

**MONTGOMERY TOWNSHIP BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**2014-15 BUDGET**  
**NEW PROGRAMS**

BUILDING/DEPT: MHS

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: Peer Leadership

The Health and Physical Education department in conjunction with the Guidance department would like to propose a Peer Leadership course for the junior and senior students who serve as Peer Leaders at MHS. Students in this course would be scheduled at the same time as freshmen Health and P.E. classes in order to better prepare Peer Leaders to perform their outreach to the entire freshmen class on a more regular basis. This course would fulfill the Health and P.E. requirements for those students enrolled. The Peer Leader program already exists at MHS as a volunteer program. As it currently exists, there are numerous obstacles to consistently provide this program, including

- an imbalance of the number of Peer Leaders available during the same time that the freshmen are in study hall (which is when the outreach occurs).
- the difficulty of including freshmen in Resource Study Hall and/or Algebra lab.
- the need for Peer Leaders to meet during unit lunch for training with their advisors
- having volunteer advisors.
- the ability to provide this program on a consistent basis.
- the need for student accountability both for the freshmen and Peer Leaders (since it is volunteer).
- having to use freshmen study hall time, which many freshmen utilize to study.
- taking the Peer Leaders out of Health/P.E. once per week without it being part of their curriculum.
- Dependence on outside funding to provide training for advisors and Peer Leaders (which may no longer be available).

STATEMENT OF NEEDS :

In order to support this course, the following would be needed:

- Teachers who have an interest in developing and teaching the Peer Leadership course: there are currently 5 teacher faculty advisors for the voluntary program, three of whom are certified teachers, two are counselors (three Health and P.E. teachers have already been trained for this program and serve(d) as advisors).
- Training for those who will teach the Peer Leadership course.
- There is also a wealth of materials available to us through the Center for Supportive Schools in addition to those that we have gathered in the last two years of the program.

The purpose of the Peer Leadership program is to provide student mentors to all students in the freshmen class in order to help them adjust to their new environment. Through a weekly outreach to groups of freshmen, Peer leaders focus on adolescent issues such as bullying, stereotyping, handling stress, and decision-making. There are many benefits to both the freshmen and the Peer Leaders:

- Through this program student relationships are strengthened across grade levels and a sense of community is developed among our diverse student body.
- The issues addressed correlate directly to the MHS Social and Emotional Learning target areas.
- The Peer Leaders will develop their leadership and communication skills which they will carry beyond their high school career.
- The Peer Leaders learn the importance of dependability and responsibility and develop a commitment to the service of others.
- Both the freshmen and Peer Leaders build confidence and a sense of mutual support.

The Peer Leadership program is currently functioning well, considering that it is not built into the school day. If the course is build into the schedule, it could be ensured that **all** freshmen are reached and that there is a better ratio of Peer Leaders to freshmen; the Peer Leaders would obtain credit for the many hours they devote to the program; social and emotional learning

target areas would be embedded into the curriculum; and the program would be recognized for the value it contributes to the school community.

Detailed Budget of New Program

<u>Description</u>	<u>Account Number</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Curriculum development--		\$360 for a full year course.

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Proposed Reallocation of resources in order to fund this proposal:

Corie Gaylord

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Submitted by