

Dear Dr. Malchesky and Mr. Porcello,

As current students attending Perry High School, it is easy to acknowledge that there are opportunities and courses that are being offered that could potentially help prepare individuals for life after high school or college. Some prominent examples are Financial Management, Positive You, and Child Development. However, these courses alone do not fully prepare us for the future. There are still many other skills that should be taught to students while they are still in high school. That is why we are proposing a set of required courses solely focused on helping our peers develop skills that they will be able to use throughout adulthood.

The AdvancED High School Exit Survey questioned 5,500 students on how prepared they felt for life after high school. When asked how prepared they felt their school made them for education after high school, “over 62 percent felt that their school did a less than fair job.” When asked how they felt their school prepared them for employment, “over 50 percent felt their school did a poor or very poor job.” Based on this survey, over half of high school students tend to agree that their school does not do the best job at preparing them for life after graduation. The life skills based course that we are suggesting will hopefully help lower those numbers, helping students feel more prepared for what the future holds.

Each of these courses will have their own objectives that they will focus on throughout the semester that they are offered. For example, the course taken during freshman year will focus on developing good study habits, time management skills, basic communication, and coping with stress. Likewise, the course offered during sophomore year will address basic needs (i.e. cooking, organization, self care, etc.), formal communication (i.e. phone calls, emails, voicemails, etc.), technology management, and self discovery. Junior year will focus on ACT preparation, basic financial management, an introduction to college/career readiness, and general mental health needs. Senior year - and the final required course - will pertain to an in-depth focus on career/college readiness, financial literacy (i.e. banking, mortgage, bills, etc.), human relations (communication within a group/public setting), and potential life obstacles. At the end of the course offered during senior year, the class will have a “Life Simulation” in which students will apply the skills that they have learned throughout this high school course in an interactive simulation.

Bullitt Central High School in Shepherdsville, Kentucky has actually implemented a similar idea. Though it was only offered as a one day conference for seniors, the students were still able to be taught some of the basic skills that they would need for life after high school. The students learned things like how to change a tire, how to file taxes, and even how to cook in a dorm room. Many people were pleased with the experience and, once the news of the short conference was shared online, many people gave praise. If this were to be a class that our school were to offer, many people would most likely react in a similar way.

Some people argue that parents are supposed to teach their children how to do these things. While this may be true in some situations, not all parents are able to. Some parents are

not equipped with the right knowledge themselves, some may not have the time or resources to - there could be a number of reasons. While it is at least partially a parent's responsibility to teach their child the different things they will need to know about life after high school, the school should also have these resources for the students. Having a class that teaches students these things will be able to help *all* students be prepared for the future, not just the ones that are fortunate enough to have parents who are able to properly teach them. Additionally, the school should be partially responsible in helping students succeed in life in general, not just in their college or career.

In conclusion, if Perry High School were to create a required course that focused on teaching students skills they will use in life after high school - and even college - it would benefit not only the students, but the teachers and parents as well. While our school already offers courses that could potentially help them with specific life skills, they only focus on a particular topic. Having a class that teaches most of the things that students will need to know after graduation would be much better. When a similar course being implemented in a different high school, it is easy to see the benefits and positive response that it was met with. This would most likely also be the case if Perry High School offered a course that would help students in the future.

## **Citations**

Kinsey, Heather. "Research Brief: Student Perceptions on Preparedness." *AdvancED*, <https://www.advanc-ed.org/source/research-brief-student-perceptions-preparedness>.

DeSantis, Rachel. "'Adulting' Class at Kentucky High School Teaches Life Skills - Like How to Pay Taxes, Change a Tire." *PEOPLE.com*, 25 Mar. 2019, <https://people.com/human-interest/high-schoolers-learn-real-life-skills-adulting-day/>.