NJDOE News

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DOE Welcomes Students for Annual "Kid Tech Day"

Students from 13 school districts across the state impressed Department of Education employees and officials today at the annual Kid Tech Day, in its third year.

"The wide range of programs and exhibits we've seen today showed us students who are learning about a global – and technologically advanced – economy," Education Commissioner Lucille E. Davy said. "These models should be shared with other districts statewide so that we can continue to improve our technology programs and performance."

Fifty-one students and 28 teachers from the 13 districts entertained visitors from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Department of Education in Trenton. The projects included web-casts, pod-casts, video-conferencing with students in other countries, history media projects, science research and bridge designs and models.

For example, fourth- and fifth-grade students at Dionne Warwick Institute in East Orange showed off their educational raps about civil rights leaders for a Black History Project. They also demonstrated their understanding of math strategies and concepts to help lower grades grasp Math concepts.

Students then recorded their own voices, added sound effects and created and published their pod-casts. For the students who participated in these projects, math grades increased by an average of 9.6 points, and social studies scores increased by 9.4.

Here is a list of the presenting teams and a brief description of their programs:

Berlin Community School
"50 States Internet Project." Sixth-grade students explore and learn about the 50 states as they design and create a Web site. Student test scores showed a 20 percent increase in comprehension of Computer Technology concepts after project participation.

Diocese of Metuchen, Edison District – Bishop George Ahr High School
"Cyberbridges." High school students participate in a journey of discovery leading to cultural understanding and global youth leadership between U.S. secondary students and youth in selected countries throughout the world. Students work towards a shared vision of social justice and peace in a global solidarity, project based learning opportunity as they engage in dialogue, information sharing, and collaborative web-based activities.

East Orange School District – Dionne Warwick Institute
"Educational Rap Pod-casts." Please see above.

Hopewell Valley Regional School District – Hopewell Elementary School
"Smartboard and Science." Third- and fourth-grade special education students learn science concepts interactively with a Smartboard. Students have shown increased achievement levels on their Individualized Education Programs.

Jersey City Public Schools – Ollie E. Culbreth, Jr. PS # 14 School
"Stories from Down Under, Stories from Home." Working collaboratively with students from Melbourne, Australia, fourth-grade students learn about their respective countries and customs. Student NJASK scores have increased by an average of 10 percent in reading, math and science.

Margate City School District – William H. Ross Intermediate School
"So You Want to be President." Fourth-graders utilize 21st century tools and skills to research the office and duties of the United States President and become "President for a Day." The effectiveness of this program is substantiated by an increase in the NJASK Language Arts Literacy scores. For example, the percentage of students in the class of 2010 scoring Advanced Proficient increased from 5 to 33 percent, while the percentage of Partially Proficient decreased from 19 to 5 percent.

Middletown Township School District – Thorne Middle School
"The Power of Words." Seventh-grade students interviewed 532 peers regarding technology usage. Their resulting PowerPoint presentations were a central feature of three teacher workshops and the backdrop for district curriculum change. This continued The

Power of Words theme that in last year's "Tell Me a Story" project resulted in an increase in reading comprehension scores of more than five points.

Millville Public Schools – Millville High School
"Local Heroes." Students created a media project that documented their local World War II heroes from the Millville Army Air Field. The project was featured as part of the History Channel's "Save Our History" project (http://tinyurl.com/26zeq2). Students worked across the curriculum covering technology, world history, local history, writing and interviewing skills, and volunteerism. Two profiled veterans, William Hogan and Owen Garrison, will be attending Kid Tech Day along with the students. The Local Heroes project grew out of a NJDOE Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) grant.

Montclair Public Schools – Glenfield Middle School
"Digital Authoring." Students from grades six through eight produce educational or creative pod-casts as part of their instructional activities. Teachers have noted a significant increase in student engagement, retention and knowledge transfer. A math class noted an average 12-point increase in students test scores in the retention of perfect squares after completing a digital project on the subject.

Perth Amboy Public Schools – Perth Amboy High School
"Raritan Watershed." Students collect and conduct tests on water samples. They compile data electronically and exchange information with other schools online. Results are discussed on Wikis and multimedia presentations are prepared to illustrate results and conclusions. Before this program was implemented, none of the students had received a score of 3 or higher on the AP Environmental Science exam. After implementation, 30 to 40 percent of the students received a score of 3 or better.

Trenton Public Schools - Daylight/Twilight High School
"Star Techs Technology Internship." Trenton Daylight/Twilight High School students sharpen their technology and career development skills interning as Technology Assistants in schools while gaining the internationally recognized International Computer Driver's License Certification (ICDL). Student attendance rates and academic performance were significantly higher than the school average.

Upper Saddle River School District – Reynolds School
"Poetry Pod-cast." Second-grade students create a class pod-cast of their poetry reading. Using the Reading and Writing Workshop model as its backbone, the second-graders read and write poetry for a unit lasting four-to-six weeks. To celebrate, each child selects one original poem to edit, revise, and publish for the Poetry Pod-cast. Since implementing the program in 2005, student vocabulary scores have increased by 9.3 percent and Reading Comprehension scores have increased by 3.2 percent.

Wharton Borough School District – Alfred C. MacKinnon Middle School
"Bridge Project." For the last three years, seventh-grade students have participated in the Bridge Project, where they plan and design the construction of a new bridge connecting New York and New Jersey. Last year, the percentage of students scoring in the GEPA proficient ranges increased to the highest percentage in the district's history (74.4 percent). Seventh-grade special education students in the MATRIX grant program took first place for their bridge designs and models during the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics National Conference. The teaching team and district administrators were especially proud of this achievement because the students competed without the judges' knowledge of their special math needs. The Bridge Project was funded by a NJDOE Enhancing Education Through Technology (EETT) grant.