



Bart Leff
Public Information Officer

Dr. B. LeFra Young
Superintendent of Schools

Office of Communications, Camden Board of Education, 201 North Front Street, Camden New Jersey 08102

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For Further Information:

Direct Line (856) 966 - 2649

Home (856) 354 - 1554

Beeper (856) 869 - 2316

Camden City Public Schools Celebrates Three Kings Day

A very special celebration will take place at U.S. Wiggins Elementary School, 400 Mt. Vernon Street, Monday evening, January 11, 2010 at 6:00 pm. Wiggins Elementary will host the delayed school district city wide celebration of Three King's Day, Día de Reyes, the Hispanic cultural equivalent to Christmas.

On the agenda for Monday evening is a program of songs, skits, and traditional Hispanic dances performed by the students and staff of the Camden City Schools. Also, traditional songs by a local band with its roots in Puerto Rican and Latin American music will perform. Refreshments will follow the program.

The highlight of the evening will be the entrance of the Three Kings, the Wise Men from the Orient, who will offer gifts to all the children at the celebration.

The sixth of January is the day when Puerto Ricans, other Hispanics, and many other ethnic groups celebrate Three Kings Day. It is part of the cultural heritage of these groups to exchange gifts with their children on that day. According to tradition, on the night of the 5th of January the Three Kings come from the Orient on camels with bags full of toys for the children. That night the children put some hay and flowers, in small boxes, under their parents' bed and then go to sleep. While the children are sleeping, the Three Kings leave the toys for the children. The sixth of January is always a day to play with and enjoy the new toys.

In Camden Schools, the history of the celebration is taught in class, and bulletin boards display visual references to the holiday as part of the Board of Education's Cultural Diversity Program.