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Science Museum to visit '30 Schools in 30 Days'

As the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) explores ways to improve science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education, the Science Museum of Minnesota and Rosemount's Flint Hills Resources are collaborating on a hands-on program for students that enhances the MDE's initiatives.

The "30 Schools in 30 Days" program extends from Gov. Tim Pawlenty's Roundtable meeting of education, business, science and community leaders held in March to discuss STEM education. The program also supports the MDE's goal to "link learning to life" by making science and math classes more experimental and connecting them to real-world situations.

Flint Hills Resources is providing Science Museum educational programs to 30 Minnesota schools in the Dakota County area in 30 days.

Science Museum staff is giving a variety of hands-on presentations to more than 6,000 students throughout 30 days - which started on Oct. 3 - to enrich science education and support each school's curriculum.

"This program provides a fun and compelling way to engage students in STEM education and gives them an opportunity to take a close-up

look at science and see how it applies to their lives," said Dr. Eric J. Jolly, Science Museum president. "With the increasing demand for our state's workers in STEM-related fields, we are intensifying our focus to further education efforts in our schools and spark students' interest in these disciplines."

The Science Museum programs are 50-minute assembly presentations that include dramatic demonstrations and opportunities for audience interaction to accommodate a maximum audience of 300 students. Each school will receive one assembly program of their choice for primary students in grades kindergarten through three and one for intermediate students in grades four through eight. The 30 schools chose from six presentation topics - Antarctica; Electricity; Explain Your Brain; Three Rivers; Solids, Liquids and Gases; and Wonders of Science: Simple Machines - based on what best fits its curriculum needs.

This is the ninth year that Flint Hills Resources has provided Science Museum programs to local schools. This is the first year, however, that the program will reach as many as 30 schools in a 30-day period. Along with the presentations, the program will include a

field trip with free admission to the museum for students during the next year, and busing reimbursement for each school to bring its students to the site.

This program is one of several that Flint Hills Resources and the Science Museum offer to students and museum visitors each year.

"Through our partnership with the Science Museum, we have served more than 74,000 grade school students in the past eight years with our school outreach program, which includes educational field trips, school assemblies, and museum camp-ins," said John Hofland, Flint Hills Resources' communications manager.

Following is a list of elementary schools in Thisweek Newspapers' coverage area that the program will visit:

Eagan — Thomas Lake, Oct. 6; Woodland, Oct. 9; Eagan; Pinewood Community School, Oct. 11; Glacier Hills, Oct. 13; Deerwood, Oct. 25; Oak Ridge, Oct. 26; Eagan; Red Pine, Oct. 27; Northview, Nov. 1;

Rosemount — Shannon Park, Oct. 10; Rosemount, Oct. 12; Parkview, Oct. 24; St. Joseph, Oct. 3;

Apple Valley — Diamond Path, Oct. 12; Greenleaf, Oct. 13; Cedar Park, Oct. 17; Highland, Oct. 17; Westview, Oct. 18; Southview, Oct. 27;

Echo Park, Oct. 24, Burnsville; St. John the Baptist School, Oct. 9, Vermillion; St. Mathias School, Nov. 3, Hampton.