

Real World Science that Matters to Your Life
Online Learning Module
Executive Summary

This learning solution targets a population of students that currently struggle academically in science as well as other disciplines. The school where they are studying is a high performing, first tier (just outside Milwaukee) suburban high school with a relatively high rate of diversity among the student body (for Wisconsin). The demographics break down to 16.6% African American, 66% Caucasian, 7% Latino and 9% Asian with 1.3% Native American or biracial. Only 15% of the students are low income, however and 4.3% are limited English proficiency. There is a large gap in achievement between Caucasian students and African American students and it seems to be getting worse despite continued efforts by staff to “close” the gap. There are also many Caucasian and ESL (English as a second language) students that struggle academically as well.

The research conducted on site revealed a lack of engagement among our African American students (and these other struggling students as well). Low performing students that were interviewed expressed interest in more “hands-on” activities, they wanted to use more technology, and they want the content to be relevant to their lives.

Currently there seems to be very little access to real-world data that is in a format that high school students can access and oftentimes the data is fictitious or not applicable to the students’ lives. The aim of this online learning solution is to engage and enable lower performing students to develop their scientific reading, data analysis and critical analysis skills using *real, current* scientific research. The idea is to “kill two birds with one stone” - teach them how to access, think through and analyze data while also giving them research based information on health, lifestyle and longevity that will help them make good choices in their lives as they move into adulthood.