



OUTDOOR CLASSROOM CASE STUDY # 5

**Dragons' Meadow—Brick High School, Chambers
Bridge Road, Brick 08723 (732-262-2500) Lead: Terry
Brown**

The entire 1 ½ acre courtyard site was converted from a mowed lawn area into various habitats including 2 ponds, a wildflower meadow, composting center for Home Economics kitchen materials, two amphitheater seating arrangements for outdoor instruction, bird and butterfly gardens, a weather station, connecting pathways and a mini fitness trail. This highly ambitious project was phased in over a period of 9 years and continues as a work in progress.



Students begin digging the upper pond after measuring and planning .

The \$ Thing:

- Brick High School was one of the three schools that received a \$3000 grant from OCSCD as part of the Barnegat Bay Watershed Nonpoint Pollution Partnership.
- The school also received a minigrant from OCSCD for \$500 to continue the work
- The school provided significant in-kind donation through upgrade of the electric and water to the site.
- Unique fundraiser included selling paver bricks with engraved messages for use in walkways.

Students were involved in the planning and design, as well as the site inventory and mapping. The after school club, SWEEP, (Students Working to End Environmental Pollution) was heavily involved in the work that had to be done which didn't fit in the school day.

Newsletter Spotlight

- Initiated 1996
- Very Large (1 ½) courtyard
- 2 Ponds with Stream
- Paver pathways
- Student involvement
- Community partners
- Multi-disciplinary
- Gazebo



Under the direction of Mr. Terry Brown, Biology Teacher, students were involved in the massive project of designing and creating a very large outdoor classroom in the courtyard of the high school. Following the "Adopt-A-Spot" program, where different sections of the area will be looked after and maintained by each grade level class. The project was phased in over a period of three years with the initial grant from OCSCD.

Year 1 – Inventory of existing facility, survey of area, elevation plotting and soil sampling. Plus site improvements including water, electric and drainage (paid for by the school) and determining placement of all the features being proposed was extremely time consuming. All told, nearly 650 stakes were laced in the ground to obtain an accurate grid for planning.

Year 2 – Construction of pond and wetland habitat design, expansion of garden areas, amphitheater design and construction were all undertaken in year 2. Additionally, walkways were continued.

Year 3- Lower pond constructed, walkway and bridge construction, enhancement of wetlands areas and continued plantings.

Including a sign on the site helps to define and give credit to partners and can also be educational and explain the site.

This project has been an ongoing and long-term ,ambitious endeavor. The integration of the design into multiple use areas, such as a recreational track, amphitheaters for instruction, composting for home economics, and other features, make this an exemplary example of a courtyard conversion.

Status 2005—Still a work in progress