

Over the Fence

Public Schools
FRASER
INNOVATE • LEARN • LEAD

JANUARY 2017 | DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

Superintendent Dr. David Richards | David.Richards@FraserK12.org

THANK YOU, BOARD OF EDUCATION!

Every January Fraser Public Schools celebrates School Board Recognition month and this year is no different. We would like to take a moment and thank the seven members of our Board of Education for the countless hours they dedicate to ensure the success of students and staff in Fraser Public Schools.

Our Board members — Gerry Gauthier, Laura Edghill, Ron DelVillano, Jim Birko, Linda Corbat, Todd Koch and Dan Stawinski — have served for a combined 49 years. They come from a variety of backgrounds, yet they share a common goal — helping students achieve in school and life.

School board members face complex and demanding challenges. They are alternately described as having the most important volunteer jobs in the country and facing the toughest challenge in elected American government. Yet our school board members are just ordinary citizens with extraordinary dedication to Fraser Public Schools.

Students from every school took time out to show their appreciation for our Board — through cards, posters, banners and videos. The items were presented to the Board at the January 10 Board Meeting. In addition, the District shared pictures of students and



staff on social media, saying why they are thankful for the Board. You can check it out by searching **#FraserBoardRocks** on Twitter or Facebook.

The items from the students and the posts are just a small way we show our Board how much their work is valued and appreciated. On behalf of Fraser Public Schools, we thank each Board member for their commitment to Fraser's students and staff.



CURRICULUM CORNER

STUDENT-INVOLVED CONFERENCES A SUCCESS!

Last November, Fraser Public Schools took a new approach to parent-teacher conferences and invited all students to attend and participate. At the elementary level, students led the conversations, shared their trimester goals and reflected on their progress. Afterward, the district collected feedback from elementary parents and the results were overwhelmingly positive.

When asked if their child was prepared to communicate and share his/her strengths, struggles, and goals clearly, 94% of the 267 parents surveyed agreed or strongly agreed.

A majority of parents also agreed with the importance of having their child included in the conference.

"My child beamed with pride after the conference," said one parent.

"Absolutely loved involving my child in conferences — much like a job performance review. [The teacher] included my child in the discussion very well by posing questions directly



to her and having her explain certain things to me. Definitely a great communication skill building experience for the kids," said another.

Teachers at Emerson Elementary teamed up to help students prepare for the conferences. Fifth-grade teacher Mrs. Ashley Fortune and 2nd-grade teacher Mrs. Jessica Kapanka split their students into small groups in the days leading up to the conferences to allow them time to practice.

"It's more meaningful to them. Now that they know they have to show it to Mom and Dad, it makes it real," said Mrs. Fortune.

Many parents indicated the student ownership of his/her learning was apparent after their child was able to participate in the conversation.

"I loved how both my children were able to identify where they stand in learning. They also put together a plan to help themselves. What a great way to learn accountability! The conversations continued at home and the whole family participated," commented a parent.

When asked if they could change anything about the new format, many parents suggested adding additional time to the standard 15-minute conference. The district will use the data collected from parents in addition to feedback from teachers and principals before conferences in March.

"We will be continuing student-involved conferences in the spring, but we are still working out the details. The feedback we received from parents and teachers is being used to help us move forward," said Katie Fitzpatrick, a district instructional consultant.

A Small Donation Can Make a Big Change

Peyton Kalka is just like any other 10-year-old — but when she found out some of the kids she went to school with at Salk Elementary had lost their homes in the sinkhole, she told her mom she wanted to do something to help. A bottle drive ensued, and in less than three weeks she surpassed her goal of raising \$3,000.

"It's important to recognize our young people when they show the spirit of caring in the community," said Fraser Mayor Joe Nichols, who came to Salk Elementary to present a proclamation to Peyton. "In Fraser, we are hard working people, we are about our community and we are about our family. It wasn't a surprise to me that people would want to help."

Peyton's parents were on hand when she received the proclamation, and they've been instrumental in helping collect and return the thousands of bottles left at four drop-off locations or called in for a porch pickup.

