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OF THE PACK

INITIATING NEWBIES INTO THE PUMA PRIDE

ON AUGUST 10TH, 68 LEADERS met to train for the upcoming PRIDE Day. PRIDE Sponsor, Mrs. Kendy Blake, has held the annual trainings since its inception in 2005. "Our PRIDE Leaders had a shortened training focused on the most important parts of the program. You couldn't tell. They jumped right in, showed creativity and flexibility, got to know their sixth graders, and started building relationships right away," Blake said. "And the sixth graders were connected to the energy. They were engaging with the PRIDE Leaders, laughing, and learning about each other. It was a great day in the midst of an unusual year."



1.

1. PLAYING TIGERS, TRAPS AND BEARS, Anna Peecher, 08, Jackson Waller and Samuel Sweetman, 06, participate in a competitive game during PRIDE Day. "I was a little nervous, but I knew one kid from basketball, so I felt a little better," Waller said. *photo by k. blake* **2. AFTER A LONG DAY OF TEACHING ON PRIDE DAY,** Makena Schell and Samuel Sokolowski, 08, take a break. "The sixth graders felt a little bit shy and quiet, but we got them more energetic in a couple of minutes. I felt like PRIDE Day really helped the sixth graders get to know each other, and later branch out to make friendships and connections," Schell said. *photo by k. blake*



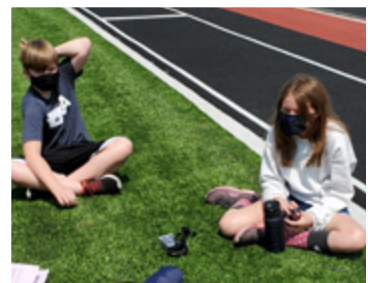
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3. PLAYING A TEAM BONDING GAME, Kaiden Lopez, Cooper Matney and Anthony-Francois Maillard, 06, become fast friends on PRIDE Day. "I thought I wouldn't know anyone, but I'm glad I got to know my peers better," Maillard said. The bonding games helped Matney get to know his peers as well. "It was easy to meet people. It made going to school the first day easier," Matney said. *photo by k. blake*



2.

THE SOONER THE BETTER



JUST GETTING STARTED AS MIDDLE SCHOOLERS

1. DIVIDED INTO SMALLER GROUPS, Conall Humphries and Jolie Krieger, 06, sit with other members of their CORE Plus class on the new track during PRIDE. Students played "Bibbidi-Bobbidi" and other team building exercises. "It was really fun and overall interesting to meet the eighth graders before school started," Krieger said. *photo by k. blake* **2. MENTORED,** Emerson Sisler and Trenton Smith, 06, work in their group with PRIDE Leaders, Chloe Hebert and Gabrielle Roche, 08. "I liked playing games, and it was funny when we would mess up," Sisler said. *photo by k. blake*

4. LEADING HER PRIDE GROUP, Olivia Leeder, 08, provides the incoming sixth graders, Lovella Cohan and Landon Nanley, 06, with important information about the school. "When I was nominated for PRIDE it felt good because I knew that not many people were nominated for it," Leeder said. "The highlight of PRIDE Day was getting to see all the incoming sixth graders and them asking me questions. I got to be a good role model. It also reminded me of when I was in sixth grade on PRIDE Day." *photo by k. blake*



4.

ON WITH THE SHOW

PRIDE DAY CONTINUES WITH SEVERAL MODIFICATIONS DUE TO SAFETY PROTOCOLS

NO SCHOOL YEAR WOULD BE COMPLETE WITHOUT PRIDE DAY. The annual event took place, yet with creative modifications.

Instead of touring the building and assisting sixth graders with their lockers, the PRIDE Leaders provided guidance in alternative ways.



"We worked hard to create a PRIDE experience that still focused on this goal. However, because of COVID protocols, we changed the format of the Activity Day in August by dividing the sixth graders into smaller groups made up of three sixth grade CORE Plus classes. The smaller groups came separately and this allowed us to socially distance within the individual groups and also between the PRIDE groups," PRIDE Sponsor Kendy Blake said.

"Because the incoming sixth graders could not tour the school before coming on the first day, the PRIDE Leaders created a video tour and neon green signs were hung around the school to help them find their classes," Blake said. "The PRIDE Leaders also created a video showing organizational strategies for school supplies and backpacks for in-person learning days and a video with strategies for the sixth graders to use on distance learning days."

