

TEACHING TODAY MN

Spring 2016, Volume 1

MINNESOTA'S K-12 EDUCATION CONNECTION

TRAVERSE [Teaching Respect Attitude Versatility Responsibility Success Ethics]



During the holiday season of 2013-14, TRAVERSE had the wonderful privilege of preparing and serving dinner to roughly 75 individuals at the Ronald McDonald House. Patients and their families were recipients of a home cooked meal during very trying times.

Jenny Manthey, Zimmerman Middle High School; School Social Worker, Hurdle Coach Elk River Area School District 728

Zimmerman Middle/High School, like many other schools, offers a wide variety of extra activities and services to help our students be successful, not only academically but personally. Like many of those same schools, all the things we offered were not helping the kids that fell in the bottom 15% of the grade. Every year we were losing kids; some went to the Alternative School, others went to a neighboring school thinking it would be better, others dropped

out, or just remained in high school until the end, never receiving their diploma.

This is where the vision for TRAVERSE {Teaching Respect Attitude Versatility Responsibility Success Ethics} was started.

TRAVERSE was created by Jenny Manthey (social worker) and Kevin Jost (special education teacher) at Zimmerman High School during the 2012-13 school year. TRAVERSE typically works with students who academically fall in the bottom 15% of their graduating class. The research we have conducted indicates that we can accurately predict by 7th grade which students

are not likely to graduate, leave Zimmerman High School or continue to struggle the rest of their academic career. Beyond the risk of not graduating from high school, these students statistically are also much more likely

The main purpose of TRAVERSE is to foster positive changes that will ultimately ensure students have the greatest chance for long-term success well beyond their high school experience.

to take part in at-risk behaviors. The main purpose of TRAVERSE is to foster positive changes that will ultimately ensure students have the greatest chance for long-term success well

beyond their high school experience. This

Continued on Page 14

LIVEGREEN: Sustainability in District 197

*Lisa Johnson
Sustainability Manager
West St. Paul-Mendota
Heights-Eagan Area Schools*

Have you ever wondered how living green could actually make you some green? Well District 197, is saving millions of tax paying dollars through LIVEGREEN.

LIVEGREEN is the district's sustainability program that promotes energy saving and recycling initiatives throughout the district. District 197 serves more than 4,800 students from the communities of Eagan, Inver Grove Heights, Lilydale, Mendota, Mendota Heights, Sunfish Lake and West St. Paul, MN.

District 197 is fortunate to have a vibrant school community filled with a variety of academic, athletic and artistic opportunities for students at every age, from Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12, in eight buildings. District 197 is committed to operating all of its facilities efficiently and fully supports all of the initiatives of LIVEGREEN.

Each school in the District has a LIVEGREEN Team that consists of students and a teacher. These teams help implement low-cost or no-cost strategies to reduce energy use, promote recycling and composting, and focus on conserving resources. Through sustainability efforts, the district has avoided more than \$1.9 million in utility costs since 2003. School District 197 uses B3 Bench-



marking, an online tool that summarizes energy consumption, costs, and carbon emissions in easily digestible monthly and annual reports for Minnesota public buildings.

LIVEGREEN goes beyond a standard energy reduction program by incorporating right sizing waste streams, recycling, composting, green cleaners, diesel emissions reduction,

LIVEGREEN teams help implement low-cost or no-cost strategies to reduce energy use, promote recycling and composting, and focus on conserving resources. Through sustainability efforts, the district has avoided more than \$1.9 million in utility costs since 2003.

paper reduction, behavioral changes and engineering controls into its initiatives. All 8 schools have earned an Energy Star label from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. A building that scores a rating of 75 or

higher on a scale of 1-100 is eligible for the ENERGY STAR Award.

The LIVEGREEN Teams in each school facilitate LIVEGREEN events across the dis-

Continued on Page 8

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From the Teaching Today MNTM Educational Blog teachingtodaymn.wordpress.com

Camp Pillsbury

Camp Pillsbury is a coed overnight summer camp for kids ages 6–17. No matter what each child’s interests are, they are certain to find activities that not only fascinate them, but help build their character, self-esteem and confidence. Camp Pillsbury is helping kids from all over the world be successful through programs led by experts and entertainment industry professionals in a unique camp environment.

What Educators Can Learn From Horses

In this blog post, administrator, author and educator Ben Johnson, reflects on the most powerful and productive professional development he has experienced. The Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association, he writes, taught him “that for students to learn, it is a cooperative endeavor with lots of give and take from everyone.”

How Some Educators are Incorporating Dogs Into Instruction

Dogs are becoming an increasingly popular classroom presence, standing in as therapy aides, reading tutors, security guards and the focus of student projects. Special-education teachers in New Jersey use them in lessons to encourage speech among students with limited language, and Texas students are socializing puppies to be trained as companions for people with disabilities.

Will Students Eat Veggies If They Grow Them?

Students at an Illinois high school are growing food for the school cafeteria. “We want students to choose healthier options. They’ll choose when they have a relationship with the food,” school garden coordinator Drew Thomas said.