Her mom, Suzanne, said there are some nights they, along with younger daughter Avery, are returning bottles until 9 p.m, but Peyton hasn't complained once. When they started the drive, she cautioned her 4th-grade daughter about the amount of work they would need to put into it.

"I took a moment to think about it, and said to her, 'You realize this could be very big? You can't change your mind.' And she said, 'Absolutely,'" said mom Suzanne.

Peyton has also been recognized in the *Fraser-Canton Chronicle*, on WXYZ-TV, WJBK-TV and WWJ-AM.

The bottle drive will continue through February 13. A flyer with a list of drop-off locations can be found on page eight of this newsletter.



"It's important to recognize our young people when they show the spirit of caring in the community."

— Joe Nichols
Fraser Mayor



Fraser Autism Team Wins Award for Peer 2 Peer Work

The Fraser Autism team recently won the inaugural START Project plate award for their work with Macomb County's Peer 2 Peer program. The Statewide Autism Resources and Training (START) Project is funded by the Michigan Department of Education's Office of Special Education. Its goal is to provide evidence-based training, technical assistance, and resources to educators in Michigan that serve students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).

The Fraser Autism team was given this award because they have been integral in helping the Peer 2 Peer program grow in Macomb County. Staff from Fraser have collaborated with other county districts to help start Peer 2 Peer programs. Fraser's team has also maintained a strong presence in START since the very beginning, and they have helped provide many countywide START trainings to professionals.

START is a statewide collaborative effort to make systems-level changes to improve the educational programming for students with ASD through the use of evidence-based practices. The awards were created for teams whom have made outstanding contributions to the field of ASD. A Michigan artist, who also happens to have ASD, painted each plate.



Disney Teacher Honored for Teaching Diversity, Respect

Dodi Monahan has been teaching 1st grade at Disney Elementary for 18 years. She makes it a point to teach her class about diversity, acceptance and lays the foundation of respect in her students. She highlights this in December by celebrating with her class different holidays from a variety of cultures. Her efforts helped her to be named the 2017 recipient of the Rise Beyond the Horizon – Mel Miller Memorial Award from the MISD.

This award honors a Macomb County K-12 educator for exemplary teaching practices that encourage mutual respect and understanding, instill an appreciation of diversity, and teach students to act without prejudice.

When Principal Aaron Sutherland heard about the award, he immediately thought of nominating Mrs. Monahan.

When you have a teacher that acknowledges and celebrates your culture and your heritage, you belong to that school. And we've seen that throughout the years at Disney, and I think it starts in Mrs. Monahan's classroom."

Mrs. Monahan said her passion is teaching students to respect each other's differences while celebrating similarities.

"First grade is an amazing place to teach about diversity and acceptance. It sets the tone for the rest of the child's academic career

Rise beyond the Horizon Mel Miller Memorial Award

and even their lives," said Mrs. Monahan. "We approach each new year celebrating our similarities and differences. We try to remember that everyone is different – not better or worse, just different. The kids learn that it's what's in your heart that counts. Its how you act and how you treat others. This approach sets the culture of acceptance in our classroom throughout the year."

The award is named after a long-time MISD consultant, Mel Miller.

"We are pleased to honor Mel Miller with this award each year as we recognize the outstanding educators in Macomb County who provide leadership in helping students understand multicultural history and experiences," said Mike DeVault, Superintendent of the MISD.

Mrs. Monahan was honored at the 30th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration of Macomb County.



FPS HOSTS NATIONAL DISTRICTS

Collaborating with others is a big component of the transformation of education in Fraser Public Schools, and it's not just the students who are collaborating. District and building staff host educators from other districts several times a year. Typically these educators travel from other districts in Michigan, but in December and January, FPS played host to districts from California, Colorado and Indiana.

"We are always looking to network and collaborate with other districts across the state and country and have dedicated ourselves to hosting both local and national school districts," said Carrie Wozniak, assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction. "We firmly believe in the importance of sharing and learning from one another."

