

# **Community Assistantship Program**

**Historic Murphy's Landing  
Program Evaluation**

# **Historic Murphy's Landing Program Evaluation**

Prepared in partnership with  
Historic Murphy's Landing  
Three Rivers Park District

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Final Report for Historic Murphy's Landing Program Evaluation

November 28, 2005

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## Executive Summary

Historic Murphy's Landing (HML) is a living history museum that offers school and childcare groups a variety of programs intended to help children learn about and experience life in the 1800s on the Minnesota River Valley. Throughout the summer and fall I evaluated youth programs to ascertain how the staff at HML was meeting teacher's expectations and how they could improve the programs to aid student learning and create more positive experiences at HML. I observed programs, created evaluations, administered evaluations to both children and teachers, and casually discussed experiences at HML with teachers and students. In addition, I worked with staff to brainstorm solutions and discussed how to implement these solutions.

Evaluation activities yielded several recommendations, a few of which follow:

- Provide teachers with an itinerary of their visit so they arrive with realistic expectations.
- Offer only two programs for summer childcare groups: Children and Family Life and Immigrant Journeys.
- Include activities for older and younger children within stations to accommodate mixed-age groups.
- Revise lesson plans to include learning objectives that guide all activities.
- Encourage interpreters to set up a "let's pretend" atmosphere at the site.
- Keep developmental abilities of children in mind: limit lecture time, use hands-on activities, show examples, and use vocabulary appropriate for the children.
- Have interpreters check-in with the chaperone or teacher mid-way through the program and make slight revisions to meet expectations.
- Encourage interpreters to observe one another and share "trade secrets".

## Project Background & Goals

Historic Murphy's Landing (HML) is a living history museum of a typical Minnesota village in the 1800s. Interpreters (staff) at HML simulate life in the 1800s and share stories of hardships pioneers endured. Field trips, led by interpreters, for school and childcare groups fuse the academic study of US and Minnesota history with real experience of life in the 1800s for children of all ages. It is hoped that these field trips provide an opportunity for teachers to complement their history curriculum and spark interest in learning history among children.

Recently, HML created new programs for children's groups that focus on four main areas of Minnesota and US history: Children and Family Life, Fur Trade, Immigrant Journeys, and Village Trades. Each program has historical content that interpreters relay to students through a variety of formats, such as: lecture, discussion, role-play, songs, and hands-on experience. In addition, each program provides an opportunity for students to make a craft project that is symbolic of an element of their program.

A participant-oriented program evaluation was undertaken to determine if HML was meeting the expectations of their visiting school and childcare groups and how they could improve their programs, increase the number of groups that visit, and expand their programming to older children.

## Summary of Activities

The guiding questions in the evaluation were, "What do children and chaperones/teachers expect from their visit to HML?" "How satisfied are students and chaperones/teachers with their visit?" and "How can we improve their experience?" Therefore, the evaluation needed to capture the experience of HML visitors and understand how their actual experience met their expectations. In addition, the evaluation needed to capture visitor's "if only we had been able

to...” thoughts to understand how the programs could be improved.

The evaluation plan consisted of a variety of activities such as: reviewing lesson plans and promotional materials, observing programs, talking with children and chaperones/teachers, developing and piloting evaluations for children and chaperones/teachers, and revising and administering evaluations.

The plan also included several meetings with the program director and the interpreters. A goal of HML is to increase the number of visitors and expand its programming to reach wider markets. Therefore, the staff opted to take a less controlled approach to the evaluation. They requested preliminary results from the evaluation half-way through the summer. When sharing results, issues were discussed and interpreters broke into small groups to focus on a specific program and brainstormed solutions and proposed changes to the programs. If changes were deemed necessary and a logical solution was offered, the change was immediately implemented. With this more applied evaluation approach, the staff at HML was able to respond to evaluation results more immediately, thereby continuously improving its programs. They reasoned that if they waited to respond to issues at the end of the evaluation period, many of its visitors would not have had an ideal experience and HML would have lost a portion of its audience. In this manner, HML felt it was in a better position to spark continued interest and return visits, as well as increase the likelihood that visitors would recommend HML to other groups.

