

More Than 300 School District of New Berlin Fifth Graders Visit Junior Achievement's Interactive BizTown

New Berlin, Wis. - This month, for the first time ever, all fifth graders at all four School District of New Berlin elementary schools had the opportunity to visit Junior Achievement's BizTown, the interactive, simulated town run by students.

Made possible through a grant from Kohl's Cares Field Trip Grant Program, JA BizTown gives fifth graders a chance to combine classroom lessons with the JA BizTown experience. In preparation for the visit, more than 320 SDNB fifth graders interviewed for "jobs" to perform while at JA BizTown, some even running for mayor. Once at BizTown, they operated more than a dozen businesses during the day-long trip and left with a better understanding of financial literacy and how the "real world" works.

Students participated in JA BizTown's local economy by serving as workers, producers and consumers by putting into practice material learned through earlier classroom lessons which introduce topics such as writing a resume; applying for jobs; creating a business plan; goods and services; supply and demand; opportunity costs; and taxes.

"The JA BizTown experience is such a valuable one for everyone involved – students, staff and volunteers," Superintendent Joe Garza said. "We're able to expose all of our fifth graders to so many aspects of financial literacy in ways that boost their confidence and give them a sense of pride.

"Additionally, I had the opportunity to conduct some of the students' 'job' interviews, and it was exciting to see them focus on their interpersonal communication skills: firmly shaking hands and making eye contact; thoroughly answering questions and explaining why they wanted certain jobs; and discussing highlights on their resumes."

The JA BizTown experience is one part of the SDNB's overall financial literacy program recognized this winter with a 2015 Governor's Financial Literacy Award. Other components include a careers and communications course for seventh graders; the Layton State Bank Financial Scholars Program offered to ninth graders; a personal finance course offered to 10th, 11th and 12th graders; and a JA Personal Finance capstone program offered to 12th graders.

"Many of these offerings, including JA BizTown, are made possible by the dedicated staff and our engaged community partners," Garza added. "We are extremely thankful for their support and commitment. Collectively, we are preparing our students for life after SDNB."

JA BizTown, located in Milwaukee, serves upper elementary students from public, private and parochial schools throughout Wisconsin. To view a photo gallery of the SDNB schools' visits, [click here](#).

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