One visit was scheduled for January 17, which ended up being an ice day and school had to be cancelled. Several principals and teachers still came to work to host the group of about 20 and share their experiences of building culture and intentional lesson design among grades and buildings.

"We are a 9-12 cohesive, articulated team," said Laura Woods of the English Department at Fraser High School, which she chairs. "We are very deliberate. In the last few years, we have continued that articulation with our middle school, and we can continue to change what we do (in 9th grade) because students are more prepared in middle school."

The visiting districts were also on the path toward competency based education and shared some of the challenges and successes they have encountered with the Fraser team.

Free Student Meals!

To help relieve some financial pressure, families can apply for free or reduced meals through the USDA's School Lunch Program meal benefits. Apply online at www.lunchapp.com. If needed, free computer use is available at the Administration Building to complete the online application.



HOCKEY TEAM HONORS FRASER TEACHER

Richards Middle School music teacher Mike Perkins is passionate about our community and our schools. Finding opportunities to unite the two are important to him, he says. Since 2015, more than two dozen RMS and Fraser High School students have performed at the Metro Jets hockey team's home games. This past November, the Jets Foundation recognized his efforts and named Mr. Perkins their Teacher of the Year.

"When the co-president of the Jets organization called me, I first jokingly said, 'Are you sure you have the correct person?' They laughed and said, 'Of course we do!' I am not the type of person that looks for praise and recognition. I feel truly honored for this," he said.

The Jets Foundation works alongside the Jets team to foster their mission of educational excellence and championing youth-related sports and activities.

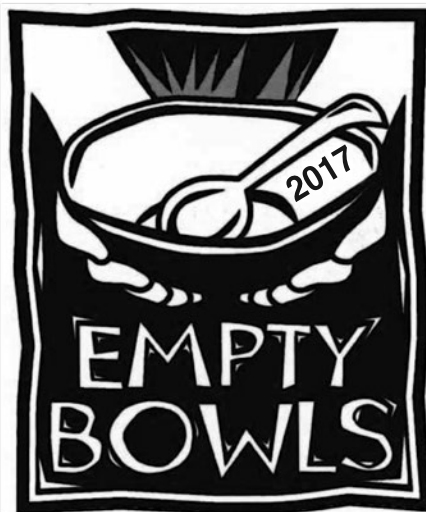
"The Teacher of the Year award is presented to the teacher best representing the foundation's goals and mission as they relate to area youth sports, as well as the surrounding Fraser Community," said Nancy Krajewski, director of the Jets Foundation.

"In addition to being a hockey lover himself, [Mike's] tireless efforts and enthusiastic support of our Jets program, as well as our National Anthem feature, is unmatched," Krajewski said. "It is for those reasons, and for just being a good guy and such a positive role model for all kids everywhere, that we selected Mike as Teacher of the Year."

Mr. Perkins was honored on the ice during the pre-game show in early December.



10th Annual



To Benefit
MCREST

Join us to support the hungry in our community

January 26, 2017
5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

Fraser High School Cafeteria

\$10 per person,
or \$25 per family

Includes a student-made ceramic bowl, with a meager meal of soup, bread and water

Enjoy an artwork raffle and a special performance by the Fraser Youth Choir.



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Fraser Public Schools
K-12 Art Department

www.fraserk12art.weebly.com/empty-bowls

Patriot's Pen Essay Contest Pays Off

All 6th-grade students at Salk Elementary had to write a 300-400 word essay on the theme "The America I Believe In." As an option, students could also submit the essays to the local VFW for the Patriot's Pen competition, and for three students, it paid off.

When the three 6th-grade classes gathered in the media center to receive their certificates of participation from representatives of VFW 6691 and the Ladies' Auxiliary, they didn't know the top three essays were written by their classmates.

"I didn't think I would like this essay very much but I turned out to love it!" said Olivia Wittstock, whose essay tied for first place. "By the end of the contest I totally forgot about the reward until my teacher talked about it again. When they called my name for first place, I almost cried. I was in disbelief!"

