

## Indian Trail students live, learn civics in *MicroSociety*

By Antoinette Konz • September 28, 2009

With a school election over, students at Indian Trail Elementary School can hardly wait to see how their new community will take form.

“Everyone is so excited,” said Kelly Davis, 9, a fourth-grader who was elected vice mayor of the school's *MicroSociety* last week. “I think it's going to help us see what the real world is really like.”

As part of Jefferson County Public Schools' plan to add more magnet programs to its elementary schools, Indian Trail implemented the *MicroSociety* program at the start of this school year.

“In a *MicroSociety*, students create a microcosm of the real world inside their school,” said principal Georgia Hampton.

As part of the society, students run their own government and manage the production and sale of items they design.

They also will each have a job in one of the many agencies or

businesses that are managed by their fellow classmates.

Some students will become peacekeepers who stop crime and misbehavior; others will be judges who arbitrate disputes.

There also will be entrepreneurs who help produce goods and services and reporters who will track down stories.

“Last year, we had representatives from each classroom write up a constitution and design the currency that will be used,” Hampton said. “At the beginning of this year, we had students campaign for the office of mayor, vice mayor, secretary and treasurer.”

Last week, the students elected to those positions were sworn in by Jefferson District Judge Erica Lee Williams during a celebration attended by the entire student body, parents and school officials.

“Now that we have a cabinet, they will work to establish the minimum wage and tax rate,” Hampton said.

Students participate in *MicroSociety* daily. Once it is established, students will report to their venture or agency at 3 p.m. and either have a business meeting, participate in a focused lesson, produce materials, shop or reflect.

“Our students have really taken ownership in this,” Hampton said. “It's a practical application of our core content. It's inquiry-based learning at its best.”

Through the program, students will learn to apply the lessons they have learned to real-life situations and develop social skills that will help them become successful adults, she said.



From right, Jefferson District Judge Erica Lee Williams administered the oath of office to the *MicroSociety* officers: Mayor AriYana Caudell, 10; Vice Mayor Kelly Davis, 9; Treasurer Chambers Sutton, 9; and Secretary Jeannie Nguyen, 8. (By Sam Upshaw Jr., The Courier-Journal) Sep. 23, 2009

AriYana Caudell, 10, a fifth-grader who will serve as mayor of the *MicroSociety*, said she thinks the program will bring the entire student body together.

“I ran for mayor because I want to help other students,” she said.

Frances Floyd, AriYana's grandmother, said parents also are excited about the program. “I think it's going to be a great opportunity for the kids,” she said. “There was a lot of talk about it last year and now it's fun to watch it all take place.”