



Elizabeth Public Schools Press Release

***Disney Institute* Introduces Case Study on Elizabeth Public Schools** **Unique Relationship with Disney Helps School District Excel**



ELIZABETH – March 15, 2011, The *Disney Institute* recently announced the publication of a case study highlighting its unique relationship with Elizabeth Public Schools. This study has found the training the Elizabeth Public Schools received through *Disney Institute* has been effective in helping the school system to excel.

The school district joins an illustrious list of Fortune 100 companies who have adapted and incorporated Disney's expertise into their organizations with excellent results. From Häagen-Dazs to Miami International Airport, Siemens Medical, and Volvo, a growing number of companies have enlisted the help of *Disney Institute* to make their good companies great, improve customer service and increase employee satisfaction.

Elizabeth Public Schools is proud to be the first school system to look to Disney to help change their organizational culture and accelerate student achievement by incorporating Disney's time tested practices into their district practices.

“We decided we had to take a page from some of the best thinkers out there and strive for excellence. We needed to change our culture,” stated Don Goncalves, Assistant Board Secretary. “So we invited *Disney Institute* to show us how we could go from being good, to being better, to being great.”

Within the framework of the school district, *Disney Institute* Consultant Susan Pearsall designed a series of three-hour programs that included classic Disney practices and principles including Leadership Excellence and Quality Service. The school system’s existing Keys to Excellence program was also incorporated into her presentations.

Over a six-month period, over 200 of the school systems’ employees took part in the *Disney Institute’s* tailored programs. From the start, Pearsall made it clear that she wasn’t going to tell school system staffers what to do. “Rather, I am going to show you some of the things we do well and I want you to think how you can adapt them,” explained Pearsall.

After each session, a group of Elizabeth Public Schools’ team members, known as the “Disney Excellence Team,” met to incorporate best practices and ideas into action plans for the district. Some of the initiatives to come out of the Disney Institute experience include implementation of new handbooks for teachers and principals; revamping the Keys to Excellence action plan; and implementing the Disney inspired employee and student recognition program called “Stars of Excellence.”

Since the implementation of the *Disney Institute’s* training series, the district has made great progress in achieving its goals. Goncalves noted, “Improvements can be seen everywhere, especially in the culture shift. Employees need to know that their jobs are vitally important whether that job is serving lunch, teaching students in the classroom, working as security guard, or speaking with students’ parents on the phone. Changing the culture doesn’t happen overnight. We are striving for excellence every day, one day at a time.”

For the complete *Disney Institute Case Study: Elizabeth Public Schools*, go to: www.epsnj.org