Olivia's essay tied for first place with Veronica Prekaj. Both girls took home a framed certificate and \$175. Hailey Burns won third place and took home \$100. Veronica's and Olivia's essays were also submitted to the VFW District level, which includes all of Macomb and Oakland counties.

The essays were judged on clarity, knowledge of the theme, and the student's ability to relate it to their own experiences. That's exactly what Veronica said she did.

"My dad was stuck between borders [of Kosovo and Serbia] for 10 days" in 1998-1999, she said. "Later on, American soldiers picked him up and put him into a refugee camp and took care of him. From there he was accepted into America as a refugee. I was inspired by the stories he told me about three American soldiers and how much they cared for him and refugees and how much they did for him and others."

Hailey also looked to her father for inspiration for her third-place essay.

"While writing my essay for the Patriot's Pen Contest, I didn't even think about winning or even about the check or award. I was so focused on writing my essay because my father was in the Air Force so this meant a whole lot to me. When they called my name for third place, I was so surprised I can't even explain it using words."

The Patriot's Pen competition is a national contest for students in 6th- through 8th-grade. Each year more than 130,000 essays are submitted in the competition.



Student's Poster Made Statewide Example

Morgan Lockhart is proud of the poster she created last year based on the theme 'America for All People' for the Social Studies Olympiad. She drew the outline of the United States, spent hours filling it in with dots of paint in a rainbow of colors, and added faces to each dot. The colors, she said, represented the diversity and cultures of all people who live in America. And now, the poster will represent Social Studies Olympiad at the state level.

Morgan was contacted earlier in the school year by the Michigan Council for Social Studies and asked if they could showcase her poster for future olympiads.

The poster has had a long journey since it was created last year when Morgan was a 6th-grade student at Salk Elementary. After taking first place among the posters created at the school, it won first place at both the District and State levels.

"Morgan's hard work paid off and all who have seen her poster can't help but smile because it truly encompasses the notion of 'America for All People!'" said Kristy Wiegand, a Quest and Computer Literacy teacher at Richards Middle School.



Science Olympiad to Expand District-wide

Every spring, the elementary schools in Fraser buzz with excitement for science as students prepare for Science Olympiad. And now, thanks to a grant from the State of Michigan, students at Richards Middle School and Fraser High School will share in that excitement as teams are created at the secondary level.



Fraser Public Schools received a \$5,600 grant from the State School Aid Act. The grant will provide \$400 to each elementary school and \$1,600 to both RMS and FHS to pay for supplies and coaching, as well as establish the new teams.

"What's exciting about this opportunity at the secondary level is that it is a continuation of the opportunities our students have taken advantage of in the past," said Principal Huston Julian II. "We look forward to continuing this program."

Science Olympiad is an opportunity for friendly competition among students in events covering topics in life, physical and Earth sciences.

Fraser Public Schools will also host the South Macomb Practice Tournament for elementary teams in March.



Girls On the Run Cross the Finish Line

Girls on the Run (GOTR) is a 10-week program offered at Salk Elementary. The participants met weekly after school throughout the season. To build their confidence and celebrate all that makes them unique, each girl defined a goal during group discussions. After their weekly meetings, the girls spent time running to train for a 5K at the end of the 10 weeks.

This year, Salk's team participated in a 5K on a very cold and windy Saturday at Belle Isle. They all did amazing!

Veterans Plaque Filling Up



The requirements for being on the plaque are that the person graduated from FHS and completed basic training. Ideally, the name is submitted by a family member. If you, or someone you know, would like to be added to the plaque, contact Ms. Fryia at Ingrid.Fryia@fraserk12.org.

As the Fraser High School class of 2011 neared graduation, they had some funds leftover and wanted to leave a lasting gift for the school. They purchased a plaque – with space for 200 names – to hang in the school and honor graduates who served in the armed forces.

Names trickled in over the years and, in August of last year, the plaque caught the attention of a local reporter. Since the story ran in *The Macomb Daily*, more than 50 additional names have been submitted to be added.

Ingrid Fryia was the sponsor for the Class of 2011, and maintains the plaque. The 4A's are now hosting a fundraiser in order to purchase a second plaque to continue honoring alumni veterans.



