

# Over the Fence



SEPTEMBER 2019 | DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

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## DESIGNING LEARNING FOR ALL

"What does that handshake at graduation really mean? What are those skills and dispositions, or habits of mind, that are going to make our students successful when they go on to that next level?" asks Superintendent Carrie Wozniak in the opening of our new district video.

The answer — after talking with parents, teachers, staff, community members, and students themselves — was six key traits. In our Portrait of a Graduate, the six traits: Creativity, Communication, Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Citizenship and Character surround the image of a handshake.

Now that the Portrait is complete, it is the centerpiece of our district's next Strategic Plan. This plan will guide Fraser Public Schools through 2023. While the details are still being finalized, the key focus areas are defined: Teaching Practices, Learning Environment, Learning Partnerships and Digital Ecosystem.

The video then takes a closer look at each of those areas and the work already being done to support them.

The video is now posted on our social media channels, as well as on our district website at [www.fraser.k12.mi.us](http://www.fraser.k12.mi.us).

## SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Fraser Families,

Welcome back! I am so excited to kick off the start of a new year as your superintendent. We are putting the finishing touches on the details of our new strategic plan and will be sharing the completed plan soon. The plan focuses on four key areas:



**Teaching Practices** – Infusing proven instructional practices and emerging innovative practices.

**Learning Partnerships** – Building dynamic relationships between students, teachers, families and the community.

**Learning Environment** – Growing a climate and culture for organic learning — interactive spaces where students are deeply engaged and motivated.

**Digital Ecosystem** – Embedding digital technologies into classroom life to accelerate, amplify and add value to learning.

These areas are interconnected and help to support our Portrait of a Graduate. I want to thank everyone who participated in the information-gathering for this project. The Portrait and strategic plan were designed with students in mind and our goal for every student to succeed during their time in Fraser Public Schools and beyond.

While all four of the strategic plan focus areas are important to our students' and district's success, the learning partnerships area really resonates with me. Building strong relationships among all of our stakeholder groups is vital.

## OPT-IN TO RECEIVE TEXT MESSAGES

Text 'YES' to **67587** to receive text message alerts from Fraser Public Schools.



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## SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

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Every August, we welcome back our teachers and staff during a two-day event at Fraser High School. This year, I wanted to make sure students were represented and their voices heard. We had representatives from our FHS cheerleaders, marching band and Fraser Singers perform during the all-staff event. We also heard directly from FHS student body president and senior Justin Babbitt. This event left our staff energized for the year ahead.

Each month in this newsletter, we will focus on one of the key areas. This month, we are highlighting our Portrait of a Graduate and the six competencies that our community, staff and parents felt were necessary for all Fraser graduates to have.

I encourage everyone to take a couple minutes to watch our new district video, which explains the Portrait of a Graduate and strategic plan in more detail. I am excited to continue building dynamic relationships within our district this year and beyond.

With Fraser Pride,  
Carrie Wozniak



# Portrait of a Fraser Graduate

Our **Portrait of a Graduate** defines what skills, attributes and experiences our students need for success after high school. This Portrait clearly articulates what it takes to earn the Fraser handshake at graduation.

During the 2018-2019 school year, the Leadership Team met with teachers, students, parents, the Board of Education and the community, and asked what traits or habits are essential for our students to possess. Once the information was collected, six key traits emerged as common themes. These six traits support the learning throughout the district. Together, they make up the Fraser Portrait of a Graduate.

## CRITICAL THINKING

Critically evaluating information and arguments, seeing patterns and connections, constructing meaningful knowledge, and applying it in the real world.

## COMMUNICATION

Communicating effectively with a variety of styles, modes and tools (including digital tools), tailored for a range of audiences.

## CREATIVITY

Having an 'entrepreneurial eye' for economic and social opportunities, asking the right inquiry questions to generate novel ideas, and leadership to pursue those ideas and turn them into action.

## CHARACTER

Learning to deep learn, armed with the essential character traits of grit, tenacity, perseverance, and resilience; and the ability to make learning an integral part of living.

