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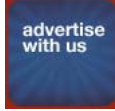
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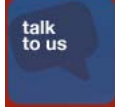
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Songwriter sings to the world

Sean Ahern 04/19/10

Students at Brandt Primary school sang about polar bears, great white sharks and dolphins during a Earth Week Assembly on Monday, April 19.

Author and Singer/Songwriter John Farrell hosted a concert for the students of the elementary school that included sing along and hand gestures for songs about lions, tigers, bears, eagles and sharks in relation to environmental consciousness. Farrell travels around the globe to promote topics such as tolerance, respect, and protecting the environment. Brandt first grade teacher Melanie Weinlein, who helped to coordinate the event, said Farrell has a wonderful way with the kids and gets them to be a part of the concert.



"Here at Brandt we love the earth. This is the perfect age group to expose the students to what it takes to reuse, reduce and recycle," she said. "Mr. Farrell is awesome. He has a wonderful way with the kids. He is able to captivate the students and get them to participate and sing along."

Farrell has the kids get involved in his songs and sounds that relate to animals in the wild. Students are encouraged to growl, make hand gestures to imitate birds and respond on cue to the song Farrell is singing. Not only are the students interested by the song that Farrell is performing, but they are also taught facts about the wildlife and habitats they are hearing about. During a song about the great white shark, Farrell brought students up from the audience to participate in the song, but also used the students to present facts about the shark, by having students distance themselves from each other to show the size that an adult great white shark can grow to (six meters).

Principal of Brandt, Arlene DiSiena, said the school has asked Farrell back over the years and said he is just wonderful to have for the kids.

Farrell, who has worked as a singer/songwriter since 1991, has traveled to over 17 countries to teach and educate students from kindergarten through eighth grade in song. With seven albums and three books, Farrell has been awarded a Parent's Choice Silver Honor Award and a Dove Foundation Award for "The Great Earth Sing Along." He has also created the Bridges of Peace and Hope charity, a non-profit organization that helps students and teachers to create collaborative creative arts programs in education projects to promote understanding, respect and non-violent solutions internationally. Farrell was impressed by the way the students at Brandt acted during the performance and said the teachers are committed to the students not only as learners but as citizens also.

"It's very evident that the staff here are committed to students as learners and as citizens," he said. "They work on character and its very evident."

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