

LEGACY QUILT

Westminster Community School #68

Buffalo, New York

The Legacy Quilt was a project designed by the junior high students of Westminster Community School #68 as a culminating project for the African/African-American history lessons the students received in their guidance/counseling classes. The purpose of the project was threefold: first, the students would recognize the significance of the art of quilting; second, the students would have discussions about their family history; and third, there would be a cooperative plan established with the students creating and sewing the classroom quilts.

Parents received letters explaining the project and its purpose. Each student was asked to donate an 8" x 8" square of material that was important to them and their family. The art teacher helped students create another 8" x 8" autograph square of muslin material, and the home and careers teacher helped students sew the quilt squares. The members of the Action Team for Partnerships (parent volunteers) worked with and encouraged the students to understand the importance of the project. The librarian shared books, stories, and videotapes that were about quilts and quilting.

The project required minimal funding. Students' parents donated the fabric squares. They used materials from their children's baby blankets, outgrown outfits, special shirts, blouses, pants, jeans, dresses, and oth-

ers. Additional materials needed were the batting and muslin, which were purchased by the school counselor.

The students were very excited once the project started. They impressed everyone, including themselves, with their outstanding, creative designs. The quilts were displayed for the school's annual spring program. In conjunction with this project, the students also received donated books from the Project Flight Program at the State University College at Buffalo. The students and parents shared time reflecting on their childhood and their families' legacy.

Two ways to enhance this project in the future would be to encourage more teachers to contribute and to ask parents to bring in quilts that are of importance to their lives.

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