

September 29, 2011

Dear Parents/Guardians:

On October 11th the Estacada School District will have the privilege of having Lt. Joe Torrillo share his experience of 9/11 with our students and faculty thanks to the efforts of our Estacada Heroes. Below is a brief introduction to Lt. Torrillo taken from his website:

“A 24 year veteran of the New York City Fire Department, Joe Torrillo was promoted to Lieutenant in 1996 after spending 15 years fighting fires in Manhattan’s financial district. While convalescing from a serious injury incurred during a rescue effort at a fire on New Years Eve 1996, Joe Torrillo worked in the office of fire safety education. During that period, Joe Torrillo gained the skills of a public speaker that would find him preaching the message of fire prevention and survival around the world.

In his new position, he would co-create the first state-of-the-art fire safety learning center in the heart of Rockefeller Center, New York City. For his hard work and initiative, Joe Torrillo was awarded the coveted “THEA” award at the Emmy award ceremony. On the morning of September 11th, 2001, Lt. Joe Torrillo was headed to the new learning center for a press conference when the first plane hit the north tower of the World Trade Center.

Knowing that his Brother firefighters from Engine 10 and Ladder 10 across the street from the towers would be the first responders on the scene, Lt. Torrillo diverted to the World Trade Center complex two minutes before the second plane struck the south tower. While evacuating ambulance crews from the south tower, Lt. Torrillo who holds a degree in structural engineering, fully aware and certain that collapse of the towers was likely and imminent, was buried under the debris of the first collapse.

After being dug out by rescue personnel, Lt. Torrillo was placed on a boat on the Hudson River and taken to a New Jersey hospital where he woke up in the operating room. By nightfall, Lt. Torrillo was placed on the official missing list, and assumed to have been missing in action. Luckily, he was identified some time later by hospital personnel, who then notified his frantic family. On February 21st, 2004, Lt. Joe Torrillo was officially retired from the New York City Fire Department from those injuries.

Lt. Joe Torrillo promises to spend the rest of his days not only as an expert fire safety educator, but hopes to utilize his speaking skills and persona to convey the message of peace, tolerance, dedication commitment, and perseverance to the youth of America who he cares so much about. Lt. Torrillo’s message is widely received as he parallels his own struggles as an adolescent and his career in the busiest rescue service on the face of the earth. At the end of his presentation, Lt. Torrillo welcomes his audience to present their own feelings, and engages the participants with a question and answer period.”

If, for any reason, you DO NOT wish for your child to participate in this event then please email, phone, or return this letter to your child’s school before October 11th. Any student opting out of this 30-minute presentation will be provided a “study hall” under staff supervision.

If you have any further questions please contact your child’s principal for more information.

Sincerely,

Scott Sullivan, Estacada High School Principal