

# Edwardsville students chat with astronauts on the International Space Station during NASA Day

by Steven Spencer, Staff Writer  
May 18 2018 1:17 PM





EDWARDSVILLE - Over 500 students gathered at Liberty Middle School Friday morning for a chance to downlink, video chat, with Ricky Arnold and Drew Feustel, two astronauts currently aboard the International Space Station.



During the conversation, students were presented the opportunity to ask the astronauts questions such as what got them interesting in the career paths they've chosen, what it's like to transition into microgravity and their daily routines.

The astronauts also spoke on how they exercise about two hours a day to maintain bone and muscle strength for when they return from the station, how they follow Greenwich Mean Time, how they started their own experiment to grow an onion and how seeing the earth in relation to space has affected them.

"You can't help but have the privilege to arrive here and look back at your home planet in a context that we're just used to," Arnold said. "The earth is amazingly beautiful and fragile. It does change your outlook and your attitude toward our home planet."

Following the downlink, Dan Hartman, International Space Station Deputy Program Manager, said it was an outstanding "once-in-a-lifetime" opportunity for the kids in attendance and thank the members of the school district who helped make the event happen before presenting a few posters for schools throughout the district.

"You guys are the next generation," Hartman said. "It's generational, it takes a lot of time to go solve some of these problems if we want to go further, back to the moon and then on to Mars. You are going to be the next ones that have the opportunity to do that."

After the downlink and presentation, the students stopped at different stations throughout the school to learn about lunar mapping, thermal cameras, astrobiology and view some NASA astronaut training videos.



