

SESA serves 300,000 students

By Kelly Doran
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LIMA — If excited students learn better, Allen County students who get Science Enhancement for Science Advancement lessons must learn a great deal.

SESA celebrated its 300,000 student impacted on Tuesday at Heritage Elementary School. SESA has been serving Allen County students grades kindergarten through eighth since 1989, bringing free, hands-on science education to the students' classrooms. The program is free for the schools, said Kathy Buescher, SESA coordinator.

Alycea Morales, a fourth-grader, became SESA's 300,000 student. She got a SESA shirt and a rocks and gems science kit, which is perfect for Morales because she hopes to be an anthropologist when she grows up.

Morales is not the only student who got a treat on Tuesday. Morales and her classmates were all treated to gifts from the sponsors and all the fourth-graders at Heritage got a gift from one of the sponsors, Buescher said.

There are hardly any other programs like this one, Buescher said, especially ones that are free for schools. Teachers can go online and

see all of Buescher's lesson plans so they can request a lesson plan that relates to what the students are learning. Buescher visits classes when teachers request a lesson.

"You just see them smile, you just see them smile and applaud, and to get them excited about learning, you can't beat that. It's really a feel-good program," Buescher said.

The students always look forward to seeing her and enjoy the lessons.

SESA is sponsored by the Allen County Educational Service Center, Allen County Schools, Ashland, Fort Amanda Specialties, Husky Energy, INEOS Lima Chemicals, Lima City Schools, Linde and PotashCorp. All of the representatives from the sponsor companies who came to see the 300,000 student have worked with students before, Buescher said.

"I always smile about it. It's a fantastic program, I've never seen anything like this and I feel so lucky that the facilitators and these companies that they give so much. Like I said, they give not only not only monetary but their time and their ideas. ... It's priceless what they give to this," Buescher said.

The Allen County ESC has been working



Photos by Craig J. Grosz | The Lima News
Kathy Buescher, SESA teacher in residence, congratulates Alycea Morales, 10, a fourth-grader at Heritage Elementary School for being the SESA 300,000 science student. Alycea received a SESA shirt and a science kit.



Kathy Buescher, SESA teacher in residence, congratulates Alycea Morales, 10, a fourth-grader at Heritage Elementary School for being the SESA 300,000 science student. Alycea received a SESA shirt and a science kit.

with SESA since the beginning and now is a fiscal agent and helps SESA get into schools and whatever else SESA needs, said Judy Chaffins, director of gifted education.

SESA lessons put a powerful emphasis on science for students, which students need because science is getting left behind in curriculum as math and reading become priorities under Common

Core, Chaffins said. This program moves science back to the forefront.

In addition to teaching science lessons, SESA brings COSI On Wheels to classrooms and visits libraries, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and Camp Robin Rogers over the summer. SESA also awards minigrants to teachers, Buescher said.

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