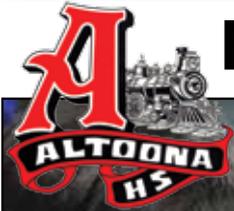


# TEACHING TODAY WI™

Spring 2018, Volume 2

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS AS YOUR EDUCATION CONNECTION



## Fostering Individuality



Steve Marczinke, Brittany Morrison, Amanda Mussehl, Altoona High School

Albert Einstein once said, “It is important to foster individuality, for only the individual can produce the new ideas.” Einstein, a masterful scientist and creator of new ideas, did not always fit into the mold of what was the societal norm in the classroom or the community as a whole. What better role model to follow when thinking about our beliefs as a

With students taking the lead, we have seen a shift from focusing on student deficits to focusing on the individual’s strengths and future goals. With this change of focus, it is much easier to make a plan that is individually focused and allows students to be empowered to come up with their next big idea!

special education team?

An Individual Education Plan or an IEP meeting is what is required to be held and written every year for students with disabilities. It is a plan that lays out what a student’s current levels are, discusses goals, and labels any supports that may be needed. To make the focus on the individual, the special education team has been implementing student-led IEP meetings. With students taking the lead, we have seen a shift from focusing on student deficits to focusing on the individual’s strengths and future goals. With this change of focus, it is much easier to make a plan that is individually focused and allows students to be empowered to come up with their next big idea!

To assist students in meeting their goals and improving specific skill areas, several new “classes” have been implemented. Trans Math is a class that is designed to help students with math learning needs get prepared for Algebra I. This curriculum allows students to close the learning gaps they may have as they work toward learning the prerequisite skills necessary to be successful in Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, and so on.

Continued on Page 4



Plymouth School District

## Parkview 3rd-Grade Class Gets Surprise Visitor



Students in Julie Kohlmann’s third-grade class at Parkview Elementary School were sitting on the floor, listening to literacy coach Stacey Ross share a story about a military family being reunited.

The students wore red paper hearts with the name Nolan on them, a show of support for a classmate whose father has been deployed overseas for the past year.

After the story, Mrs. Kohlmann — wearing a patriotic scarf — played the song “God Bless the USA.” Nolan, sitting with his classmates, felt someone tap his shoulder. He turned to see his dad, Sfc. Ethan Feldner.

Father and son hugged, then moved to the front of the classroom, where the students serenaded them with a song from their Veterans Day program. Sfc. Feldner then brought in a big bag of gear and let students try on his helmets, bullet-proof vest, and goggles. He talked about his job as a military mechanic, shared photographs, and answered lots of questions.

“Coming together to support a military family who has made a sacrifice that we cannot take for granted,” [Julie Kohlmann] said. “‘Give Love’ is our class theme this year, and I think this event did just that.”

As Nolan walked out with his dad, all students and staff lined the hallways for a “clap-out.” Students clapped, and little ones offered high-fives. Some held posters and flags, and some thanked him for his service.

Mrs. Kohlmann had learned only two days earlier that learned that Sfc. Feldner was returning and wanted to surprise Nolan.

“I first had tears and a stomach drop because I could only imagine how amazing this was going to be for both dad and Nolan,” she said. “I knew this was a big, big deal. I envisioned the reunion and started brainstorming ways to magnify the significance of this very special event.”

Continued on Page 4

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**Stand4Change Gives Students Hope Against Bullying**

Bullying is not a rite of passage. It is wrong, and we can help change this. With the prevalence of bullying, especially the rapidly growing cyberbullying through social media, it is more important than ever to stand strong with our youth to empower them on the virtues of being kind and respectful to others. We can make a difference.

**Poverty and Trauma are Causing Principals to Rethink How They Lead**

People living in poverty suffer the effects of nearly every major societal problem, many of which affect their children's ability to learn. Often referred to as a manager of people, the school principal has been able to be effective at increasing academic proficiencies by using traditional methods of educational leadership.

**10 Tips to Prevent Laptop and Mobile Device Theft**

In today's school environment, the theft or loss of even a single laptop computer cell phone or tablet can be devastating — unless you take some common sense measures to mitigate the damage ahead of time. It's not just the cost of the lost device itself. If there is confidential, proprietary or personally identifiable information on the device — or readily accessible through it — your school could be exposed to substantial liability, fines and penalties.

