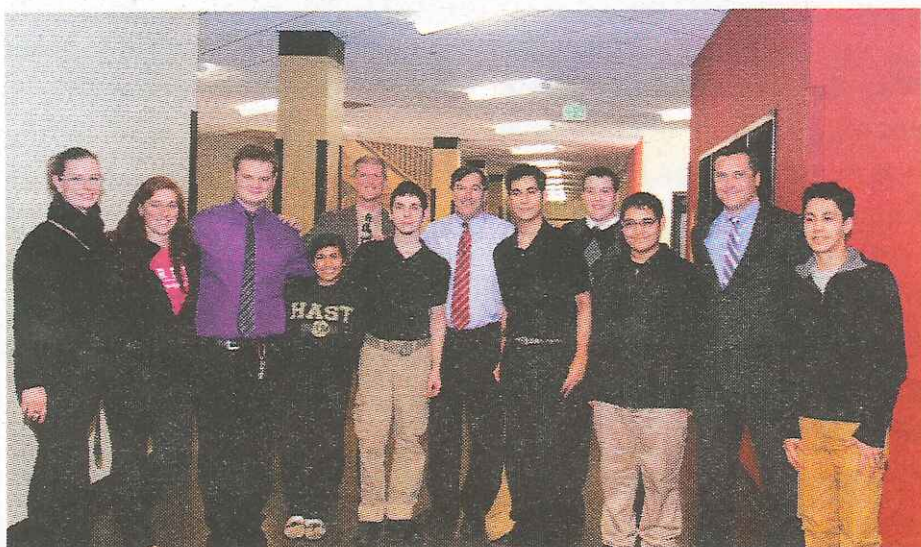


US Senator Donnelly Visits HAST



Pictured above are US Senator Joseph Donnelly and Hammond Mayor Thomas M. McDermott, Jr., with Sean Egan, Principall of HAST; Carrie Hutton, Teacher at HAST; and her engineering class.

On Thursday, January 17, newly elected US Senator Joseph Donnelly (D-Indiana) made a stop at the Hammond Academy of Science and Technology charter school as part of a quick tour through the Hoosier State. On hand to greet the Senator and accompany him on his tour of the facility was Hammond Mayor Thomas McDermott, Hammond City Council Member at Large and HAST Board member, Janet Venecz, the Mayor's Chief of Staff, Tom Dabertin, HAST Board President Kris Sakelarlis, HAST Board member Dave Ryan, as well as a number of others representing Purdue University Calumet, the Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce, and other civic, educational, and commercial interests in the greater Hammond community.

The majority of the Senator's visit to the school involved direct contact and communication with HAST students. After a brief introduction to the school's creation and development by School Leader Dr. Sean Egan, the Senator entered the school's multipurpose room. There, he introduced himself to the 10th grade students during their lunch period. Taking note of the students having gym class next door, Senator Donnelly grabbed a basketball and made a few free throw shots before moving on to his next stop in the school.

The Senator met with select members of the 11th grade, which will also be the first class to graduate from HAST. These students shared with the Senator the school's high school curriculum and ways in which they feel they benefit from a HAST education. Students specifically mentioned the

quality and quantity of the dual credit options available in technology, business, and engineering through an agreement with Ivy Tech, as well as the dual credit elective options newly available in English/Language Arts and Psychology/Sociology through an additional agreement with Purdue University Calumet. Junior Brandon Swart declared that at present he has accumulated 16 college credit hours through the HAST dual credit program. The Senator and the students also discussed how HAST's project based curriculum, fused with a variety of technological media of instructional delivery (hardware and software) prepare HAST students for today's workforce needs.

Finally, the Senator stopped in the 6th grade pod where Science teacher Mira Projovic and English/Language Arts teacher Elizabeth Burke were co-teaching a unit on the water cycle in which the students demonstrated their use of the iPad as their research and writing tool. The students integrated the science unit into their English class by writing and presenting small plays about the water cycle. Before his departure, the Senator signed a number of autographs and took many photos with HAST's youngest group of students.

The Senator's visit to Hammond Academy was part of a broader tour through the state, including stops in Elkhart, Lafayette, and Terre Haute.

Source:

The Hammond Academy of
Science & Technology