



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Students, Educators At Hill-Hope Captivated By Lessons In A Lunch Box Program**

*Dentists, dental student converge on historically named school to present oral health literacy initiative.*

Atlanta, Georgia (March 26, 2010). The students and teachers at Hill-Hope Elementary School were totally captivated by the presentation of the *Lessons In A Lunch Box: Healthy Teeth Essentials & Facts About Snacks®* program. Professionals from the Georgia Dental Society, the North Georgia Dental Society, the Maryland Dental Society and the Medical College of Georgia School of Dentistry converged on the historically named school to help educate children about the importance of having healthy teeth and more.

The dentists were dispersed to classrooms and the media center under the capable leadership of 5<sup>th</sup> grade science teacher Shannon M. Paige. Ms. Paige, who serves on The Maryland Children's Oral Health Institute Board, the nonprofit organization responsible for developing the initiative, was instrumental in making sure the students at Hill-Hope Elementary School were recipients of *Lessons In A Lunch Box*.

The children were shown videos about proper flossing and brushing. Then came the moment they all had been waiting for since the large cardboard boxes had arrived last month. The description of the lunch box and its special contents fascinated the audience. The dentists held up the lunch container and described each label. Quite possibly of the most far-reaching benefit, a reflective, metallic sticker designed to resemble a smile that reads, "*See Yourself Becoming A Dentist.*" Oohs and awhs filled the room. A description of the carrot case followed. First the rinse cup top was unscrewed and removed. The pediatric dentists lining the front of the room demonstrated how the rinse cup is used by filling their cheeks with air and pretending to swish from side to side. Then the carrot case was opened revealing the contents. The room burst into cheers. Calm was restored and the contents were described, including a sparkle toothbrush by Plak Smackers, Tom's of Maine Silly Strawberry toothpaste by Colgate, and Tutti Frutti flavored dental floss by Sunstar Americas. Excited students clapped and cheered. At dismissal the front of the school was flooded with thrilled children boarding the endless line of yellow buses while cheerfully displaying their newly acquired lunch boxes.

The state Dental Director, Dr. Elizabeth C. Lense and Atlanta City Councilmember Mr. Michael Julian Bond were in attendance. Both were most impressed with the fundamental value of the oral health literacy initiative.

Both leaders for whom the school is named, Charles W. Hill, the first African American principal in the state of Georgia and John Hope Franklin, activist and United States historian, would likely have approved of the collaboration between the dental professionals and the educators. Dr. Cassandra Miller-Ashley, Hill-Hope's principal and all of the principals around the country who continue to embrace *Lessons In A Lunch Box* are to be commended for affording their students the opportunity to participate in this invaluable program.

*For more information about The Maryland Children's Oral Health Institute and the Lessons In A lunch Box: Healthy Teeth Essentials & Facts About Snacks visit [www.mycohi.org](http://www.mycohi.org).*

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