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## Stand4Change Gives Students Hope Against Bullying

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By Pam Harlin  
Meemic Foundation Director

Let's get serious . . . about bullying.

I have many memories of my youth, but the ones that are most vivid are the times when I was bullied. In elementary school in Columbus, Ohio, I recall one particular incident of being followed home from school by a girl and her friends, yelling taunts at me, even standing in front of my house while continuing their hateful comments. The attacks were personal and made me fearful. I felt alone and afraid; my self-image was crushed.

Even as an adult, I can still feel the scars left from those incidents. And I know my story is not unique. Bullying is not a rite of passage. It is wrong, and we can help change this.

With the prevalence of bullying, especially the rapidly growing cyberbullying through social media, it is more important than ever to stand strong with our youth to

empower them on the virtues of being kind and respectful to others. We can make a difference.

The Meemic Foundation has partnered with *Defeat the Label*, a nonprofit organization that is primarily focused on empowering students to take a stand against bullying. One of their premier events is *Stand4Change Day*. On Friday, May 4, at noon ET, millions of students from around the world stand and take the pledge against bullying. It's a powerful moment, one that every school across our country should participate in. Registration is simple and free. Visit [MeemicFoundation.org/Events](http://MeemicFoundation.org/Events) to sign up today.

For more resources to continue the conversation with your students, please visit:

[MeemicFoundation.org/Together](http://MeemicFoundation.org/Together).

Let's get serious about bullying . . . together.

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## Fostering Individuality

Continued from Page 1

"Positive Approach to Student Success" (PASS) programs are designed to let students earn credits in areas they are lacking for graduation. These PASS classes can be in a booklet form or online and are generally in the CORE areas of English, Math, Science, and Social Studies. The PASS programs are designed at a "students' ability" level and completed at their own individual pace.

We also offer "GradPoint" online courses for students who may perform better online than in a general classroom setting. GradPoint allows students to get required credits for graduation while offering options that may not be available at AHS.

With students whose focus is to go straight to work after high school, we provide vocational skills programs to work on the soft and hard skills of employment. In the past we have partnered with St. Francis Food Pantry and Hope Gospel Bargain Center to help students practice these skills in a hands on environment. We were able to partner with the Eau Claire Humane Association and Metropolis Resort

and Conference Center to expand the opportunities for our students to get hands on vocational experience.

Although most students will leave Altoona High School with the same piece of paper, a high school diploma, their journeys through these halls and the stories they tell will all be different. These "classes" are one of the ways we meet the individual needs of students in special education to reach their goals and prepare for life after high school. It is our goal as a special education team to foster the individuality of the students that we work with so they can enter the world with the confidence to produce new ideas!

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## Parkview 3rd-Grade Class

Gets Surprise Visitor *Continued from Page 1*

She couldn't tell the class for fear that they would leak the secret. But she instructed them to wear red, white and blue the next day and had them make flags — for what they thought was a Martin Luther King Jr. Day activity.

"Almost scary coincidentally, I came upon a Scholastic News while I was organizing on Monday evening," she said. "The cover story was about a military family being separated and then reunited. It was from November, but I had set it aside because at that time it would have been too painful for Nolan."

Mrs. Kohlmann recruited Mrs. Ross to read the article to the class, and instructed the students to tape on their paper "Nolan hearts" as a reminder to keep him in their hearts as they listened. Meanwhile, she met Sfc. Feldner in the school office and escorted him to the classroom.

In addition to creating a memorable moment for Nolan and his dad, Mrs. Kohlmann wanted all of her students to experience something special: "Coming

together to support a military family who has made a sacrifice that we cannot take for granted," she said. "'Give Love' is our class theme this year, and I think this event did just that."

"I sincerely thank Ethan for his service to our country and thank him for letting us be a part of this magical reunion," Mrs. Kohlmann said. "I feel honored to have been able to be a part of it."

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# Fourth Graders Dig Into Economics Through Entrepreneurship Exercise



*Courtesy of Greendale Schools*

Learning by doing is a foundational concept of project-based learning (PBL) and College Park fourth graders are learning about the economy through the development of their own business idea. Just as any entrepreneur would, each student (ages 9 or 10) has been tasked to develop a product or service idea, do market research, plan for the resources needed,

determine the startup cost of their business, and create a prototype. The culmination of which was making a pitch of their business idea to “investors”.

