

Cape May City Elementary School District
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For immediate release
Contact: Victoria Zelenak, Superintendent

Cape May City Elementary School Launches Guest Speaker Program

Something new this year at the Cape May City Elementary School is the Guest Speaker Program. The purpose of the Program is to bring local residents, workers, and business people into the school on a regular basis.

“The City of Cape May has so many human resources,” said School Superintendent Victoria Zelenak. “The people of Cape May have so much to offer our students.”

Each month, the Guest Speaker Program has a different topic. For October, the topic was Community Helpers. First, teachers signed up for time slots to have a Guest Speakers visit their classrooms. Then, invitations and sign up sheets were sent to people considered “Community Helpers” in Cape May.

“For the first month, Mayor Mahaney really came through for us,” continued Zelenak. “He signed up eight city workers including himself to speak to the classes. Each person spoke about his or her job responsibilities and how their job or department serves the residents, the visitors, and the City.”

According to Zelenak and the teachers, the Program was a great success. Guest speakers for October included Mayor Mahaney, Fire Chief Jerome Inderwies, Jr., Fireman Mike, City Manager Bruce MacLeod, Police Chief Diane Sorantino, and James Wolfe and Carl Behrens, both from the

Water Treatment Plant. Mrs. Karen Fagan who is a member of the Cape May Garden Club and the Women's Club is a regular guest reader in Mrs. MacNaughton's 1st grade class.

Mayor Mahaney's speech to Mr. Doto's 6th grade class included the plans for the new Convention Hall and the four Cape May Parks. The Mayor said he would have the Temple University Landscape students visit the class to get their ideas for what students would like to have in the parks.

City Manager Bruce MacLeod demonstrated the four levels of government in Ms. Griffith's 3rd grade class: Federal, State, County, and Local. The students sat at rapt attention as the City Manager talked about all the activities and services that are the responsibility of the City.

Chief Treatment Plant Operator Carl Behrens and Administrative Clerk James Wolfe brought water treatment equipment and gauges along to help explain their jobs to Mr. Jon Hammett's Kindergarten class. The children voiced their concerns that many of their family members leave the water hoses running and "that wastes the water" commented several five year-olds.

"The speakers were just great," said Zelenak. They all seemed to enjoy their visits. It's a good way for us to learn from one another. I have to give Jim Wolfe credit for how he handled a question from a little Kindergarten girl":

"Is Santa Claus real?" asked the little Kindergarten girl.

"I only answer water questions," replied Jim Wolfe, Administrative Clerk from the Water Treatment Plant. "You'll have to ask the elves about Santa Claus."

Zelenak also added that the NJ Core Curriculum Standards contain Workplace Readiness Skills and that all elementary children must receive an education that prepares them for the 21st Century workplace.

"Awareness is the first step," said Zelenak. "By having the guest speakers visit the classrooms, children begin to understand how we are all connected to make our schools, cities, countries, and nations work together."

Topics for the 2009-10 school year are as follows: November: Legislators; December: Local Restaurant Owners; January: Business Owners and Realtors; February: African American Citizens; March: Women's History Month; April: Gardening & Earth Day; May: Coast Guard.

If you are interested in participating in the Guest Speaker or the Guest Reader Program at your preferred date and time, please contact Mrs. Victoria Zelenak, 884-8485 or vzelenak@capemaycityschool.org