Problem Based Learning Lesson Plan

Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Time/Period\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Subject\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Grade level \_\_\_

Text page #s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Lesson objectives from SCOS:

**3.08** Examine taxation and other revenue sources at the state and local level.

**3.09** Describe the services provided by state and local government agencies and how funding is provided.

**5.05** Explain how local government agencies balance interest and resolve conflicts.

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| **The problem and the setting** – Problem should be ill-structured with only guidelines given as to what steps to take to solve problem. Problem should be rooted in real-world dilemmas. |
| You will be placed into a group of 3-5. In that group, you will act as a member of a city council that is facing some serious financial issues (see attached budget sheet). Your expected revenue is well short of your expected expenditures for the next fiscal year. According to local ordinances, the city council must balance the city budget every year – your task is clear. Additionally, your city is facing a number of important local issues related to education, environmental concerns, and economic growth. As you balance your budget, you must also make crucial decisions related to these issues. Oh yeah, one more problem! This is an election year and you must try to get re-elected for another term. Good luck! |
| **Roles and responsibilities:** Students should be assigned various roles that would be found within the context of the problem. These roles should be tied to real-world individuals who would typically confront this problem. Responsibilities should be clearly defined. |
| As stated in the problem statement, you are all city council members who must: (a) balance the budget; (b) handle local policy issues; and (c) get re-elected. |
| **Encountering -** Students answer the following questions: What do I know? What do I need to know? What resources will help me find out more? |
| What is the current state of affairs in your community? What else do you need to know in order to fulfill your tasks? Where can you find this information? How have other municipalities handled similar circumstances? |
| **Accessing, Evaluating, and Utilizing information -** Students seek and access resources that help them solve the problem. They should evaluate the validity and reliability of all sources as they prepare to use those sources to propose a solution to the problem. |
| Your use of outside sources may be limited in this activity, but you may use any print, electronic, or human resources you deem necessary to complete your task. |
| **Synthesis and performance:** Students are required to pull together their findings and demonstrate that they have mastered material related to solving the problem. They should be required to produce some product that requires them to share what they have found and proposed. This “performance” can be oral, written, simulated, acted out, or presented through technology. |
| Each city council must turn in a completed and balanced budget. Each city council must also turn in an action plan that outlines how they intend to handle the local issues confronting the community. Once completed, each council will present to the class their proposed budget with selected cuts and revenue changes. A justification must be given for the major changes made along with a prediction of how these changes will affect chances for re-election. |
| **Debriefing questions:** These questions should require students to demonstrate that they have mastered core content. They should be inextricably tied to the lesson objectives and essential questions. They should require students to observably or measurably show learning. |
| From this activity, what challenges face city councils today? What are some possible solutions to these problems? What role should the state and federal governments play in helping local governments deal with these problems? What is an example of opportunity cost within this activity? How does this activity serve as an example of the basic economic dilemma? |