

Inclusive EHS Thespian Troupe Shows New Possibilities



Edina Public Schools Communications

Emma Schwert loves to sing on stage. “When she sings, her words are clear and fluid and it is easy for her to form words,” said Carrie, her mother. Having autism makes speaking a challenge for Emma. But she joined her singing voice with the voices of two of her special education peers and their Edina High School (EHS) Thespian partners for a performance at the International Thespian Festival last month. More than a demonstration of vocal and acting skills, the performance showed the national high school thespian community a new realm of possibilities.

The idea for an inclusive theater experience was hatched more than a year ago. Lisa Hanson, special education teacher at EHS, and Jessica Froehlich, language arts teacher, were both interested in developing a play during the 2015 May Term. So they decided to join forces — and students — to create something that had apparently not been done before, pairing special education students

with general education students to stage *Shrek the Musical*.

“We looked around and couldn’t find anyone who had done what we were trying to do,” Lisa said. “So we winged it!”

Their 2015 May Term class, Theater for All, included 60 EHS students, 18 of whom receive special education support for developmental cognitive disabilities. It was a hit with students and families and a lot of fun, and it didn’t end there.

Six of the performers went on to compete at the state level in the Individual Showcase in early spring. Emma, Jenni Moffatt, and Elise Toepel, together with their partners Delia Busch, Abigail Swoap and Ella Williams, who are members of EHS Thespians, performed “Fiona’s Song,” with each team of two taking parts as the young, the teenage, and the adult Fiona. They earned a score that qualified them for the International Thespian Festival and were one of five groups selected to perform at the competition’s Showcase at the Guthrie Theater.

“What just happened?” was Hanson’s first thought when she heard the group earned a Superior rating. “It didn’t even cross my mind that this could happen,” she said. “For us, it was all about providing an opportunity for an experience.”

Arranging for the group to travel to Lincoln, Neb., for the festival required extreme planning. Each of the special edu-

Continued on Page 15

High School Coach Teaches More than Just Athletics

Carissa Hopkins-Hoel
St. Cloud Area School District 742

It’s week two of the summer Speed and Strength Camp that coincides with varsity Apollo High School athletics. However, something is a little unique about the girls’ soccer “chalk talk” with Coach Mark Timpane. The girls all received a text the day before from the coach stating they needed to write and bring their resumes to today’s class.

What?!

Yes. You read correctly. Eighth-grade through 12th-grade players are required to bring their resumes to chalk talk.

Why, you might ask?

Timpane is teaching a leadership class every week during his chalk talk time. He uses Stephen Covey’s “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People” as a guide for his class.

This week is Habit 2, “Begin with the end in mind.”

As the girls walk into the classroom, the conversation is much like any athlete’s conversation.

“How much did you squat?” asks Ashley Kesler.

Alyssa Pajari answers, “I squatted the bar!”

The large screen in the front of the classroom reads, “The tragedy of life doesn’t lie in not reaching your goal. The tragedy lies in having no goal to reach.” -Benjamin Mays

Timpane starts the class with reviewing Habit 1 “Proactive v. Reactive.”



“Why do we want to be proactive versus reactive?” asks Timpane.

Several athletes shout out the reasons for the statements “I will” and “I believe” describing a growth mindset and how to change the way they think.

Taking that growth mindset and positive way of thinking leads to Habit 2.

Timpane asks for two volunteers to re-enact a scene from “Alice In Wonderland.” The scene portrays Alice asking the cat which direction she should go. The cat responds to Alice, telling her it doesn’t matter which way she goes if she doesn’t know where she’s going.

More volunteers are called up to solve a puzzle that has not yet been put together. Timpane only gives them a few minutes to put the pieces together.

Unsuccessfully, the girls take their seats.

Timpane asks, “What would have helped put the puzzle together faster?”

Anna Carlson replies, “A picture would have helped.”

The aha moment!

Continued on Page 13

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Using Shakespeare to Build English-Language Skills

In this blog post, fourth-grade teacher Matthew James Friday writes that his students, many of whom are English-language learners, gained confidence and language skills through an after-school Shakespeare club. He describes how the students learned to perform "Romeo and Juliet" and held performances for their peers and parents.

Framing, Reflecting Can Help Improve Learning

Educator Jackie Gerstein is helping her students learn in makerspaces and other problem-solving situations by framing learning goals and giving students time to reflect after the activity. Framing and reflecting can help minimize student frustration and build social-emotional skills, Gerstein says.

9 Lesson Ideas for Culinary-Arts Integration

Culinary-arts integration in the humanities opens the door for project-based learning, educators Sarah Henderson and Lori Holm write in this blog post. They share nine integrated lesson ideas.

Pediatrician: Consider Weight of Child's Backpack

Backpacks that are too heavy or worn incorrectly can contribute to back pain, muscle sprains and can affect posture, Dr. Preeti Parikh says. She offers strategies to help ensure proper backpack use and avoid injuries.

In this Issue

Dr. Brad Gustafson Selected Minnesota National Distinguished Principal Page 4

Six Schools Validated as 2016–2017 Minnesota Schools of Excellence Page 4

Mckinley's Phyllis Haensel Named Elementary Social Studies Teacher Of The Year Page 5

Local Manufacturer Opening Doors to the Public Page 6

Re-Thinking How We Do School . . . Page 7

Teachers Learn About Manufacturing Page 8

Trading Stocks in Social Studies . . . Page 11

Personalized Approach Gives Students Choice, Voice in Their Learning Page 12

3D Printer at Groveland Combines Science and Compassion Page 13

Getting to Know You Page 15

What's It Like: Teaching Talent Development Page 18

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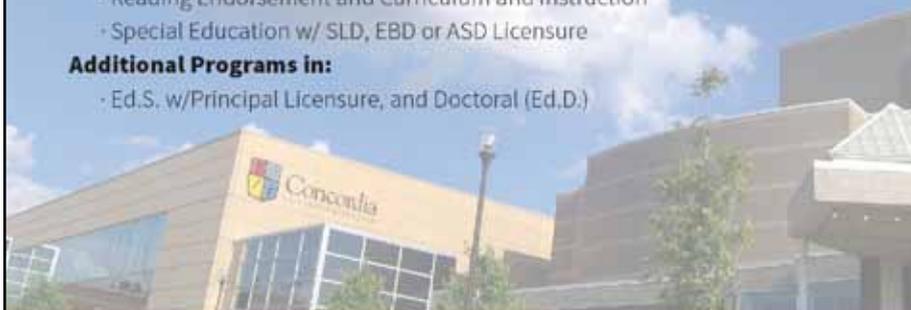
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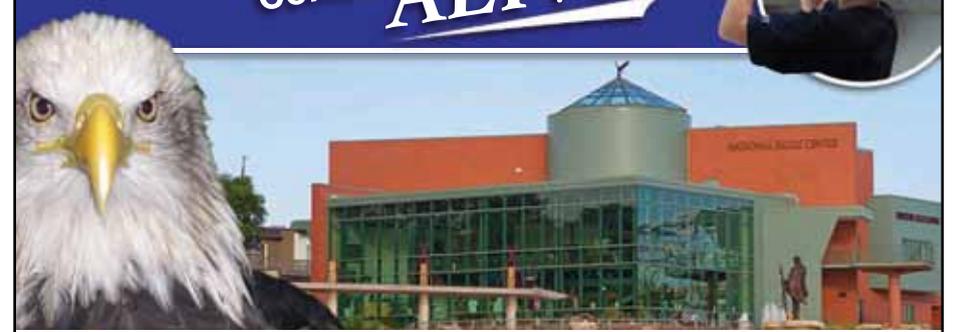
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Dr. Brad Gustafson, Wayzata Elementary School Principal, Selected Minnesota National Distinguished Principal



Dr. Brad Gustafson, principal of Greenwood Elementary in the Wayzata Public School District, and a member of the Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association (MESPA), is Minnesota's 2016 National Distinguished Principal (NDP). MESPA and the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) present the prestigious award.

