

D.C. Adventure Awaits Students

Springfield eighth-graders raise funds for Capital visit

By: Angie Tonucci

Springfield, Ill. – District 186 eighth grade students began fundraisers this week for their highly anticipated end-of-schoolyear field trip to the nation's capital. Washington Middle School students kicked off their fundraising with a car wash on Saturday, while Jefferson held a used book fair. Other district middle schools like Iles, Lincoln Magnet, and Grant have similar ventures in the works.

Each student must raise over \$1200 to cover the trip's expenses, which include bus fare, hotel stay, and all meals for four days. Language Arts teacher, Sherry Daniels, who is leading this year's trip for WMS, states that the kids are very excited about the trip and enthusiastic about working hard to raise their funds. With full payments due in March, however, the students do not have much time to come up with the hefty sum.



WMS students rake and bag leaves to earn money for their trip.

"The students have weekly meetings to discuss fundraising options," says Daniels. Some other ideas WMS kids have proposed are candy and doughnut sales, a spare change collection, and a service auction.

Some students also plan to earn money individually by doing extra chores at home or by raking leaves and shoveling snow for their neighbors. WMS students, Kaleb Antonucci and Killion Rowden, who are neighbors in the Lincoln Park area, hope to work together when the snow starts to fall. "If I don't earn enough money, I can't go on the trip," says Kaleb. "My mom says she won't pay!"

Other parents have expressed similar sentiments. Stacey Jones, a parent of two Lincoln Magnet eighth-graders, says she knows the trip will be educational and important, but she has concerns about having to pay the balance if the kids don't raise enough funds on their own. Several parents of WMS students have joined together to discuss options such as combining their efforts to create a large garage sale to raise money for their kids.

WMS American History teacher, Gail Spengler Neely, says a trip to Washington D.C. is a rite of passage for eighth grade students. "Not only is the trip a fun way for students to learn about our nation's government," says Neely, "but it's a great way for them to

celebrate the end of middle school."



Jefferson eighth-graders in front of the Washington Monument in 2014

The students are already eager for the end of the schoolyear, but they realize they cannot slack off when it comes to their field trip fundraising. Killion plans to work hard because he is most excited to go to the Smithsonian Museums, while Kaleb wants to see the White House. They both hope that local Springfield residents will help them get to D.C. by hiring them for yard work and supporting their school fundraisers.

Upcoming events can be viewed on the District 186 calendar at <http://www.sps186.org/calendar>.