

CALLING ALL COLORS
2006-2007
ACTION PLAN OUTCOMES

The Calling All Colors Project is designed to provide an opportunity for middle school students to learn about racial tolerance and develop action plans for increasing appreciation for racial diversity in their school communities. Students attended the winter conference at Hope College, where they learned about cultural diversity and cross-cultural skills. They designed action plans to implement over the academic year back in their school communities. The students returned to the spring conference at GVSU and shared the results of their action plans.

Action Plans:

- **Creekside Middle School:** Calling All Colors students produced a diversity video to show the entire school. The group worked on organizing the script and taking pictures to illustrate diversity. They also had a “Movie Day Fundraiser” that was publicized to everyone at school plus parents.
- **Harbor Lights Middle School:** The students created materials for two diversity bulletin boards. They invited speakers for Kwanzaa and Hanukkah. The students read a variety of cultural stories to elementary students. A talent show was held with a cultural emphasis. A fundraiser was done to help cover the cost of the Calling all Colors activities.
- **Holland West Middle School:** Calling All Colors students held a “Holidays Around the World Week” which included lunch activities, announcements, a video, buttons, advertisements, and other activities to encourage students to learn more about how people of other cultures celebrate around the world. In addition, for their annual “Mix-It-Up” day, they produced and showed a video to advertise the day. This year’s “Mix-It-Up” Day was a success again.
- **Holland Christian-North Shore Middle School:** The students presented two skits to next year’s incoming 6th grade on diversity. They followed up with discussion questions about their thoughts and experiences. The group shared with the 6th graders what has helped them in middle school.
- **Lakeshore Middle School:** The students not only have their ongoing diversity projects, but they also organized different monthly activities to present diversity awareness to the student body. Ongoing projects consist of Diversity Showcase, Girl 13, Student Exchange Program, and Pen Pals with Great American Mail Race. The monthly activities included: Family Hispanic Night, “Mix-It-Up” Lunch, Celebrations around the World, Holocaust Survivors activity, Black History Month, diversity quotes for

announcements, diversity power point, GHAPS District Diversity Day on March 16th, Civil War, and The Glass Castle Book Club.

- **St. Mary's Catholic Middle School:** Calling All Colors students organized a "Mix-It-Up" Lunch Day and held it on November 14, 2006. They also organized a "No Name Calling" week (January 15-19) where they asked other students "how did you feel when someone called you a name?" The students also had a fundraiser by selling t-shirts to raise money to create a "peace" area for their school courtyard. They had "Reflect Respect" days after getting their t-shirts. The group wore the shirts and visited classrooms to emphasize ways they can show respect for each other.
- **Steele Middle School:** Students again held their annual informational session to 6th graders to explain Calling All Colors and recruited new members for the following year. A guest speaker presented a diversified topic, motivational and soul searching, to the entire student body. To help promote racial harmony and racial healing, they created a survey for all of the students to take and then used the data to address the issues at hand. Birthday greetings were provided to all 6th, 7th, and 8th graders again this year from the group. The Calling All Colors banner will now be a permanent fixture of the school's main entrance.
- **White Pines Middle School:** This year the group designed a new Calling All Colors banner. They continue to post diversity quotes in their cafeteria. The students created a power point presentation to assist on sharing the message to all the students in their school that unity and cultural diversity is important. The power point also educated the student body about the country, Ghana, in preparation of bringing back the African band "Biakuye" (which means unity) for a Cultural All-School Assembly. The students also took a field trip to San Chez, a Spanish restaurant in Grand Rapids; honored Rosa Parks by ice-skating at Rosa Parks Circle; and organized a walk-a-thon to help raise money for the Lakeshore Ethnic Diversity Alliance.

Racial Demographics of Participating Students:

Two hundred and forty four students participated in the Calling All Colors Conferences over the year, with additional students working on the projects in the school. LEDA requests a minimum of 51% of the attending students from each school be students of color, in order to provide an opportunity to share various perspectives in the dialogue experience. This year the demographics broke down as follows:

African American	Asian American	Caucasian	Latino	Native American	Bi-Racial	NEC*
34	24	108	48	2	28	0

*Not Elsewhere Classified

Participant Outcomes:

Calling All Colors participants are exposed to lessons and activities geared to increase awareness on issues of race and increase appreciation for racial and ethnic diversity. The CAC program focuses on one main lesson over the year-long program.