Dance Club at Eisenhower Builds Relationships, Arts Appreciation



For an hour each week after school, about twenty 5th- and 6th-grade students at Eisenhower Elementary gather to learn different forms of dance. Their teacher is Ariella Lombardo, a first-year Intervention Specialist with the district.

"She organized an afterschool dance club at her other school, and when she came to Ike, wanted to open up the opportunity for our kids to participate as well," said Denis Metty, principal at Eisenhower.

The Eisenhower Dance Club has been a hit. The students are building relationships with each other, experiencing one of the arts, getting exercise and having fun!

Giving Tree Helps District Families

During the holiday season, examples of the Fraser Family working together to help others could be found in every building. At Fraser High School, staff and students worked hard to sort through presents for more than 100 Fraser students through the annual giving tree.

Each school submitted up to five families who needed extra help, and the effort was coordinated by a collaboration of CTE student organizations at FHS – FCCLA, BPA and HOSA. Tags were hung on a tree in the FHS Media Center during November,

and about half were taken by staff within the district. The others were sponsored by families, groups of students, and people from the community.

Staff worked to sort the presents once they were turned in, making sure each student had the items on their list.

In all, 107 students from 42 families in Fraser Public Schools received presents, which in many cases included clothes, shoes and winter coats.



BUILDING A STEM FOUNDATION WITH LEGOS

Playing with Legos during school? That's exactly what kindergarten students at Eisenhower Elementary got to do, without realizing there were lessons built into the blocks.

Students participated in an in-school field trip with Bricks 4 Kidz, a local company that teaches hands-on learning with Legos.

Students worked with a partner to build a Loop de Loop model using Legos. They were given specific directions to build their model, which included working gears and axles.

"The excitement on the students' faces was amazing when they completed their model," said Kindergarten teacher Julie Ricci. "During this fun activity they were exposed to the key terms 'gravity' and 'accelerate.'"

Field Trips by Bricks 4 Kidz are designed to teach the fundamentals of S.T.E.M. (science, technology, engineering and mathematics)



education, built around our proprietary model plans, created by engineers and architects.

"At Bricks 4 Kidz, they believe that kids learn best through activities that engage their curiosity and creativity. We feel the same way here at Eisenhower Elementary. That is why we will continue to promote these type of activities for our students," said Ricci.

"At Bricks 4 Kidz, they believe that kids learn best through activities that engage their curiosity and creativity. We feel the same way here at Eisenhower Elementary."

— Julie Ricci
Kindergarten Teacher

DISNEY GIRL SCOUTS DONATE BAGS TO KIDS IN NEED

The Girl Scouts at Disney Elementary worked hard to collect bags, suitcases and backpacks in the Fall to help kids in foster care.

Often kids in foster care use a trash bag to carry their possessions from home to home.

Together, the Daisies, Brownies and Juniors troops at Disney collected more than 30 bags.

The bags were donated to local Child Protective Services workers to pass out to children who are under their care.




FRASER
HIGH
SCHOOL
**Moonlight
Madness
AUCTION**

Silent/Live Auction

Friday, February 24, 2017

7:00 p.m. – Midnight

Vintage House

31816 Utica Road, Fraser

\$30 per person

Includes Hors d'oeuvres,

Pasta Bar, Dessert,

ALL Beverages, Dancing

and FUN for ALL!

TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

Contact

Ingrid Fryia

ingrid.fryia@fraserk12.org

Athena Kovalcik

athena.kovalcik@fraserk12.org

Must be 21 or older

*Benefits FHS Student
Activities and the Classes
of 2017–2020*

PEYTON'S SINKHOLE BOTTLE DRIVE

*To help raise money for our
Fraser families losing their
homes from the sinkhole.*

GOING ON NOW TO JAN 31, 2017

DROP OFF LOCATIONS:

*2295 Metro Parkway, Ste. 100, Sterling Heights
9 am – 4:30 pm

*Fraser Public Schools Maintenance Building
33499 Klein Road, Fraser, MI
7 am – 3 pm

