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MEDIA RELEASE

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Ashwaubenon Elementary Schools To Hold Poverty Simulations

Ashwaubenon, WI – March 11, 2010 – The educational staff of all three Ashwaubenon elementary schools will participate in a poverty simulation on Monday, March 15. The poverty simulation, brought to the schools through the Ashwaubenon School District Equity Council and the Brown County University of Wisconsin Extension, aims to raise awareness about what it might be like to live on a very low income. The object is to sensitize teachers and other staff to the realities faced by people with limited incomes surviving month to month. This simulation has proven to change the way of thinking and working with low income families.

Staff at Valley View Elementary School will participate in the simulation in the Valley View gym from 8:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. on the 15th. Staff from Cormier School and Early Learning Center and from Pioneer Elementary School will take part in the simulation in the Pioneer gym from 12:30 p.m. until 3:30 p.m.

The simulation takes place with “families” seated in groups in the center of the gym. Around the perimeter are tables representing community resources and services for the families. Persons, who have a personal experience or an appreciation for the realities faced by those living in poverty, are recruited to staff the resource tables and assume roles such as: utility collector, landlord, banker, food pantry, employment office, pawn broker, grocery store, and school.

This program is being brought to the district by their Equity Council in response to a district-wide goal to continue to increase staff awareness of diversity and to develop ways to ensure the success of all students. Superintendent David Schmidt explained, “As Ashwaubenon becomes more diverse, our staff will review and revise our practices based on the needs of our students. This training reflects this needed work.”

The Equity Council will be holding poverty simulations for the staff of Ashwaubenon High School and Parkview Middle School within the next 18 months.

For more information, please contact Andrea Pasqualucci, School Social Worker, at 920-448-2875 extension 7500 or apasqualucci@ashwaubenon.k12.wi.us.

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