MAISD Muskegon Area Intermediate School District

630 Harvey Street
Muskegon, Michigan 49442-4278
Phone 231-777-2637 Fax 231-733-1028

PRESS RELEASE

December 20, 2019

Contacts: Stephanie Hoekenga, CTC Outreach Specialist, shoeken@muskegonisd.org, 231-767-3613

Karen Reynolds, CTC Criminal Justice Instructor, kreynolds@muskegonisd.org, 231-767-3674

Photo Caption: DSC_0053.JPG–Criminal Justice students Jacob Perry (North Muskegon) and Dade Breuker (Mona Shores) are patted down before entering the visitors area.

DSC_0078.JPG– L to R: Kayla Davies (North Muskegon), Aliyah Jensen-Schroeder (Holton), Delanie Suzor (Mona Shores), Instructor Karen Reynolds, Paraprofessional Mark Lewis, Robert DeeWaard (Fruitport), and Kennedy LaLone (Fruitport) speak with a prisoner.

DSC_0114.JPG– Zhoné Beacham (Muskegon), Delanie Suzor (Mona Shores), and Kayla Davies (North Muskegon) share with the group what they learned from hearing the inmates stories.

Link to photos

Prison inmates tell Criminal Justice students to learn from their mistakes; love others

MUSKEGON: It's not every day that a group of 40 teenagers has the opportunity to meet face-to-face with a half-dozen convicted felons, some serving multiple life sentences, but that's what Criminal Justice students from the Career Tech Center (CTC) in Muskegon were able to do on Thursday, December 19, 2019. The visit was part of the Helping Others Pursue Excellence (HOPE) Youth Deterrent Program developed by the Michigan Department of Corrections. Students from the CTC's Criminal Justice program met with six inmates at the Earnest C. Brooks Correctional Facility in Muskegon. Inmates shared how they landed in prison and gave their advice on how students can avoid landing there themselves.

The visit started with a pat down including a search of the insides of student's shoes and bottoms of their bare feet. After passing through the metal detector, Criminal Justice students were ushered into the visiting area where they were introduced to six inmates serving at the Correctional Facility. Each inmate shared the story of his upbringing, how he became involved in criminal activity, his conviction and sentence, and a real-world description of life inside prison. Inmates encouraged students and chaperones to ask questions and guests were even given time during a break to speak with the inmates.

"I realize what a unique opportunity this is," shared Criminal Justice student Kayla Davies (North Muskegon) during the visit. "So when they invited us to ask questions I didn't hesitate. It was interesting to hear their perspective."

Following the presentation each prisoner shared one takeaway they hoped the teens would get from the experience. Some of their answers were that students would learn from the mistakes the inmates made, would not be afraid to ask for help no matter what the situation, and would love others.

The HOPE Youth Deterrent Program is a community service youth prevention program at the Earnest C. Brooks Correctional Facility in Muskegon for at-risk males ages 14 to 20. For more information contact Inspector Thomas Page at PageT1@michigan.gov.

For more information on the Career Tech Center's Criminal Justice program, or any of the 15 other career-prep programs at the CTC visit muskegonctc.org and click on the Classes link.

###