

PROGRAM:

Bridges Summer Tech Camps for Middle School Students

OBJECTIVES:

- a) Students will learn to make web pages.
- b) Students will learn to ask questions like a journalist.
- c) Students will learn more about their community.

LOCATION:

Tech camps are located at the school. They are run during the summer as part of summer school, to kick-off summer school, or to wrap summer school.

DESCRIPTION:

Tech camps were created to get students to be inquisitive and use technology to express their thoughts, opinions, and information they learned on the field trips. A week of tech camp gives students the opportunity to attend a day camp at no cost. Teams of college students, who were mentors, planned and met with site directors to create a schedule and list of activities. Each summer there was a theme that surrounded the week, for example, science, fine arts, geography, and the community where the school was located.

Mentors planned out each day and maintained communication with site directors. It was important to keep that in place because GEAR UP site directors are from the community and know the students. Mentors did all the leg-work and led the whole week of tech camp. Mentors taught students how to build their own web pages which were linked to The Bridges website. Students discovered how simple it was to create a web page. At the end of each day, mentors emailed all web files to another mentor who located at CWU to help with uploading pictures taken during the week, the student pages, and linking them to The Bridges website. Each day, students would have access to their updated pages and continue to work on them.

Site directors were in charge of recruiting the students (a maximum of 20 students), reserve a classroom, a computer lab, and provide lunches. In order to have the most impact on students, it's best to have a maximum of 20 students and 5 mentors. One school accidentally signed up 35 students. Luckily there were 8 mentors and we had access to 2 computer labs and the library as a classroom to house all students. The sixth graders were in one lab and the 7th and 8th graders were in the next lab. It is recommended to separate 6th graders from 7th and 8th graders. It helped with classroom management and learning development.

When the first tech camp occurred, the director of The Bridges Project noticed that students did not know how to type. Second language learners, first must identify the word they want to type in their native language, and then translate it to English, and finally try to type it out. By then, this process may have caused the student to forget what he/she was going to type.

The director proposed to purchase typing software for students to learn to type. One school adopted it as a regular class. Students learned to type remarkably well in a short time period.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE:

PREPARATION ACTIVITIES:

- a) Recruit mentors and students-5 mentors for every 20 students
- b) Pick a theme and meet with mentors to begin planning activities.
 - a. Each day includes an educational icebreaker, a field trip, and 2 to 3 hours of web page development. Normally, in the morning the students would participate in an icebreaker, go on a field trip, have lunch and the rest of the afternoon work on their web pages.
- c) Purchase or collect supplies for the week. Mentors went to local stores and big box stores to get donations of supplies.
- d) Confirm all field trips the week before tech camp.
- e) Confirm transportation.
- f) Have at least 3 digital cameras to take pictures of each day and of the students.
- g) A signed release form from parents indicating it is okay to go on field trips to take pictures of their child and post them on the web site.
- h) Must have a notepad and pencil for each student to take notes on their field trips.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES:

- 1) The last day of tech camp, students and mentors are required to do community service; for example, pick up trash at the local park, paint fire hydrants and benches at park, paint a mural downtown, visit the senior center, etc.
Then there is a potluck among the mentors and site directors to provide a BBQ or picnic for the students. Certificates of completion are awarded to each student who participated.
- 2) All files of each student must be emailed to the mentor at home base to finish up the web pages. All cameras need to be checked in, all supplies returned or donated to the school.
- 3) Thank you cards are sent out to hosts of the field trips and businesses that donated supplies, time, etc.

COSTS OR COST CONSIDERATIONS:

Event costs depend on many factors. Are the mentors getting paid to help that week (the program paid mentors \$10 an hour, plus 3% benefits, plus transportation)? Are lunches part of the summer school program, are they donated by a local business or did the school receive a discount for lunches? Supplies can be purchased or donated by businesses and/or the school.

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