

Governor Phil Murphy

Press Pool Coverage: Governor Murphy Visits Betty McElmon Elementary School to Highlight Funding for Preschool Programs

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Gov. Phil Murphy on Thursday toured a pre-K class of 3- and-4 years at Betty McElmon Elementary School to highlight the state's increased funding for pre-K programs.

The visit came three days after the school transitioned from half-day to full-day pre-K.

"You could eat off the floor here," Murphy marveled as he walked the hallways.

"Hello, folks!" he said to the children as he entered the class.

"I hear it's sports jersey week. I see Yankees, Giants, Packers, Bengals."

He noted the Giants and Packers are playing in London this weekend.

"The theme is team up for respect," district Superintendent Christina Egan told him.

"The idea is: Even if you don't like the other team, you have to respect their choice," Murphy said.

The governor then sat on a yellow chair as the class sang a song to identify colors.

"If you're wearing blue, touch your shoe," one lyric went.

Murphy, who was singing along and slapping his knees, touched his shoes because he was wearing a dark blue suit.

"I'm wearing blue, I've got to touch my shoe," he said.

"Well done. Good job," Murphy told the kids

The governor then walked around the class and helped students as they did color exercises at their desks.

"What a treat," Murphy said before he left.

He later told reporters he had a "magical" time visiting the students and educators.

"It's just a game-changer," Murphy said of expanding pre-K

"We have a goal to be the No. 1 state in America with universal pre-K. It's gonna take us a few years to get there. We want to make sure we get that road map really well done."

Brent Johnson The Star-Ledger & NJ.com

PHOTO

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VIDEO

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