## COLLABORATION

Work interdependently and synergistically in teams with strong interpersonal and team-related skills, including the effective management of team dynamics and challenges, making substantive decisions together, and learning from and contributing to the learning of others.

## CITIZENSHIP

Thinking like global citizens, considering global issues based on a deep understanding of diverse values and worldviews, and with a genuine interest and ability to solve ambiguous and complex real-world problems that impact human and environmental sustainability.



# PLANNING AHEAD

## SEPTEMBER 25

**Powder Puff Football Game**  
FHS Stadium, 7:00 p.m.

## SEPTEMBER 27

**Homecoming**  
**FHS and RMS Early Release (DPPD)**  
RMS: 8:05 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.  
FHS: 7:30 a.m. – 11:44 a.m.  
**Parade**, 6:00 p.m.  
**Football Game**, 7:00 p.m.

## OCTOBER 2

**Count Day:** The State of Michigan uses attendance records from today to determine funding for our schools. Please plan on sending your students to school today or excusing their absence.

## OCTOBER 5

**Mom to Mom Sale**  
FHS Gyms, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.  
\$2 admission, strollers welcome

## OCTOBER 15

**Early Release All Levels** – District Provided Professional Development  
Elementary/DK: 8:35 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.  
ECSE AM Class: 8:45 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.  
ECSE PM Class: 11:15 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.  
RMS: 8:05 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.  
FHS: 7:30 a.m. – 11:44 a.m.

## OCTOBER 17

**RMS Half Day** – Afternoon (1:00 – 4:00 p.m.) and Evening (5:00 – 8:00 p.m.) Conferences  
Students dismissed at 11:35 a.m.

## OCTOBER 19

**Craft & Vendor Show**  
Fraser High School, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
\$3 admission, no strollers

## OCTOBER 31

**Early Release, All Levels** – District-Provided Professional Development  
Elementary/DK: 8:35 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.  
ECSE AM Class: 8:45 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.  
ECSE PM Class: 11:15 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.  
RMS: 8:05 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.  
FHS: 7:30 a.m. – 11:44 a.m.





## Dr. Jay Marks Brings Message of Inclusion, Cultural Proficiency to Fraser

"What if?" Dr. Jay Marks asked the Fraser staff gathered in the Fraser Performing Arts Center on a Tuesday in late August. "What if we had the courage as a society to engage in meaningful conversations about our differences — such as race and religion — instead of ignoring them or avoiding them as if they don't matter?"

Dr. Marks brought a message of social justice and cultural proficiency to Fraser as part of the keynote address at this year's welcome back event for staff. Cultural awareness is also one of the three principles of Universal Design for Learning, which is a focus area in our district to help all students succeed.

He challenged teachers to think about the notion that we are all the same, and the problems thinking that way could cause in the classroom.

"Sameness can be oppressive," he said. "We're all human beings; we have that in common... But we're different. Because if we're all the same, then we teach like we're all the same, and that could become hugely problematic. We're going to build relationships like we're all the same, and that

could become hugely problematic. We're going to assess like we're all the same, and that could become hugely problematic."

He encouraged the crowd to acknowledge the differences that exist among students and to celebrate them all the time, not just during a diversity event or lesson. Many teachers in Fraser are already working on this through restorative practices and restorative circles.

In classrooms across the district, students assemble in a circle and are given a question prompt. They each have an opportunity to share their response with the class. This process builds the classroom culture and a foundation of trust among students, in the event a conflict arises in the future.

**"Sameness can be oppressive. We're all human beings; we have that in common . . . But we're different. Because if we're all the same, then we teach like we're all the same, and that could become hugely problematic."**

— DR. JAY MARKS

## BUILDING DYNAMIC PARTNERSHIPS

Relationships are built on understanding, respect and trust. This year Fraser Public Schools is continuing its focus on building the relationships within our district among staff, students, the district and the community.

At the two-day welcome back event for staff in August, there were several professional learning opportunities to further those relationships.

"You have a great deal of influence," Superintendent Carrie Wozniak told the auditorium full of staff. "Together we can positively affect our students."

Ms. Wozniak then introduced FHS senior and student body president Justin Babbitt, who talked about his experience in Fraser and the mission of this year's student council.