The National Distinguished Principal program was established in 1984 to recognize

and celebrate elementary and middle-level principals who set high standards for instruction, student achievement, character, and climate for the students, families, and staffs in their learning communities. The program highlights the fundamental importance of the school principal in achieving educational excellence for pre-kindergarten through eighth-grade students and reinforces their continued leadership in helping children develop a lifelong love of learning. One NDP principal is chosen annually from each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Dr. Gustafson's commitment to ensuring all kids experience a relevant education can best be described in his own words; when asked about his educational philosophy, Brad said, "I consider it educational malpractice to limit student opportunity based upon what we refuse to learn."

Dr. Gustafson and the staff at Greenwood Elementary strive to meet the needs of all learners. "Our team provides world-class learning experiences to students who excel and to those who struggle," said Dr. Gustafson. "Students benefit from exemplary first time instruction regardless of whether they have been identified

as 'gifted & talented' or have difficulty with foundational concepts. A team of interventionists collaborates with teachers to implement research-based interventions when students struggle. Grade-level PLCs [professional learning communities] create team goals that align with overarching school goals. We meet to discuss achievement data, culturally sensitive teaching, and strategies to support struggling students." The Greenwood team demonstrates that on the other side of every number and data point is a child who wants to learn and grow: "At the end of every year we come together as a staff to share progress on our PLC goals and celebrate student growth," said Dr. Gustafson. "One year our kindergarten teachers achieved their grade-level goal the last week of school, and I'll never forget the shared celebration."

In her letter of recommendation for Dr. Gustafson, Dr. Jill Johnson, Executive Director of Teaching and Learning for Wayzata Public Schools, wrote, "What sets Brad apart from others is the passion and energy that he brings to his work. There is a quote in the book *The Leadership Challenge* by Kouzes and Posner, that I feel best describes Brad's work: 'He transforms values into actions, visions into

realities, obstacles into innovations, separateness into solidarity, and risks into rewards.'"

In describing how he involves parents and community members in supporting student achievement, Dr. Gustafson said, "Our school is intentional, transparent, and inclusive in how we involve the community. We've added events like 'Passport to Passion' so that all families can celebrate and learn together. We're also teaching students that families can look different so that each and every student feels a sense of belonging. Diverse community members have shared with staff during professional development sessions to help us better support our students and families." The Greenwood team is thinking outside-the-box to meet more families where they are. An example of this is, "live-streaming to broadcast events like concerts, geography bees, parent meetings, and assemblies. Live-streaming has enhanced our ability to involve working and extended families who are unable to physically attend school events."

Mary Harding, a parent of a Greenwood Elementary student, wrote about Brad's commitment to his students in her letter of rec-

Continued on Page 5

Six Schools Validated as 2016–2017 Minnesota Schools of Excellence

Six Elementary Schools have been validated as a Minnesota School of Excellence by the Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association (MESPA). This prestigious honor was awarded to the schools for their commitment to 21st century teaching and learning.

The *Minnesota School of Excellence* Program promotes excellence through a rigorous evaluation process that showcases dynamic schools of the 21st century. Established by the Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association (MESPA), the program is recognized by the Minnesota Department of Education, as well as the National Association of Elementary School Principals, and was nominated for the Brock International Prize in Education – which "recognizes particular innovations and achievements in the field of education."

MESPA endorses schools whose principal, staff, students, and community — working as a team — demonstrate the desire to strengthen education by successfully undertaking the research-based Minnesota School of Excellence school improvement process. This includes a systematic school-wide self-study, development of a school improvement plan, and implementation of that plan. The entire Minnesota School of Excellence Program is aligned with six national standards: Learning Centered, Diverse Communities, 21st Century Learners, Quality Instruction, Knowledge and Data, Community Engagement.

"Through the MN School of Excellence program, grounded in national research on high-performing schools, MESPA has created the premier opportunity in the state for validating greatness in a school community," said Jon Millerhagen, MESPA executive director. "This school improvement program examines the entire school community through six national standards, ensuring there is a holistic approach to creating a plan for future achievement and celebrating the unique accomplishments of each School of Excellence."

Sam Richardson, chair of the School of Excellence Committee, said of the School of Excellence process, "It takes hard work and commitment to thoroughly assess areas of strength and at the same time plan for continual improvement. The SOE process provides an opportunity for the entire school community to reflect on the collaborative work being done and to celebrate these accomplishments. Schools that receive validation have had the important data-driven conversations about what a high-quality 21st century learning experience should be for all students. Honoring the important work of dedicated staff, eager students, and supportive communities is an essential component of becoming a School of Excellence."

Six elementary and middle level schools

Continued on Page 5



MESPA is the single most important resource that I use on a weekly basis.

Jim Borgschagtz,
Principal, Lake City

MESPA is dedicated to promoting and improving education for children and youth, strengthening the role as educational leader for elementary and middle level principals, and collaborating with partners in education to assist in achieving these goals.

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Mckinley's Phyllis Haensel Named Elementary Social Studies Teacher Of The Year



Anoka-Hennepin School District
Communications Department

Phyllis Haensel, a third-grade teacher at McKinley Elementary School in Ham Lake, is passionate about social studies and the impact it can have on young students.

"I just think it makes education relevant for kids," she said. "When kids are little, they don't

know much about the world, and they don't even really know who they are. And I think social studies is the vehicle that helps them figure out what their place is in the world and who they are."

That passion led her to take on a leadership role in social studies curriculum development that has impacted thousands of students across the state. Her dedication to her students, excellence in teaching, and impact on colleagues has earned Haensel the admiration of the Minnesota Council for the Social Studies Board, which has named her its 2016 Elementary social studies Teacher of the Year.

Haensel was honored at the 2016 MCSS Awards Dinner on Sunday, March 6.

McKinley Elementary School Principal Mike Koenig said this is a great recognition for Haensel, who retired at the end of the school year after nearly 30 years of teaching.

"I'm just really excited for her. What a nice way to go out," he said. "She's so passionate about social studies curriculum and so engaged with it as a curriculum writer. This really speaks

to the work she's done with it."

Haensel said she has always loved social studies. "I just think it's fascinating," she said.

To date, she has written three iterations of social studies curriculum for the Anoka-Hennepin School District. According to MCSS, she has also written curriculum for the Minnesota Partnership for Collaborative Curriculum and led professional development for teachers.

In addition, she served on the Minnesota State Social Studies Standards Committee when it was tasked with bringing a more diverse, global view to the curriculum statewide.

Students in her class used to spend half the year learning about and comparing three different ancient civilizations.

"I was teaching ancient Egypt and my kids were absolutely crazy about it," she said. "They were saying things to each other like, 'social studies was so fun today!'"

By learning about these ancient civilizations and how they behaved in their daily lives, Haensel said her students are also learning about geography and map skills, economics and gov-

ernment.

"Social studies creates that concrete piece for them, that connection to the real world, where they can apply what they have learned," she said. "I had kids who didn't read that well, but they took this magazine about ancient Egypt and they poured through it and they would figure out the hard words, because they were fascinated by it. So I see it not only as making education relevant, but I also see it as a huge motivator."

Haensel said she was happy to have the opportunity through this award to express why she thinks social studies is so important to kids.

"It's such an important thing. It is what makes education meaningful, in my mind," she said. "The kids in my class do the math, they do the reading. But when they come alive is when we do the social studies."

