



Buncombe County Public Schools

J. Frank Yeager, Superintendent

175 Bingham Road

Asheville, North Carolina 28806

Phone: (704) 255-5921 — Fax: (704) 255-5923

March 8, 1993

Mr. Tom Heck
Asheville YMCA
201 Beaverdam Rd.
Asheville, N.C. 28804

Dear Tom,

Thank you so much for inviting me to see Adventure Day at Oakley Elementary School. I was impressed with your ability to work with children and the variety of activities you made available. It was quickly apparent to me why I have received such good reports from principals about your program. The students were actively involved, attentive, and certainly enthusiastic about what they were doing.

I have always liked group initiatives that promote cooperation and problem solving. I think children need these opportunities to learn to work together. Through the activities you provided these children gained invaluable experience that will help them in the classroom and in the social situations they are involved in on a daily basis. I wish Buncombe County Schools could offer the same experiences you were offering to Oakley children to all of our fifth grade students. However, as you know, many of our schools cannot afford the program.

Please keep me updated on future programs and on the progress of this program.

Sincerely,

Alice H. Hart
Assistant Superintendent

Isaac Dickson Elementary School
125 Hill Street
Asheville, North Carolina 28801

February 22, 1993

To Whom it may Concern,

"What has "Adventure Day" done for our students?" you ask? Let me tell you!

Fifth grade is a year when students' individual responsibility and effort are emphasized in the classroom, partly in preparation for the demands of the coming middle school years. But it is also the final year at a school that, all along, has placed a great premium on working cooperatively, respecting differences and creatively solving problems. "Adventure Day" has provided our fifth graders, early on in that last year, an opportunity to see how these skills, and others, are used in a context other than the classroom. "Adventure Day" has a compelling, 'real life' aspect to it that allows students to see how qualities like tolerance, creativity, patience, positive attitudes and perseverance actually do help them solve problems and reach goals. When students succeed in an "Adventure Day" task, they know why, and the excitement and pride are there for anyone to see!

"Adventure Day" staff have consistently been highly qualified professionals, bringing expertise in setting problems that are challenging but not too frustrating; in skillfully processing the activities with the students; and in always emphasizing safe practices.

In my opinion, the 'life skills' of problem solving, listening and contributing to a group, appreciating differences among people.... all these get much 'lip service' but too few opportunities to practice and refine. "Adventure Day" provides that opportunity, plus a model for students and teachers alike to follow for the rest of the year.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cathy Scott". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Cathy Scott, School Counselor

Pisgah Elementary School

Route One, Box 241
Candler, North Carolina 28715

Office of the Principal
Phone 667-9356

February 16, 1993

To Whom It May Concern:


Pisgah Elementary School fifth graders participated in Adventure Day, a YMCA program, in November, 1992. The program was presented to us as a learning experience in the skills of cooperation, team building, communication, and problem solving for children.

These are areas of need in schools today. Our children often come to us without these skills and from homes where these skills are not given priority. In addition, in rural areas such as our area children do not always accept differences in others.

Adventure Day was a big success with our students! Tom Heck and his assistant did an outstanding job of working with our students and integrating the above skills into an exciting, fun-filled day. The best part of the program is that the learning did not end that day. A "team recipe" is left for each class and throughout the remainder of the year the students refer to it when a problem arises.

I know that the program works. Last year these same students, as fourth graders, were angry, rebellious, and violent toward each other. This year we have had none of these problems from these groups. Adventure Day is worth the investment of time and money.

Pisgah Elementary will schedule the program again next year. I highly recommend the program to others.


Kathy Drake
Principal

KD/bw

"Building the Best for Tomorrow"

Pisgah Elementary School

Route One, Box 241
Candler, North Carolina 28715

Office of the Principal
Phone 667-9356

February 16, 1993

To Whom It May Concern:

I would like to take this opportunity to recommend to you a program called Adventure Day developed by Tom Heck from the YMCA. It is a very worthwhile activity.

Last November my fifth grade students had many experiences in a day-long session that addressed some real needs that all children have. The boys and girls learned skills and techniques that they can use when facing problem-solving and decision-making situations.

A lot of emphasis was placed on understanding and accepting their own feelings and those of others. Strategies for effective group participation were also taught as students faced challenges where they had to rely on each other in order to reach a goal. The problem solving situations were designed so that each child had opportunities to experience success.

The values and skills taught on Adventure Day have meaning for the classroom setting. Mr. Heck concludes the day by helping the children see the connection as they develop a "recipe" for working effectively in groups. This poster remains in my classroom, and we refer to it often.

Adventure Day was a very positive experience for each student. I hope we're able to have the program in our school in the future.

Carol Sutton *Carol Sutton*
Fifth Grade Teacher

CS/bw

"Building the Best for Tomorrow"

Pisgah Elementary School

Route One, Box 241
Candler, North Carolina 28715

Office of the Principal
Phone 667-9356

February 16, 1993

Dear Tom,

I am delighted to recommend your program, Adventure Day, to those who might be in a position to fund the event in school settings. The program stresses and reinforces the North Carolina Standard Course of Study by promoting higher order thinking skills in students. The activities challenge the participants to use cooperation, brainstorming, and creative logic to solve problems. The experience for our fifth graders at Pisgah in 1992-'93 was enthusiastically received by students and teachers alike. We appreciate your enthusiasm in the presentation and for advocating its use in the school setting.

With Sincere Thanks,

David Newsome

David Newsome

Buncombe County School Counselor

DN/bw

"Building the Best for Tomorrow"

What Teachers Are Saying About Adventure Day . . .

1. What kinds of feedback did you get from your students after the event?

“We talked about the day and they had a lot of fun. Some said they had headaches from thinking too much, but they also agreed they’d love to have another Adventure Day.” -- Hall Fletcher Elementary

“They enjoyed it. They felt very good about themselves and their ability to work together and solve problems.” -- Randolph Elementary

2. What feedback did you receive from parents?

“Parents felt it was a good idea – it provided an opportunity for students to rely on each other and learn to work together.” -- Randolph Elementary

3. Did you feel that your students were challenged in a positive way?

“Very definitely! They were encouraged to work together, accept each other’s suggestions and give each other positive reinforcement.” -- Carolina Day School

4. Did you observe positive changes in individual students over the course of the day?

“Yes! I saw some children really become excited that they could do things within a group and feel successful. Some of these children feel successful infrequently and on Adventure Day they felt very positive about themselves.” -- Hall Fletcher Elementary

5. What thoughts and feelings did you have as a teacher/observer during the day?

“It was a learning experience for me as well. I was able to get to know a group of my students much better through this unique experience. I feel I’ll be capable of recognizing their differences and capitalizing on their individual strengths. Furthermore, I’ll be able to utilize many of the techniques to encourage listening and communication.” -- Carolina Day School

“I enjoyed watching the students work together as this was a weakness for them in the classroom. This was a wonderful opportunity to observe my own class.” -- Claxton Elementary

“I thought the entire experience was fabulous for my kids! I would recommend it highly to any group wishing to work on self-esteem, listening, respecting differences and problem solving.” -- Carolina Day School

6. What overall effect did Adventure Day have on your students?

“We did group exercises in math class two days later, and afterward we discussed their teamwork. I saw a definite improvement in their ability to cooperate and solve problems as a team.” -- Carolina Day School

“This program has caused all students to respect themselves and others for their uniqueness.” -- Accelerated Learning Center