



## Optional Program Opportunities

### Grade Combo

**What is it?** Schools bring 6<sup>th</sup> graders along with their 5<sup>th</sup> graders. The 5<sup>th</sup> graders are first year participants and the 6<sup>th</sup> graders are now second year participants. (Schools may instead elect to bring 4<sup>th</sup> graders as the first year participants, making 5<sup>th</sup> graders the second year participants.)

**What's different?** The day itself is no different. However, teachers can be creative in tying the two grades together as they prepare for their day at JA BizTown. For example, some schools have allowed their second year participants to serve as peer counselors to the first year participants and some restrict business leadership positions only to second year participants with the idea that they are more “experienced.”

**Why should we do it?** After participating the first year, students have a whole year to apply that knowledge and to grow and mature as children. They return to JA BizTown with more confidence and understanding of their roles as producers and consumers which allows for a greater impact of continued learning and application as a second year participant. This option is also especially well-suited for schools with small populations because JA BizTown requires a minimum of 70 students

to operate. Therefore, schools with less than that are normally paired with other small schools in order to have enough students for participation. By doing the Combo Grade, small schools can combine grade levels to reach the minimum of 70 instead of being partnered with another school.

### **What have Grade Combo teachers said?**

*“Our kids always ask about coming back again after the first time they come. They are so excited to come back this year!”*

*“We love the idea of working with our 6<sup>th</sup> grade team as a partner instead of with another school. It made it so much easier to communicate.”*

**Restrictions:** Priority will be given to schools which have 70-120 students total when combining both grades; however, others are still welcome to apply for participation. (We recommend schools bringing 4<sup>th</sup> grade participants apply for the Spring semester.)

**Costs:** There are no additional costs. Schools will simply be charged the normal fee per child for all participating students.

## Double Day

**What is it?** Schools bring students for two days in a row to JA BizTown for an extended version of a single day's visit.

**What's different?** Of course, this allows students to reflect on Day 1 and put new ideas for improvement into practice on Day 2. PLUS, we also get a chance to expand on some concepts and job tasks that we just don't have time to include in a single day's experience! For example, on Day 2 the students get a bank statement of the previous day's activities and balance checkbooks. Many learn valuable lessons from the consequences of overspending or not remembering to record their purchases and get a second chance at applying that knowledge as they take their second day's breaks. Some businesses also get new "projects" to complete as a service to the Town or their customers.

**Why should we do it?** Teachers, volunteers, and staff have observed that with the nerves of Day 1 behind them, students are much more comfortable in their roles on Day 2 which provides for a more meaningful learning experience. In addition, armed with the new-found knowledge of Day 1, students practice better time management and bring creative ideas for improvement to their businesses on Day 2. Studies have shown that students are also much more confident in their own abilities to earn good grades, understand Social Studies, and figure out problems on their own after participating in the Double Day experience. Furthermore, they have a greater belief in the importance of graduating from high school and are more convinced they will go to college.

**Restrictions:** Limited spots are available for schools participating in September through April. The Double Day option is *not* available for schools visiting in May. Once the available number of days are allocated, only single day visits will be available.

**Costs:** See Fee Schedule.

"I have had 2 opportunities to be a volunteer. My oldest son's class attended for one day. The double day is much better for students. It allows them to understand what they are doing. This is such a great program."

—Cheryl Smith, Parent volunteer  
Fairview Elementary, Williamson County

### What have Double Day teachers said?

"Two days were *better* than 1 day."

"Two days allowed them to correct mistakes from the first day. They really saw the fruits of their labor."

"The 2 day experience was great! There was so much more immediacy and the children had to live with the effects of overdrafts, poor business decisions, etc. They really had good ideas on how to improve business."