

Congressman Rothman Celebrates School Renaming for Local Englewood Educator

Cleveland Elementary School renamed the Dr. Leroy McCloud Elementary school in honor of First African-American Principal.

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(Englewood, NJ) — Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ), the former two-term Englewood Mayor, returned to the city yesterday to help celebrate the re-naming of the Cleveland Elementary School in honor of the city's first African-American principal, Dr. Leroy McCloud.

"It is wonderful to come home today, to celebrate the life and work of a man who was such an important role model for so many of us," said Rothman. "Dr. McCloud was an iconic figure in Englewood, having served as a teacher, principal and advocate for 50 years. He demanded and received the best from all his students and inspired everyone who ever met him. Having Dr. McCloud's name on this beautifully renovated school will cause future generations of Englewood students to reflect on the extraordinarily positive impact one person can have on a community."

The community gathered to celebrate the life and work of the late educator and advocate, who passed away in 2004. Rep. Rothman was part of the two hour ceremony which included New Jersey State Commissioner of Education, Lucille Davy, Dr. McCloud's family, members of the school board, local elected officials, teachers, parents and students.

Dr. McCloud began teaching in 1941, a time when Englewood's school system was racially segregated; he was one of only two African-American teachers in the district. After desegregation, he would go on to become the first African-American principal in the district, where he worked tirelessly and set high standards for all his students, regardless of race. He retired after forty-one years with the Englewood school system, but continued to work as an advocate and liaison to community groups in the city, ensuring that all children had access to quality education and were held to the highest standards.

Cleveland Elementary School had recently completed a renovation and expansion to better meet the needs of today's students, and has more than doubled the school's educational capacity, according to Dr. Richard Segall, District Interim Superintendent. The Englewood School Board voted to rename the school in Dr. McCloud's honor at its July 16th meeting.

Rep. Rothman (with wife Jennifer Rothman, left) presents a Certificate of Congressional Recognition to Dr. Leroy McCloud, Jr. and Michele West, children of the namesake of the newly dedicated Dr. Leroy McCloud Elementary School.

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