#### Evaluations

A variety of evaluations were created and piloted throughout the summer. Final versions of the evaluations for children (see Appendix A) and teachers/chaperones are attached. There are two versions of the teacher/chaperon evaluation. The first is a short evaluation HML can give teachers/chaperones to complete on site (see Appendix B), the second is a longer evaluation



HML can either mail to teachers/chaperones or email a link to online (see Appendix C).

In addition to evaluations administered onsite, an evaluation with open-ended questions was posted online. These questions were originally created for use with a focus group. A copy of this evaluation is in Appendix D.

## Summer Results

### *Observations*

The groups of children that visited HML during the summer were generally childcare groups. These groups offered unique challenges to the interpretive staff, as the programs were primarily designed for use with school groups. Childcare groups often arrived late, and the group usually spent the first 20 minutes of the program using the restroom facilities. The behavior of children in the childcare groups varied widely. Some chaperones made sure students were polite and attentive, while other chaperones wandered away from their group of children or were unable to maintain order. Also, the children were often of mixed aged groups. This was a challenge for interpreters, as the programs were designed for activities for younger or older children. It was difficult for interpreters to engage all of the children in the group when they ranged in age from first to sixth grade. Finally, the children often came with little memory of the history lessons they had learned during the school year. Children had a difficult time answering questions because they could not recall what they learned during the school year. This issue was compounded by the lack of structured curriculums in the childcare centers and chaperones not preparing children for the visit by using the HML curriculum packets. Therefore, some programs, such as the Fur Trade, spent a substantial amount of time reminding children about what life was like in the 1800s, before children could fully comprehend and delve into the Fur Trade industry.

### *Expectations*

When childcare groups booked a field trip to HML, they usually expected the visit would be educational as well as fun and enjoyable for the children. “Learn about life in the 1800s” was the reason for attending checked off on 90% of all evaluations collected, while “Fun” was checked off only 57% of the time. After the program was completed, 88% of teachers agree or strongly agree the students learned as much as they expected them to learn about life in the 1800s and 80% of teachers report that their visit met their expectations. The programs that most consistently meet teachers’ expectations were Immigrant Journeys and Children and Family Life, while the program that came close to, but did not entirely meet expectations, was Fur Trade. The Village Trades was rarely requested during the summer or fall.

One expectation consistently not met was the number of buildings teachers expected to visit. Only 69% of teachers reported they were satisfied with the number of buildings they visited. Chaperones in the Fur Trade program were the least satisfied with the number of buildings they were able to visit. While the pre-visit information mailed to chaperones specifically states they will only visit a pre-determined and limited number of buildings, chaperones often arrived expecting to see more than two buildings.

### *Program Implementation*

Evaluation data indicated that chaperones agreed and strongly agreed the interpretive staff was organized and well-prepared for their visit. Chaperones agreed and strongly agreed “The staff effectively communicated knowledge about life in the 1800s to the children.” To the items, “The children learned as much as I expected them to learn about life in the 1800s,” and “Overall, the visit met my expectations,” responses varied from disagree to strongly agree, however the responses averaged to “agree.” Chaperones agreed and strongly agreed that children

enjoyed the craft project. Finally, chaperones ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree that the number of buildings they visited was appropriate to the program. The average response on this item was “agree.” Overall, chaperones seemed to think the interpreters did a fine job of teaching the children about history and usually met chaperones’ expectations.

### *Children’s Thoughts*

At the conclusion of most programs children were randomly selected to complete a short evaluation of their experience. If children were unable to read and write the evaluator or chaperone would assist, or the child would be asked to draw a picture of their favorite thing at HML. Children almost always reported they had an “ok” or “fun” time at HML (97%). Fur Trade was the program rated highest in terms of the fun children reported having at HML. In addition, 97% of children responded that the craft activity was “ok” or “fun”; with the bracelets in the Fur Trade program being the most fun. (Only one Village Trades program was evaluated, and all the children in this group said that basket weaving was “fun”.) When asked if they would like to return, 54% of children said “yes” and 35% of children said “maybe.” Children in the Fur Trade and immigrant journey programs were more likely to say they would like to return than Children and Family Life participants. Finally, 53% of children surveyed reported that they visited as many buildings as they wanted. Children in the Children and Family Life program most often reported being satisfied with the number of buildings they visited. In general, it seemed that older children (3<sup>rd</sup> grade and up) were more interested in seeing buildings than younger children.