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Minnesota Schools of Excellence

Continued from Page 4

achieved recognition as 2016–2017 Minnesota Schools of Excellence:

- Cuyuna Range Elementary School, Crosby-Ironton Public Schools, Principal Kurt Becker
- Eagle Creek Elementary, Shakopee Public Schools, Principal Josie Koivisto
- Hiawatha Community School, Minneapolis Public Schools, Principal Deb Regnier
- Howe Community School, Minneapolis Public Schools, Principal Kevin Oldenburg
- Kenny Community School, Minneapolis Public Schools, Principal William Gibbs
- Randolph Elementary School, Randolph Public Schools, Principal Matt Rutledge

The Minnesota School of Excellence Program was established in 1986, combining the findings of current research on effective schooling with the practical on-site experience of working principals and education staff. It offers a comprehensive school improvement process that results in student learning growth. This school improvement process focuses on six national standards and involves a systematic self-study, development of a school improvement plan, and implementation of the plan based on demonstrated results. Since the program's inception, 189 schools have earned Minnesota School of Excellence validation. The validation remains effective for seven years, at which point schools may choose to reapply for validation.

Gustafson Selected Minnesota National Distinguished Principal

Continued from Page 4

ommendation. She described the relationship he formed with her son who transferred to Greenwood after his first year of grade school. "[Brad] drove all the way from his home, about thirty miles distance, to cheer Elliott on [at a hockey game]. From that showing of support, Elliot could feel Mr. G 'was in his corner'. Their relationship grew also as Brad would 'plant' himself in the hallway each morning specifically so he could greet Elliott, high-five him, and make him feel welcome." Harding summed up her recommendation by saying, "I could go on with several more examples specifically sharing how Mr. G has been such an outstanding principal for our son. I really want to relay that it's not just for our son. He has created a positive tone for the whole school."

Not only does Dr. Gustafson create an inclusive culture for his students and the community, he also works to create an inclusive, positive culture for his staff. "I try to balance leadership and management duties with a servant-mindset," said Dr. Gustafson in his NDP leadership statement. "This provides perspective, vision, and balance. I ask for help when experiencing difficulty, and create conditions where our team is empowered to manage a safe and productive learning environment. By cultivating a sense of shared responsibility, those who are closest to the work become key contributors to the collective effort." He

describes the foundation of a positive school climate by saying, "Building climate starts with people. I approach my work with passion and positivity because I'm thoroughly in love with our students and staff. Modeling what it looks like to be grateful for the opportunity to serve is one way to cultivate a child-centered climate."

Speaking to one of his school's most significant accomplishments, Dr. Gustafson cited:

Our school has created a child-centered culture that models the importance of relationships, innovation, and personalized learning (for students and staff). I'm proud of the work our team is doing to put people first while infusing relevance into the student learning experience. We started a school-wide character education program several years ago to further invest in the relational underpinnings and "heart work" that must occur before any child puts pencil to paper . . . or finger to touchscreen.

Armed with the understanding that teaching and reaching students requires a relationship, our team has established a culture that inspires new levels of learning using a connected pedagogy. We value innovation and nurture 21st century skills in all students. I believe part of our school's identity involves a willingness to see failure as a catalyst to growth. We are constantly learning. We are collaborative, curious, and we disregard what some might say is "impossible." These

are all characteristics that I see manifesting in our students as well. For example, when our students presented to the School Board they encountered a couple different failures (e.g. difficulty with Bluetooth syncing). Instead of looking to their teachers, they instinctively huddled together to collaborate and problem-solve.

We've given students more control over how they are learning by injecting choice throughout the school day. Students interact with state standards and district curriculum using cutting-edge technology like educational drones and robotic droids. Whether students are immersed in Genius Hour, MakerSpaces, coding, or collaborating with schools on other continents; they are experiencing a connected pedagogy that amplifies their voice in the learning process.

Dr. Gustafson first served as a principal in 2008 at Tracy Area Elementary in Tracy, MN. In 2010, he became the principal of Greenwood Elementary in Wayzata, MN where he currently serves. Prior to becoming a principal, Dr. Gustafson was a second-grade teacher and soccer coach in North Branch, MN.

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Stillwater Area Public School District

First-of-its-kind Think Tank brings industry together with education August 08, 2016

A dozen industry experts came together with a dozen local educators recently to re-think education in Stillwater Area Public Schools. The first-of-its-kind Think Tank conversation was designed to bring together

people with very different perspectives to talk about a common interest – our future workforce.

“It was a great chance to connect with an impressive group of people to discuss ways we could work together to improve not just K–12 education, but to strengthen and improve the community,” said Mike Teachout, an innovation coach at Stillwater Area High School.

Participants in the Think Tank included leaders from corporations such as Andersen, 3M and Adobe and local manufacturers, engineers and programmers. They came together with teachers, principals and technology staff from across the district to talk about the challenges and opportunities that exist within our current education system, as well as to generate creative solutions.

“It seems today that we hear a lot about what the schools could be doing better or how they compare to other countries - mostly nega-

tive in nature,” said John Talbot of Tramonto Circuits. “If those of us outside the [education] industry are willing to complain about it, then it is my opinion that we should be willing to help find solutions as well.”

Participants were encouraged to think creatively to identify gaps that exist within the current education system, and consider ways to improve our schools to engage students and provide relevant learning experiences. Small groups of people shared their ideas on what skills and attributes make up a well-rounded student, a successful graduate, and a desirable employee.

“We’ve been doing school the same way for generations, and while it works for 60 percent of students, there are far too many students feeling disengaged and disinterested,” said John Perry, director of learning technology and system design. “We want to learn from industry experts to see how we can make our education system more relevant and hands-on, and to help our students be more successful.”

Overall, Think Tank participants

“District leaders are aware it is not just math problems, definitions and test scores that make up a young adult. Each student is unique and trying to help them find their path early in life is a must by sharing and exposing them many different avenues and options for career paths.”

*Patti Olson
C.G. Hill and Sons*

expressed a desire to see the school district focus on developing soft skills in our students - such as the ability to collaborate and get along with people different than themselves and to think critically and learn from failure. They also suggested the district create more flexible learning spaces for students and provide more project-based and experiential learning opportunities.

“District leaders are aware it is not just math problems, definitions and test scores that make up a young adult,” said Patti Olson of C. G. Hill and Sons, a manufacturing firm in Mounds View. “Each student is unique and trying to help them find their path early in life is a must by sharing and exposing them many different avenues and options for career paths.”

The district plans to hold future Think Tanks with community experts on related topics in the future.

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Teachers Learn About Manufacturing

The Winona Chamber pays local teachers to observe manufacturers up close

By Tom Mason

Winona High School teacher Bill Braun spent two weeks this summer in a manufacturing immersion program designed to help him better counsel students about the kind of careers that might be available to them after graduation.

Braun has taught chemistry and physics at Winona High School for 25 years and has been the faculty advisor for the robotics club.

“There is a great need in hands-on mechanical fields, whether it’s machining, or woods, or electronics,” he says. “There are a lot of students who don’t have to go to a four-year school. They could get a two-year degree and really do well in manufacturing—and it’s going to be a whole lot cheaper for them than going to a four-year college.”

Braun said he was hoping to get wide exposure to what it is like to work in manufacturing. “I’d only been in education; I wanted to get first-hand experience that I could bring back to the classroom.”

The Teacher in the Workplace pilot program was designed by the Winona Area Chamber of Commerce Business Education Networks Committee and funded through a grant managed by the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce. Through it, two Winona High

School teachers received a paid summer industry immersion experience with two separate Winona area manufacturing companies. During each of the one week immersions teachers are given or directly exposed to a work assignment that provides a meaningful experience based on the teacher’s area of expertise.

