

SPOUT SPRINGS SCHOOL OF ENRICHMENT

Students learn about career choice

BY LISA LASKEY
llaskey@gainesvilletimes.com

So, what do you want to be when you grow up?

This question was asked of Spout Springs School of Enrichment first-through fifth-graders last week by Flowery Branch High School students who visited classrooms to talk shop with the future work force.

In Amy Adams' fourth grade class, high school junior Gracie Braselton advanced through a multimedia presentation featuring "Paws," a wiggly puppy who explained various career headings and the "cluster" of jobs available underneath each.

"Who knows what a plumber does?" asked Braselton. Hands immediately shot up around the class as Paws the pup outlined the various careers under architecture and construction.

Next, on to business management and administration.

"Who's in charge?" Braselton again quizzed the kids. "The boss!" was the unified response. And, that would be your teacher, and the principal would be the big boss, she explained.

About 20 Flowery Branch High students visited the elementary school with career-related instructor Felecia Doyle, who is also the high school's work-based learning coordinator.

"In high school you have an opportunity to take classes in something you're interested in," explained Doyle to the students who had just watched the pizza manufacturing process with rapt attention.

In the 2013 "Teens & Careers Survey," sponsored by Junior Achievement, ING U.S. and GfK Public Affairs & Corporate Communications, findings showed a 15 percent decrease in student interest in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) fields. Junior Achievement believes the decrease may be



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Flowery Branch High School career-related instructor Felecia Doyle, center, and 11th-graders Samantha Pagliarulo, Nakerah Shaw and Gracie Braselton talk career opportunities with Spout Springs School of Enrichment fourth graders.

due to a lack of awareness about career opportunities in these sectors.

This, and projections of a greater need for employees trained in technical skills, were reasons that Doyle and the high school students spent the afternoon chatting career with the kids. "Hall County Schools wants the kids to learn about these careers," said Braselton.

"I drive here every morning to do an internship," Braselton said,

who works with first-graders and said she's known she wanted to be a teacher since she was five-years-old.

But for some students who really just don't know what they want to be when they grow up, taking career-focused classes and internships can help them explore options. "That way you'll know what you might want to do in college," said Braselton. "I feel like most people do the

internships to try to find out; some are just testing the water."

Nakerah Shaw originally considered becoming a pediatrician but realized that was only because she loved being around children so much, she said. The high school's career pathway program helped her determine that she, too, wanted to become a teacher.

Flowery Branch High School Global Studies and Leadership

Academy allows students to choose their own career pathways with support by teachers such as Doyle.

"You have five more years until high school," Doyle said to her young audience. "That's why we're here — to explore, and you can learn more about careers so you'll know what classes you can take in high school. We're preparing you to be the person you want to be when you grow up."

KINECT FOR FITNESS

Friendship Elementary wins Xbox for getting active

BY LISA LASKEY
llaskey@gainesvilletimes.com

On that fateful day each September since 2004, Saturday morning cartoons on the Nickelodeon channel have gone dark; they are suspended for the cable television station's Worldwide Day of Play.

This year in Hall County, Wellness Coordinator Jacob Weiers sent out a challenge to schools and students — get outside and move on that Saturday for an hour. The school with the highest percentage of active children would receive an Xbox Kinect.

Scoring big was the approximate 630-student Friendship Elementary, coming in with 71 percent student and winning the motion sensing video game console.

"I am blown away by the participation numbers," said Weiers in an email to the school. "This is a reflection of your school's dedication to promote healthy lifestyle choices for your students. Thank you for all you do for your students; you are impacting tomorrow's leaders."

"To have such a high percentage of students commit to 60 minutes or more of activity time was impressive," said Friendship Elementary physical education teacher Scott Weaver, "and I'm proud of our students for understanding the importance of physical activity."

Friendship Elementary is no newcomer to the world of wellness. As a county Wellness School of Choice, Friendship was named among five 2013 Georgia "Partner Up! for Public Health Heroes," selected for effectively addressing public health challenges including seeking to make a local impact on childhood obesity.

In addition, the school has been recognized by the Alliance of a Healthier Generation's Healthy School Program and has received the American Heart Association's Fit Friendly School Gold Achievement.

"I want to say thank you to all of our Friendship Elementary School teachers and families for promoting the Worldwide Day of Play," said Weaver. "Healthy kids are

... schools play an important role in shaping our children's health and wellness'

Scott Weaver
Friendship Elementary physical education teacher

better learners and schools play an important role in shaping our children's health and wellness.

"Improved nutrition and increasing physical activity at school and home can create an environment that supports our children's readiness to learn."

Among fitness and wellness programming that the school has implemented, explained Weaver, are an early morning workout, girls' running program and an after-school running group.

According to Weaver, wellness is also integrated into other activities that might not first come to mind. Music teacher Tara Shaw and art teacher Judy Bagwell collaborated on a musical promoting healthy choices.



For The Paper

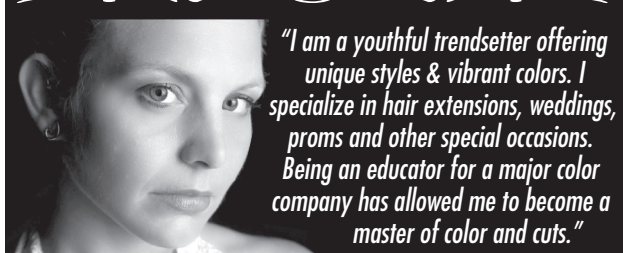
Seventy-one percent of Friendship Elementary Falcons participated in Hall County's challenge to participate in 60-minutes of Saturday morning activity this year for Nickelodeon's Worldwide Day of Play. As the winning school, the school was awarded an Xbox 360Kinect, which is now being used in its media center.

"Tara created and directed the musical and Judy showcased artwork from 4th and 5th grade students," said Weaver. "Our classroom teachers are providing daily activity breaks for our students and our fundraising programs are also activity related, so we feel good about our fitness initiatives."

"Having said that, it's also important for parents to promote good nutritional choices and also limit their child's screen time," the P.E. teacher said that includes television, computer and video game time.

"The average child in the U.S. spends over four and a half hours in front of a screen each day," said Weaver. "A good guideline is for every 30 minutes of screen time, try to get 30 minutes of activity time," he said.

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