

Credit Flexibility

A Day of High School - 2015

Whether sleeping past 6 is a luxury or necessity for teens, Cade Stevens gets to do it many school days.

Today, Cade was still in bed when first period bell rang. Which is OK, he was again working on his economics basics until The Daily Show began. Cade's interest in business led him to find a mentor, Zach (recent business school



grad, now working in micro-lending). Zach recommended lessons from KhanAcademy.org. Cade's own school offered only a very basic econ class; the Khan Academy lessons go much deeper. With the help of a retired master econ teacher (found at Creditflexibility.org), Cade and his mentor designed a credit flex plan to fit Cade's specific abilities. Ms. Fischer, head of the Social Studies dept, signed off on the plan after a few modifications. (They'll archive this

plan for future CF students to adopt or build on). Ms. Fischer will also sign off on his work at the end of semester.

Arriving more rested for second period, Cade is enthused to be part of a team project for his biological sciences class.

Mr. Beal is a particularly passionate teacher, and he uses projects, so classes go fast. There's one twist. One of Cade's partners is Rhia, a student at a small nearby district. Using CreditFlex, Rhia does the studying part of the work independently, and participates via Skype for most of the project work.



Third period is choir, which Cade greatly enjoys. If he'd taken Dual Enrollment or an Online Academy, he wouldn't have been able to work in choir.

Fourth period brings Algebra II, with the nice, yet sometimes confusing Mrs. Dunlap. For now, he's hanging with the class, asking Zach for a little help now and then. His friend Katie advanced through the class a semester early, so she's finding interactive lessons on CK-12 to help him learn with less struggle.

Katie might seek 1/4 credit next term for tutoring.



Fifth period study hall has Cade actually working on his plan for next summer's credit flex effort. He's going to learn history on the road. Cade and his buddy Ross are still exploring possibilities; they've hooked up with a couple of students who did this last year. For part of it, they want to bike the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Trail. They found a

couple of Twitter-nactments (true stories tweeted over the course of a day or more), and an audiobook. One is a tale of canal days. Another goes back to the earlier Forbes Road and even to Major George Washington's part in the



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Radically Personalized Learning

Battle of Fort Necessity and the founding of Ft. Pitt. (As he sits in fifth period today, Cade doesn't know it yet, but they'll end up standing where Gen. Washington wrapped up the Revolution, 27 years later, at Yorktown.)

Assessment and a work product are the challenge now for their trip. Being only 2015, all of these things are so new, not much has been accrued to the History section of the CreditFlex app. They think a diary and summary paper will be part of their assessment, but their principal, Mr. Eddy, has reservations that that is sufficient. Today, Cade finds (on the CreditFlex site) a retired history teacher, Mrs. McGuire, with a passion for students learning early American history. She promises to help with research on assessment possibilities for his plan. She's pointed them to a couple of OpenBadges.

(Mrs. McGuire has actually heard of groups building up entire residential/camp experiences for students to achieve mastery of sections of history.) She's looking at the current offerings of a number of parks and historic sites, and will suggest historic drama, as well.

Sixth period, Cade and seven other students are learning Arabic. Arabic was not Cade's own preference, but he needed a language credit and his friend Tamara really had her heart set on learning it in a group. So he joined, and they meet in a corner of the cafeteria, using RosettaStone. Through a soldier friend of the family, Tamara was connected to several Iraqis who help them on occasion. One has joined CreditFlexibility.org as a mentor to others.

Seventh period is chemistry, and labwork is quite traditional. But Mr. Hutchison has decided that paying for texts makes no sense when he can adapt content from providers like CK-12. He's also 'lurking' at creditflexibility.org on occasion, with the idea of a semester biochem class, one that introduces students to proteomics, nano-biotech, and other very modern fields. He could never have the time to do this himself, but with the help of others...

For Cade, it's a somewhat intimidating workload (and he hasn't even chosen to take advanced placement). Yet he's satisfied and fully engaged. His experience helping Tamara achieve her goal got him something far different than school otherwise would have. His economics work is far more than his school would have provided. And he's achieving deeper mastery in chemistry and biology than might have been hoped just a few years earlier.

This year, Cade is one of just a few students at his school using credit flex. Yet every week, students ask him how he's doing what he's doing.

They're thinking they, too, might have a very different high school experience. Taylor wants to work with robotics. Mia wants to explore criminology. Sam wants to go beyond the school yearbook and write for a local newspaper. Damari would like to learn specific concepts to help his family's struggling farm.



If he'd chosen college dual-enrollment, Cade couldn't take Choir.



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