In this Issue

Manufacturing News from Schools Page 4

Why a Career in Manufacturing? Page 6

Edina High School Students Collaborate With German Peers on Sustainability Page 8

Congratulations to these National Board Certified Teachers Page 10

5th Grade Math Carnival at Glendale Elementary Page 12

Students’ App Earns Top Spot in 2nd U.S. Congressional District Contest Page 12

Discovery School Principal Becomes Author to Empower Her Students Page 14

Financial Literacy Resources Page 15

Blazing Cats Cheerleaders Urge Adapted Hockey Team on to State Tournament Page 16

Groves Academy Expands Teacher Training, Offers Literacy Framework to Partner Schools ... Page 18

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Manufacturing News from Schools

Apple Valley High School's Fab Lab

Envision an old high school woods workshop newly renovated to house a high tech lab that includes 3D printers, laser engravers, CNC routers, CNC plasma cutters and more. This sleek new design space where students will imagine new inventions and products has been outfitted with a large Samsung touchscreen display, a state of the art audio-visual system and more. It is just missing one key ingredient, furniture! This is where we found ourselves in the spring of 2015 with our new Fabrication (Fab) Lab at Apple Valley High School in Apple Valley Minnesota. It was at this point that engineering & technology instructor Kerry Blaine asked the question "Why in the world would we buy furniture when we can build it in our new lab?" That one really good question sparked a series of actions leading the production of student designed tables.

This project provided a tremendous amount of learning for our students. "The students had an opportunity to see the design and manufacturing process all the way through from concept to product," according to Kerry Blaine. Through the process, a few of the students even developed leadership skills and took on project management roles under the guidance and supervision of their instructor Mr. Blaine.



Apple Valley middle school's 'Fab Lab' built to engineer better students

Valley Middle School celebrated the opening of a fabrication lab back in November, 2014. The lab pairs computers and precision tools, allowing students to learn advanced manufacturing skills. There are even a few drills and band saws around to complement the digital age.

For Huard, the so-called "Fab Lab" reinforced his desire to study engineering in high school and college.

"I think it's a privilege," he said of working in the lab. "It's something everyone should have a chance to do. It helps develop real world skills."

The Fab Lab is part of the Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan school district's effort to encourage collaborative learning and creative problem solving across its elementary, middle and high schools. All schools in the district have a growing focus on STEM education, short for science, technology, engineering and math that encourages project-based learning and student exploration.

Fergus Falls Fab Lab

Twenty-five high school sophomores who arrived for the first day of classes in Fergus had signed up for the first year of a STEM curriculum (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). They are taught, in part, around a dramatically renovated Manufacturing Learning Lab – the old "shop" -- that includes \$317,000 worth of new welding equipment, 3D printers, and lathes. Their classes include fabrications, physical science, principles of engineering, math and a language arts class, which is tailored to technical reading and writing.

The lab has already proven to be the envy of teachers and school board members for a variety of reasons, but perhaps mostly because the whole project was funded privately.

The idea of the Lab was conceived when local manufacturers Evan Westra and Mike Westergard formed a working group designed to find solutions to the worsening skills gap that threatened their ability to compete.

The teachers are still playing with the curriculum, like how to get first-year students familiar with CNC equipment in just 50-minute increments.

But the bigger accomplishment, the teachers agree, is that they can now show students and parents the possibilities in manufacturing. "It's exciting and new every day. I think it's our job to make sure students know that and understand that it's not what it was even 10 years ago".



Ribbon cutting ceremony for the new Manufacturing Learning Lab at Fergus Falls High School.

White Bear Lake

White Bear Lake's two senior high school campuses this fall featured tech classes with \$250,000 in manufacturing-related equipment thanks to a grant from the Greater Twin Cities United Way.

Students are using the equipment in a two-semester course called Manufacturing and Applied Engineering. A later offering will be Precision Manufacturing. Both will be taught by long-time tech instructor Delroy Nyren, a tireless advocate for expanding tech education who is largely credited with building a coalition of local business partners who made the grant possible.

Sara Paul, the district's current assistant superintendent, says the educational context for the grant is "not about a class, it's about a pathway. How do we find that sweet spot of helping kids throw the door open to all the opportunities out there for them? How do we begin designing our system to make sure that students are prepared for livable wage jobs that are out there?"

Beyond just the actual skills of using equipment, there are a lot of things that we are learning from our industry partners about what essential skills are needed for the different types of jobs available in manufacturing, so that we really are setting our students up for success."

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WHY a Career in Manufacturing?

Hope Riska, *Applications Engineering Operations & Training, Productivity Inc.*

There has been a lot of talk over the years about a “Skills Gap” in the Manufacturing Industry. There still seems to be a stigma that “*Manufacturing jobs can be dirty and dangerous*”. I even heard someone tell me she didn’t want to pursue a career in Manufacturing because “I don’t want to get injured!” My jaw just dropped when I heard that! I asked her, “Jamie, *where* did you hear that?” She replied, “That’s what people (friends and family) told me.”