Following the programs, when children were asked what they learned they often correctly recited a historical fact or mentioned a difference between the way pioneers lived in the 1800s and the way they live today. Children nearly always reported the most fun thing they did at HML was hands-on activities, such as: chores, touching and smelling items, playing games, and craft

projects. When asked what they didn't like, children offered a multitude of responses, ranging from to "too hot" and "too many mosquitoes" to "walking" and "not going in enough buildings".

### Fall Results

A different, more detailed, evaluation was administered in the fall; therefore results from the fall evaluation are presented separately. Another issue is the evaluator was unable to attend as many programs as in the summer. The number of evaluations completed and returned was quite low, and it is difficult to know if these evaluations are representative of all the school programs.

Of the school groups that visited HML, 60% had studied US history in the past year, and 40% had studied Minnesota and US history in the past year.

### *Observations*

During the fall the groups of children attending HML were no longer childcare groups, but school groups. School groups were different from childcare groups in several ways. One of which, is the school groups more often arrived on time and did not need to use the restroom for the first 20 minutes of the program. Further, the children were generally well-behaved and the teachers were more attentive to the student's behavior. School groups usually were not of mixed ages, as each group of children was usually comprised of children in the same grade level. Also, the children in school groups also seemed better prepared for the trip in terms of their knowledge of history and life in the 1800s.

The interpreters were also different from the fall. There were fewer interpreters (reducing variation) and they had improved substantially as a result of the feedback they received throughout the summer. As the evaluation progressed from summer to fall the focus shifted from macro-level issues, such as providing opening and closing ceremonies, to more micro-level issues, such as using vocabulary appropriate to the age group.

### *Expectations*

When teachers were asked to compare what they expected children to do at HML and what they actually did, 66% of teachers reported they expected to enter more buildings than they actually did and 83% expected to see more of the village. In addition, 60% thought they would see more costumed interpreters and 84% thought they would see more of the “daily life” of an 1800s village. These results indicate teachers are not arriving at HML with an accurate perception of their field trip. The majority of teachers felt the amount of walking was what they expected, as well as the number of hands-on activities in which the children participated. Only 17% of the teachers thought children would learn more, and 17% also thought children would have more opportunities for exploration. As these percentages are quite small, it is reasonable to conclude children are learning as much and exploring as much as teachers expected.

### *Program Implementation*

Teachers were asked to rate the importance of various aspects of their field trip. Then the teachers rated these same items on how satisfied they were with these aspects of the program. There were no significant differences on how teachers rated the importance and satisfaction of the items; therefore if a teacher rated the item as important, he or she also reported they were satisfied with the item. All aspects of the programs listed were rated “important” or “very important” by teachers. All teachers rated “Gaining an appreciation for the hardships settlers endured.” as very important. While still rated as important, the item “Reinforcing history lessons children learned in the classroom” had the lowest average importance score. Therefore, of all the options given, teachers come to HML with the hope that children will gain a better appreciation of the struggles of life in the 1800, but aren’t as concerned with the program reflecting the content of their history lessons.

Looking more closely at how satisfied teachers were with aspects of the program they rated important, teachers were most satisfied with “Students learned something new about history.” And while still satisfied overall, teachers were least satisfied with “Students were able to relate past issues to present day issues.”

Regarding other aspects of their visit, teachers agreed or strongly agreed that the interpreters were friendly, interacted well with the children, and encouraged children to get involved. Teachers agreed that the interpreters did an “excellent” job of teaching children about history, provided accurate information, and satisfactorily answered children’s and teacher’s questions. In addition, teachers agreed and strongly agreed interpreters were flexible in adapting the programs to meet their group’s needs. Overall, teachers agreed they had a great trip to HML.

#### *Facilities*

When teachers were asked if they thought HML was safe for children, teachers generally agreed and strongly agreed. All teachers agreed that site was clean and well-maintained.

#### *Potential Changes*

Several questions asked teachers to respond to potential changes that would either increase or decrease satisfaction. Teachers agreed the following changes would increase satisfaction: more costumed interpreters, visiting more buildings, adding more demonstrations, and adding more historical content. Teachers also agreed the following changes would decrease satisfaction; having fewer hands-on activities for children and doing less walking. Allowing children to explore more on their own would not substantially increase or decrease satisfaction. Therefore, adding more to the programs would only increase satisfaction, and the amount of walking the groups currently do does not distract from their experience.

