
RHODES TO SUCCESS

James Ford Rhodes High School

Cleveland, Ohio

Students travel down numerous roads to achieve success in their lives. James Ford Rhodes High School recently formed the Teacher-Alumni-Parent Partnership (TAPP) to help guide students down the road of success. Team members used their own experiences and fond memories of their high school days to develop activities. They met one evening per month throughout the school year at a local recreation center. The high school was not available in the evenings, so the recreation center donated a meeting room at no cost. TAPP informed families throughout the year of the team's goals and accomplishments. Meeting dates and times were also listed in the local newspaper to encourage alumni and community members to participate. At each meeting, there were introductions and a brief synopsis of the topics previously discussed. TAPP's first objective targeted boosting school spirit by recognizing student success. TAPP members believe that students who take pride in themselves, their classes, and their accomplishments are more likely to be successful throughout life.

Since TAPP began with no budget, the team raised funds to support its student recognition program. They used the profits from designing and selling sweatshirts with the school logo to develop the Rhodes to Success Wall. The Rhodes to Success Wall is in the same hallway as the Alumni Hall of Fame. At the end of every month, teachers selected three students from each of the four grades to receive an award for their excellence in academics, attitude, or athletics. Award-winning students had their pictures taken and displayed on the Success Wall. One hundred and eight frames (12 students per month for 9 school months) were purchased at a cost of \$1.00 each. The cost of film and the development of the pictures was less than \$20.00 per month.

TAPP wanted to encourage students who were working hard on their grades on a regular basis, or who may have brought up their grades significantly during the month. Also, TAPP wanted to thank those students who displayed a good attitude through their kindness, their community service, and their friendliness with classmates, teachers, and staff. Finally, they wanted to encourage those athletes who may not be the superstar of the team, but who are dedicated to their sport; always show up for practice; and do their best.

Each award-winning student had her/his name announced over the PA system and received a certificate designed by a TAPP member. At the end of the year, the students also were recognized in the local newspaper. Hopefully, these students' families and the community will see the children's accomplishments, know of the pride TAPP feels towards them, and be inspired to become more involved with the school. It's great for families and the school to rejoice with the students and pat them on the back as they are heading down their "Rhodes to Success." A parent recently commented, "Today the students are on our Rhodes to Success Wall; tomorrow they will be in the Alumni Hall of Fame."

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