

# My Turn

By Dennis Franks

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Abraham Lincoln has always been popular, but it seems he is getting even more attention these days. In fact, a new film "Lincoln," directed by Steven Spielberg and starring Daniel Day-Lewis as the 16<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, opens in theaters today.



With such a busy schedule, we were honored to host Honest Abe (portrayed by John Cooper of Baltimore, Ohio) as our keynote speaker for our annual Veterans Day Assembly. And from the comments I have received, the unique speaker idea was a big hit.



Honest Abe Speaks - Abraham Lincoln (aka John Cooper) with PRCTC Principal Shara Cochenour following our Veterans Day Assembly.

Mr. Cooper brought a compelling and entertaining historical perspective to an assembly held to honor members of our staff and others who have served our country. He captivated our students and staff as he walked them through various military activities, influences and personalities during Lincoln's youth, young adult life and years serving as President during the Civil War.

In fact, as I talked with "Abe" afterward in the cafeteria, he commented on my height and told me a few stories about how he would never allow anyone close to his height to be in the same photos with him, and that I would have to stand across the room from him due to my height.

During the presentation, Mr. Cooper discussed in detail the Emancipation Proclamation, sharing how it was a brilliant social-political maneuver because it rallied the northern states around the divisive issue of slavery, but it kept England and France from providing assistance to the "rebellious states" because of their strict anti-slavery laws. Lincoln understood that had England and France entered the war, our nation may not have survived the conflict, and the United States of America may have forever been changed, he stated.

Mr. Cooper finished with a recounting of the Gettysburg Address, which today is still considered one of the most powerful public speeches ever given.

I want to thank Mr. Cooper for his time and talents, and I want to thank all of you for making our Veterans Day Assembly a special event once again.

Remember to thank a veteran for their service, and remember those who have paid the ultimate price for our freedoms with their lives. Keep their families in your thoughts and prayers and let them know how much we appreciate their service and sacrifices.

