



Gretchen Baker

Walla Walla Public Schools Classroom Close-Up



TEACHER NAME: Gretchen Baker

SCHOOL: Walla Walla High School

SUBJECT: Vocational Employability Skills (Career and Technical Education)

Q. How does your employability program work?

A. I have about 45 students each semester with varying levels of Special Needs. I have three, two-hour blocks. Students are placed at more than 100 Walla Walla work sites four days a week. They spend one day a week in a classroom setting at Walla Walla Community College working on resumes, work ethics and other curriculum related to gaining job skills.

Q. What do the students do at job sites?

A. Students spend about one hour at the work site performing various jobs; another hour is built in for transportation to and from the work site. The job skills the students learn are vast. We have students at the Veterans Administration, grocery stores, offices and many other sites.

Q. What is the goal of the program?

A. We want students to learn skills so they can get a job after high school. Most of our students will go to work right after high school. Some may end up living with their parents the rest of their lives, but we want them to be able to contribute and be productive citizens. Jobs equal success in our program.

COMMENTS FROM WA-HI ASST. PRINCIPAL (CTE DIRECTOR) BRETT COX:

"Gretchen Baker is a 'can do' person. There is no task too great or too small. She accepts everything you present to her as a welcome challenge and gets it done with a smile. She is a wonderful role model for students. She has gone to great lengths to build relationships with business leaders in the community. She places many students in jobs with these people. Many times our students are offered full time employment because of Mrs. Baker's program."

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MOMENTS & MEMORIES FROM
GRETCHEN BAKER'S CLASS:



COMMENTS FROM GRETCHEN...

"Our business partners have been wonderful and have really embraced this program. I've been doing this for 10 years and it just keeps getting better. It's so rewarding because you see the students learning skills that will help them later in life."

"I have each student write a thank you letter after their work experience. They include three skills they learned from the experience. These letters mean a lot to the students and businesses."



"We work with students with varying degrees of disabilities from medically fragile to behavior issues. All of my students are in the Special Education program and we provide services to meet their individual needs."