

'It's important to remind students that the government is yours and owned by the people.'

Assemblywoman Alison McHose, R-24, speaking at Hamburg Public School

McHose gives civics lesson

By **ALICIA HARTGROVE**

For the Herald

State Assemblywoman Alison Littell McHose is used to being peppered with questions.

That again was the case Tuesday as she fielded the following queries:

"Have you met any presidents?"

"Have you ever been in the White House?"

"Do you ever want to be president?"

"If you did become president, would you take us to the White House?"

Huh?

Granted, not your typical inquiries, but these weren't your typical inquisitors. They were sixth-, seventh- and eighth-graders from the Hamburg School, curious to know more about what McHose's job as state legislator is like.

McHose told the more than 100 middle school students, faculty, and staff that she has met President Bush, she has been to the White House and would "not really want to be president because it's a really tough job" but would "love to" take the Hamburg students to the White House if she did become president.

Michael Blochinger, a middle school history teacher at Hamburg, invited McHose to speak in honor of the 10th annual National Legislators Go Back-To-School Program.

"The goal was make civics come alive to the students . . . to put a face to what they see on TV and read in the news," said Hamburg School Superintendent Steven Engravalle.

McHose said her main purpose was to promote the national program, which encourages kids to get involved, read up on current events and issues, and spark a general interest in government.

"It's important to remind students that the government is yours and owned by the people," said McHose, who has been a legislator for five years in the



Photo by Daniel Freel/New Jersey Herald

Assemblywoman Alison McHose speaks to students Tuesday at Hamburg Public School and answers their questions about legislating.



Hamburg Public School sixth-grader Michael Armstrong raises his hand to ask Assemblywoman Alison McHose if she has ever seen the Oval office.

24th District, which covers Sussex County and parts of Morris and Hunterdon counties.

Besides McHose's connections and past relationships at the nation's capital, the students

also asked probing questions about how bills are passed, is a bill like a petition and the process of amending a bill if it doesn't work.

Hamburg School Board

President Patricia Harby was "totally impressed" with the students attentiveness to McHose.

"This tells me they (the students) are learning and doing well in class . . . they really knew what they were talking about when asking questions," she said.

Blochinger said his students' enthusiasm amazed him.

"They think outside the box, meaning they aren't sticking to their parents' opinion," he said. "They form their own opinions about government and that's what I wanted to see."

Eighth-grader Marissa DeOliveira, who is president of the school's National Honor Society chapter, said she would like to be an intern for McHose someday. DeOliveira found what McHose did on a daily basis the most interesting, like getting to travel to Trenton.