College Park fourth grade teacher Leah Wycklendt, who completed PBL training last summer, along with her grade-level teaching partner, Sara Toter, brought the project to the students this year. The economics unit has been a part of the fourth grade curriculum in

Greendale Schools for many years. Adding project-based learning to the unit, takes it to a different dimension for students and teachers. “We have taught this economics unit for several years in conjunction with a simulation field trip taken annually,” Wycklendt said. “By transforming this content with PBL, students learn about the economy and all of the important and necessary concepts by investigating a subject matter that means something to them through the development of their own business ideas.”

College Park’s Fourth Grade “Shark Tank” began with a launching event. In this case, students watched clips of kids who have been on the ABC Television series Shark Tank, pitching their businesses. “It was important for our students to see that there are actual kids their age in the world starting a business,” Wycklendt said. “Once our students began discussing possible business ideas, the projects took off!”

Wycklendt and Toter offered students the authentic question, “How can I develop a business idea that will better my community,” to help them get started. Each student works to answer that question throughout the project development.

Some very interesting projects have emerged. “One student really enjoys riding his bike and listening to music. However, he didn’t like that he couldn’t listen to music with his bike helmet on so he’s working to create a product that is a bike helmet with built in headphones,” she said. “Another student is working to make picking up your clothes less of a chore and more of a game by creating a laundry basket hoop. Now students can shoot their clothes into a laundry hoop. Yet another is creating a table top tennis board game out of all recycled materials. They amaze me!”

Giving students real-life project opportunities, plus voice and choice in their learning is key to the success in PBL. The project at College Park has stretched student learning by allowing them to take the content and concepts about the economy and apply them to the real world. “Our students were able to ask deep questions about how businesses and the economy work because they were seeing it through the eyes of an entrepreneur,” said Wycklendt. “It also allows students to work within their level. Their projects range from fairly simple, such as a babysitting business, to complex.”

Throughout the project, students have a voice and choice in the ways they complete the assignment, from deciding what approach to take to determining how to present their project. As they proceed in their work, students are constantly prompted by teachers to reflect on their product while they are receiving feedback and revising their work. A final important component in PBL is the opportunity for the finished product to be visible to the public. Student work can be placed at the public library, a coffee shop, or presented to community members. “This encourages the



best work possible, as the students know that there will be a public audience, not just their teachers looking at it,” Wycklendt added.

Fourth graders are responding to the new opportunities and way of thinking created through this way of learning. “It isn’t about teaching traditionally and then doing a project at the end of the unit. The project is *the teaching and the learning*,” Wycklendt said.

“They are asking questions and seeking answers. Often times their questions are driving what’s being taught that day. Through the project they may think of a “what if” or questions, such as how do you get the money to start your business. These questions are immediate and relevant to where the kids are at in the project, so it’s important for us to have them think through the answers to their questions.”

She notes the students often find the answers to their questions through classroom discussions. “A simple, ‘What do you guys think,’ opens up a conversation where they can begin to answer each other’s or even their own questions. It has also helped us to raise the level of rigor of the unit. Students are using the vocabulary naturally in their conversations about their product and applying things about the economy and businesses to their project.”

Presentations for the College Park ‘Shark Tank’ were made to investors on February 23. Students presented their projects to a panel of community-member ‘judges’ and their peers, all of whom asked questions about the project and offered suggestions for improvements. Overall, it was a great experience!

*Images courtesy of Greendale Schools.*

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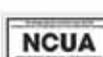
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## School Counselor of the Year — Congratulations Mrs. Leadholm!



School District of Black River Falls

Sue Leadholm has been a counselor at our high school for the past 23 years and we couldn't be more excited for her recent recognition as one of four individuals throughout the state named School Counselor of the Year! Of those four individuals, one moves forward to represent the Wisconsin School Counselors Association on a

national level to be in the running for American School Counselor Association National Counselor of the Year! Sue will be the representative from the state of Wisconsin. We couldn't be more proud of the work that she has done serving the students and families of our District and community!

The criteria for the recognition includes a number of indicators of a counselor's success in their chosen profession. This includes a demonstrated success in advocating on behalf of all students, created structures within their schools to set students up for success, as well as demonstrating a positive impact on their building, district, and greater community. We can easily look at the work of Mrs. Leadholm and check off those marks!

