



-- CLOSE WINDOW--

Print Version

Print Page

Last modified: Wednesday, June 2, 2010 11:46 PM EDT

Saugus student scholars enjoy luau

By Chris Stevens / The Daily Item

SAUGUS - A select group of Oaklandvale School scholars were the envy of their friends Wednesday when they were treated to a luau on the school's front lawn.

Principal Kathy Stanton, who was decked out in a grass skirt and flowered top, said volunteers initially wanted to set the party up on the ball field behind the school but Stanton told them to put it out front.

"I wanted everyone to see them," she said. "This was something special."

Students in kindergarten through fifth grade worked all year on Study Island, an Internet site where they complete lessons and take online tests aimed solely at preparing them for the MCAS. Students won a blue ribbon for every test they passed and were allowed to toss their name into a treasure chest. Students who completed an entire section were allowed to enter their name into the treasure chest 10 times.

Stanton said the students knew that at the end of the year 25 names would be drawn from the chest for a special prize.

"There were smaller prizes along the way, but the big prize was the promise of a luau," Stanton said.

Teacher Terri Rauseo, also decked out in a grass skirt, devised the friendly competition because she said she wanted to give the kids something to work for.

"I was trying to promote the use of Study Island and with the word 'island' I thought 'luau,'" she said. "We don't get to do a lot with holidays anymore. Everything is MCAS, but this is the stuff they remember and enjoy."

As the kids munched on their exotic lunch of chicken fingers, fried rice and pineapple provided by Kowloon, their friends, out for recess, hovered on the fringe, calling them lucky.

But for fifth grader Nicholas Guarino, luck had nothing to do with it. It was hard work.

Guarino said matter-of-factly that he got to the luau because his name was in the chest at least 15 times because, "I finished all of Study Island and I did it the fastest."

First grader Derek DiPesa couldn't remember how many times his name was in the treasure chest but he knew who to thank for pulling it out.

"Sofia drew my name," he said, referring to his classmate. "That's why I'm here."

Rauseo said she thought the event was a great success.

"It was educationally based," she said. "They had to earn this, so it's a win-win."



Oaklandvale Principal Kathy Stanton looks on as first graders Sofia Ianello and Derek DiPesa pick up lunch at Wednesday's luau. They were two of 25 students chosen to partake in the top prize for Study Island scholars.

-- CLOSE WINDOW--