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Bloomfield students celebrate World Water Day

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Bloomfield Life



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From left, Bloomfield Middle School students Jill Carrick, Michaela Ryan and Mackenzie Prezume test the turbidity of Clark's Pond water, marking World Water Day on Friday.

The Friday morning chill could not damper students, faculty and administrators gathered to commemorate World Water Day at the outdoor classroom, located at Clark's Pond behind Bloomfield Middle School.

"This is an important and appropriate thing to show the kids," Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission's Hollie Gilroy said. "We'd like to do something like this on World Water Day every year."



Passaic Valley Sewage Commission's Christopher Brooks explains water tests to be conducted Friday by Bloomfield eighth-graders at Clark's Pond outdoor classroom.

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After a water sampling demonstration, students broke into groups to do their own tests. Students also cleaned up the pond's shoreline.

"This is a really unique learning experience compared to anything else we've done in school," said student Jill Carrick.

PVSC's River Restoration Program and the Bloomfield public school district partnered to create the outdoor classroom in October 2012. The first of its kind in New Jersey, the naturally made lectern and benches achieve a teaching station in a bucolic setting.

"The principal was telling me they get a lot of requests from the kids to come out here - and not just the environmental classes," PVSC Executive Director Michael DeFrancisi said. "It's great to see our efforts pay off."

Superintendent Salvatore Goncalves praised the students, reminding them how hard work can mean the realization of a goal.

"A couple years ago, this was just a dream," he said. "We have 34 beautiful acres of land that your middle school sits on, and this shows you that when you have beautiful ideas, you can make them happen. It just takes time and effort.

"Some people say, 'That's crazy. I know what a classroom looks like. It needs walls. It needs ceilings,'" Goncalves said. "The more you know, your idea can become a reality."

"It's stimulating to see that the kids are so motivated because they were an important component of this being built," Bloomfield Councilman Nicholas Joanow said. "This is an incredibly important day because we have created an outdoor environment that can provide an educational opportunity for the youngsters.

"We can all learn in different ways, and you can certainly learn with the sky above us and the ground below us and the water at our back."

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- See more at: <http://www.northjersey.com/news/education/bloomfield-students-celebrate-world-water-day-1.749912#sthash.9BstTG95.dpuf>