This year's message was focusing on the effects of stereotyping and encouraging students to think about differences and their reactions to our differences. Evaluations completed by student participants at the conclusion of the year-long program indicated the following outcomes:

96% of the attending students indicated Calling All Colors helped them develop a greater awareness about racial diversity.

84% of the students stated that the conference influenced how they treat people from other racial ethnic groups. Of the students who did not feel the program influenced their treatment of others (16%), reasons given indicated they already understood the message of racial tolerance and feel they treat everyone equally.

The following questions were asked of the participants in the evaluation. Typical responses are included:

Describe one new idea you gained from participating in Calling All Colors this year.

The participants provided a variety of responses to this question. The responses given most often included, meeting new people, referred to their school action plans, unity, the effects of stereotyping and judging others.

"I learned that people from different cultures can have great stories about their country."

"To really look down deep and see what someone is like. Don't judge on past experiences."

"Don't stereotype people you don't know."

"That you should think for yourself. Also to be what you want to be, not what people want you to be!"

"I learned that I do judge people when I look at them."

"An idea I had learned was how to appreciate differences."

Has Calling All Colors helped you develop a greater awareness about racial diversity? Please describe.

Overall, the students expressed greater awareness about racial diversity. The most common responses reflected on the diversity dialogues about stereotyping and judging others.

“Yes, because if we didn’t have diversity we would be the same.”

“Yes, it shows not to judge others even if they look different. This will help me in life.”

“Yes, everyone is equal and special in their own ways.”

“Yes, it taught me that not to judge people at first glance.”

“No, I was previously aware about racial diversity.”

“It has enhanced about what I knew but I would like to learn more.”

Has your involvement in Calling All Colors influenced how you treat people from other racial and ethnic groups? Please explain.

The responses to this question were consistent to the previous question. However, more students stated no but then would explain how they have already appreciated and respected other racial and ethnic groups.

“Yes I respect their difference a lot and you can learn a lot from different people.”

“Yes, you know that no matter how people look or what color you are, you should treat people the same.”

“Yes, because being from an all white school, I met people of different races.”

“Yes, I will try not to judge and I will be open minded and talk to people.”

“No because I have always treated everyone equally.”

“Kind of, because I always treated people from other racial and ethnic groups the same, but I know more now.”

What did you like the best about Calling All Colors?

The majority of the participant’s responses were in regards to meeting new people from different schools and the afternoon activities. Several participants also noted the lunches, going to a college, and the dialogues.

"I liked the fun incorporated with the learning."

"That you can be open."

"Hanging out with people from different schools."

"I would say the lesson they teach us."

"Learning about different cultures and treating people equally."

"I like how it allows us to be really social and expressive."

What would you change about Calling All Colors?

The most common response from participants was not to make any changes. Many students made comments referring to the food provided, different cooperative games, and having more conferences/meetings. The quotes provided are exceptional suggestions by the participants.

"That instead of breaking groups apart, that everyone gets together instead."

"I want CAC to do more with the school."

"Talk a little more about racial slurs, than just stereotyping."

"I would have more schools participate."

Overall how would you rank your experience at "Calling All Colors"? (1 = It was a great experience! 5 = It was not a worthwhile experience.)

The rankings provided by the students were overwhelmingly positive. One student even ranked the conference a 10! The breakdown of the rankings is as follows:

1	55%
2	42%
3	1%
4	1%
no answer	1%

Summary:

LEDA is thrilled to see the goals of the Calling All Colors Project achieved, as students return to their schools and implement action steps for increasing appreciation for diversity within their school communities. By providing the

opportunity for the attending students to become advocates for racial diversity, thousands of students in Ottawa County have now been exposed to the message of racial tolerance. That message is often the most powerful when provided by peers.

This year's message was focusing on the affects of stereotyping and encouraging students to think about differences and their reactions to our differences. 96% of the attending students indicated Calling All Colors helped them develop a greater awareness about racial diversity. 84% of the students stated that the conference influenced how they treat people from other racial ethnic groups. The remaining 16% gave reasons signifying that they already understood the message of racial tolerance and feel they treat everyone equally.