



## Gloucester Community Engagement & Public Information

6382 Main Street  
Gloucester, Va. 23061  
804.693.5730 • [www.gloucesterva.gov](http://www.gloucesterva.gov)

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Quinton Sheppard,  
Director of Community Engagement  
& Public Information  
[qsheppard@gloucesterva.info](mailto:qsheppard@gloucesterva.info)

### Community Engagement Brings Mobile Dairy Classroom to Gloucester Students

Gloucester County's Community Engagement & Public Information (CE&PI) Department brought a unique opportunity to over 1,000 Gloucester County Public Schools (GCPS) students and staff in late November in the form of a Mobile Dairy Classroom. Megan Day of Southwest/Southland Dairy Farmers visited all eight schools alongside her Jersey Cow, Penny.

Through the outreach, students were provided opportunities to learn about the logistics of getting milk from the farm to our tables, the role dairy plays in a healthy diet, careers in the dairy industry, and more.

Debra Falkenberg, Gloucester's Community Engagement Supervisor, stumbled across the outreach last June when Day was traveling through the Hampton Roads area. Since it was the end of the school year, there was no way to schedule the outreach then, but Falkenberg followed up to see about bringing the program to Gloucester in the fall.

"As soon as I heard we could bring a cow to visit our schools, I knew this was a one-of-a-kind unique opportunity to share with our students," Falkenberg said. "Though we live in a rural area, many of our students will never experience the farm up close and learn about the importance of the dairy industry and the impact it has on our health, food, and economy."

Falkenberg worked with GCPS leadership, staff and her CE&PI team to schedule the visits with all the schools. Specific grade levels were targeted based on Standards of Learning (SOL's) that matched the program. Day covered everything from cow breeds, their purpose and life on the farm to robotic milking machines that identify the cow by their smart collars that work like smart watches. She also talked about health and nutrition to unique careers that range from animal science to robotics and technology.

"Our students and staff were able to ask their questions and enjoyed their visit with Megan – and Penny quickly became the star of the week," Falkenberg added.



For more information about outreach opportunities through the Community Engagement & Public Information Department, contact 804-693-5730 or [mail.CEPI@gloucesterva.info](mailto:mail.CEPI@gloucesterva.info).

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**Megan Day presents to students at Bethel Elementary School as part of a Mobile Dairy Outreach program.**



**Debra Falkenberg, Gloucester's Community Engagement Supervisor, left, is shown with Megan Day and Penny the Cow.**