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## **Third Graders At Public School No. 27 Will Receive Activity Book Donation From Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey (PDFNJ) and the PSEG Foundation**

*\*\*\*Captions for photos below\*\*\**

Representatives from The Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey (PDFNJ) and the PSEG Foundation visited Public School No. 27 to donate Third Grade Life Choices Coloring and Activity Book, a booklet aimed at educating young students on how to make safe and healthy living choices. It is part of drive by the collaboration to reach 35,000 young New Jersey students across the state. Speaking to the students were Superintendent of Schools Eileen Shafer, Executive Director of PDFNJ Angelo Valente, and PSEG Foundation Program Manager Maria Spina.

The activity book contains prevention education activities and a contract for students, teachers, and parents to sign, committing to a healthy lifestyle. Students taking part in the assembly that was held in the auditorium were enthusiastic about receiving the activity book and keen on asking plenty of questions related to the effects of illegal drugs. Mr. Valente was happy to answer each student's question, echoing statements from the other speakers on how to avoid illegal drug use.

Superintendent Shafer said, "I want you, the students to know, as your Superintendent, not too long ago I was a teacher. I was also in charge of the drug program here, in the Paterson school district. One of the most important lessons about avoiding bad drugs is to make good decisions and not be afraid to say no and report it to an adult." Of the activity books, she told the assembly, "It can't be stressed enough that we need to teach our students how to make good decisions and those are the kinds of lessons that are going to be in your activity book." Then to the students, "I want to say to each and everyone of you, I couldn't be more proud of the students here at School No. 27. I know you're going to listen. I know that you're going to complete these activities."

"The Third Grade Life Choices and Activity Book provides students information and encouragement to make healthy decisions," said PDFNJ Executive Director Valente. "The prevention efforts of family members and the educational system are as vital to the mission of this program as the students' commitment to live drug-free," Valente added. "Parents and caregivers provide the guidance and emotional support to steer their children toward healthier life choices, while schools educate students on the positives of healthy living and the consequences of substance use."

"PSEG is committed to supporting the communities we serve — including the young people in those communities. We believe strongly in the good work of the Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey and are proud to partner with them to help communicate the importance of making smart decisions at any age," said Ms. Spina, of the PSEG Foundation.

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By distributing the activity book and contract through schools, PDFNJ and the PSEG Foundation recognize the key role. Recent studies suggest research-based, age-appropriate prevention materials have had a positive impact as alcohol, tobacco and substance use has decreased among American teenagers in grades 8, 10 and 12.

*Photo 01: School No. 27 Students in the assembly raise their hands during the Q&A part of the session.*

*Photo 02: Standing in front of the student assembly, presenters and organizers pose for a picture. Shown are (L-R) School No. 27 teacher Apryl Sneed, PSEG Foundation Program Manager Maria Spina, School No. 27 Principal Frank Puglise, Superintendent of Schools Eileen Shafer, and Executive Director of PDFNJ Angelo Valente, and a staff member of the school.*

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