



DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM



The City of Bridgeport “Lighthouse Program” is an innovative school/community program sponsored by the City of Bridgeport through its Department of Youth Services, School Department, and nonprofit community. It receives local, state and federal funding as well as parent fees.

The Lighthouse Program brings together community sponsorship in 24 Bridgeport public schools to provide over 2,600 students daily with a safe and supportive environment after school, and during the summer. The Program which operates Monday through Friday between the hours of 3:00 to 6:00 pm provides educational, cultural, and recreational opportunities through a diversified approach to programming. The summer program operates for five full weeks from 8:30 to 5:30 and both programs include academics that support school day learning as well as athletic and recreational activities designed to motivate participants. Partnering agencies include the YMCA, ABCD, Ralphola Taylor Center, Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, Neighborhood Studios, Village Initiative Project, the Kennedy Center and a host of other non profits providing special activities including science, dance, art, theater, music and various sports.

Specific activities provided at the various sites include, but are not limited to, homework assistance, tutoring, computer instruction, board games, basketball, karate, arts and crafts, ballroom dance, swimming, drill team, math, science, reading activities, thematic units, open recreation, special education, tennis, nutrition education, chess, cooking, theatre, art, and music.

The Lighthouse Program is designed to blend community and school visions in a unique approach to give Bridgeport’s youth an opportunity experience new things while learning, relaxing and interacting with peers and significant adults in a safe and supervised school environment. Additionally, it provides comfort and support to family members, many of whom work in the crucial after school hours and long summer days.

Although the program was initiated for different reasons, it is based upon the premise that the student population faces a variety of risk factors that must be addressed on a preventative basis. The concept of using extended school time to address these factors is a research-based proven practice, providing that educational, recreational and enrichment components are properly blended, supervised and implemented.