Wow – we must dispel this impression . . . and fast! No matter what seems to be said, you always have someone that paints a dark and gloomy picture. Perhaps they used to work in a foundry or other factory *way back when* and don’t realize that some manufacturing companies are so clean you can eat off the floors!

We have participated in Career Fairs and when students come to our booth we have them play Plinko to win a prize. But, there’s a catch – they need to tell us two things that are *manufactured* before they can play. It’s amazing the answers we hear – even the looks on faces that ask “Um . . . what’s that?” We give them hints – what are you wearing? What are you carrying? What do you live in? Sleep on? Text on? Then, it’s like a lightbulb and they get it – *Manufacturing is all about making stuff!*

Food for thought . . . Does your student, son or daughter like Legos? Do they like taking things apart and putting them back together? Do they seem to have a knack for figuring out how something works? Great! Manufacturing Careers range from the idea to the design to the creation to the sale and support of products – products that we (often) use in our daily lives. Sometimes, they are products that save lives!

So, you want them (or they want) to be a doctor – where do the doctor’s tools come from? The medical devices that go into peoples’ bodies that keep them alive? Answer: manufacturing!

They are great with computers, so you want them (or they want) to be a Programmer or IT person – where do all of those techie devices come from? Did you know manufacturing is Computer Programming? Ideas are born on computers . . . designs are created on computers . . . products are manufactured through computerized machines (CNC – Computer Numerically Controlled)!

Parents, teachers, counselors, industry leaders and professionals – every one of us need to keep open minds when helping guide students with their Career Pathway decisions.

Most manufacturing jobs require a two-year technical degree. Some manufacturing companies even offer apprenticeships or summer jobs and may even help pay for tuition toward a



manufacturing degree. Have you ever toured a manufacturing facility? Check your community for a local manufacturing company and ask to come see what they do. Many companies have open house events where the community can come in and visit and see what it’s all about!

Did you know that many students in a manufacturing-related program have jobs waiting for them before they graduate? Many jobs in manufacturing pay between \$18-25 per hour!

So, before you pass over careers in manu-

facturing, ask yourself if anything above makes sense!

Just a reminder – As education and industry, we have an *opportunity* and *responsibility* to encourage today’s youth (and adults) to not be afraid to pursue careers in manufacturing. If we don’t encourage them *now*, where will manufacturing be in the future? Tomorrow’s generation of leaders cannot be successful without our help and encouragement. What are you waiting for?

Careers in Manufacturing: Which one is right for you?

- Accountants
- Aerospace Engineers
- Agricultural and Food Science Technicians
- Agricultural Engineers
- Aircraft Structure, Surfaces, Rigging, and Systems Assemblers



- Automotive Engineers
- Biofuels Processing Technicians
- Biological Engineers
- Biological Technicians
- Career and Technical Education Teachers
- Cargo and Freight Agents
- Chemical Engineers
- Chemical Plant and System



Operators

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- Medical Scientists
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- Nuclear Engineers
- Nuclear Equipment Operation Technicians
- Nuclear Power Reactor Operators



- Outdoor Power Equipment and Other Small Engine Mechanics
- Paper Goods Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders

- Precision Instrument and Equipment Repairers
- Robotics Engineers
- Robotics Technicians



- Semiconductor Processors
- Software Developers, Applications
- Soil and Water Conservationists
- Telecommunications Line Installers and Repairers
- Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers
- Water/Wastewater Engineers
- Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers

Please note: This represents a broad and not conclusive list of careers within the world of manufacturing.

SAY **YES** TO A CAREER IN

EVERYTHING we have, **EVERYTHING** we use, **EVERYTHING** we see, taste, hear, smell, feel, or rely on for our way of life, and our very existence, at this moment in human history, has been made possible by **MACHINISTS and ENGINEERS.**

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Textiles/Clothing: Socks, shoes, shirts sunglasses & jewelry.



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MANUFACTURING

LIVEGREEN: Sustainability in District 197 Continued from Page 1



district and throughout the year.

LIVEGREEN week occurred Feb 1st through the 5th. LIVEGREEN Week is our opportunity to ask our district community of teachers, staff, and students to pause and shift their intention and actions to promote a more environmentally friendly way of living.

- **Make & Take the LIVEGREEN Pledge.** There are lots of ways to promote green living. To show all that we hope to achieve as a school community, students and staff are encouraged to pledge to work toward a sustainable change.

This could include pledging to MOVEGREEN (carpool, walk or bike) to school or pledge to save a tree and reduce your junk by unsubscribing.

- **You've got the Power! Video Contest.** K-12 students submitted videos they created to bring awareness to their environmental passion.
- **Water Conservation.** In an attempt to reduce wasted water and to celebrate what we have conserved so far, we will be promoting our water filling stations.

Try using a reusable water bottle instead of disposable bottles or drinking straight from the water fountain.

