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Open Letter to All Interested in TeamMastermind

TeamMastermind is described as "an innovative curriculum that not only fosters critical thinking and self-evaluation skills but also empowers kids to use their heads, hearts, and hands — the three H's — to learn." By all informal accounts, the program has been extremely successful and has captured the attention of many local schools, programs, children, and parents. Since fall 2007 I have been working with TeamMastermind Director Mindy Degraff to head up a formal assessment of the TeamMastermind program, as it is carried out in local classrooms. This ongoing assessment will empirically document and assess the extent to which TeamMastermind curricula meets its stated learning objectives (<http://www.team-mastermind.com>), both in the immediate learning context and over time.

We anticipate that this assessment will serve multiple purposes and will benefit multiple stakeholders. For example, during an average Team Mastermind session, we will know what percentage of time students are engaged in *active learning*. We will quantify the frequency and duration of *collaborative learning* in small groups. Our longitudinal assessment component will help us determine if self-confidence and *problem-solving ability* strengthens and if student skills in *perspective taking and empathy* for others increases over time.

I have become involved in TeamMastermind because I have seen first-hand the benefits in my own children, and because I am convinced that formal assessments of the program will not only be helpful for the ongoing development of the program, but also to those individuals making the decisions about adopting the curriculum for their students. TeamMastermind has been designed to help children discover for themselves the incredible power of creativity, while acquiring specific cognitive, intellectual, social and emotional skills that enable them to learn *how to learn*. I am enthusiastic about joining TeamMastermind and look forward to sharing the results of the program with all who are interested.

Sincerely,

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