

[http://www.newjerseyhills.com/the\\_progress/news/students-delight-with-multicultural-night-in-roseland/article\\_433ec140-3bcd-5bde-80b4-8775fb5156b0.html](http://www.newjerseyhills.com/the_progress/news/students-delight-with-multicultural-night-in-roseland/article_433ec140-3bcd-5bde-80b4-8775fb5156b0.html)

## Students delight with Multicultural Night in Roseland

By DEREK ALLEN Staff Writer 18 hrs ago



Students at K-6 Lester C. Noecker School helped host a Multicultural Night for over 170 residents, highlighting concept

**ROSELAND** – Students at the grades K-6 Lester C. Noecker School helped host a Multicultural Night for over 170 residents, highlighting concepts like diversity and acceptance to parents and peers on Friday, Oct. 20.

“With all of the things happening nationally and in our community in terms of politics, we should show our children that we should love and respect each other despite our differences,” said Poonam Sooknanan, a Roseland resident who organized the event. “I think it went really well. I feel like we brought people together.”

Sooknanan said children prepared presentations on their heritage and family histories to show how diverse the student body at Noecker School is.

“People may think Roseland is not a diverse place, but we had students from all over presenting,” she said.

She said a lot of professionals from different backgrounds also presented songs, skits and demonstrations to students, including a Korean TaeKwonDo demonstration by Master Yoon’s Champion TaeKwonDo, a West African drum circle performed by the Umoja Dance Company, and Italian opera performed by Roseland resident Autumn D’Esposito.

Sooknanan said around 170 parents attended the event with their children.

“We are hoping to make this an annual event. I want to be involved in next year’s too, since we had a really nice turnout with this one,” she said. “We quickly pulled it together, and I think people really enjoyed it. Even if only one person opened up and learned something from this event, it was worth it.”

Sooknanan said the school’s administration was very supportive in helping her organize the event.

“The community Multicultural Night on Friday was phenomenal. We had an incredible turn out,” said Superintendent Deanne Somers. “Parents, students and guests raved about how much fun it was and how the performances and displays highlighted the variety of culture in our school. It was truly a diverse and engaging celebration.”

Somers said the event capped the school’s Week of Respect. The Week of Respect is a state-wide initiative, focusing on character education lessons and age appropriate anti-bullying initiatives. At Multicultural Night, students were encouraged to Learn, Accept, Care and Embrace (LACE) diversity.

Somers said students at Noecker School focused on the theme of “Oneness” during the week of respect, and will continue to participate in respect themed, school-wide activities for the rest of the month.

For more information, visit [roselandnjboe.org](http://roselandnjboe.org).