

In order to make sure that creating this team at this specific school would not go to complete waste I had to ensure there were students who were willing to join the team after it was established. To get a rough estimate of how many students would be interested in something like this, I did a robot demonstration at their school. I had a survey prepared with questions like “do you have any interest in Engineering,” “would you like to be a part of an FLL team,” “do you know what STEM is,” “are you interested in programming, building, and presenting,” and “do you like building things.” This survey was given before and after the demonstration with the same questions to get an idea of their previous knowledge vs what they learned after the demonstration. The survey was inconclusive. Many students were asking their friends for answers while others simply circled anything. When comparing the before and after surveys, the data simply did not make sense so, I decided against using the survey data. However, while talking to the students I did ask many of them if they were interested in joining a team dedicated to building robots and competing and while many of them said no, there were quite a few who said yes. After hearing their thoughts I decided Martinez would be a good school to start this project as many of their teachers were also dedicated to establishing and sustaining this team.

When I first started thinking about this project, I had many schools in mind since New Haven has many local public middle schools including the middle school I went to. However, each school has a magnet theme and my middle school’s theme was community and culture so they were focused on the environment. John S. Martinez has a Magnet theme of Sea and Sky STEM. Their school itself has STEM in their name. Throughout my initial contacts with the teachers there I learned that they try to incorporate robotics into their everyday teaching. For example, one of the teachers sets time aside to do mini lessons on STEM topics like technology

use, the importance of the number 0, and the process of how engineers build bridges. When I heard about this, I knew Martinez was the correct school to choose but I also had to be sure that there would be students willing to join the team so the robot demonstration was significant in finalizing my choice.