

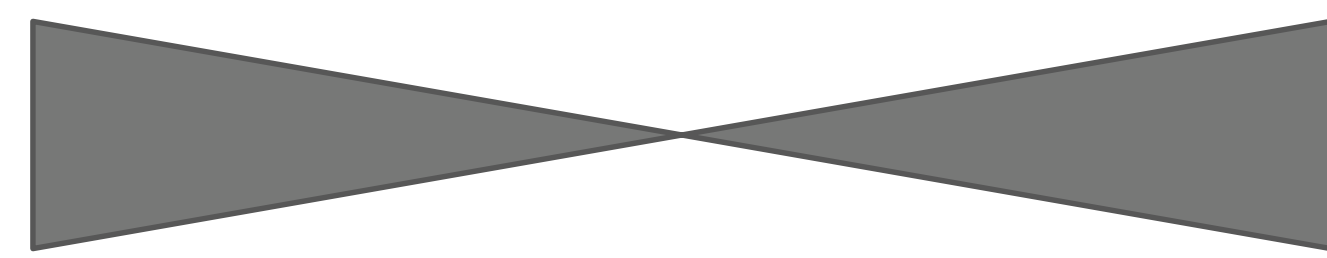
# Alternative Spring Break: College Access for Rural Communities

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## ABSTRACT

Alternative Spring Break (ASB) is a collaborative project between OSU Extension – Vinton County and the OSU Office of Student Affairs' Buck-I-Serv program. OSU students spend their spring break week interacting with over 1400 students in Vinton County schools helping youth consider a variety of post-secondary options. OSU Extension – Vinton County coordinates the experience for the students and works with teachers and administrators at Vinton County Local Schools to make the week a success. When not dialoguing with students the group explores local tourist attractions, visits with college staff from the Rio Grande Community College- McArthur Center, interacts with the Vinton County Local School Board and meets with the local extension advisory committee to expand their knowledge of the county and barriers students face in rural, low income counties.



## Small group discussions about college



## Learning about Vinton County



## GOALS

ASB's goal is to increase the knowledge of rural students about education after high school. Goals are accomplished by:

- ✓ leveraging resources from main campus to develop programs in the county
- ✓ developing relationships with local school systems that see value in exposing students to college information

## NEED

Vinton County is one of only 2 counties in Ohio that has had the opportunity to host a group of OSU students as part of the ASB program. Youth living in a low income, rural county like Vinton are often eager for outside peers that can help answer questions about college and post-secondary education. ASB students are a great asset to link these students with resources and connections for continuing their education. OSU students are not in the county to recruit students to OSU but rather to energize students to pursue an education beyond a high school diploma. .

## IMPLEMENTATION

OSU Extension staff work with teachers and administrators to organize content and scheduling. Schools prefer that OSU students spend the day at the school working in classrooms over the larger assembly style programming. At the elementary level, the content is more general so a science or engineering challenge is taught in small groups allowing students more direct interaction with the OSU students.

## Integrating a science lesson



## EVALUATION

OSU students educate over 1,400 youth (grades 3-11) each year during their week-long visit and the Alternative Spring Break program is included in the district's Career Advising Plan for all students.

- 86% of youth served indicated on the post-test an increase in knowledge about post-secondary options. (2016)
- 91% indicated during the post-test that they know someone that attended college and can answer their questions about college. (2016)

## CONTENT

OSU students spend their spring break week teaching students what they need to know to continue their education after high school.

### Elementary school Topics

- KnowHow2Go.com "4 Steps to get to College"
  - Be a Pain – ask lots of questions to everyone about college
  - Push Yourself – challenge yourself by taking the harder classes and working hard to maintain good grades
  - Find the Right Fit – there are options for everyone (tech school, 2 years, 4 years)
  - Get your hands on some Cash – grants, scholarships and financial aid

### Middle/ High School Topics

- Post-secondary options
- ACT/ SAT testing
- High school class selection
- Scholarships
- Financial Aid
- Preparing for your senior year
- College course selection
- Interviewing
- Time Management

## CHALLENGES

- Dates are determined by OSU spring break
- Buy-in from teachers at all grade levels
- Time commitment of OSU Extension staff to work with students in schools and provide opportunities for exploration and extended learning through diverse experiences countywide.