



STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE PROGRAM PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET

SCHOOL: Brooklawn Middle School

ACTIVITY: Brooklawn Bridges

DATE(S): May 27, 2010

CATEGORY: Student Services

ADVISOR NAME: Lou Miller

ADVISOR E-MAIL: lmiller@njasc.org

PROVIDE A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THIS PROJECT:

Brooklawn Bridges is a program that brings together about 300 fifth graders from several district and non-district elementary schools that will be attending Brooklawn the following September. The intent is to welcome them to Brooklawn, give them the chance to get to know each other and kids from other schools headed to Brooklawn, calm the fears they and their parents may have about leaving a small elementary school for a large middle school, and to give information that will be helpful in their transition to middle school. It also gives our current student leaders the chance to apply their skills and identify the incoming student leaders that may follow in their footsteps.

DESCRIBE THE PLANNING & EXECUTION OF THIS PROJECT:

Planning involves the Peer Leaders, Student Council, and Elementary Guidance Counselors. Mr. Miller meets with all Elementary Principals at the annual calendar meeting to set the date for Brooklawn Bridges. The Elementary Guidance Counselors work with the 5th graders throughout the year, and meet several times with Mr. Miller and Brooklawn Guidance Counselors to prepare for Brooklawn Bridges.

On the day of the event, Brooklawn's Peer Leaders and Student Council Executive Board members take an active role, leading groups of 5th graders throughout the activities, which include:

1. Icebreakers and group problem solving activities upon arrival at Brooklawn.
2. Stations on the upper field. Groups stay at each station for about 8 minutes. These range from how to open a school combination lock, to cooperative games/activities that help kids get to know each other as they play them. The Elementary Physical Education Teachers run most of these games – one of them was adapted to become "Gutter Ball", a B.I.G. Night event.
3. Barbecue Cookout, sponsored by Pomptonian Food Service
4. Dress Code and Spirit Day Fashion Show
5. Brooklawn Question & Answer session, where Peer Leaders and Student Council Executives answer questions about life at Brooklawn.

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

This program effectively introduces our incoming students to Brooklawn, and also gives us a chance to get them involved from the start in our Student Activities program. It is important to our Student Council, since it is the first opportunity for our Executive Board to meet the incoming 6th grade; it is also one of the first activities where our newly elected Executives work together, since it takes place during our transition period. It gets the incoming 6th grade excited about attending Brooklawn, and gives us a valuable chance to promote our Student Activities program with them – and eventually their parents. It also gives us an opportunity to identify potential student leaders, who we can then encourage to get involved in our Student Council upon their arrival in September.

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

Overall, this program is highly effective - which we can see each September when the incoming sixth graders arrive at Brooklawn, quickly and comfortably assimilating into the student body. Each year we sit down with the Brooklawn and elementary Guidance Counselors to review the effectiveness of this event, and plan for the following year. From year to year, we make changes as need be - most recently revising the activities on the upper field so that ALL students can participate in them.