



STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE PROGRAM PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET

SCHOOL: Delaware Township School

ACTIVITY: Kids Vote

DATE(S): (annually) March & April; November (during gubernatorial or
presidential election years)

CATEGORY: Educational/Student Services

ADVISOR NAME: Cynthia Terranova

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PROVIDE A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THIS PROJECT:

Kids Vote is an annual event hosted in conjunction with the any state elections. Student Council members visit both elementary and middle school classrooms to present mini-lessons on the democratic process after training with their advisors. As part of these mini-lessons, the student council members unofficially poll the students of DTS with regards to "issues" in which they would like to be more involved. Once the mini-lessons and polling are complete, the data is compiled and presented to the administration to craft one elementary and one middle school question on which students will be given the opportunity to vote. The actual voting takes place in coordination with state-scheduled elections. On the evening of the election, the votes for both questions are "officially" tallied and verified by the student council advisors and administration so that the results can be announced the following morning at school. In addition to providing all DTS students with an opportunity to take part in the democratic process, Kids Vote also allows our student council to interact with the student council members from the regional high school who oversee the event for all the local sending districts.

DESCRIBE THE PLANNING & EXECUTION OF THIS PROJECT:

The planning of Kids Vote begins in January. Once the high school coordinator contacts our administration with deadlines and any other important updates, the student council advisors begin to plan the mini-lessons and train the student council members for their presentations. These mini-lessons generally include a picture book that describes the democratic process and activities that allow all students to let their voice be heard. As the student council members poll the elementary and middle school students, a display with all of the ideas suggested is created in the main foyer to foster the sense of community. Once the data collection is complete, the student council advisors and officers meet with administration to finalize a single question for the elementary students and a single question for the middle school students. Flyers, announcements, and a "commercial" created by our Broadcast Network continue to promote student participation in the event on election night.

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

This project creates a multitude of learning benefits for all DTS students. Our school administration has been very supportive in implementing the results of the Kids Vote election. This brings the democratic process to life for all students who have participated in the mini-lessons, polling, and actual voting on the night of state and/or national elections. Kids Vote engages students in the democratic process from the time they enter public school, fostering civic empowerment that can last a lifetime.

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

We have found that the Kids Vote project has been very effective in strengthening our school community within the district as well as our connections to the regional high school. In order to continue our success with Kids Vote and expand the program's civic empowerment, it may be beneficial to have a student council representative serve as a member of the Board of Education committee that would be involved in implementing the election results.