#### *Children’s Thoughts*

In the fall, 100% of the children rated the programs as “ok” or “fun” overall. Also, 100% of the children thought the craft activity was “ok” or “fun.” 40% of the children were unsure if they wanted to return to HML, but 60% said they did want to return. And 60% of the children thought they did not see enough buildings.

When given the opportunity to say what they liked or didn’t like about the programs, children never mentioned anything they did not like. Also, when asked what they learned about the programs, children in the fall recited content they had learned. During the summer, children would often say they learned something, but it wouldn’t necessarily be related to history, such as “I learned how to make a bracelet.”

## Recommendations

### *Pre-Visit Activities*

It is apparent that chaperones and teachers are not arriving at HML with accurate expectations for their visit. Pre-visit information and curriculum packets should be revised to more clearly reflect the program for which the teachers have registered. Instead of a generic information sheet, teachers should receive a detailed itinerary that describes the stations and activities the students will participate in while visiting. This may also help summer groups understand that if they run late and use the restroom for 20 minutes, they will miss part of their program. Also, the information provided before the visit should let teachers know how many interpreters will accompany the group and explain that the town will not be bustling with people dressed in period costume as it is on the weekends. Pre-visit information should also state exactly how many buildings the group will actually enter, and provide teachers with the option of adding on a 20 minute walking tour if they would like to see or enter more buildings. Also, the curriculum packets should be revised to correct typing and spelling errors for a more polished

and professional presentation.

### *Programming*

The programs developed and implemented in the past year are strong programs that both teachers and children seem to enjoy. All of the teachers from the fall program and 85% of the chaperones from the summer program would recommend visiting HML to other groups.

The first programmatic recommendation is to provide only two programs during the summer: Children and Family Life and Immigrant Journeys. Summer childcare groups face a number of challenges, one of which is that students have little memory of the history they learned during the school year. The Children and Family Life and Immigrant Journeys programs do not require that students know a great deal about history or specificities of the 1800s. The content of the programs can be taught in short segments with a variety of hands-on activities and students still learn a great deal about what life was like in the 1800s or how immigrants came to Minnesota. This would also allow summer interpreters to focus and become more familiar and expert at those programs.

The Fur Trade program is one that is rich in history and children enjoy the most. The activities are very hands-on, and children love touching the furs, the skulls, and making bracelets. However, teachers and chaperones seem to be the least satisfied with this program. Perhaps the reason teachers are most dissatisfied with this program, is because the groups do not tour the buildings on site. This program is also difficult to do with summer groups because the content of the program is so dependent upon students arriving with a solid grasp of Minnesota history. Therefore, this program should be offered only to school groups. Further, the Fur Trade program should be held on the east end of the site, at the Berger farm. By moving the program to the east end of the site, children and teachers won't be surrounded by buildings they cannot



enter, and perhaps they will not be so disappointed that they weren't able to visit buildings if they aren't in plain sight. Also, this area of the site seems to provide a stronger background for the Fur Trade, as it emulates what life was like in the early 1800s much better than the village. However, moving the Fur Trade program to the east end of the site will raise logistical issues in terms of getting children to the location in a reasonable amount of time. A simple solution would be to extend the program by half an hour to allow time for walking to and from the site.

Another programming modification that can assist with the multi-age summer groups is to offer variations on activities within each rotation for older and younger children. During the 1800s, tasks were often divided and assigned to children based upon their age and their mental and physical capacity. The same should hold true at HML. For example, during the Children and Family Life program children often make a thaumatrope. However, older children can finish the task in minutes, while younger children are still struggling to cut out the squares or circles. Instead of giving older children a photocopied thaumatrope, give them a blank piece of cardstock and have the children create their own. This modification will keep all students challenged and engaged without the older children getting bored or younger children getting frustrated. Another example, with the Immigrant Journeys program, would be to have the older children help younger children load the wagon. Or, older children would have to carry water with the yoke further than younger children. Interpreters could clearly set higher standards and expectations for children based upon their age.