Within our high school building, Sue has been the driving force behind an advising program for all students, freshmen through seniors.

Sue wears many hats throughout the building, but the one thing that is ALWAYS consistent is her positive outlook. When I say

that she is a cheerleader for student success, she is a cheerleader for all things good! Sue has been the driving force behind the high school advising program, which groups all students, freshmen through seniors, into small groups with one adult that follows them through their four years of high school. The advising program is an excellent way for a staff member to keep closer ties with their small group of advisees. Mr. Chambers, the high school principal, wrote on her nomination, "Sue is one of the most positive people I know. Students and staff gravitate to her because of her warm smile and friendly personality. Students know they can trust Sue with their personal issues, and even staff have been known to share their personal concerns with her as well!"

Perhaps some of the community members also know Sue from her days teaching at Western Technical College? For many years she taught Speech and Writing courses, as her Bachelor's degree is in the English area. There was recently a change in the law which no longer qualifies Sue as a teacher there, but for many years she

was a comforting face for our graduates to see as they entered into their post-secondary education.

Dr. Severson has this to say, "I would describe Sue as a problem solver, a solution seeker, a hard worker, and someone that takes pure joy out of all she does. I'm so appreciative that she chooses to share all of this sunshine in the School District of Black River Falls. I couldn't be more proud of the work that she does and am thrilled that she is receiving this external recognition! We truly have so many exceptional staff members that are deserving of a day just meant to honor them! When you see Sue, or any of our wonderful staff around town, please tell them Congratulations on a job well done!"

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## Barron High School Agriculture Teacher Selected for National Educator Award



Kristin Hanson, agricultural educator at Barron High School in Barron, Wisconsin is one of only six individuals nationwide who received the 2017 National Agriscience Teacher of the Year Award. The award was presented on December 7 at the National Association of Agricultural Educators annual convention in Nashville.

The National Agriscience Teacher of the Year award recognizes teachers who have inspired and enlightened their students through engaging and interactive lessons in the science of agriculture.

Hanson, who taught agriculture at two other schools before she came to Barron, prioritizes making her curriculum rigorous for her students and relevant within the context of the community. A passion of Hanson's is to connect science and agriculture. She teaches physical science principles with a connection to agriculture using inquiry-based learning. Inquiry requires students to plan, conduct and

evaluate experiments, then communicate their findings. She tops off her advanced learning curriculum by incorporating valuable soft skills like teamwork, communication and responsibility.

Hanson models the communications skills she expects her students to develop. She regularly updates social media accounts and school announcements, making for open communication of chapter activities to students, parents, community members, and school administration. Hanson also provides excellent examples of advocacy to her students by partnering with Farm Bureau and the county extension office. By keeping her audience informed, she is able to maintain funding and support for a strong agriculture program.

The FFA chapter at Barron is a student-led organization that Hanson advises. Student members select and plan their activities, participating in more than 40 events each year. This provides many opportunities for leadership development and community involvement.

"Kristin works well with her peers, community leaders and has a great rapport with students. She not only gets them out into the community, taking advantage of leadership opportunities but she is always involved herself as well," says Karyn Schauf, president of Barren County Farm Bureau.

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## Thorp High School Agriculture Teacher Selected for National Educator Award



Glen Schraufnagel, agricultural educator at Thorp High School in Thorp, Wisconsin is one of only seven individuals nationwide who received the National Association of Agricultural Educators Ideas Unlimited Award at the NAAE annual convention in Nashville on December 9.

The Ideas Unlimited Award gives NAAE members an opportunity to exchange teaching ideas. Winning ideas are selected by members' peers at NAAE regional conferences.

Schraufnagel requires students to put their knowledge into action beyond the classroom by participating in a leadership lunch. In his agriculture leadership course students spend four weeks learning soft skills, including making a first impression, maintaining meaningful conversation, and telephone and dining etiquette.

For the lunch, Schraufnagel pairs students with business professionals from the community who the students do not already

know. Students then contact the individual and set the date, time and location for their leadership lunch. Students are responsible for making a great first impression, maintaining conversation, following dining etiquette, and paying the bill. Throughout the lunch, business partners evaluate students based on a rubric that Schraufnagel provides.

