

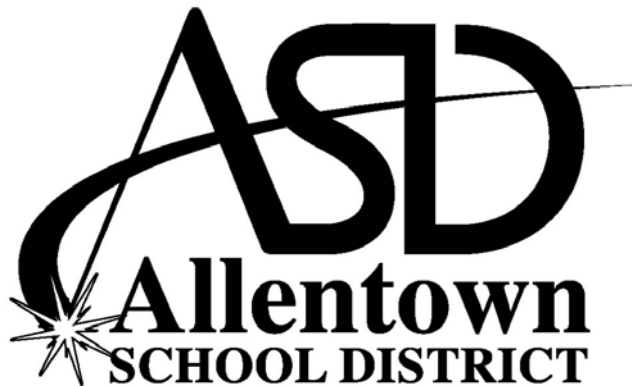
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information, please contact:

Sally West
ASD Director of Federal Projects
484-765-4163
wests@allentownsd.org

Burdette Chapel, HMMS Principal
484-765-5701
chapelb@allentownsd.org

Susan L. Williams, APR, MA
Susan Williams & Associates
610-366-2155
suewill@ptd.net



**HARRISON-MORTON MIDDLE SCHOOL NAMED ONE OF FIFTY NASA
'EXPLORER SCHOOLS' IN COUNTRY**

(Allentown, PA) June 3, 2005 – NASA has named Harrison-Morton Middle School (HMMS) one of fifty Explorer Schools in the country, and the only school in Pennsylvania to receive such distinction. With the announcement of HMMS as an Explorer School, the school community will participate in the NASA Explorer Schools (NES) program. The main purpose of the NES program is to encourage focus on the STEM-G courses (science, technology, engineering, math and geography).

The NES program establishes a three-year partnership between NASA and schools. The program seeks partner schools from diverse communities across the country. Augmented by a \$17,500 grant over three years, the program states that during the partnerships, NES teams will work with NASA personnel and other partners to develop and implement strategic plans for staff and

students. As an NES school, HMMS will receive priority access to any resource that NASA can provide, including personnel, technology and physical objects.

“The educational benefits of this partnership will bring vast resources that are available through NASA, into our math, science and technology classrooms,” says eighth grade science teacher, Jennifer Walz. “NASA has such a wide variety of resources including curriculum, scientists and other assets to help promote our students’ interest in careers in the science field, especially the behind the scenes professions that are seemingly overlooked. ”

HMMS students will partake in authentic NASA science and technology experiences with special access to NASA resources and materials to actively engage students in mathematics, science, engineering, and technology. Also, families of students at HMMS will have special access to interactive Web NASA experiences. Teachers will receive a one-week professional development workshop at a NASA Field Center each summer.

Harrison-Morton Middle School is already participating in rare, cutting edge technology through partnerships with the National Science Foundation’s G K-12 (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) grant, Lehigh University, and generous local sponsors. With the addition of the NASA as a partner, interdisciplinary learning offers students an in-depth understanding of mathematics and science in order to be prepared for careers and citizenship in the 21st century. Fifteen interactive, high-tech robots reside at HMMS and are used in conjunction with many subjects. This summer the school will add a Martian Landscape room that simulates the terrain and elements of Mars. As an NES partner school, Harrison-Morton and other ASD schools will be able to further integrate the unique, cutting-edge curriculum for students.

“The combination of the NES with the robotics already in place and the Martian Landscape to come, is a great asset to our science curriculum at HMMS and ASD,” says Donald Stahl, HMMS technology teacher. “The robots and the Martian landscape experience will be enhanced through participation as an NES school and add to what our hard-working students and dedicated teachers already achieve. These educational opportunities are tools to engage students and teachers alike in new experiences to further what is already a strong science and technology curriculum.”

The HMMS team includes Jennifer Walz, 8th grade science teacher; Donald Stahl, technology teacher; Joan Preston, 6th grade teacher; Sonia Varra, ESOL teacher; and Burdette Chapel, principal of HMMS.

ABOUT NASA EXPLORER SCHOOLS

Schools from across the country are eligible to apply online for an opportunity to partner with NASA in a program designed to bring engaging mathematics, science, and technology learning to educators, students, and families.

Each spring, a three-year partnership is established between NASA and 50 new NASA Explorer School teams, consisting of teachers and education administrators from diverse communities across the country.

NASA invites the selected teams to work with education specialists from NASA Centers in an effort to spark innovative science and mathematics instruction for students in grades 4 through 9. While partnered with NASA, NASA Explorer School teams will acquire new teaching resources and technology tools using NASA's unique content, experts and other resources -- to provide exciting learning experiences science, mathematics and technology for students.

www.nasa.gov

About Allentown School District

As the fourth largest of 501 districts throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Allentown School District educates approximately 17,521 students in 23 pre-school, elementary, middle and high schools located throughout the City of Allentown, and employs over 2,000 administrators, professionals, staff members and employees. The District has successfully completed a three-year Empowerment Plan. 2002-2003 PSSA scores revealed 62.8 percent of all students were in the basic, proficient or advanced PSSA categories. Just under 70% of ASD's students take part in a district-wide free or subsidized lunch program.

31 S. Penn St., P.O. Box 328, Allentown, PA 18105

484-765-4000

www.allentownsd.org

#