The final recommendation for programming is to revise the format of the lessons. Lesson plans for each program should begin with learning objectives and then describe how the activities described meet each objective. When interpreters are focused upon communicating a few key points about a lesson, they can concentrate more upon how they will communicate these

essential objectives, rather than thinking about how to fill up the time and how to get the students to learn about the 1800s. These objectives can be the guiding principles for program revisions and modifications as well.

### *Program Delivery*

Between the summer and fall, interpreters improved upon how they implemented the programs. However, wide variation still exists between interpreters. Some interpreters play their role dramatically and talk to the children about how they just traveled back in time and the children are going to visit the interpreter's village and house. Teachers and chaperones seem to enjoy this "let's pretend" atmosphere of the trip, and children tend to believe and hang on every word the interpreter says. It seems that interpreters who assume a "let's pretend" role are more successful in engaging children. Interpreters should be encouraged to assume a more dramatic role and create a more ceremonious opening and closing.

Another recommendation to improve program delivery is to provide some training in classroom management. While interpreters expect the teachers and chaperones will maintain control of the children, it often does not look good if the interpreter is struggling to maintain an audience and the teacher must repeatedly step in to quiet and discipline the students. In addition, during the summer programs, not all childcare groups had chaperones that were skilled in managing the children. Therefore, interpreters should learn some basic classroom management techniques, such as: using a signal for children to quiet down, maintaining order, or firmly but respectfully asking a child to cease disrupting the group.

When delivering programs, interpreters should also keep the children's developmental abilities in mind. Young children, especially in the summer, cannot sit for long periods of time and listen quietly and attentively. Interpreters should ask the age of the youngest child in the

group, and limit their uninterrupted talking to that number in minutes. For instance, when the youngest child in the group is five years old, the interpreter should talk without interruption for no more than five minutes at a time. In addition, interpreters should try to involve all the children's senses. Show children examples, and let them touch, smell, and taste models when appropriate. Also demonstrate activities and have students participate whenever possible. While limiting the amount of time one is talking, it is also important to repeat key aspects of the program. When children rotate between stations the interpreter should always spend the first minute by asking what the children learned in the previous station and reinforce those lessons.

In addition to tailoring the teaching methods to the developmental abilities of children, interpreters should also use vocabulary appropriate to the children's age. For instance, children under the age of 10 may not understand that the "nineteenth century" and the "1800s" refer to the same time period. Young children also many not understand that when interpreters say "ears and mouths do not work at the same time" they are telling the children to quiet down and listen. Interpreters can still use such phrases, but after reciting them they should say something like, "so close your mouth so your ears can listen."

Also, at the half-way point of each visit, interpreters should check-in with teachers and chaperones to ensure they are meeting expectations. If the teacher or chaperone has a suggestion that can be easily accommodated, interpreters should honor that request. For instance, if midway through a program a teacher mentions she would like to see more buildings, ask if she would like to cut the last activity a few minutes short and offer to take children around the village square and allow children to peak in the windows of buildings. If a teacher or chaperone requests cutting an activity short to go on a brief tour of the buildings on site, the interpreter should also ask the children and verify they also would like to visit more buildings. Children in summer

programs seem to be more focused upon having fun and aren't as interested in touring the buildings. However, children in school programs seem to be more focused upon learning, and indicated they were not seeing enough of the buildings.

Finally, all programs vary according to the interpreters leading the field trip. Some interpreters have great success in putting their own "stamp" upon a program while other interpreters seem to struggle when they wander from the established curriculum. Interpreters should observe one another to see the variety of ways in which the same content can be delivered. The interpreters may discover more effective ways to teach and engage children, learn more about specific aspects of the 1800s, and gain skills in managing groups of children. After observing a program, interpreters should gather for a short "debriefing" in which they share ideas and talk about how the program went. This discussion can be informal and occur as the interpreters help each other clean up or prepare for the next group. Observing one another and sharing "trade secrets" can increase the consistency in program delivery, increase the skills of the interpreters so they are more confident performing various roles, and improve the program overall.

### Conclusion

The children's programs at HML provide an excellent opportunity for children to learn about history in a fun and interactive manner. With some modest improvements to program planning and implementation, teachers, chaperones, and children will only grow more satisfied with Historic Murphy's Landing.

