

Synergistic Effect

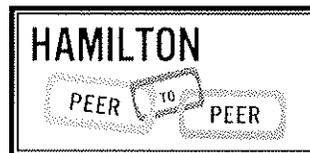
How the Hamilton LINKS program
created synergy, awareness, & acceptance



Becky Myers, Coordinator of Student Services
Sydney Wassink & Rachael VanHuis, Hamilton High School Juniors

Hamilton LINKS

- Peer support for students with ASD
- Students educated
- Apply knowledge
- Educate others
- Individualized groups



Meet the needs of the students

- Successful LINKS groups
 - Teach similarities
 - Teach characteristics
 - Allow students to problem solve
 - Truly know one another
 - Talk about behavior ~ talk at their level ~ they can relate!



Meet the needs of the students

- Maintain a core group of kids for each student with ASD
 - Ensures social **consistency**
 - Develops true friendships
 - Allows students to problem solve
 - LINKS know what has been tried, what works, and the growth that has been made



2015-16 Hamilton LINKS



Fred Bear's Family Diner



Republic Rebellion Clones



KFC Veterans



Spartans LINKS



Jedi Masters



Sparking Pikachus



Hungry Titanic



Sonic LINKS



Cheesy Hawkeyes



Yellow Turtles



US Navy LINKS

Synergy

- Teamwork will produce an enhanced result greater than if each person of the team was working individually toward the same goal



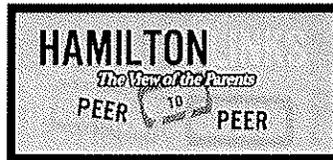
2014 banquet



2015 banquet

School Involvement

- People involved from the beginning
- Staff and students presented in identified classrooms
 - Created our own ASD awareness video
 - Had HS video productions teacher film
 - Parents of kids with ASD involved

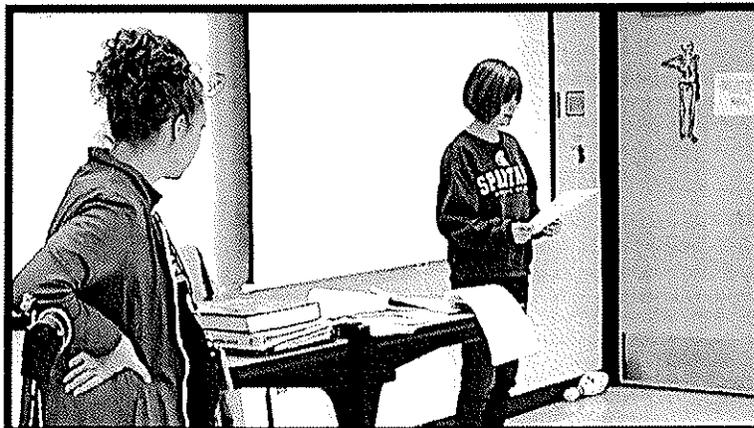


Informing staff



Middle School Staff Meeting

Informing students



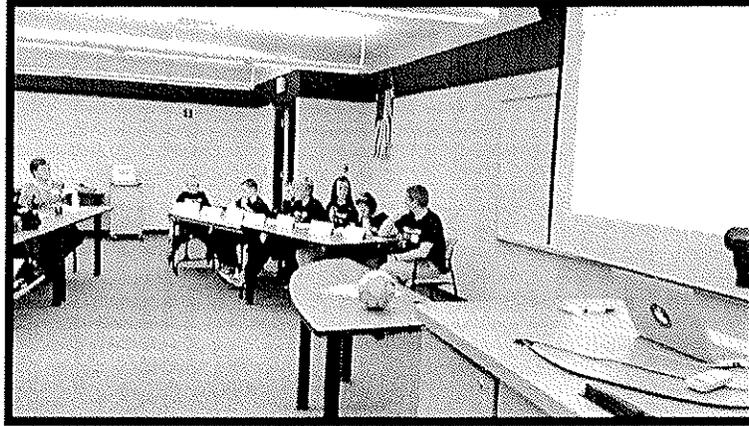
Presented to classrooms

Informing the community



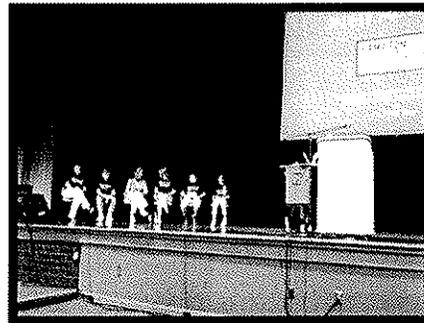
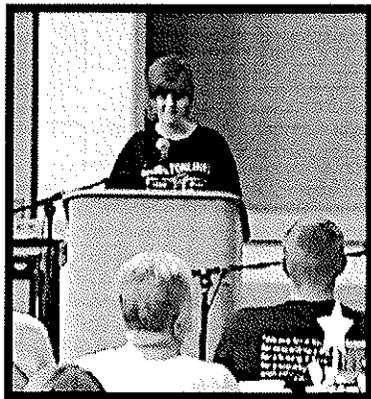
Presented to our Board of Education