Braun said he spent most of his time observing various aspects of the manufacturing process, from finance to engineering to assembly. He was most intrigued, he says, by his experience in R&D, where employees were setting up a new operation.

“I was more helping than just watching,” he says. “They’d never done it before, and so it was a trial and error for them as well. It was fun to be able to throw out ideas.”

He said creative problem solving provided a useful example to take back to his classroom. “It’s not just set procedures,” he said. “You have to understand what’s happening and be able to be creative on the fly. It’s not just a matter of memorizing something, but working toward a solution by understanding it.”

“I’m very aware that the majority of my students are probably not going to go become scientists. That’s the reality. To find out even though they’re not going to become scientists,

what are they going to have to know and do relating to science, or the skills that they can learn in the science class?”

Winona Chamber president Della Schmidt said the program grew out of an effort by the chamber to provide “familiarization tours” for all new teachers.

She said the two participating instructors will submit written reports about their experience and conduct personal debriefs with members of the sponsoring chamber committee, as will four participating manufacturers.

Schmidt said her efforts are designed to help solve manufacturing’s three challenges. “We have an image problem. We have a skills gap problem. And we have a problem with soft skills, which affects all businesses looking to hire: do you understand how to show up on time, how to articulate your ideas, how to be part of a team, how to dress properly? Those things are definitely a challenge.”

She said manufacturers have an increasing need for employees with some level of training in addition to a high school diploma. “There is a need for CNC welders, and machinists, for example. They all require something beyond high school. That is a big part of it.”

Her other objective, she said, is to help people understand and know that manufactur-



ing is now high-tech. “It is, in a vast majority of cases, in environmental situations that are comfortable. It’s not hot. It’s not dirty. It’s not loud. It has changed dramatically, but we’re not certain that people who are middle-aged and older, who are influencers of young people, are making young people aware of the opportunities in manufacturing because they might have an outdated sense of what manufacturing looks like.”

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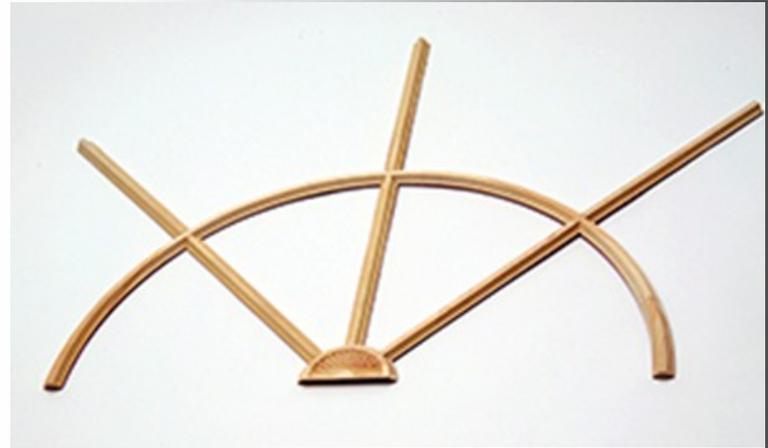
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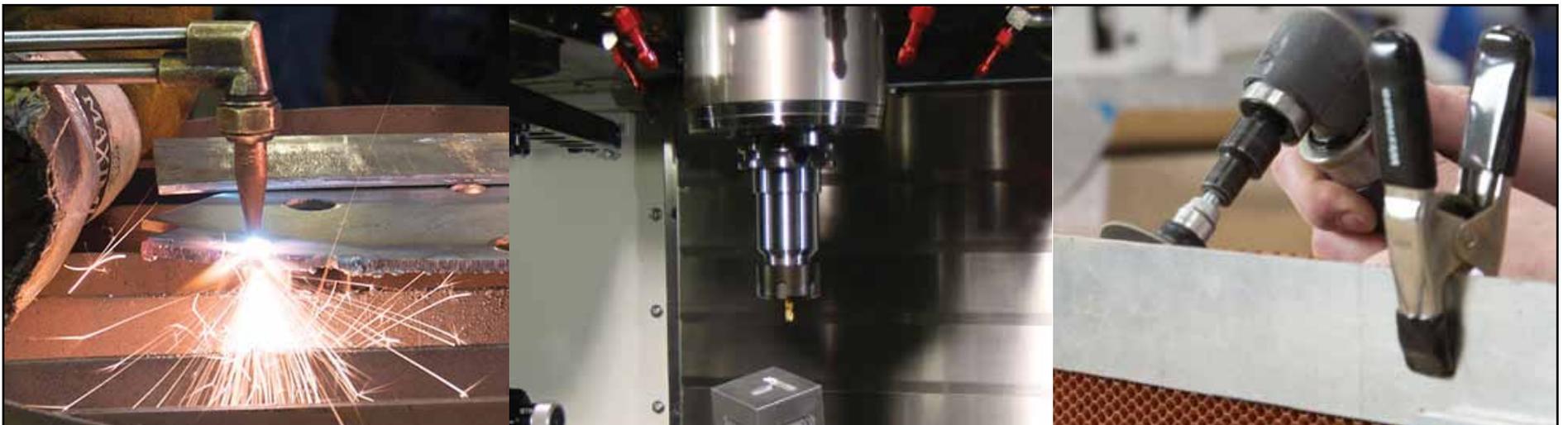


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Trading Stocks in Social Studies

Jessica McMahon
Digital Learning Specialist
Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools

The room was full of students clearly engaged in their work. The most common phrase heard as they turned on their iPads was “Oh my gosh!” as they checked stock prices to see how their group’s stocks were doing. Discussions for each group were intense, as the groups needed to reach a consensus on their buying and selling decisions. “Do you guys agree that we’re going to buy it back?” “This would be

“The bigger picture for this social studies class is about economics, but the students learn plenty about math skills, vocabulary decoding, reading for meaning and collaboration.”

the perfect time!” “It’s never going to make five percent.”

Before logging on to see their stocks, teacher Lori Bui had the students watch a video of Warren Buffett, then they discussed as a class what they heard. The word of the day seemed to be patience. Stock prices change quite a bit, but you should never sell too quickly. Bui lets the student drive the discussions each day. One day a student asked about mutual funds, so the next day Bui presented on mutual funds. “We kind of jumped in with both feet and I let the students start investing without a lot of front-loading of information. The lessons that I teach are based on what the students want to know.”

When Lori Bui first began using the stock market game, she had to fill out bubble sheets with each group’s choices to buy and sell, and mail them to Best Prep in Minneapolis. Now days, it’s done online and students are able to make much more current decisions. Best Prep provides this opportunity to teacher free of charge, with corporate sponsors field-



ing the cost. Bui reports that engagement has increased considerably from this activity.

The bigger picture for this social studies class is about economics, but the students learn plenty about math skills, vocabulary decoding, reading for meaning and collaboration. Most groups reported that they worked together “for the most part” but one group reported that sometimes people buy and sell without permission from the group. These are all skills they will need in their futures, and

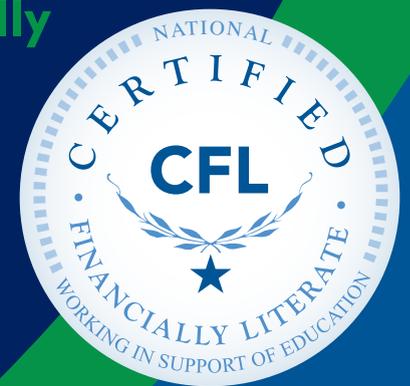
some students leave this experience and ask for stock for their birthdays. These are future-ready kids in action.

