Diversity initiatives build understanding

Three diversity initiatives involving students, teachers and community members, have been valuable learning experiences.

The student diversity program, called “The Journey,” has 125 students from Walled Lake, Berkley, Bloomfield Hills, West Bloomfield and Clarkston School Districts participating and was initiated by the Oakland County Superintendents. Students and teacher facilitators discuss and explore the different religions that make up our communities.

Carol Kravetz, language arts teacher at Walled Lake Middle School, is participating with her students. “We are teaching students to be sensitive, aware and to be knowledgeable about the diverse regions that exist within their neighborhoods,” she said.

The diversity program designed for teachers, “Pathways to Understanding Religious Diversity,” supports the teachers facilitating the student program, and offers an opportunity for new teachers to learn about different cultures. The four teacher sessions explore Judaism, Chaldean Catholicism, Hinduism and Islam.

Teachers and students learn about the traditions, holidays, beliefs, taboos and stereotypes attached to each religion.

Meadowbrook hosts disability workshop

Meadowbrook Elementary hosted an all-day disability workshop Oct. 15 that provided awareness and understanding of how difficult and complex living can be for individuals with disabilities. The workshop is provided through Oakland Schools and allows students to experience physical, visual, audible and learning impairments.

Students rotate through four different stations dealing with hearing and speech impairment, vision impairment, physical impairments and learning disabilities.

Activities include a wheelchair obstacle course; using crutches, canes and walkers; operating a TTY machine; experimenting with external and internal hearing aids; learning sign language, and much, much more. In addition, a handicap accessibility activity, children’s storybooks, a writing assignment and discussion tools are available. The complete workshop is a full day of active learning.

To learn more about Oakland Schools’ Disability Workshop, contact Lisa Kowalski at jkowalski@wwnet.net.

2003-2004 School Calendar

Nov. 27-28, 2003 - Thanksgiving Break

Dec. 1, 2003 - No school - all students, all teachers (Comp day for Parent/Teacher Conferences)

Dec. 2, 2003 - School resumes


Jan. 5, 2004 - School resumes

Jan. 19, 2004 - No students all day, all levels. Records day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

Jan. 23, 2004 - Half-day, a.m., elementary and high school students ONLY. School improvement and benchmark assessment for staff.

Feb. 5, 2004 - Half-day, a.m., high schools ONLY (School improvement).

Feb. 16-20, 2004 - Mid-winter Break

Feb. 23, 2004 - School resumes

March 11, 2004 - Half-day, a.m., all students. School improvement for staff.

March 22, 2004 - No students, elementary ONLY (Curriculum day)

March 30, 2004 - Half-day, a.m., elementary and high schools ONLY (School improvement and benchmark assessment for staff).

April 9-16, 2004 - Spring Break

May 6, 2004 - Half-day, a.m., all students. School improvement for staff.

May 19, 2004 - Half-day, a.m., high schools ONLY (School improvement)

May 28-31, 2004 - Memorial Day Break

June 1, 2004 - School resumes

June 10, 2004 - Last day of school for students - half-day, a.m.

June 11, 2004 - Last day for teachers

Aug. 23, 2004 - School resumes, half-day, a.m. for students