

2024

Cooperative Extension Takes Field Trips to a New Level



UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE
**COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION**

RELEVANCE

School **field trips** are an important part of a child's education for many reasons.

Field trips provide



Hands-on learning



Opportunities to go outside of comfort zone



Critical thinking

Field trips are less common due to:



Funding



Lack of time due to standardized tests

It's possible to expose students to a broader world and have a culturally enriching curriculum without sacrificing academic outcomes.



RESPONSE

The University of Delaware Cooperative Extension strives to help many generations understand the importance of our programs in the community.

Extension Express



A **traveling field trip** where professionals bring the program into middle schools



throughout the state of Delaware to teach students all about **Cooperative Extension**.



**4-5
Stations**



4-H, Poultry, Horticulture, and Health and Well-Being



RESULTS

DE 4-H Extension surveyed **83** middle school students who had participated in recent **Extension Express** programs in Sussex and Kent County.



85% Could identify one or more career options that may be a good fit for them.

86% Have a better understanding of the types of programs that the University of Delaware Cooperative Extension provides.



One educator from John S. Charlton School for Special Needs Students whose students attended the program said,

"This program is amazing! Thank you so much!"

RELEVANCE

School field trips are an important part of a child's education for many reasons. They provide students the opportunity to step outside of their comfort zone and be exposed to a variety of things they may not otherwise be able to explore. Field trips offer the opportunity for hands-on learning and critical thinking skills. They can also help students meet new people and learn about new skills and careers. However, field trips have become less common due to limited funding and limited available time with school systems focused on standardized testing. Non-traditional field trips are still quite possible (Behrendt and Franklin, 2014). It's possible to expose students to a broader world and have a culturally enriching curriculum without sacrificing academic outcomes, and it may actually improve academic outcomes (Erickson, 2022).

RESPONSE

The University of Delaware Cooperative Extension strives to help many generations understand the importance of our programs in the community. To build on this concept, staff developed a program for middle school students called Extension Express. Extension Express is a traveling field trip where professionals bring the program into middle schools throughout the state of Delaware to teach students all about Cooperative Extension. Depending on the number of students, they will rotate through four to five different 15-minute stations and engage in hands-on learning activities based on programs such as 4-H, Poultry, Horticulture, and Health and Well-Being. Extension professionals educate the students about our programs and provide them with ideas for future careers.

RESULTS

DE 4-H Extension surveyed 83 middle school students who had participated in recent Extension Express programs in Sussex and Kent County.

Based on the results from the survey:

- 85% of the students who took part in the program could identify one or more career options that may be a good fit for them.
- 86% of the students who took part in the program now have a better understanding of the types of programs that the University of Delaware Cooperative Extension provides.

One educator from John S. Charlton School for Special Needs Students whose students attended the program said, "This program is amazing! Thank you so much!"

PUBLIC VALUE STATEMENT

The survey's results indicated that taking Extension programs into schools can benefit students and teachers alike by educating them on programs that are offered to people of all ages throughout the state of Delaware.