"As student leaders, we all have the same goals as you all do," he told the packed auditorium of teachers and staff. "We're really passionate about improving the culture in our building and making it fun for students to walk in every day. . . . And, we want to emphasize that we can't do it alone. As student leaders we want to work with all of the staff this year and truly create that partnership that really represents what the Fraser Family is all about."

In addition to learning from each other, the event featured student involvement at every step.

As the district's roughly 600 staff members made their way from the Fraser High School cafeteria to the Performing Arts Center, they were welcomed back by the FHS cheer team. Once settled into their seats, the Marching Ramblers lined the aisles and took the stage to perform a selection from their halftime show as well as the FHS fight song. The morning ended with a performance from the Fraser Singers.

Staff took to Twitter to share their feedback during the event.

"Best Opening Day morning in Fraser School history! Fraser band, Student Body President, Fraser Singers ... it's all about the kids!" tweeted FHS teacher Don Drysdale.

"What a great way to start the school year! Thank you FHS Band, Cheerleaders and StuCo!" tweeted FHS principal Ryan Sines.

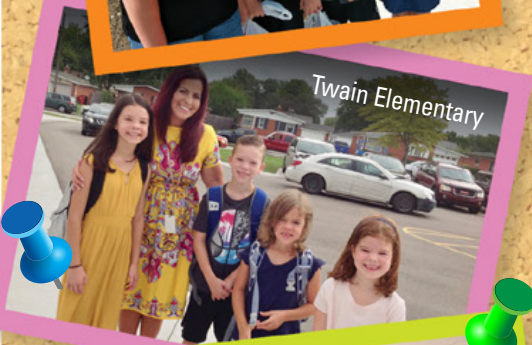
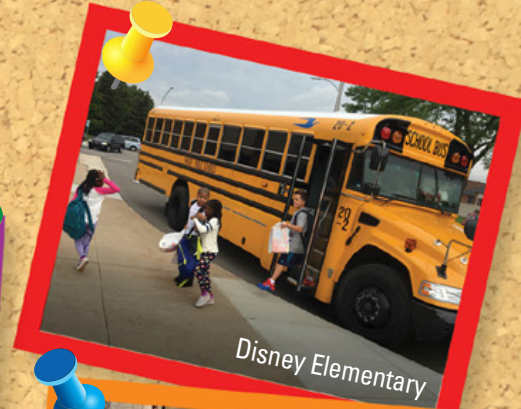
"Well THAT is how you welcome back staff! YASSSS!!! Best. Opening. Ever!" tweeted Richards Middle School teacher Tanya Leon.

"Favorite opening morning ever! It's all about the kids," Eisenhower Elementary teacher Shannon Descamps tweeted. "The extra bonus was seeing some of our past Ike students doing what they love! My FHS alum heart and marching band/color guard heart was full!"



# FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

The new school year kicked off on September 3 with students checking out newly redesigned classrooms (see story on page 5), and celebrating with friends, family and classmates. **Welcome back, Fraser Family!**



## STUDENT ID REQUIRED TO RIDE RMS, FHS BUSES

Students at Richards Middle School and Fraser High School must have their student IDs in order to ride the bus. The card needs to be scanned as students enter the bus each morning and afternoon.

This procedure ensures students are riding the correct bus. Students who lose their IDs should request a replacement card from the media center in their school. There may be a small fee for a replacement.

Once fully implemented, parents will have the option to download an app that will alert them when the bus is running ahead or behind schedule. They can also opt-in to receive text messages when their student gets on the bus and exits safely at school.







## Redesigned and Reimagined Spaces Greet Students

Each year, teachers in Fraser are provided professional development opportunities. Beginning in the 2018–2019 school year, the focus of that development was Universal Design for Learning (UDL). UDL focuses on three main areas: classroom and environmental design; culturally responsive design; and design for executive function.

This year, teachers are beginning to implement the UDL principles in their classrooms and lessons.

A cohort of about 40 teachers participated in a deeper level of UDL training last year. Using funds set aside in the 2017 bond, they selected new furniture to redesign the physical space in their classrooms.