Informing the community



Community Conversation

Informing the community



Year End Celebration Banquet

Informing the community



LINKS in Hamilton Homecoming Parade

Informing other school districts

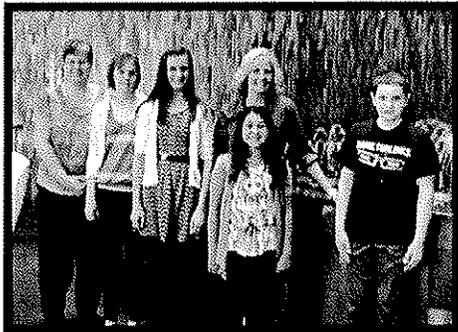


Local districts visiting Hamilton



Ottawa Area Intermediate School District

Informing the state



Sydney & friends present at START conference in Lansing

Informing the state



Michigan Autism Conference in Kalamazoo

Kids started informing others



Kids planned
a surprise
birthday party

They organized
a “wear blue
day” in April



Something bigger than ourselves

- It sold itself!
- Used our successful volunteer program called WISH
- Have a district volunteer coordinator
 - Created LINKS lunch coordinators
 - Community members (not associated with LINKS) began donating time, money, lunches & supplies to our program
 - Kids began sharing what they learn to their parents & friends



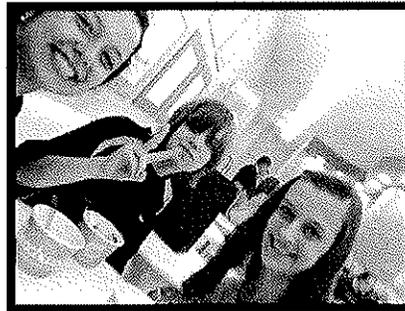
Impact



Community & businesses donate time
& lunches for our meeting

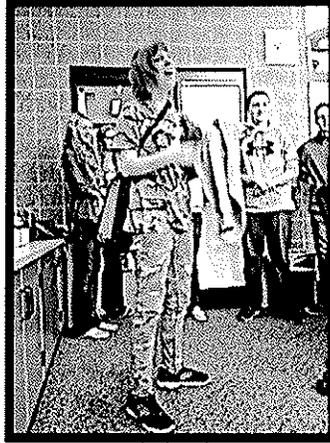


Impact



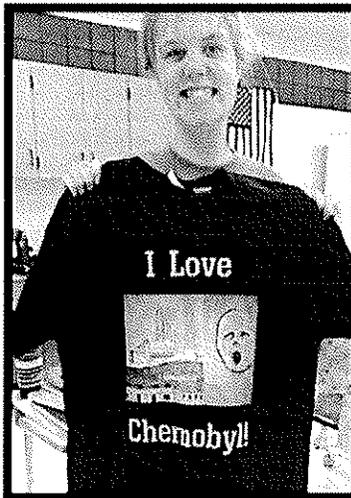
Invited each other to outside activities

Impact



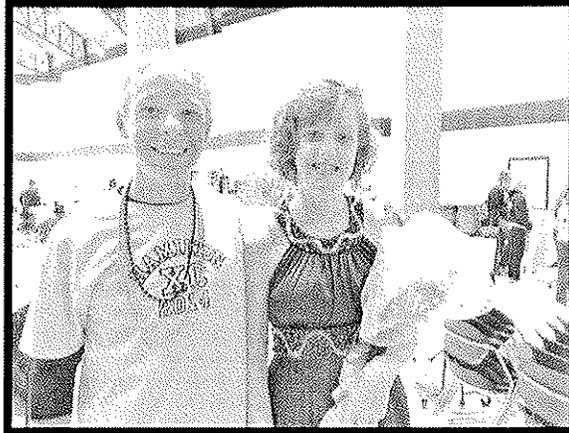
Surprise! Happy birthday, Syd!

Impact



Celebrate preferred interests

Impact



Invited each other to outside activities

Current Status

- About 200 kids supporting 11 students with ASD
- LINKS class for credit
- LINKS banquet @ end of the year



Synergy has been created

- Belief that each individual can make a difference
- Power in common belief system & vision
- Common language, knowledge, and communication
- Behavior is communication!
 - This is not isolated to students with ASD
 - Connected us together
- Belief in community



LINKS Mission Statement

- “We are for difference.....
- for respecting difference
 - for allowing difference
 - for encouraging difference
 - until difference no longer makes a difference”

-Johnnetta B. Cole

