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DISTRICT 89

MAYWOOD | MELROSE PARK | BROADVIEW

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DISTRICT 89 STUDENTS EXPERIENCE A LIFE-CHANGING VISIT TO THE SUPREME COURT

Maywood-Melrose Park-Broadview, IL – On February 19, 2025, 75 middle school students from across District 89, chosen for their interest in politics and law, had the extraordinary opportunity to hear United States Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson. This immersive experience allowed students to witness firsthand the workings of the nation's highest judicial body, deepening their understanding of the legal system and inspiring future leaders.

The visit was made possible through Mr. Keith Mahone Sr., Principal of Irving Middle School, who coordinated tickets with Rev. Dr. Charlie Dates, Senior Pastor of Salem Baptist Church of Chicago. Thanks to this partnership, students received VIP seating at the House of Hope Arena, special recognition for participation, and a gift bag with a signed copy of *Lovely One* by Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson.

During their visit, students were honored to hear from Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson. She spoke about the judicial system and her journey to the Supreme Court and shared words of encouragement for the young scholars. She emphasized the importance of perseverance, education, and civic engagement, leaving a lasting impression on the students.

"The teachers and students were inspired. It was a life-changing experience," said Dr. Michelle Hassan, Superintendent. "Hearing directly from a Supreme Court Justice and understanding the impact of the Court was an invaluable opportunity that will shape their futures. Learning more about the Constitution is especially important."

Niyla Collier, a sixth-grade student, shared her perspective: "The experience was very memorable to me. I was quite surprised by how much time and research goes into each Supreme Court decision. I did not realize how many perspectives and steps the justices must go through and consider before deciding cases that impact everyone in our country and their lives. Hearing from someone who works in the highest court in the U.S. was an amazing experience. Being there made me truly think about how the laws affect everyone. The visit also really changed my perspective on the justice system. Again, being in the presence of Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson was a huge pleasure and a time I will never let slip off my mind."

As part of this initiative, students were encouraged to participate in the Middle School and High School Essay Competition Inspired by Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson, which challenges students to reflect on Justice Jackson's journey, the role of the Supreme Court, or the importance of civic engagement.

For more information about this visit, the essay competition, or other educational initiatives, please visit www.salemchicago.org or www.maywood89.org.