When students returned on September 3, they were greeted with flexible furniture in select classrooms and spaces.

The classrooms are across the district. In the elementary schools and Richards Middle School, the rooms represent the entire grade level or content area. For example, 5th-grade classrooms at Disney Elementary, kindergarten classrooms at Eisenhower Elementary and 7th

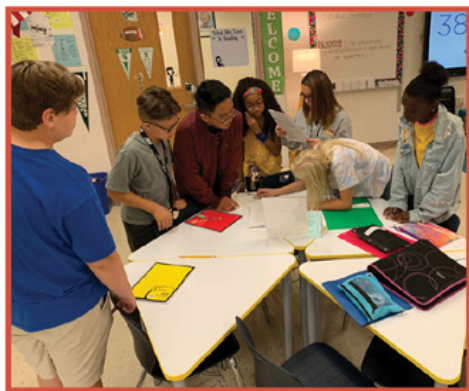


grade English Language Arts classrooms at RMS were redesigned.

The new furniture is flexible and most have white board surfaces. Students were excited to try out the different seating and learning areas. The furniture is designed to engage and motivate, and allows students to thrive, participate and become expert learners.

At Fraser High School, several career and technical education areas were also redesigned. The cyber lab, health sciences classrooms and STEM lab are now outfitted with new furniture that better meets the needs of today's learners and prepares them for real-world settings.

The new furniture is flexible and most have white board surfaces. Students were excited to try out the different seating and learning areas. The furniture is designed to engage and motivate, and allows students to thrive, participate and become expert learners.



## BREAKFAST AND LUNCH AVAILABLE FOR ALL STUDENTS

We are proud to offer healthy options for breakfast and lunch every day in all of our schools. Breakfast is served before school at



Richards Middle School and Fraser High School. Students can visit the cafeteria and pick from a variety of a la carte options. Elementary, DK and preschool students eat breakfast at the beginning of class.

If you think you may qualify for free or reduced-price meals, we encourage you to fill out an application on our website, [www.fraser.k12.mi.us/freereducedmeals](http://www.fraser.k12.mi.us/freereducedmeals). Everyone who received free or reduced meals last year will need to reapply this year in order to maintain their status.

## ELECTRONIC FLYERS LAUNCH IN FRASER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

As students begin bringing home projects and assignments, one thing will be missing from their backpacks – flyers for upcoming events.

Fraser Public Schools launched a partnership with Peachjar, an electronic flyer delivery service. Electronic flyers will be sent home about once a week via email. They are also available on the homepage of every school. Look for the Peachjar button to access the flyers.

Once uploaded, the flyers are easily sharable on social networks. They can also have call-to-action buttons, meaning you can easily call, email or click to a website for more information.



FRASER EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

MOM 2 MOM  
SALE

OCTOBER 5, 2019 | 9:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.  
FRASER HIGH SCHOOL GYM | 34270 GARFIELD ROAD

SHOP

\$2 admission  
Strollers allowed  
Concessions available

SELL

75+ tables  
Big Ticket Room  
Applications available at  
[www.Fraser.k12.mi.us/mom2mom](http://www.Fraser.k12.mi.us/mom2mom)

SAVE

Gently used and new children's  
clothing, toys, shoes, books and  
big ticket items priced at a  
fraction of the retail cost!

Proceeds benefit the Fraser Educational Foundation, which provides funding that enhances teacher creativity, student enrichment and community involvement through activities that go beyond the scope of normally funded school budgets and responsibilities.

For more information, visit [www.Fraser.k12.mi.us/mom2mom](http://www.Fraser.k12.mi.us/mom2mom) or contact [Michelle.Wenner@fraserk12.org](mailto:Michelle.Wenner@fraserk12.org)

ATHLETIC BOOSTER CLUB

CRAFT & VENDOR  
SHOW

OCTOBER 19, 2019

AT FRASER HIGH SCHOOL

10:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.

\$3 ENTRY FEE

For more information, contact  
[fhs Craftshow@yahoo.com](mailto:fhs Craftshow@yahoo.com)

*No Strollers Please*