This evaluation study of children's programs throughout the summer and fall provided information about the experiences both children and teachers/chaperones have at HML. However, the evaluation also raised many questions and issues that are important to consider in

planning and future programming. For instance, children who participated in the Children and Family Life program enjoyed their visit, but they were also less likely to say they'd like to return to HML. The question is raised: If children are enjoying the program, why don't they want to return? Perhaps children feel as they leave HML that they have experienced all the site has to offer. Interpretive staff could alter their closing ceremony to suggest content they would teach children in a return visit, either in another program or by going into more depth in their current program. HML has much more to offer than two hours worth of history; by highlighting "what else" HML has to offer they may be more interested in return visits.

Another question interpreters at HML will continue to face is: How many buildings should childcare groups and school groups visit? Interpreters struggle with finding a balance between providing breadth and depth of content they cover in teaching children. If interpreters visit more buildings, they have less time to teach and less time for children to participate, and they must cover content in more breadth and less depth. Teachers and chaperones consistently report they expected to see more buildings, yet nearly half of the children do not want to see more buildings. If interpreters took children from building to building in a tour would children and teachers be more or less satisfied?

A related question, is what if HML gave teachers results from the children's evaluations? If teachers knew what the children enjoyed and what the children learned, would the teachers use this information in deciding whether to schedule another trip? If teachers knew students were satisfied with the number of buildings they visited, would they be less inclined to be dissatisfied with visiting just a few buildings? Interpreters could quiz students during their closing ceremony and ask what they learned and what they thought about their visit to HML. If teachers heard directly from the students what they learned, how would the teachers use that information?

Evaluation at HML must be an ongoing activity as with each evaluation, questions are answered but many more arise as a result of the new information. An online evaluation was created as part of this evaluation study; however few online evaluations were completed. In the future, HML could move to completely online evaluation format, in which interpreters collect email addresses of teachers and email them a link to the online evaluation after their visit. This follow-up email would provide another contact with the teachers, in which interpreters could reinforce the “wonderful” experience children had at HML, suggest follow-up activities the teachers could do in their classroom, and encourage teachers to provide constructive feedback in the online evaluation to help improve the HML programs.

Throughout the evaluation study, the staff at HML was interested and involved in the evaluation process. They were open to all feedback and were genuinely interested in improving the experiences of HML visitors. In the future, the entire staff at HML must continue to be involved in the evaluation process and committed to providing the best possible experience for visitors. When the entire staff works together to discuss issues, brainstorm solutions, and implement changes, the programs and all the children benefit greatly.

## Field Trip Evaluation for Murphy's Landing

Circle the face that shows how you feel.

1. My field trip to Murphy's Landing was:



Fun!



Ok



Not fun!

2. The art project we did was:



Fun!



Ok



Not fun!

3. I would like to come back and visit Murphy's Landing again:



Yes!



Maybe



No!

4. I visited as many buildings as I wanted:



Yes!



No!

5. One thing I learned today: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. My favorite part of Murphy's Landing was: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_





13. Do you have any additional comments or suggestions about your trip to Murphy's Landing? \_

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14. After scheduling your visit to HML you should have received a curriculum packet with activities to help students prepare for their field trip. How would you rate the overall quality and value of this curriculum packet?

Not Valuable					Somewhat Valuable					Highly Valuable
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Thank you for completing this evaluation! Please return it to the evaluator.

## Appendix C

### Evaluation for Historic Murphy's Landing

Recently your group of students visited Historic Murphy's Landing (HML) for a field trip. We are interested in learning more about your experience so that we may continue to improve our program to meet the interests and needs of our visitors. Please take a few moments to complete this evaluation; your feedback is appreciated!

In the past year, has your group studied Minnesota or US history?

Yes, MN history      Yes, US history No/Don't Know

Please rate the importance of the following:

	Very Unimportant	Unimportant	Neutral	Important	Very Important
Reinforcing history lessons children learned in the classroom.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Getting students excited about learning history.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Learning something new about history.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Gaining a better understanding of the life of early settlers.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Gaining an appreciation for the hardships settlers endured.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Relating past issues to present day issues.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2

Circle the number that most accurately describes your response.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Our visit to HML reinforced history lessons the children learned in the classroom.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Our visit got students excited about learning history.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Students learned something new about history.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Students gained a better understanding of the life of early settlers.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Students gained an appreciation for the hardships settlers endured.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Students were able to relate past issues to present day issues.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2

What were your expectations before arriving at HML? Please circle the number that most accurately describes your response.