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Personalized Approach Gives Students Choice, Voice in Their Learning



Edina Public Schools Communications

Nico, a Countryside fifth grader, worked on a project during the novel study unit to show what he knew about academic Standard 1: "I can summarize a fiction text in my own words." He decided to make a newspaper. "I thought it was unique and no one else was doing it," he said. He sketched out headlines, drew pictures and was hand writing the stories on his front page. "It is a good way to show summary because I think that is what a newspaper does — kind of summarizes what happened," said Nico.

This is personalized learning in action. Nico chose the book to read, the academic standard to learn first, how to learn it, and used a project of choice to show what he'd learned. In

short, choice, voice and proof of mastery.

Nico and his classmates have been part of a pilot study this year focused on creating a personalized learning experience for fourth and fifth grade language arts classes at Countryside and Cornelia elementary schools. As the year has progressed, students and teachers have hit their stride. For teachers, there has been learning around how to release some of the control they are accustomed to having. For students, there has been self-discovery about how they like to learn and work, in addition to accomplishing the required standards in ways they find engaging and that foster their self-motivation, critical thinking and creativity.

Kate Perardi and Paul Tessmer-Tuck, two of the district's gifted education teachers, proposed this pilot study more than a year ago. They were using personalized learning techniques in their gifted classes and quickly saw that the methods and benefits of this type of teaching could work in any classroom. They

worked with Countryside and Cornelia teachers last summer to share techniques and what they've learned by teaching this way, and have continued to meet with the pilot study cohort throughout the school year.

"There are amazing teachers in this district who have taken this and totally embraced it," said Tessmer-Tuck.

Jenny Rydeen and Mark DeYoung, fifth grade teachers at Countryside, say that these personalized learning methods have made a noticeable difference for them and students.

"It is amazing," said Rydeen. "Students have more time to reflect and are so much more engaged and interested in talking about the books they read. This is definitely living up to expectations."

Molly O'Keefe, a Cornelia fifth grade teacher, also says that personalized learning methods have made a marked difference in her classroom. "I love teaching this way," she said. "It is rewarding to see the students connect with the standards in a more authentic way. It makes the learning something that teachers and students share, rather than the teachers holding the knowledge and giving it to the students — everyone is part of the process of learning."

To achieve that kind of environment, teachers need to release some of the control they are accustomed to, which can be a difficult adjustment when they are used to giving

specific directions for when and how learning occurs. "I think it is in our personalities and letting go of control does not come naturally," she said. But by releasing control and allowing students to work independently, Rydeen said teachers have found they have more time for one-on-one conferencing.

Likewise, it is an adjustment for students, said Tessmer-Tuck and Perardi. "Students have to unlearn to rely on teachers telling them what to do," Tessmer-Tuck said. "It takes more work for them to be self-directed, and they get exhausted easier." A mix of direct teacher instruction and independent learning can ease the adjustment, they said. "But once students know the 'why' and what they need to learn, they can be more in charge of it," Perardi added.

Students learn about self

In addition to learning the academic standards, there have been many self-discoveries as students make choices about how to work and the projects they create to show their learning.

A group of girls, huddled in a corner, worked on their projects. Emily said she and Brittany had tried working together on an earlier project but it didn't go well. "We got into arguments about what project to do and what device to use," she said, laughing. "We decided we like

Continued on Page 13

Apply for a Grant



Amber Brown Grant

The Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI) offers the Amber Brown Grant to commemorate author Paula Danziger. The grant is awarded annually to one school and includes a visit by a children's book author or illustrator to encourage children and youth to read and connect them with creative influences.

Deadline: Applications are accepted November 1 through April 15, annually

Website: www.scbwi.org/awards/grants/amber-brown-grant

Instrumental Music Grants

The Fender Music Foundation awards instruments and equipment to eligible music instruction programs that are part of US public schools or qualified nonprofit organizations. The instruments and equipment are lightly used, blemished, or otherwise imperfect and have been collected from manufacturers and retailers.

Deadline: Applications are accepted year-round

Website: www.fendermusicfoundation.org/grants/grants-info

Let's Play Imagination Playground Grants

KaBoom! supports organizations that build playgrounds for children and youth to ensure they have the opportunity to lead an active and healthy lifestyle. KaBoom! grants support community-inspired projects that engage the larger community in all aspects of project planning and playground build execution.

Deadline: Applications are accepted year-round

Website: kaboom.org/grants/creative_play

Air Force Junior ROTC Grants

The Air Force Association Junior ROTC (AFJROTC) grant program was established to promote aerospace education throughout

classrooms and units. Applications are judged by the importance and the impact the selected aerospace activity will have on students. Funds may be used for any aerospace education related activity from purchasing textbooks or videotapes, to going on a field trip to an aerospace museum, Air Force base, or other aerospace facility.

Grants up to \$250 are awarded

Deadline: Applications are due February 10 and October 10, annually

Website: www.afa.org/afa/informationfor/teachers/k12grants/airforcejuniorrotcgrant

Project Produce: Fruit and Veggie Grants for Schools

The Chef Ann Foundation and Skoop have teamed up to help schools increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables for children and youth, and nutrition education in schools. The purpose of Project Produce is to create planned lunchroom activities to showcase and taste fresh vegetables and fruits.

Grants of \$2,500 are awarded

Deadline: Applications are accepted year-round

Website: www.chefannfoundation.org/programs-and-grants/project-produce

Whole Kids Foundation School Garden Grants

Whole Kids Foundation created this

program in partnership with FoodCorps to provide a \$2,000 monetary grant to support an edible educational garden on the grounds of a K-12 school. Schools, or a nonprofit organization working in partnership with a school, may apply.

Deadline: October 31, 2016

Website: www.wholekidsfoundation.org/index.php/schools/programs/school-garden-grant-program

2017 Honey Bee Grant Program

The Honey Bee Grant program allows for a K-12 school or non-profit organization to receive support for an educational honey bee hive.

There are 3 grant options:

- **Monetary grant** of \$1,500 to support the success of a honey bee hive educational program.
- **Observation hive:** equipment grant of a custom made indoor observation hive from The Bee Cause Project
- **Traditional hive:** equipment grant of an outdoor top bar hive with Starter Kit from Bee Thinking

Application Open: September 1st, 2016

Letter of Intent (LOI) Closed: October 31, 2016 at 5pm

Website: www.wholekidsfoundation.org/schools/honey-bee-grant

More Grants on Page 17

3D Printer at Groveland Combines Science and Compassion



Minnetonka Public Schools
Communications Staff

In school, everyone needs a hand from time to time. In Tatiana Giraldo's 3rd grade Spanish immersion class at Groveland, it is a literal hand. Giraldo spearheaded a project to build a prosthetic hand using the school's 3D printer.

Inspired by a post she saw on Facebook last summer, Giraldo found a great way to combine technology, science and compassion into one powerful lesson for her students. The post was about a program

called e-Nable, which provides designs and instructions to build and donate prosthetic hands for people in need around the world using 3D printers.

"The article just caught my attention. I knew we had a 3D printer, but I didn't know how to use it," Giraldo explained. "The idea of printing something useful, that was not just a fun toy or trinket, changed my whole vision of how to use these devices as an educator."

Giraldo partnered with Colleen Small, the media specialist at Groveland, to program the 3D printer.

"The 3D printer was purchased by our PTA last year with funds raised at the Spring Gala," said Small. "The software to print was pretty easy to learn and the vendors were very helpful."

Giraldo explained how students are using the hand as part of several lessons in her class.