In addition to the soft skills that students learn and use, they develop partnerships with individuals in their community. These partnerships are beneficial because they provide support to students and the agricultural education department.

"[The leadership lunch] is unique in that it gives a third-party assessment of a student's ability to demonstrate many needed soft skills. It is also unique because it allows our students to have one-on-one conversations with employers and professional men and women," said Schraufnagel. "This assessment is perfect for building relationships and strengthening the agriculture education program."

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# Wisconsin Names Principals of the Year

Wisconsin's 2018 Principals of the Year are Mike Kruse, principal at Stoughton High School; Scott Walter, principal at Riverside Elementary School in the Menomonee Falls School District; and Justin Szews, assistant principal at Lakeland Union High School in Minocqua.

"School leaders know the importance of creating a school climate that empowers teachers and supports student learning," State Superintendent Evers said.

"These leaders represent what is great about Wisconsin school principals and their importance to our communities." Association of Wisconsin School Administrators Executive Director Jim Lynch said.

Meemic is a major sponsor of the award.

## Secondary School Principal of the Year

### Mike Kruse, Stoughton High School

When Mike Kruse arrived at Stoughton High School in 2008, he saw a school ready for change. He led efforts among school staff members to use an Integrated Comprehensive Services model that provided accommodations, modifications, and differentiation of lessons

to keep special education students in regular classes. The changes addressed Office of Civil Rights criteria and moved the school off of the statewide disproportionality watch list.

Kruse also helped staff address academic rigor, which led to increased graduation requirements, Advanced Placement offerings, and college-level courses taught at the high school. Improved behavior and academic expectations, as well as the full inclusion effort, contributed to a graduation rate well above 90 percent, an "exceeds expectations" ranking on state report cards, an inaugural Award of Excellence from the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association, and a Spirit of Excellence Award from the Wisconsin Association of School Councils.

In a letter of recommendation, School Counselor Ann Cook said that Kruse transformed Stoughton High School. "He has increased staff morale and school spirit exponentially," she said. Cook attributed the turnaround to Kruse's ability to get the most out of staff and students. "He demands the best, but does so in a way that is motivating and affirming."

"Mike is connected, visible and engaging with stakeholders throughout our school community, and his leadership has led to considerable gains at our high school," said Dr.

Tim Onsager, district administrator of the Stoughton Area School District. "He is an exceptional leader who is committed to continuous professional growth and encouraging others to succeed. It is a tremendous honor for our school district to have an exceptional principal like Mike receive such an award."

## Elementary School Principal of the Year

### Scott Walker, Riverside Elementary, Menomonee Falls

Riverside Principal Scott Walter received the surprise of a lifetime when he walked into his gymnasium under the guise of a photo opportunity.

Not only was he greeted by all of his students, the Menomonee Falls High School pep band, cheer team, district leadership and school board members; he was also greeted with the knowledge that he is the 2018 Elementary School Principal of the Year as awarded by the Association of Wisconsin School Administrators.

"I was both completely shocked and completely humbled," said Walter. "The work of all of our staff and students day in and day out is what makes Riverside a great school and

makes me work even harder to be the principal they deserve."

Riverside Elementary School hosts hundreds of educators each year to showcase its continuous improvement efforts. Walter, a Six Sigma Green Belt, focuses staff on analysis and problem solving, partnerships, and a strong culture for learning. Through those efforts, the school "exceeds expectations" on 2016-17 school report cards and has gained the trust of parents and the community.

Students learn on their first day the Plan Do Study Act (PDSA) process. According to Walter, students design their learning, set personal goals based on common classroom assignments, and let their teachers know which instructional strategies are working for them. Teachers then make adjustments based on student input.

"Scott is an exceptional educator and a strong advocate for our students," said Dr. Pat Greco, superintendent of schools for Menomonee Falls. "The hard work he has placed into continuous improvement in Riverside Elementary is providing life-changing opportunities for children in this community."

*Justin Szews, Lakeland Union High School, is Wisconsin's Assistant Principal of the Year and was featured in the Fall, Volume 3 issue of Teaching Today WI.*

# Summer Session

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## Secondary Literacy/Illiteracy

Gary L. Willhite, Ph.D.

