

PR 4. 3000

City of Renton Innovations

Public Information/Citizen Involvement

Third Grade Tours of the Municipal Campus

As part of the third grade curriculum on City government and history, Renton third graders annually tour the Renton Historical Museum and various areas of the municipal complex. The children then split up into smaller groups to tour the courthouse, library, fire station, police station, well house, community center and visit the mayor.

At the courthouse the children are involved in a mock court situation with third graders playing the various roles as they try a young prisoner for shoplifting. In the library the children are taught how to find and check out books. They also go behind the scenes to observe the process of a book from purchase to getting dressed up for the shelves. They also observe how ragged and torn books get repaired. They view the computer system where librarians can obtain information about thousands of books and the children are given packets about the summer reading program.

At the Police and Fire Departments the kids are fascinated by the various pieces of equipment. They view the stations and then have discussions on fire safety and, with the assistance of the firefighters and parents, the children are run through a skills course. Dialing 911 is a good check to see if they really know their own addresses. They practice the "stop, drop and roll" techniques for burning clothes and practice crawling low to get out of a burning building. They discuss the importance of smoke detectors and planning and practicing a home fire escape plan. Children leave with a folder of information including Junior Firefighter stickers and coloring books to reinforce good fire safety practices.

In the transportation area, the students view the City's traffic computers and guides explain the challenges the City faces with thousands of cars driving through Renton each day.

The children leave with plenty of material to stimulate discussions back in the classroom. Included is a coloring book, redesigned in 1993, that helps children learn about City services in a "colorful" way.

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