"We started the school year talking

about exoskeletons and how animals use them. I used the parts of the hand plus a couple of videos to show my students how people can now create their own parts and improve their bodies when for any reason we are missing a part, a little bit like hermit crabs."

"We also talked about the engineering process, where you have to study the problem, create a solution, test it and improve it. The people that came up with the idea for this hand had been working for a while on the design, and they created many prototypes before developing the device we have here. It is amazing for the students to see how something so 'simple' requires that much work."

Giraldo's plans for this year?

"I see the students learning how design and print their own models, solving real life problems and printing hands on a regular basis, with adults around them serving as coaches and facilitators. I can't wait!"

Combining leading-edge technology, such as 3D printers, with authentic and real-world learning, engages students because lessons are relevant, meaningful and exciting.

For other teachers with access to a 3D printer, Small advises "you have to just



jump in with the kids and know that some things are going to fail and some things are going to amaze you. You should also take advantage of the online 3D communities that are out there. They have some great information to share."

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High School Coach Teaches More than Just Athletics

Continued from Page 1

Timpane points out that the cat telling Alice "it doesn't matter which way you go" was true. It was true because Alice didn't know where she was going. She didn't have the end in mind. Timpane also points out, if the girls don't know what the puzzle is supposed to look like, it makes it difficult to put it together.

"Have an image in mind of what the end looks like," says Timpane. "All things are created twice. Once in your mind or imagination. The second is in the physical-doing the steps."

Last year, the players, were asked to set goals for the season and turn their goals into Timpane. Only one on the team had the State Tournament as a goal.

There are two important key aspects that Timpane wants his players to know. 1. You are the driver of your life, not the passenger. 2. Decide where you want to go.

In regards to their resumes, Timpane says, "It's ok if you don't know what you want right now."

However, Timpane wants them to start thinking about it.

"I'm not afraid of calling up a CEO and saying, 'I've got a girl here who wants to go into IT. Is there something we can do to get her in an internship?'" says Timpane.

A shocked eighth-grade student, Paris Hoel,

remarks, "I didn't know he could do that!"

Timpane urges the girls to volunteer in a field of work they are interested in. Some may find they love it and some may find out it is not a good fit at all.

He presents another exercise to the girls. This assignment is more of a seed in their minds. Timpane wants them to think about what they would want written in their obituary. He wants the girls to decide what values are important to them.

"We want to teach them to become a good person instead of an athlete. [If we do that] they become great athletes," remarks Timpane.

Stephanie Van Houtan, the assistant girls' soccer coach, adds, "Championships die. You don't walk up to a person and say, 'Hi. I'm Mark the National Championship winner,' says Van Houtan. "You say, 'Hi. I'm Mark.'"

Timpane smiles saying, "We spend two hours a day with these girls, which can be more time than with their parents. We just want to make sure they become well-rounded people."

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Personalized Approach Gives Students Choice

Continued from Page 12

working separately but we can still sit near each other." Kailey worked on a book that she would use to show her mastery of summary and theme standards. "I like the way this will look in a book," she said, as she cut and pasted colored paper into her handwritten book. "I could do it on a computer but I like paper better."

Along the counter, computers were the method of choice for three boys, although that was all their work had in common. Abdi and Jackson were working on projects geared toward the same standard -- Standard 6: "I can accurately quote from a fiction text when I am explaining my predictions." Although their goal was the same, their journeys were different. They read different books, and while Abdi worked on a slide show, Jackson was created an online cartoon to show mastery.

In DeYoung's class, a similar scene played out. Griffin was using Google slides to show Standard 6, but said he would create a bubble map for Standard 7. "I need to compare two people in the story," he said. "A bubble map will be an easy way to do that." Easton also chose Google slides for his work on Standard 6. "I can make my prediction on one slide, then a quote that supports my prediction on the next," he said. "And I get to choose blocks and colors and use my creativity."

Whether it is choosing colors, or what book to read or which academic standard to tackle first, allowing students to personalize the way they learn leads to a more engaged student and, in the end, more learning, according to the teachers in the pilot study.

"I've noticed that students seem much more connected to the 'why' behind their learning," O'Keefe said. "They are analyzing the reading standards to understand what they should be able to do and show. And since students present their work, and each student's final product is different, they are also learning from each other rather than competing."

And, the teachers say, the implications of this type of learning go far beyond fifth grade. "I just read an article about the top 10 things employers want kids to know," said Tessmer-Tuck, "and personalized learning touches on all of them. When we give students opportunities to take charge of their learning, they are more motivated to learn."

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Getting to Know You

Izzy Events Promote Intentional Cross-Cultural Interaction

Rachel Gutierrez
Mounds View Public Schools

It is a weeknight in March. School is out for the afternoon but there is still a buzz of student voices throughout Edgewood Middle School. Edgewood's principal, Penny Howard, says that it is not uncommon to find students in the library, hallways and classrooms before and after school. With a number of co-curricular offerings to choose from, most students find a program, club or sport that brings them to school early or keeps them there late. She says these co-curricular connections are important and have an impact on how students feel about their school, and their overall success.

Seventh-grader Ignatius Ejofor is among the group of students still at school on this particular March afternoon. Ignatius participates in the school band and the STRIPES program. He is also on the basketball, track, soccer and floor hockey teams.

When Principal Howard says connectedness impacts students' overall success, she points to students like Ignatius. "Not only is Ignatius involved in sports and enrichment programs, he is also an academic excellence and honor roll student. He is a shining example of a connected kid who boasts academic success."

Breaking Down Barriers

Integration and equity specialist Xavier Reed sees how connectedness impacts student success and wants to extend the sense of connectedness beyond the school walls. He enlisted Ignatius, along with other students and staff, to help organize and host "We are all Edgewood" in March.

After experiencing Intentional Social Interaction events (ISI — pronounced "izzy") at Marnita's Table, Xavier was determined to bring that model to Edgewood. An organization based on human-centered values, Marnita's Table brings people together for a meal and intentional cross-cultural interaction. With the goal of breaking down barriers and making everyone feel comfortable to participate, these events are known to help facilitate important conversations about education and other topics. "If we invite everyone to the table and expand our stakeholder reach, we'll be better equipped for success," says Xavier. "Both the school and the community will benefit."

The first school-hosted "Izzy" in the District drew a crowd of more than 130 community members including business owners, former and current families, and community and church groups. Attendees gathered around tables to share dinner and participate in orga-



nized conversation-starting activities.

According to Tai Celestine-Lloyd, the Edgewood event was a success. Tai, who has three students at schools throughout the District, said "Many times you see everyone sitting around and keeping to themselves at events." Here, "the organized activities brought everyone together." She said that the games and activities helped people start conversations and connect in a way that they may not have otherwise connected. According to Tai, all schools could benefit from events like this.

"Turns out when you bring people together for good food, conversations naturally begin," says Penny Howard. "It was fun to see our students facilitating conver-

sations and helping to ensure everyone felt comfortable and engaged." "Izzy" events are a cost-effective human-centered way to bring together a community of varied cultures and productively plan and problem-solve.

Edgewood and other schools throughout the District will also host similar events in 2016–2017.

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Inclusive EHS Thespian Troupe Shows New Possibilities

Continued from Page 1

cation students require varying levels of assistance and care, so planning began immediately and was pretty intense, according to Hanson.

"I can't tell you how many dozens of emails I exchanged with the International Festival folks," she said. "Housing, seating at the events . . . every detail needed to be arranged and negotiated," she said. "They were very helpful and totally open to it, but this hadn't been done before so they were adapting to our needs along the way." Tony Matthes, theater arts teacher at EHS, who had his own hands full organizing the EHS Thespians' trip to the festival, was very supportive and also worked hard to get the group to the competition.

