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## LOCAL NEWS

### 'Celebrities' prepare pre-K students for kindergarten

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Students at Cartersville City Schools' Kids and Company Community Pre-K Center last week got to see a different side of some of the school system's administrators.

The Pre-K Center last week began its "Hollywood Star Readers" campaign, which invited teachers, staff members and administrators of the school system and Cartersville Primary School to read to students who are months away from starting kindergarten. "Celebrity" readers added their own flair to the experience by coming dressed up in accessories such as feather boas, hats, sunglasses and more.

Maureen Napps, Pre-K resource coordinator for Cartersville City Schools, said the campaign began Tuesday and runs through Friday, adding that it serves as part of the school's "Kindergarten Readiness Initiative" and a way to ease the upcoming stress of leaving their first school.

"Moving to another building, the 'big school,' can be very stressful for the kids," Napps said. "The Hollywood Readers, that's a fun way to get those people into our building so the kids make the transition to kindergarten a lot smoother.

"We're making efforts to get them ready for kindergarten, and part of that is we introduce them to the staff at the primary school because that's where they're going to be attending. And we decided to make it a little fun this year and invite [staff members] to come over as our 'Hollywood Readers.'"

Among the celebrity readers were Cartersville Primary Principal Walter Gordon and Superintendent Howard Hinesley last week, the latter of whom read Dav Pilkey's book "Dog Breath: The Horrible

Trouble with Hally Tosis" to students Tuesday morning while wearing a Goofy hat.

Reading to classes on Thursday was Cartersville Primary Assistant Principal Bertha Nelson, who presented Brenda Parkes' "Kakadu Jack," which she said has been one of her favorite book choices to read to students. In addition to reading the book, she also manipulated a puppet that went along with the book.

"I chose this for the kids because I thought we could do some rhyming words and they could participate in the actual reading of the book and not just have me do all the reading," Nelson said. "I've taken the book to different schools and the kids really enjoy it and the parrot that goes along with it."

Nelson said her reading opportunity and the entire Hollywood Readers campaign shows students that many people want to see them excel in the classroom.

"I think it's a great thing because I think the kids need to know who the administrators are and know who all the stakeholders are in the school -- not just somebody who sits behind a desk," she said. "For administrators to get back into the classrooms and be able to participate with the kids, that's what it's all about."

In addition to the Hollywood Readers program, the school has further emphasized reading through its "Love, Read, Learn Reading Explorers" promotion, which seeks to get parents to read to their children at home. For every 20 books a parent reads to their child, they receive a coupon for one children's buffet at CiCi's Pizza.

Napps said reading to children is a vital part in getting students to read themselves.

"Before a child ever sees a word on a page," she said, "he or she will hear thousands of words, they're broken into sounds, and that's how they get exposure [to them] and learn to read."

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