

Middle School Aims to Reduce Bullying

To help reduce the threat of bullying at North Plainfield Middle School, and to anticipate the implementation of the state's comprehensive anti-bullying legislation, John Ferguson, dean of students, prepared a multi-faceted assembly program on November 23, 2010. Zoe Ledesma and Dayanna Mendoza, middle school students helped facilitate this program.

- All middle school students participated in this school-wide anti-bullying program during the extended home room period. This initiative highlighted the harmful effects of bullying and included a presentation by Detectives Eric Fowler and Alex Kuga of the North Plainfield Police Department on cyber bullying, sexting, and online predators along with the reading of middle school sentiments by Sally Reagan and Christian Vivas, counselors. New Jersey Assemblywoman Linda Stender, North Plainfield Mayor Michael Giordano, Jr., and Council President "Skip" Stabile were honored guests and spoke to students about using appropriate words and how words impact on others. The program culminated in the students signing an anti-bullying pledge banner as they listened to Andrea Wright, one of their classmates, sing "Lean on Me." The anti-bullying banner, created by the NPHS/MS Art Club, under the direction of Tammy Mackiewicz, art teacher, was prominently pictured in the November 24 Star Ledger article that covered the program.*

- David Branan, Board of Education vice president, who attended the event, expressed his gratitude and appreciation for the hard work demonstrated by the entire team. "It was certainly a proud moment for our schools.~I believe I am not speaking out of turn when I say that the Board should be very pleased and proud with the efforts made by the staff and the administration of the middle school in this event. Many Board members have expressed their desire to see programs exactly like this held and this more than fit the bill. I was happy to sign the pledge banner myself," commented Mr. Branan.*

On Friday, December 3, 2010, there will be a follow-up activity entitled “A Friend I Haven’t Met Day,” where students unfamiliar with a classmate will have the opportunity to share lunch with them.