The six attended the weeklong festival with an entourage of teachers, family members, and personal assistants. Their performance earned another Superior rating and they were one of 20 groups selected to perform in the main stage Showcase. In fact, they were the finale. Hanson emphasized that the group was judged on the same criteria as every other group and earned their score "on their own merit." But scores are not the only reasons the trip was a success.

"To be included and have the opportunity to contribute artistically, to be able to work with my partner and contribute as best as I can is very rewarding," said Jenni, expressing her favorite parts of the experience through her father, Dan.

"Emma felt included with all the kids and was able to do what she loves most — sing!" said her mother. "Emma and her partner were very compatible. Delia was so kind and patient."

Their singing partners were also excited to be part of something new and untried. "I was excited for my partner to be able to experience something so wonderful and empowering and beautiful," said Delia, "and to be able to show that to the world — that what we were doing can be, and should be, done anywhere!" Delia is a veteran of at least seven EHS productions and said it was great to be able to share her own love of the theater.

The students not only provided onstage support for their special education part-

ners, they also prepared them backstage and helped deal with performance butterflies.

"We told them that everybody gets the jitters so they aren't alone," said Ella, who added that the only worry she had was ensuring that her partner, Elise, was having fun through it all. "I wanted the experience to be as amazing for her as it was for me."

Kiersten Jarvis said her daughter, Elise, was scared at times. "She overcame her fears and was able to perform in front of thousands," Kiersten said. Elise also loved the dances, dressing up, putting on make-up and doing hair with the rest of the girls in the number.

The students found the response to their performance overwhelming. "I think the audience was surprised at how well the piece worked with partners," Ella said. "They all watched very intently, and immediately when it finished there was a standing ovation," said Delia. "It was amazing."

The special education partners and their

"To be included and have the opportunity to contribute artistically, to be able to work with my partner and contribute as best as I can is very rewarding."

Jenni Moffatt

parents are grateful to Hanson for making the experience possible. "Emma is so proud of herself, as are we, and we plan to find new opportunities for her to sing and perform," said her mother. Emma returned to the stage this spring, playing the part of Belle in the 2016 May Term production of "Beauty and the Beast."

"The festival recognized and included disabled performers, and demonstrated a great compassion and sensitivity for who we are," said Jenni through her father. "I am grateful to them for their acceptance and understanding that the arts are for all."

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Student Contests and Awards

Regeneron Science Talent Search

The Regeneron Science Talent Search (Regeneron STS), an annual program of Society for Science & the Public (SSP), is the nation's most prestigious science research competition for high school seniors. SSP has provided a national stage for the country's best and brightest young scientists to present original research to nationally recognized professional scientists since 1942.

Three hundred semifinalists receive \$2,000. Each school receives \$2,000 for each semifinalist named. Forty finalists compete for the top 10 awards, with a top award of \$250,000 awarded.

Deadline: Transcripts and recommendations are due November 9, 2016. Technical support requests are due November 15, 2016. Applications and all materials are due November 16, 2016.

Website: student.societyforscience.org/apply-science-talent-search

Team America Rocketry Challenge

The Team America Rocketry Challenge (TARC) strives to inspire the next generation of engineers and technicians to join the aerospace industry. The challenge is an extra-curricular, hands-on, project-based learning

program incorporating aerospace-specific science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Teams of three to 10 students design, build, and fly a rocket. Each year a unique task is included in the challenge.

Prizes up to \$100,000 are awarded.

Deadline: Entries are accepted September 1 through December 2, 2016.

Website: rocketcontest.org

JFK Profile in Courage Essay Contest

The book "Profiles in Courage," written by President John F. Kennedy and published in 1956 when he was a US Senator, inspires the JFK Profile in Courage Essay Contest. The contest challenges students to identify an example of political courage on the part of a US elected official at the local, state, or national level during or since 1956, and then analyze what made the person's decision and actions a "profile in courage."

Deadline: Applications are accepted September 1, 2016 through January 4, 2017.

Website: www.jfklibrary.org/Education/Profile-in-Courage-Essay-Contest.aspx

Bright Schools Competition

Through the Bright Schools Competition, which will award nearly \$40,000 in prizes,

students in grades 6–8 located in the U.S. and Canada, are asked to explore the correlation between light and sleep using scientific inquiry or engineering design concepts. Students will measure the amount of light available in the classroom, compare and analyze light measurements, and create and submit an original project that demonstrates their understanding of the effects of light and sleep on student health and performance.

Deadline: Competition registration is now open and submissions will be accepted until February 6, 2017

Website: brightschoolscompetition.org



Shell Science Lab Challenge

The Shell Science Lab Challenge, sponsored by Shell Oil Company (Shell) and administered by NSTA, encourages teachers (grades 6–12) in the U.S. and Canada, who have found innovative ways to deliver quality lab experiences with limited school and laboratory resources, to share their approaches for a chance to win up to \$93,000 in prizes, including a grand prize school science lab makeover support package valued at \$20,000.

Deadline: All entries must be received by 11:59 pm EST on 1/23/2017, via online submission.

Website: www.nsta.org/shellsciencelab

Paul Gagnon Prize

The National Council for History Education (NCHE) annually awards the Paul Gagnon Prize. The prize is awarded to either a teacher in kindergarten through grade 12 who exhibits exceptional historical scholarship, or to individuals or groups that have made a significant contribution to the promotion of history education. A cash prize of \$1,000 is awarded, plus complimentary registration for the NCHE National Conference.

Deadline: Applications are due Dec. 9, 2016.

Website: www.nche.net/awards

Recycle-Bowl Competition

The *Keep America Recycle-Bowl Competition* invites all K–12 schools in the United States to recycle for the chance to win prizes and receive national recognition. The competition seeks to establish new recycling programs within schools, increase recycling rates in schools that currently recycle, and provide teachers and students educational opportunities about recycling and waste reduction.

Deadline: October 14, 2016.

Website: www.kab.org/recycle-bowl/why-recycle-bowl

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Grants



Continued from Page 12

Dudley T. Dougherty Foundation Grants

The Dudley T. Dougherty Foundation supports programs in arts, community, education, environment, health care, and peace. Recent awards include music lessons for people with disabilities, children's theater, learning center, writing education, after-school and summer activities, literacy programs, and services for at-risk children and youth.

Deadline: Applications are due November 30, 2016

Website: dudleytdoughertyfoundation.org/submit_grant

Education and Technology Program School Station Grants

The Education and Technology Program (ETP) of American Radio Relay League (ARRL) provides funding and resources to elementary, middle, and high schools in the United States. ETP School Station Grants are awarded for the purpose of purchasing equipment to set

up a school amateur (ham) radio station. Equipment valued at up to \$1,500 is awarded.

Deadline: Applications are due November 1, annually

Website: www.arrl.org/etp-grants

Epsilon Fund Grants for Young Scholars Programs

The Epsilon Fund of the American Mathematical Society (AMS) annually awards grants to summer mathematics programs that support and nurture mathematically talented youth. Programs should run over a period of multiple weeks during the summer, bring in at least 20 high school students with mathematical talent, and generally be directed by mathematicians.

Grants up to \$15,000 are awarded.

Deadline: Applications are accepted September 15 through December 15, annually

Website: www.ams.org/programs/edu-support/epsilon/emp-epsilon

What's It Like: Teaching Talent Development



By Carissa Hopkins-Hoel
St. Cloud Area School District 742

I wonder . . .

Heather Ebnet, a District 742 teacher on special assignment for the Young Scholars program, has an entire wall of post-its filled with “I wonder” statements from her students. She calls it her “wonder wall.”

