careers exist (Conley and McGaughy, 2012), so the Virtual Field Trip has high potential for long-term impact. The more students can have high expectations for their own futures, the longer the impact of the opportunity. Very few of the other opportunities had as much of a long-term impact on students. Additionally, in the short run, this opportunity still allows students to apply their knowledge in a new context and increase engagement for normally disinterested learners. The virtual field trip may not be an obvious choice for low income students from northeast DC to be exposed to, nor does it have a substantial number of obstacles getting in the way of accessing the opportunity. Therefore, it is an obvious choice to provide my students, having a substantial amount of impact and engagement without being difficult to provide.

A math literacy night is similarly easy to physically provide students, as there are minimal outside resources that must be brought to the school. Instead, the main obstacle will be ensuring staff and community members are invested in providing the literacy night as well. Parental engagement dramatically increases student success (Powerschool, 2016). Parents will be better equipped to help their students with their homework and feel a stronger connection with teachers by attending a math literacy night at school. I selected this resource because it was the only one that actively engaged parents and other school staff, which maximizes overall impact on students. Additionally, most educational focus is on providing traditional literacy nights, so most of our students have not been exposed to an opportunity like a math literacy night before. As long as the activities provided are interesting to students and parents so that both come away with new strategies, academic achievement should be increased as well.

The other resources, except for code.org, required more planning with outside partners in the community. While this can be very valuable, these opportunities did not necessarily have increased student engagement or impact. Therefore, they were simply more challenging to provide without adding more educational value to students. Instead, free opportunities that can be done in-house, such as a virtual field trip and math numeracy night, are easier to provide to students and still have a substantial amount of impact. The goal is to provide new knowledge and encourage increased student and parent investment in learning (Usher and Kober, 2012, p.5). The chosen resources do this the best while also being logistically simple to provide to students. Code.org would also be logistically easy to provide to students but does not have the same level of interest that a virtual field trip does, nor the same level of parental engagement as a math literacy night. If I provide a third opportunity to my students, code.org would likely be the next one I provide since coding literacy is so crucial for the future success of students

(Consortium for School Networking, 2016). However, the virtual field trip also highlights the benefits of coding to students and may increase students' interests in an activity like code.org in the future. Since the virtual field trip both exposes students to the applications of coding and other forms of mathematical thinking, it does more work towards student success in less time. Therefore, the virtual field trip is the superior computer-based opportunity to provide students.

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