- **Talking Trash!** There were volunteers from the Dakota County Master Recyclers group in a few of our lunchrooms on to help students sort their waste correctly.
- **Paperless Day.** Do your part to reduce paper use district wide. If possible, do all school lessons on tablets or computers, and if you need paper try not to use any new paper, only recycled paper from the copy room or recycle bin.
- **LIGHTS OUT Electronics OFF!** Some hallways will be dimmed, if you have natural light in your classroom consider turning some lights off. As always we are still looking for new ways to remind everyone to turn their electronics and lights off when not in use. Remembering to only have our devices/lights on when they are needed.

MOVEGREEN is a series of events for staff and students, promoting healthy and environmentally conscious transportation methods. Once a month, students and staff are invited to bike, walk or carpool to school. Each month the goal is to grow the number of participants. There are a couple of ways participation is being tracked. Staff are asked to sign up each time online and or snap a selfie commuting green and sending it to their LIVEGREEN

leader. Those pictures are shared on Facebook and also printed off and mounted on school bulletin boards. Those participating may be eligible for prizes.

Did you know milk cartons are now recyclable? The recycling industry is ever changing and most of the time for the better. Our students consume around 700,000 cartons of milk annually. This will be a shift for the better from composting milk cartons to recycling them. The paper in cartons is valuable high quality fiber and the highest and best use is for cartons to be recycled vs. composted.

The Compost Sale is an opportunity for the District 197 community to purchase compost that started off as lunch room waste. The compost is donated to the district by the compost facility and sold by the LIVEGREEN teams as a fundraiser, but more importantly the purpose for the sale is to bring awareness about our recycling efforts. The compost is from our own lunch rooms, bringing our recycling efforts full circle.

LIVEGREEN is always looking for smart, green, and efficient practices to incorporate into our district.

www.isd197.org
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Edina High School Students Collaborate With German Peers on Sustainability



Edina Public Schools Communication Department

Lindsay Smaka's enriched chemistry students crowded around laptops so they could see the faces of their project partners. It was a half hour before school begins at Edina High School (EHS) but it was the end of the day for their partners -- students at Geschwister-Scholl Schule in southwestern Germany.

The collaboration is part of a new intercultural learning project called Going Green

which is a program of the Teach About U.S. partnership between the U.S. Embassy in Berlin, Leuphana University in Luneburg, and German e-learning organization LIFEe.V. EHS is the first and only American school to participate this year, thanks to Smaka's personal interest in German culture.

Smaka, who has bachelor's degrees in chemistry and German studies, learned about the opportunity when she was perusing the website for the Goethe Institute, Germany's

cultural center promoting German language, culture and intercultural relations worldwide. "I've always wanted to do something with a school in another country," she said. "I've tried to find things when I've gone to professional development workshops, but it is hard to get real world examples and situations in chemistry."

Students in both schools chose one of four sustainability topics -- recycling, transportation, local food, and toxicity and fashion. The teach-

ers paired up the teams according to their topic choice. Following some research, the students are fine-tuning ideas for an action plan for a project that that will make a difference in the sustainability area they chose. The American and German teams will compare notes and share ideas with one another.

The students will Skype twice during their project. Their first opportunity to meet and swap information was mid-February. "The German kids know English," Smaka said, "and they enroll in one another's classes so they are connected and can also chat and collaborate

that way, in addition to the Skype sessions."

Faces on both sides of the Atlantic covered the computer monitors as they exchanged greetings and then got down to work. "How do people get to work in Germany -- do they drive, or take a bus or train?" asked a team

of EHS students. "How many times in a week or month do you have to put gas in your car?" Others were quizzing their counterparts about recycling habits.

"This is an opportunity for students in both places

to explore attitudes in their own countries and in one another's about subjects of sustainability, which will ultimately affect the whole planet," Smaka said. "Hopefully, they will get ideas from one another."

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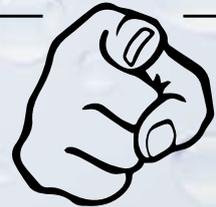


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NBCT Teachers March 2016

Angela Fasteen

Lakeville School District 194
Science/Early Adolescence



This is my eighth year of teaching 6th grade, second year teaching Science at McGuire Middle School. Prior, I taught one year in Grand Forks ND, and five years in Fargo ND. I graduated with my BS in Elementary and Middle Level education with an emphasis in Health and Science in 2007, and my MS in Education with a Middle Level Endorsement in 2009.

It was important to me to go through the process of becoming Nationally Board

Certified because I wanted to strengthen my reflective practices not only in teaching, but in how I am building relationships with my students and school community.

Linnea Nelson Marrin

Roseville School District 623
Music/Early and Middle Childhood



Congratulations to the district's newest National Board Certified Teacher, Linnea Marrin. Mrs. Marrin, a vocal music teacher at Falcon Heights Elementary School and Parkview Center School, was recognized at the January 12 school board meeting by Julie

Schultz, the district's National Board Teacher Coordinator.

