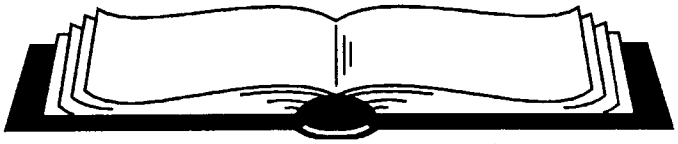
Code # 29
(office use only)

NEW JERSEY

2000-2001 Guidelines and Application



BEST PRACTICES

Deadline for Application to County Office: NOVEMBER 27, 2000

The Best Practices application is a public document. The information that you provide will serve as the official record. Review the application prior to submission to ensure accuracy and adherence to the guidelines. Type or keyboard information requested on this page and page 2, if applicable.

Category Social Studies (Application is limited to one category. See page 3 for details.)
Practice Name Family Roots Day
Number of Schools with Practice 1 (If more than one school or district, read and complete information on page 2.)

County	Bergen
District (Proper Name)	Oradell
Address	350 Prospect Avenue Street/P. O. Box
	Oradell New Jersey 07649 City Zip Code
Telephone	201-261-1180 Fax 261-1167 Email
Chief School Administrator	Mrs. Karen A. Lake, Superintendent
Nominated School #1 (Proper Name)	Oradell Public School
Address	350 Prospect Avenue Street/P. O. Box
	Oradell New Jersey 07649 City Zip Code
Telephone	261-1180 Fax 261-1167 Email
Principal	Mr. William Scott Ryan, Principal
Program Developer(s)	Mrs. Elinor Goeller
Application Prepared By	Mrs. Elinor Goeller
Chief School Administrator's or Charter School Lead Person's Signature	Karen A. Lake

FOR USE BY COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS ONLY

Approved: ✓ Yes ___ No **County Superintendent's Signature** Aaron K. Graham

NEW JERSEY STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Code # _____
(for office use only)

NEW JERSEY
BEST PRACTICES
2000-2001 APPLICATION

Application Requirements: Failure to comply with the procedures for submission of the application will result in the elimination of the application.

1. **RESPONSES to the information and the statements below must be ANONYMOUS and ACCURATE.** No reference should be made to the names of the district, the school(s) or community. Use the words "the school" or "the schools" in referring to the applicant in responding to the statements
2. **USE ONLY THE SPACE PROVIDED ON THE APPLICATION FORM on pages 1, 2 (if applicable), and 4.** Do not include any additional materials, as they will not be reviewed in the selection process.
3. Application must be **keyboarded on 8 ½" x 11" white paper, portrait** format. **Twelve-point or larger computer font** or **fourteen-pitch or larger typewritten font** must be used. (This sentence is in twelve-point Times New Roman.)
4. **KEYBOARDED RESPONSES** to all the statements below must be **no more than a total of four pages. Keyboard and number the statement followed by the response.** Format your response for accuracy and clarity.
5. **The information on page 4 and the responses** to statements must be copied **on one side of the page. The information on pages 1 and 2 (if applicable)** must be copied **on one side of the page.** Staple pages 1, 2 (if applicable), 4, and the keyboarded responses together, in that same order.
6. **The original application must be signed by the district chief school administrator or charter school lead person, indicating his/her approval.**
7. **The original and seven copies of the application** must be submitted to the county superintendent of schools by **November 27, 2000**, with the **Itemized List of District Applications** form. Keep the seven copies of each application together with the original containing the signature of the district chief school administrator or charter school lead person on the top of each set.

The following data is required to assist the panelists in the evaluation of the application:

Type of School	Grade Levels	
X Elementary School	K-6	**Practice Name** Social Studies
___ Middle School	___	Number of Schools with Practice 1
___ Junior High School	___	**Number of Districts with Practice** 1
___ High School	___	**Location** __ Urban/City __ Suburban With Urban Charcteristics
___ Other: ___	___	__ Suburban __ Small City/Town __ Rural

Check the ONE CATEGORY into which the practice best fits.

___ Arts (Visual and Performing Arts)	___ Educational Technology	___ Safe Learning Environment
___ Assessment/Evaluation	___ Gifted and Talented Programs	___ School-to-Careers/Workplace Readiness
___ Bilingual Education and Diversity	___ Health and Physical Education	___ Science
___ Citizenship/Character Education	___ Language Arts Literacy	X Social Studies
___ Early Childhood Education Programs	___ Mathematics	___ Special Education
___ Educational Support/Guidance and Counseling Programs	___ Professional Development	___ World Languages
	___ Public Engagement (family involvement and partnerships with business, community, school districts, and/or higher education)	

1. Describe the practice proposed for recognition, and list its objectives. Detail how the practice is innovative and how it promotes high student achievement.

