

**March 13, 2014**

The third and fifth graders at Northside School are studying local government. Students wrote letters to the City Council regarding ideas they had for new businesses in Geneseo. The City Council reviewed their letters and developed a PowerPoint which showed the results of the letters from the students. Mayor Van Der Leest and Alderman Roodhouse recently visited with the third and fifth graders at Northside School and shared the PowerPoint with the students.



Student letters showed students were most interested in having a new grocery store. The Mayor announced that Save-A-Lot will be coming to Geneseo in the summer of 2014.



Alderman Roodhouse discussed the process of welcoming new businesses to Geneseo. The student letters identified over 15 different businesses for the City. The students all agreed the City would not be able to support everyone's ideas for new businesses. Students decided to conduct a survey to select three new business ideas. Students were asked to weigh some important elements of the decision making process before making their final choice: what does the feasibility study show, are there enough patrons in town to support the business, and is land available?



Students discussed reaching a consensus on their choice for a new business. In fact, one student even said to the Mayor and Alderman, "while that is not my favorite new business, I will help my classmates because we all need to work together."



The students voted to send letters from their class to the corporate office at Buffalo Wild Wings and Jeff Platt at Sky Zone.



Comments from staff and students include: I would like to personally thank you and the members of City Council for your time. The 5<sup>th</sup> graders at Northside Elementary were **thrilled** to find out that their letters were read and discussed by City Council members. It has been especially exciting to hear back from you so soon!

The students voted for their top 3 choices. I tallied the results below. (Students could give 3 points to their favorite, 2 points to their 2<sup>nd</sup> choice, and 1 point for their 3<sup>rd</sup> choice).

The students learned a valuable lesson about decision making. The students didn't realize that getting a new business, like Save-A-Lot, can take two to three years. Each class had a lot of ideas. They quickly understood it would probably be impossible to get everything that everyone wanted all the time. They learned how important it was to reach a majority consensus.

I appreciate your email, as well as all the inspiration you've given my students! They are excited that City Council took an interest in them, and hopefully the new mayor is as passionate about helping our class as you've been.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers are Lori Johnson, Courtney Meyer, Traci Haxton, and Jamie Sievers. Their Building Principal is Alex Kashner.

Before departing, Alderman Roodhouse showed the students the city website. The students viewed the ward map, pictures of the City Council members, etc. Students also learned that if they do not live in the City limits, their representatives are the members of the Henry County Board.

Photo credit to Teri Ford, Media Relations Secretary for School District #228.