	Strongly	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly

	Disagree				Agree
I expected to enter more buildings.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
I expected to see more of the village.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
I expected to see more costumed interpreters.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
I expected to see more of daily life in a historic village.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
I expected to do less walking.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
I expected more hands-on activities for the children.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
I expected the children would learn more about the 1800s.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
I expected the children would have fewer opportunities to explore the site.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
I expected the interpreters to do less talking and demonstrate more activities.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2

How was your field trip to HML? Please circle the number that most accurately describes your response.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The staff was friendly.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
The staff did an excellent job of teaching the children about history.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
The staff provided historically accurate information.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
The staff was flexible in adapting the program to meet your needs & interests.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
The staff interacted well with the children.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
The staff encouraged children to get involved.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
The staff was able to answer questions to your & students' satisfaction.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
The staff was able to help students relate to life in the 1800s.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
The site was safe for children.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
The site was clean and well maintained.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Overall, we had a great trip to HML.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2

How would the following changes improve your satisfaction with your visit to HML?

Potential Change	Greatly Decrease Satisfaction	Decrease Satisfaction	Neutral	Increase Satisfaction	Greatly Increase Satisfaction
More costumed interpreters.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Fewer hands-on activities for	-2	-1	0	+1	+2

children.					
Less walking.	-2	-1	0	+	+2
Visit more buildings.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Allow children to explore on their own.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
More demonstrations.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
More historical content.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2

Would you recommend a visit to HML to other school groups? (please circle)

No                      Yes                      Yes, with the suggestion they: \_\_\_\_\_

Currently HML offers school programs on the following topics: Children & Family Life, Immigrant Journeys, Fur Trade, Village Trades & Travel over Time. Please check any other program topics for which your school group would be interested.

- |                                     |                            |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| _____ Women's Rights                | _____ American Indians     |
| _____ Religion                      | _____ Underground Railroad |
| _____ Civil War                     | _____ Transportation       |
| _____ Politics & Prominent citizens |                            |
| _____ Other, please specify: _____  |                            |

Do you have any other general comments about your visit to HML?

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Thank you for completing this evaluation!

## Appendix D

### Focus Group Questions

School programs at Historic Murphy's Landing are intended to be both fun and educational for children of all ages.

- When you decided to schedule a field trip to Murphy's Landing, what kind of experience were you hoping to provide for your students?

The staff at Historic Murphy's Landing work hard to ensure their programs are historically accurate and that their programs can supplement classroom lessons on Minnesota and US History.

- Did you study Minnesota or US History this past school year?
- If yes, how did your visit to Murphy's Landing fit in your curriculum?

As your visit to Murphy's Landing began you had a brief orientation wherein the staff explained the "rules" at Murphy's Landing and may have divided larger groups into smaller groups and assigned a schedule for rotating through various stations.

- What was your first impression after this brief orientation?
- Did you understand the schedule for your visit?

The staff teaches children about life in the 1800s in a variety of ways: verbal presentations, demonstrations and hands-on activities.

- What activities were the most and least effective (if any) in teaching children about life in the 1800s?

One area with which Murphy's Landing school programs struggle is finding a balance between breadth and depth in terms of visiting a few buildings while providing detailed lessons about life in the 1800s. Many teachers and chaperones remark at the end of the tour that they expected they were going to be able to visit more of the buildings than they actually did.

- What was your impression of the staff's ability to balance breadth and depth?  
Please describe how many buildings you would like to have seen on your tour and which activities could have been cut or reduced to cover more breadth than depth.

Each program includes a component in which children make a craft related to their program that they can take home to remind them of their visit and what they learned.

- What is your impression of the craft activity – were the children able to complete the craft and understand how it fits in with their visit?

The staff at Murphy's Landing work hard to provide a fun and historically accurate visit for children.

- How well did the staff meet your expectations as interpreters of life in the 1800s?
- How well did the content, presented through verbal presentations and hands-on activities, meet your expectations of what students would learn about life in the 1800s?
- How well did the tour of the site meet your expectations in providing a fun,

educational activity?

Choose three adjectives to describe your overall visit to Historic Murphy's Landing.

Do you have any additional comments or suggestions you would like to share?