Like board-certified doctors and accountants, National Board Certified Teachers meet rigorous standards and are considered master teachers. The certificate is recognized in all 50 states as a mark of excellence.

Mrs. Marrin joins the district's 15 other Roseville National Board Certified Teachers: Paul Allen, Amy Dahlin, Jenny Eckman, Stacy Gabriel, Julie Gloege, Kathy Mielke, Jill Mikkelson-Bue, Lori Oberstar, Charity Prezepiora, Cameron Radke, Melissa Reid, Natalie Ramirez Ulmer, Julie Schulz, Kristen Smith Olson, and Stacey Whitwood.

Kimberly Folkers

Minnetonka ISD 276
English Language Arts/Early Adolescence

Kind, innovative, straightforward and funny are just a few words students use to describe Kim Folkers, a Language Arts teacher at Minnetonka Middle School East. Kim constantly looks for new ways to present concepts so students are engaged and interested in learning. She goes above and beyond to ensure all her students reach their full potential, often making herself available outside of



school hours to provide additional assistance to students. Kim takes a genuine interest in each student's life and truly cares about their success beyond her classroom. "Instead of trying to teach us just what we need to know for the year, Ms. Folkers wants to make a longer lasting impression. She wants us to have a prosperous future and sustain the knowledge we learn in her class so we can get good jobs and live a happy life," says one student.

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5th Grade Math Carnival at Glendale Elementary



Jessica McMahon
Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools

The students were excitedly answering math questions. (Let that sentence sink in for a moment.) Students in Glendale 5th grade classes spent three weeks creating carnival games to help practice math skills. The Math Carnival was a mass of excitement and candy, with kids helping other kids do math. I witnessed one girl patiently help a younger student reach an answer to a problem, showing a great understanding of both number sense and patience.

Fifth grade students worked in teams to design and make their games. They spent one week brainstorming and creating ideas for their games, and two weeks in the actual creation process. Many students had big dreams, and had to bring those down a bit to fit actual reality. The students creating the whack-a-mole game realized that having a large number of answers (on the “moles”) would be tricky. They then realized that they could create a number of different questions to reach a fewer number of answers.

Students went through a number of steps to

get to the carnival. Brainstorms came mostly from experiences of the students. One group had played the game they designed at camp. Students created drafts, and even had a dress rehearsal with their kindergarten buddies. The dress rehearsal helped some groups realize the questions needed to be tweaked, otherwise they’d be handing out a lot of candy prizes. The students were able to decide the levels of math questions, usually ranging from basic addition and subtraction all the way up to what the 5th graders called “6th Grade Math” (exponents and square roots).

At the carnival, students and parents paid a penny to play a game. The pennies collected will be donated to Pennies for Patients, the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. The students from other grades had a chance to sign up to visit the carnival. You could scan the QR codes to get video directions, or read the posters the students had designed. The lines were long and the excitement was high. Students who has done this project in previous years even came back to check out the current designs.

Teacher Jeff Sillman, who has done this project on a smaller scale for years, brought this idea to the whole 5th grade team. Sheila Erpen-



bach, Scott Geisler and Katie Jaeb all agreed that it was a successful project. Getting students to engineer a game and integrate math into it isn’t an easy task, but the teams pulled together to make it happen. The games are so successful that the PTC will be borrowing the games for their Spring Carnival. Sillman has big plans for the future of this project, so keep your eyes on Glendale.

priorlake-savage.k12.mn.us
(952) 226-0000



Students’ App Earns Top Spot in 2nd U.S. Congressional District Contest



Burnsville High School students Fiona Chow and Emma Hakanson display their Birdsong app, featuring photos, sounds, and information about eight local birds

Burnsville-Eagan-Savage School District
191

Two students, who developed a mobile app for a class at Burnsville High School, have won first place in the 2nd Congressional District as part of the national Congressional App Challenge (CAC).

Sophomore Fiona Chow and junior Emma Hakanson designed and developed an interactive soundboard app in their mobile computer science principles class. The app, named Birdsong, features photos, sounds, and information about eight local birds.

“The app was flawless,” according to

Cindy Drahos, their programming teacher at Burnsville High School.

It was so good that Drahos suggested they enter the app in a competition sponsored in U.S. Congressional districts around the country that inspires high school students to pursue computer science and STEM disciplines.

Fiona and Emma heard recently that they’re the winners in Minnesota’s Second Congressional District and they’ll be meeting with U.S. Congressman John Kline to receive his congratulations and their official certificate.

“The students put a lot of detail and care into developing the app,” said Drahos, who was not surprised that Fiona and Emma won. “They collaborated well, came up with great ideas, and were excited about their project.”

Birdsong is a unique app because it offers several different features. For example, users are able to take a picture using their device’s camera then compare that image with images on the app to determine the species of bird. Users can listen to each individual bird’s call and view basic information for each species in pop-up windows.

“This app is targeted towards the newer generation of bird watchers, who are likely to have a phone with them, if not a bird field

guide,” said Emma. “We hope that this app will enhance the birdwatcher’s experience and prompt others to become interested in the world of birds.”