2. List the specific *Core Curriculum Content Standards, including the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards,** addressed by the practice and describe how the practice addresses those standard(s). Provide an example to substantiate your response.

3. Describe the educational needs of students that the practice addresses. Document the assessment measures used to determine the extent to which the objectives of the practice have been met. Provide assessments and data to show how the practice met these needs.

4. Describe how you would replicate the practice in another school and/or district.

*The 1996 edition of the ***Core Curriculum Content Standards*** published by the New Jersey State Department of Education was disseminated to all districts and charter schools and is available on line through the department's web site at http://www.state.nj.us/education.

1. Describe the practice proposed for recognition, and list its objectives. Detail how the practice is innovative and how it promotes high student achievement.

"Family Roots Day" successfully integrates social studies with language arts literacy. As part of the fourth grade curriculum, our students study the impact of immigration on New Jersey's diverse population. "Family Roots Day" is a precursor to understanding and relating to the immigration movement of the mid 1800s. The project is based on the idea that discovering one's personal history opens the door to world history. The students are therefore required to discover how the immigration process affected their own families by tracing their family roots from foreign soil to the state of New Jersey. They are given specific criteria which must be followed. Their final product is a family scrapbook which includes a two page typed summary of their findings, a family tree design, and a ten page pictorial essay of their family's history. The activity culminates on the actual "Family Roots Day". Families join the students in the classroom for a unique presentation of the scrapbooks. Students present their familial history in a three minute presentation sharing stories with the audience. It is a sheer pleasure to watch the looks on the faces of many grandparents as their grandson or daughter speak proudly about their family.

Throughout the process, students conference with the teacher and share various parts of their work in progress through organizational calendars and checklists. To get started, the students interview their relatives asking them specifically assigned questions such as: When did our family first come to America? What form of transportation did they use? Why did they come to America? When did they come to settle in New Jersey? What did they do to make a living once they came to America? How was it different from where they came from? The students are required to summarize the information they receive in a two page typed paper. This requires the students to analyze, summarize, and apply language to a meaningful situation. They are then required to design and create a family tree. This experience in planning, designing, and sharing the final product is invaluable. Both the summary and family tree are then included in the family scrapbook. The bulk of the scrapbook is a ten page pictorial essay. The ten pages include pictures dating back to the nineteenth century. Included with these pictures are anecdotes about the relatives. It is these anecdotes that lend a special quality to the project. The students reflect the special conversations they experienced when speaking to their relatives.

"Family Roots Day" is unusual in the way it promotes high student achievement for all different kinds of learning styles. Children who enjoy writing are given the freedom to express their family stories in a unique way. Students who have hands-on talents shine when designing their family tree and scrapbook layout. Often made anxious by tests, these students experience success through their design work and the retelling of family stories.

Another by-product of this unique project is the response from family members who attend "Family Roots Day". Parents comment that they enjoyed the opportunity to turn off the computer and the television and actually talk with their children for longer than five minutes. Students were fascinated with making over-seas phone calls to relatives abroad and receiving air-mailed packages containing old photographs and family memorabilia. What a great way to have our children experience world history!

2. List the specific Core Curriculum Content Standards, including the Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards, addressed by the practice and describe how the practice addresses those standards. Provide an example to substantiate your response.

Nationwide efforts by the National Council Teachers of English and the National Council Teachers of Social Studies have been considered in developing this integrated project. The emphasis is on students as thinkers and gatherers of information. Also there exists a common thread toward integrating the curriculum as a means of empowering students to make meaningful connections in their lives.

At the state level, the New Jersey State Department of Education played a vital role in the development and assessment of this project. Within the New Jersey Core Curriculum Standards, the following Language Arts Literacy Standards/Indicators are addressed:

3.1 All students will speak for a variety of real purposes and audiences.

3.2 All students will listen actively in a variety of situations to information from a variety of sources.

3.3 All students will write in clear, concise, organized language that varies in content and form for different audiences and purposes.

3.4 All students will read various material and texts with comprehension and critical analysis.

3. 5 All students will view, understand, and use non-textual visual information.

