



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EDUCATION ACTIVITY

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## Building Bonds Beyond the Classroom

FORT KNOX, Ky. — On Friday, August 16, 2024, the Fort Knox community gathered at the Saber & Quill for the annual Community Information Fair. The event drew representatives from various sectors, including the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) school officials, which included Instructional System Specialist (ISS) Lisa Marie Arroyo (SPED) and Angela Thomas (PK-12 Content), along with Dr. Aristian Torregano, Principal of Kingsolver Elementary, was not merely a formality but a strategic outreach.

Their involvement was crucial for several reasons. Firstly, community engagement allows school representatives to connect directly with parents and community members, fostering relationships beyond the classroom. This interaction provides a better understanding of community needs and resources, which can then be integrated into school programs. Secondly, the fair showcased over 100 community representatives, from local organizations to veterans' groups, giving school officials a platform to share insights on educational programs. This ensures that parents are well-informed about the support available for their children's education.

"It was enlightening to see the breadth of support offered here," Torregano continued. "As a new face on Knox, I believe supporting community events that enrich our families' lives is crucial. This event was a perfect opportunity to connect, answer questions, and familiarize myself with the Saber & Quill as it is our emergency evacuation point. Plus, it was a chance to spend some quality time with parents, community leaders, and staff outside the usual school environment, which is always a highlight."

Moreover, the physical presence of school staff at such events builds trust. Parents see firsthand the commitment of educators to not only teach but to be active members of the community, reinforcing the school's role as a community cornerstone. Events like these also serve as a feedback loop, providing an informal setting where parents can voice concerns, ask questions, and offer suggestions directly to school administrators, which is invaluable for improving educational services.

Additionally, through giveaways like pencils, bags, keychains, and Frisbees, the school promotes its identity and engages students and families in a fun, community-oriented way, enhancing school spirit.

"It was a fantastic opportunity to engage with our community stakeholders," Arroyo said. "We are very fortunate to live and work in an area with such wonderful people who care about our students."

Participation in events exemplifies DoDEA's commitment to a holistic educational approach, where community involvement is integral to student success. Ensuring that our schools directly benefit the students through enhanced resources, community support, and a strengthened school-family bond.

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