In addition to creating the app, they documented their process on websites and created a YouTube video to show it.

“Creating Birdsong was a large eye-opener to how much ‘behind-the-scenes’ work is required for rather simple applications,” said Fiona. “All steps are essential and cannot be skipped or missed; the importance of each step — each command — is extremely significant because if just one piece is missing, nothing will work. It’s the littlest things that matter the most.”

This was the first app creation for both students, but might not be the last as they are both interested in Information Technology (IT). Fiona considers going into software development or engineering while Emma knows she’ll have to utilize technology in her particular area of interest — wildlife research.

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TRAVERSE

Continued from Page 1



TRAVERSE students at a Special Olympics Basketball Tournament

is achieved through Character Education, Service Learning and Enrichment opportunities both inside and outside of the school environment designed to expand their sense of self and personal awareness.

We completed five years of research to confirm our thoughts and found that only 28% of the bottom 15% of seventh graders remained at Zimmerman High School through graduation, and of those students, only .08% ever made it out of the bottom 15%. The bottom 15% accounted for 4,166 behavior

referrals, missed 15,587 days of school and used alcohol or drugs at a rate of 64% (23% were unaccounted for because they left ZMHS at a young age) leaving only 13% that didn't turn to chemical usage.

Traverse has been at ZMHS for two years and has seen great success. The class, initially offered to a group of eleventh grade students showed a 90% decrease in behaviors and grades went from 13 F's their first semester, prior to the class, to 2 F's second semester, with the class. Last year the class

was then moved to work with a group of 12 seventh grade boys. Once again it proved to be very successful. This group of 7th graders finished their 6th grade year (prior to TRAVERSE) with a total of 83 D's and F's. They finished their 7th grade year with only 9 D's and 5 F's occurring 3rd quarter and 4 D's and 4 F's occurring fourth quarter. This group of 12 also finished fourth quarter with 6 students receiving C's or better in all their classes and 4 others making the B Honor Roll, one of which just missing the A Honor Roll!

There are school programs that offer character education classes, there are districts that require service learning projects and there are teachers that have brought students to participate in enrichment activities. However, to have a class geared toward the bottom 15% that includes all three, that keeps the students engaged through a four year program and that allows the teens to come back as peer mentors in a leadership role seems to be unique to Zimmerman.

Comments from TRAVERSE students: *"TRAVERSE is really helpful when I first came here I had a hard time with my grades the beginning of 7th grade we started TRAVERSE. I was just happy about going on the field trips but now I don't even care about them. They are fun but I like staying in the classroom and talking and learning stuff about helping people."*

"TRAVERSE is the best class I ever had or ever will have. TRAVERSE put a mirror in front of my face and I didn't like what I saw one bit. So you know what I did? I changed."

Comments from TRAVERSE parents include *"This program is why he is still there . . . it has helped so much that I was not going to jeopardize enrolling him at a different school."*

"I am sitting here in tears, happy tears! I am also so proud of him. I know he has put so much work into getting caught up. His life has been one upheaval after another; it is the first time ever it is all coming together for him."

The money needed to cover the costs of all the activities is dependent on grants and donations.

We have been amazed at the community support we have received over the past few years.

Check out our website at changewithtraverse.com

zhs.elkriver.k12.mn.us
(763) 241-3505



Discovery School Principal Becomes Author to Empower Her Students

St. Cloud Area School District 742

In the fall of 2014, Tammy Wilson became the new principal at Discovery Community School in St. Cloud, Minnesota and had plenty on her "to-do" list. Writing a children's book wasn't on it – until one day she helped out in the school media center.

"The idea for the book came out of a need," Wilson explains. "Our school community includes a number of Somali students, and one day when I was helping a little girl try to find a book to interest her, I realized there was nothing in the library that represented her. Not a single book."

Wilson next searched online for books and discovered that children's literature as a whole is lacking in children of color being featured as protagonists.

That's when she thought, "Wouldn't it be fun to write a book?"

Wilson invited students to join her over lunchtime to learn more about them and to

talk about their experiences. She admits that the heroine of her book, "Through My Eyes", is modeled on one of those students, whose African name is Zamzam.

The book practically "wrote itself," says Wilson, over the course of one summer. She feels that the empowerment of a Somali character that is also a girl first attracted her editor, a writer for *The Huffington Post*, and after that, her publisher.

[T]he power of Wilson's book is found in its themes: the alienation and fear of the refugee experience, the genuine and bewildering culture shock of moving to another land, as well as the universal power of friendship and understanding.

The illustrator for the book is the muralist for Discovery's colorful and inspirational school interiors.

Wilson contacted her and

now laughs, "I just told her she was going to be the artist for my book. She agreed, and it was only later that she came back and said, 'What's it about?'"

In addition to the strength of Zamzam as a character, the power of Wilson's book is found in its themes: the alienation and fear of the refugee experience, the genuine and bewildering culture shock of moving



to another land, as well as the universal power of friendship and understanding.