*Fraser City Department of Public Works,
near the recycling: (586)353-1901
31250 Kendall, Fraser, MI

**IT'S SO EASY
EVERYONE
CAN CONTRIBUTE**

**FOR PICK UP
PLEASE CALL:**

Suzanne Kalka
248-770-1608 or
248-321-4514

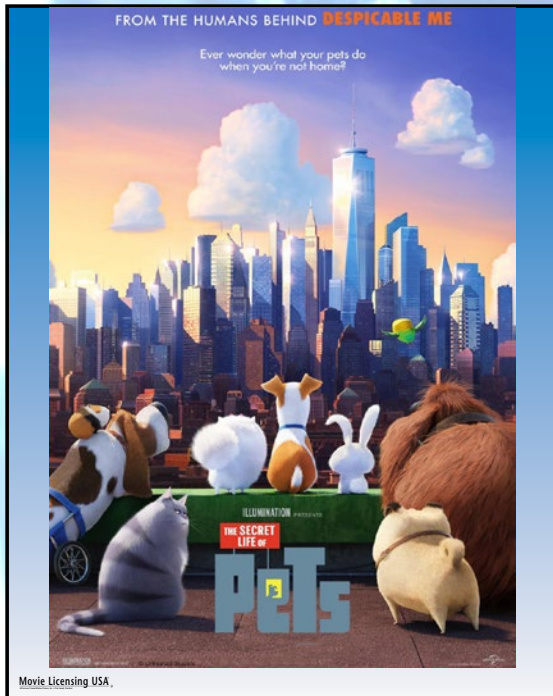
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**Special Thanks to:
Fraser City Council
Fraser Public Schools**

**“A SMALL
DONATION
CAN MAKE A
BIG CHANGE”**

**TOGETHER WE
CAN HELP THESE
FAMILIES....**

FRASER WINTER MOVIE FEST



Friday December 16

2017
FRIDAYS
AT
7 PM
IN THE
HIGH
SCHOOL



Friday January 13

Admission: Adults - \$3, age 6-12 - \$1, & under 5 – Free

Only \$1 for anyone with
Fraser Public School ID.

SOUND SYSTEM - 4 SUBWOOFERS - 8 JBL PRO
AUDIO SPEAKERS - OVER 12,000 WATTS OF SOUND
- PROJECTION SYSTEM - HI RESOLUTION IMAGE -
TRUE LCD TECHNOLOGY - 30' BY 20' SCREEN

Nothing to get, nothing to do!

Just show up and enjoy!!

Admission is first come first served and limited
to the first 600 attendees.

**Concessions will be available for
purchase!**

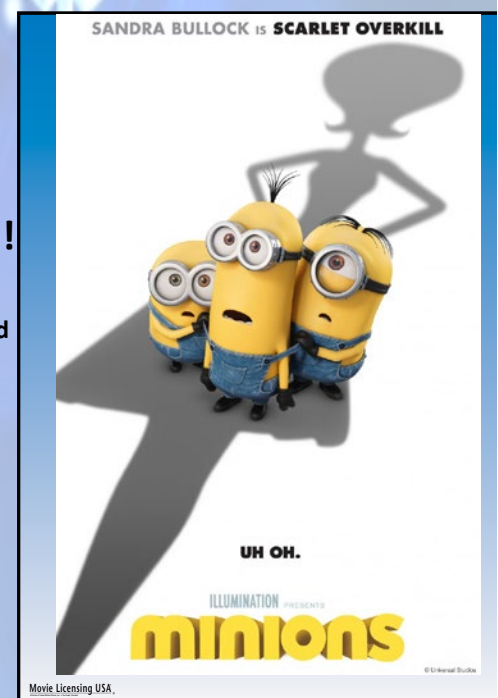
Proceeds benefit the Journalism
Program at the high school

Watch for updates and news

FHSTheFlash.com



Friday February 17



Friday March 3

All Movies, Doors Open at 6:30 p.m. – Concessions Available in the High School Auditorium.