



STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE PROGRAM PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET

SCHOOL: Brooklawn Middle School

ACTIVITY: B.L.T. SATURDAY

DATE(S): March 6, 2010

CATEGORY: Educational

ADVISOR NAME: Lou Miller

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PROVIDE A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THIS PROJECT:

"B.L.T. Saturday" is our annual local Leadership Training Conference sponsored by the Brooklawn Student Council. Each year 100-150 students from Brooklawn as well as all ten of our district elementary schools participate in this conference. We try to take several features of the NJASC Leadership Training Conference (LTC) program and condense them into one day, trying to...

1. Prepare our students at Brooklawn to develop and refine their leadership skills.
2. Give fifth graders the chance to see what middle level Student Council is all about, and hopefully become an active part of it when they arrive at Brooklawn or Central (our other middle school) the following year.
3. Give our students a small taste of what LTC is all about, so that they become interested in becoming more active in NJASC programs, especially participation at LTC in July.

Participation at B.L.T. Saturday is required for any 6th grader planning to run for Student Council Secretary or Treasurer. We also have a Candidate Training Course in place for 7th graders planning to run for President or Vice President and participation at B.L.T. Saturday is a component of this course.

DESCRIBE THE PLANNING & EXECUTION OF THIS PROJECT:

Student leaders are at the heart of B.L.T. Saturday. Current Brooklawn Student Council Executives serve as Junior Counselors (JCs), organizing and leading delegate groups through the day's activities. High school and college students - some of whom are past or present NJASC State Officers - come back to serve as Senior Counselors (SCs), facilitating leadership sessions and conducting other activities for the delegates.

Our Student Council Leadership Committee is in charge of B.L.T. Saturday. They sit down and review what sessions should be taught each year. We always do "Speaking With Ease" first (just like at LTC), but then we rotate different sessions in and out from year to year. This is important, since many students will attend BLT as a delegate for three or four years in a row. The actual sessions may be classes from LTC, such as "Effective Communication" or "Elected to Lead Everyone" or sometimes workshops that we find at LEAD or National Conferences, such as "True Colors"

Registration takes place in early February, with the conference being in early March. Since B.L.T. Saturday is a requirement to run for Brooklawn Student Council office, students need to start making decisions at this time about whether they might be interested in running. While registration takes place at Brooklawn we are contacting State Officers, current Parsippany Hills officers, and former Brooklawn officers about whether they want to serve as Senior Counselors. At the same time, we are sending information to the elementary principals so they can nominate up to five fifth grade students from their school to participate.

Shirts are ordered for all participants, but we do not charge for registration or participation. We pay for the shirts and other expenses of B.L.T. Saturday (food) through money raised in other events throughout the year, like dances.

Staff Night is a really big part of the planning for this event. The night before, all of the Junior and Senior Counselors meet to prepare for B.L.T. Saturday. The advisor covers any general information needed and then reviews "Speaking With Ease", since everyone teaches it. As part of this class, each JC has to come up with a "speech" in advance, and one of them is chosen by the SCs to get up and do it. After the large group session, then breakout sessions take place where one senior counselor who is in charge of each leadership session reviews it with the other SCs who will teach it. Meanwhile, the JCs prepare their delegate group's folders and shirts ready while planning icebreakers and welcoming activities. After the breakout sessions, the Senior Counselors are given time to set up their classrooms – each is assigned a classroom to decorate and teach in for the entire day.

DESCRIBE THE BENEFIT OF THIS PROJECT BENEFIT TO SCHOOL AND/OR COMMUNITY:

Each year, our B.L.T. Saturday delegates learn important lessons about leadership, tolerance, cooperation, communication, and problem solving. Sharing some LTC experiences with our fellow students not only makes our Student Council stronger, it gets more students interested in becoming active in it. This also promotes participation in LTC, usually getting us a few more delegates each year. We also get to know many of the fifth grade student leaders in our district, making it easier for them to become active when they arrive at Brooklawn for sixth grade. B.L.T. Saturday also gives us an opportunity to meet and work with student leaders from visiting schools, sharing our ideas and getting new ones from them.

EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THIS PROJECT, REFLECTING ON ANY POSSIBLE CHANGES YOU MIGHT CONSIDER:

Since we started B.L.T. Saturday in 2003, it has been a great success for our Student Council. Each year we have a very good turnout of delegates and receive a lot of positive comments – from our own students and parents, as well as guests from other schools. The elementary school principals in particular really love this program and ask to send more of their fifth grade students each year. Being Junior Counselors gives our own Executive Board members a great chance to apply the leadership skills they learned at LTC. The high school Senior Counselors keep coming back each year to help out, and this provides a really great bridge between our program and that of the high school.

Each year after all the delegates go home, we get the entire junior and senior staff together for an evaluation meeting - the same way that we do at LTC. We spend about 20 minutes discussing what worked, what did not, and coming up with ideas to make the next B.L.T. Saturday even better. Minutes of this meeting are typed by our current Secretary and are given to the Student Council Leadership Committee, who reviews them and makes their own recommendations a few weeks later. Through this process, we have reflected upon and implemented a lot of changes over the years, which helps to keep our program current and strong.