Wilson says the word is out locally about the book and excitement is building.

"The children who inspired me are sixth-graders now," she explains. "They are invited to the book launch and will be recognized."

www.isd742.org
(320) 253-9333



FINANCIAL LITERACY RESOURCES

The Keys to Financial Success Course

Keys to Financial Success is a complete course plan for teaching personal finance to high school students. It is composed of 54 lessons designed to help you teach your students personal finance using active and collaborative learning. Keys to Financial Success is offered free of charge to schools and teachers.

Website: www.philadelphiafed.org/education/teachers/resources/keys-to-financial-success/

Uncle Jed's Barbershop

Students listen to the book Uncle Jed's Barbershop, about an African-American barber who, despite significant setbacks, saves enough money to buy his own barbershop.

From the story, students learn about saving, savings goals, opportunity cost, and segregation. The students participate in a card game to further investigate what it takes to reach a savings goal.

Website: www.stlouisfed.org/education/uncle-jeds-barbershop

Market Basket

Students will compare the price of goods from one time period to another and through discussion and role play interpret the effects of inflation on consumers. They will categorize goods and services according to the eight major groups of the consumer price index and be able to determine the difference between the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and the core CPI.

Website: www.stlouisfed.org/education_resources/market-basket

Abraham Lincoln and the Five-Dollar Note

Students participate in a puzzle activity to identify leadership characteristics that Abraham Lincoln possessed. They review the changes in the redesigned \$5 note and consider how Lincoln's leadership characteristics contribute to the fact that he is

pictured on the \$5 note. Students look at a timeline of Lincoln's life and identify significant events in his road to the White House. They play a game to review content learned in the lesson.

Website: www.stlouisfed.org/education_resources/abraham-lincoln-and-the-5-note/

Federal Student Aid Information for Counselors

Provides basic college access and financial aid information for middle school, high school, and TRIO counselors. Features include the Counselors and Mentors Handbook, other federal student aid publications (with instructions on how to download or order them), training information, and scripts and slides for presenting a financial aid night. Click on "Network & Potential Partnerships" in the Counselor Resources section to locate financial aid professionals in your community who can assist you.

Website: www.financialaidtoolkit.ed.gov/tk

Introduction to the Living Wage Calculator

In many American communities, families working in low-wage jobs make insufficient income to live locally given the local cost

of living. Recently, in a number of high-cost communities, community organizers and citizens have successfully argued that the prevailing wage offered by the public sector and key businesses should reflect a wage rate required to meet minimum standards of living. Therefore we have developed a living wage calculator to estimate the cost of living in your community or region. The calculator lists typical expenses, the living wage and typical wages for the selected location.

Website: livingwage.mit.edu (Select your state and county)

My Classroom Economy

My Classroom Economy enables any educator to teach children financial responsibility through fun, experiential learning. It's a simple classroom economic system based on the idea that students need to earn school "dollars" so that they can rent their own desks.

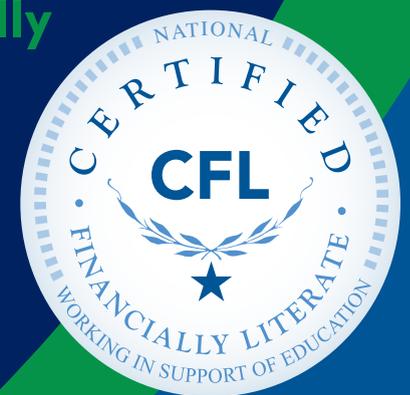
My Classroom Economy can work for any grade level. Tailored to the learning ability of your students, the program has the same overall objectives for all grades—to instill basic financial responsibility and teach the value of delayed gratification.

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Blazing Cats Cheerleaders Urge Adapted Hockey Team on to State Tournament



By Amy Olson
Lakeville Area Public Schools

As the Blazing Cats adapted hockey team faces off March 11 and 12 in their games at the state tournament, their loudest supporters may be right behind the bench.

With cheers they've written themselves and an unmatched enthusiasm, the Blazing Cats Cheerleading team's nine members have been a powerful source of support for the adapted soccer and hockey teams throughout the 2015-16 school year.

The cheerleading team is the only team of its kind in the state, said Neil Strader, activities director for Lakeville South High School. With members who have cognitive of physical impairments and those without disabilities, it may be the only team of its kind in the country, he noted.

While the Blazing Cats adapted soccer and hockey teams — consisting of players from Burnsville, Farmington and Lakeville — have existed for years, the cheerleading team is relatively new. It formed three years ago as a way to give students an opportunity they might not otherwise have to take part in an activity,

said Kelly Gorman, one of the team's coaches who is a special education teacher at Lakeville South High School. The cheerleaders practice two nights a week and cheer at two games during the adaptive soccer and adaptive hockey seasons.

Gorman said she's proud of the incredible progress she's seen among her team members.