It is this wonder wall that helps to inspire kids to create projects. Students in the Young Scholars program are students who have demonstrated signs of higher learning, such as critical-thinking and problem-solving skills.

Once a student is identified for the program, he/she continues with the program through fifth grade. From there, the goal is to move the students into the advanced courses or AVID (advancement via individual determination) in the middle and secondary levels.

Students in this project-based program are pulled from their regular classes one to two hours a week. One of those hours is “Genius Hour.” Students are able to choose between doing a project or a presentation on anything they are curious about.

Ebnet shares, “When you allow the kids to be curious, it is a gift to me and the kids.

They get to expand on what they already know, and it is fun to watch.”

The Genius Hour is meant to guide students through the project process, start to finish, yet continue to build on their projects.

“Our work is never done,” says Ebnet, “We can always improve on it. No one is perfect. We make mistakes, but we can still move forward.”

The program is meant to push students to see themselves as learners. Fourth and fifth-graders present their growth mindset project to the Madison Elementary staff during their staff meeting. The students’ “I Wonder” statements turn into a presentation of “I believe.”

The theme is “Keep Moving Forward.” It is a video montage focusing on the power of “yet,” “resilience,” “overcoming failures” and “mind traps.”

Students teach the staff. Madison staff, while in groups, discuss what the most difficult thing is for them to remember when practicing the growth mindset.

Students call on the teachers to share with the group.

Denise Huebsch, an academic coach, says, “For me, it’s foreign language, I’ve had the mindset that I can’t start learning a foreign language like Chinese. I’ve had to change my thinking, and I’m starting to learn some of it now.”

“I get trapped by my schedule—trying to fit everything in within a time frame, and it sometimes gets in my way [remembering to praise the process],” states Karen Kruse, a music teacher.

There are approximately 160 students in the Young Scholars program at Madison Elementary and Discovery Community School. The program has been such a success, the plan is to expand the program to Talahi Community School and Lincoln Elementary School.

Ebnet describes the program as life-changing for the students. They have another adult to support them in the higher learning that the program promotes.

The students are proud to be in Young Scholars.

“They are so proud to be a Young Scholar. They physically raise their shoulders and show it,” says Ebnet. “They are super, super kids. It’s fun to watch them grow. I’m such a better teacher because of this program. I’ve learned how to reach kids in a different way and I’ve been at this for 20 years.”

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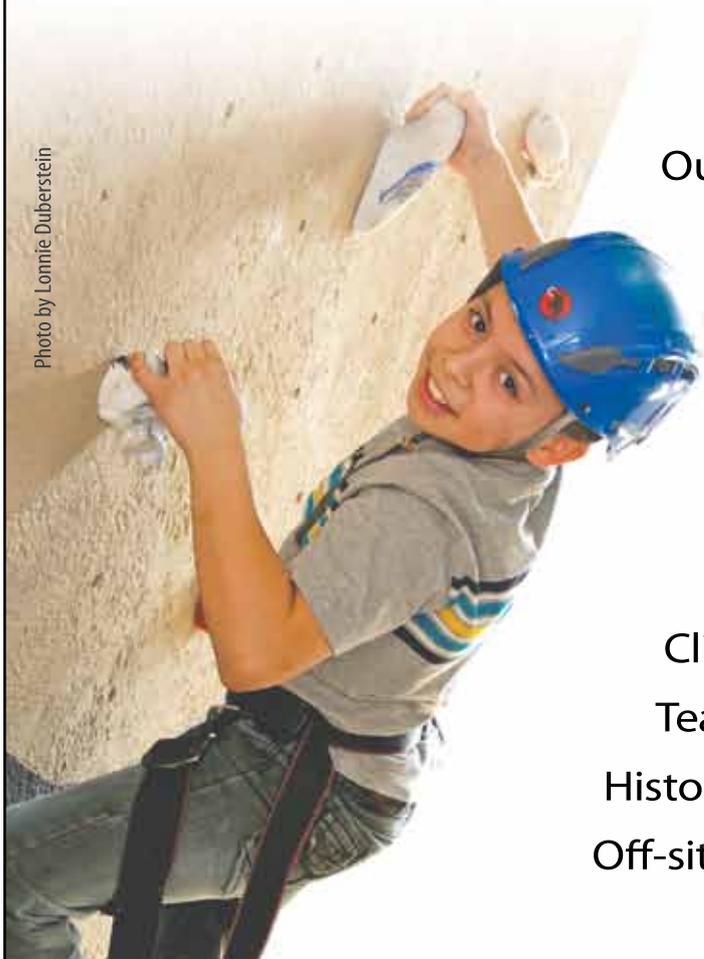
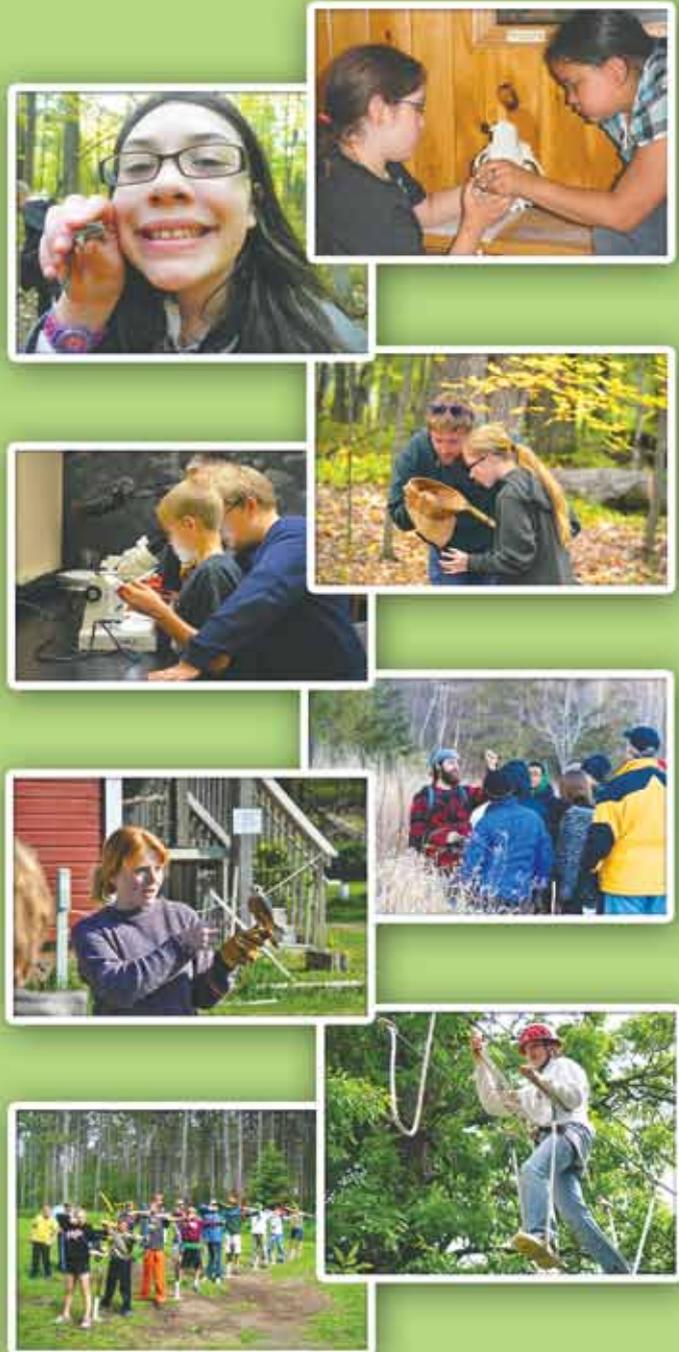


Photo by Lonnie Duberstein

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