"Family Roots Day" highlights the above standards in very specific ways. All of the students present their family history in a three minute presentation to fellow students and invited family members (3.1). In order to gain an understanding of their unique immigration experience, each student must actively engage in an interview process with various family members (3.2). Also, the students must prepare a two page typed summary of their family history. They are required to synthesize and summarize their interviews (3.3). The students receive some of their information from letters and e-mail. They read and interpret their notes as well (3.4). The ten page pictorial essay allows the students to display family pictures dating back to the nineteenth century (3.5). Each student documents the experience in precise expository style.

The following Social Studies Standards/Indicators are addressed:

6.3 All students will acquire historical understanding of political and diplomatic ideas, forces, and institutions throughout the history of New Jersey, the United States, and the world.

6.4 All students will acquire historical understanding of societal ideas and forces throughout the history of New Jersey, the United States, and the world.

6.5 All students will acquire historical understanding of varying cultures throughout the history of New Jersey, the United States, and the world.

6.6 All students will acquire historical understanding of economic forces, ideas, and institutions throughout the history of New Jersey, the United States, and the world.

"Family Roots Day" highlights the above standards in the following ways: Through interviewing family members, students come to realize the reasons why people immigrated to the United States Some of their families came for religious freedom, some for economic reasons, and others for political freedoms their countries did not afford them (6.3, 6.4, 6.6). Students are given the opportunity to explore the diversity and commonalities of the human experience. The students understand the impact of immigration by first relating it to a personal experience. Through their research and presentations, they were able to understand our differences as well as our similarities as people (6.5).

The following Cross-Content Workplace Readiness Standards/Indicators are addressed:

2. All students will use technology, information and other tools.
3. All students will use critical thinking, decision-making, and problem solving skills.
4. All students will demonstrate self-management skills.

"Family Roots Day" highlights the above standards in the following ways: Students use letters, telephone, e-mail and face-to-face interviews to gather their family history (2). Students are expected to locate, develop, summarize, organize, and synthesize the information they receive when interviewing their relatives (3). Finally, all students are required to keep organizational calendars and checklists. These graphic organizers are periodically shared with the teacher through the process (4).

3. Describe the educational needs of students that the practice addresses. Document the assessment measures used to determine the extent to which the objectives of the practice have been met. Provide assessments and data to show how the practice met these needs.

"Family Roots Day" addresses the following educational needs of the students:

1. To open the door to world history by focusing on personal history first;
2. To summarize in an expository narrative, synthesizing information;
3. To organize a long-term project through graphic organizers;
4. To create a family tree and pictorial essay in scrapbook form;
5. To present to an audience;

"Family Roots Day" requires the students to interview their families. Through these interviews, the children gain insight into the social, economic, and political forces that affected their family's immigration to the United States (1). They are expected to thoughtfully listen to these experiences and summarize them in an expository narrative (2). Throughout the project, students are expected to keep graphic organizers which are periodically reviewed by the student and teacher (3). Each student is required to design and create a family tree. They will create a ten page pictorial essay in scrapbook form highlighting various relatives and their stories (4). Finally, the students make a three minute presentation to their classmates and invited family members (5).

The following assessments are used for the "Family Roots Day" Project:

⇨ The students are required to make a self-assessment of the learning experience. A rubric is used to determine their appreciation of diversity and their expression of apathy. Within the self-assessment the students are required to reflect on their personal history and relate it to forces (social, economic, political) that prompted their

family to come to America (1).

- ⇨ The Holistic Scoring Rubric for Writing is used to assess the summary required by all students as well as the pictorial essay with accompanying anecdotes (2).
- ⇨ Students are required to periodically meet with the teacher to share their graphic organizers. There are ongoing checklists that are used to determine their self-management skills (3).
- ⇨ Family Trees and Scrapbooks will be evaluated using a rubric broken into four descriptors (Novice, Apprentice, Practitioner, and Expert) (4).
- ⇨ Finally, the students are assessed on their presentation skills using the ESPA Speaking Rubric (5).

All assessment rubrics are shared with the students at the beginning of each aspect of this project.

4. Describe how you would replicate the practice in another school and/or district.

"Family Roots Day" can be easily replicated in other schools and/or districts because it requires only the following ingredients: enthusiasm, curiosity, and a willingness to share! To build momentum, the teacher shares a scrapbook of his/her own. The sharing of pictures and the telling of stories engages students. They especially enjoy seeing their teacher as a child! It also helps to build curiosity about their own family history. Just how **did** I get to be living in New Jersey? Once the spark is there, the seed planted, the project begins to grow. Inviting family members to attend the culminating activity extends the classroom beyond the confines of the four walls. World history becomes personal. It has meaning. It is appreciated and understood.