"They've come a long way since the beginning of the year," Gorman said, adding she had to lead the students out, lead the cheer and lead them back. "Now, they do it all on their own."

At a recent game, the girls cheered on the junior varsity adaptive hockey team to victory.

"Cat Pride, Cat Pride, we're stepping up, so step aside! We're the best, we're here to win. Cat Power is here again," the girls chanted.

Along the way, Gorman said she's seen the girls' senses of self-esteem and pride increase. Among those girls is Morgan, who said she joined as a way to make new friends. Gorman said when she approached Morgan about possibly being captain of the team last fall, Morgan said she didn't feel quite ready. Instead, she co-led the team with a foreign exchange

student during the adaptive soccer season. After the student returned home to Germany and the team needed a leader during the adaptive hockey season, Gorman approached again Morgan. This time, Morgan said yes.

Deb Brown said being part of the team has been good for her daughter Emily.

"This pushes her to try something new," Brown said, adding it has helped Emily form friendships. "She said, 'Mom, just imagine me: I'm a cheerleader!' It's really been fun to watch her confidence grow."

Emily said seeing the soccer and hockey players smile makes her feel good. Even when the team isn't doing well, she likes to try to cheer them up.

"When they've had a bad game, I like to encourage them to keep trying," Emily said.

Other families say they see the positive impact, too.

Olivia Nicholson said she's seen her daughter Beckie grow as she's been a part of the team. When the family moved from Lakeville to Farmington this winter, the freshman hoped she could remain part of the group. Much like the Blazing Cats adaptive soccer and hockey teams, the cheerleaders, too can come from any of the partnering schools.

"I love to be able to see them at games. You can see how happy they are. You can see how happy all the kids are," Nicholson said.

"I've watched her blossom."

Cheerleaders have the opportunity to letter in the activity, which also is a source of pride for them, Gorman said.

Kyla Barber, a paraprofessional who works with Gorman and the students, said she's seen the impact extend to the classroom, where the students are excelling. Barber said she thinks it extends even farther, adding she thinks the cheerleaders and adaptive sports teams have endeared themselves to their classmates without disabilities.

Strader said he's proud of the team and of Gorman.

"Kelly Gorman has ran this program for several years as a volunteer on love and dedication for her kids at Lakeville South" and other schools, said Strader. "It's just incredible."

All in all, cheerleaders, parents and advisers say the experience is a great way for the girls to build lasting friendships and enjoy their high school experience to the fullest.

"This is an opportunity for them to make great memories that will last a lifetime," Gorman said.

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Groves Academy Expands Teacher Training, Offers Literacy Framework to Partner Schools



For more than 40 years, Groves Academy has been recognized as the foremost authority in the Twin Cities in its work with students with specific learning disabilities and attention deficit disorders. Groves Academy has deep knowledge of reading and math disabilities, ADHD, and executive function difficulties and Groves teachers know how to teach students with these disabilities

literacy framework with the schools and their teachers and, consequently, positively impacting the education of more than 350 non-Groves Academy students.

With significant achievement gaps in both reading and math in Minnesota, there is clearly a need to share the success Groves has had with its curriculum model on a broader basis and to better prepare all teachers so that

to help them gain confidence, success and a sense of purpose through their education experience. Groves regularly shares this content and teaching knowledge with educators in the Twin Cities and beyond through workshops, conferences, and specific teacher trainings. Educators have come to Groves from Switzerland, Canada, Connecticut, California, Iowa, and North and South Dakota to be involved in Groves Academy teacher-training programs. Over the past six years, Groves has partnered with public and charter schools, sharing its unique

students can experience greater success in the classroom. Groves Academy has established a proven teacher-training program involving reading and spelling instruction and has had successful partnerships with schools from the community.

As a part of its recently-created five-year strategic plan, Groves Academy will be significantly expanding its Education Development Program. The expansion will feature two strategic initiatives: increasing professional development opportunities for teachers in the community by providing training directly to teachers interested in obtaining a deeper knowledge, and implementing the entire Groves Academy literacy framework directly in other schools, providing consulting to entire schools on curriculum implementation as well as professional development to teachers. Both initiatives will enable Groves Academy to impact a greater number of students each year by improving their education experience.

Groves Academy's Education Development Program will directly train 140 or more individual teachers in the first year, impacting more than 2,500 students. Additionally, Groves will deliver its teacher training cur-

riculum to at least four different schools by 2020. These schools will serve students in the general population in grades K-3 and all struggling readers in grades K-8, impacting an additional 40 teachers and at least 1,000 additional students.

Groves Academy has hired full time Literacy Director, Katharine Krogness Campbell, to direct the Education Development Program. She will work with teaching staffs at partner schools, in addition to teaching classes to enrolled teachers. Groves will partner with multiple schools beginning this summer to implement the literacy framework.

Also beginning this summer, Groves Academy's Education Development Program is offering public workshops in word study to K-3 classroom teachers and teachers who provide intervention to struggling readers in grades K-12.

More information is available at groves-academy.org/pd.



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