*Institute for Professional Studies in Education, UW-La Crosse*

Professional Development is a term used, in most school districts, to help improve the skills of faculty to improve their professional knowledge, competence, skill and effectiveness in supporting student learner outcomes. This, of course, may take varied forms such as curriculum refinement, new instructional strategies and assessment endeavors; however, the bottom line is that student achievement depends on supporting and educating the whole student.

As school districts search for professional development plans to meet their student and school needs, the one area that should immediately come to mind the last to be recognized — literacy at the secondary level. District administrators stress the need for 'something' to help them combat the low literacy rates of their secondary students who as juniors and seniors, can only read at a second or third grade level and will still earn a high school diploma. First Lady Barbara Bush made family literacy one of her primary platforms stating, "The American Dream is about equal opportunity for everyone who works hard. If we don't give everyone the ability to simply read and write, then we aren't giving everyone an equal chance to succeed" (Barbara Bush Foundation Fact Sheet, 2018).

In America, a common trend appears — that 4th grade reading scores steadily hold, 8th grade reading scores rise slightly, but then 12th grade reading scores decline noticeably (National High School Center, 2009). And a disturbing literacy statistic is that, "The 4th grade is the watershed year. We can predict that if a child is not reading proficiently in the 4th grade, he or she will have approximately a 78 percent chance of not catching up" (*Begin to Read*, 2018).

An issue is that literacy instruction is often not available in high school. Two reasons for poor literacy performance in high school are that reading and writing are rarely taught as separate subjects beyond 8th grade and content teachers do not feel they need to include reading strategy instruction in their course curricula (Heller & Greenleaf, 2007). Additionally, a survey of content methods textbooks instruction guides for teachers found that content textbooks offer few specific strategies for teachers to use to help their students understand and actively engage [in] the content material through reading, with no suggestions for struggling readers (Draper 2002).

In *5 Solutions to Illiteracy* (January 14, 2017) Lombardo lists five potential solutions to help seal up the cracks of those slipping through the literacy cracks.



- Invest in basic training that is provided by employers.
- Create supports within schools.
- Encourage outreach efforts into disadvantaged communities.
- Improve access to education
- Make it an obligation to receive incentives and supports.

A review of the above suggestions and a review of what some district administrators have decided to do regarding professional development to combat illiteracy at the secondary level is to provide secondary content teachers with the opportunity to earn Reading Teacher Certification. A great solution for everyone — teachers' gain professional development and students gain teacher's at the secondary content level who can help them read for understanding!

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**“An investment in knowledge pays the best interest.”**

**— Benjamin Franklin**

## Ground Broken for Phase II of Field of Dreams



### Pulaski Community School District

Pulaski High School athletic director Janel Batten, right, visits with PHS junior Becca May after she spoke during the groundbreaking ceremony for Phase II of the Red Raider Field of Dreams project.

Come next spring, Pulaski High School boys baseball and girls softball teams will play at a new complex. A ground-breaking ceremony Thursday helped kick off the construction of the Pulaski Community School District's baseball/softball complex, east of Saputo Stadium.

Pulaski Community School District Board of Education president Michael Voelker told the crowd of about 60 PHS students, staff, project donors and contractors, media and community members that when ground was broken for Phase I in April 2016, the board supported the project because members had faith in its success and because they knew it would benefit the entire community. Both have been proven true, he said.

"This facility has had a transformational effect on not just the school but the community. It has literally changed the landscape of the community," he said. "It is recognized and praised by those outside the district," he said, noting Saputo Stadium is used by school and community events alike.

"Our faith in the success of the project was borne out, as the project was completed on time, on budget, and with full funding from private donations, and with many in-kind donations from local contractors involved in the project," he added. It is with that success and faith that the board supports Phase II of this project, Voelker said.

PCSD superintendent Bec Kurzynske

introduced members of the Red Raider Field of Dreams Steering Committee, donors, contractors, local government officials, board of education members, PCSD leadership team members, coaches, athletes and supporters of district schools and community. She also thanked Prevea, Bay Tek, MCL and the Van Lannen family, all of whom have been major contributors to both phases of the Field of Dreams project.

"Some contractors get work and that's a job for them. With this project, our donors and our contractors really are part of the community and part of those efforts." Contractors for this project have provided "extra special attention" on nights and weekends to make sure everything is just right, Kurzynske noted.

She also praised Janel Batten, PHS athletic director, for her hard work on the Red Raider Field of Dreams project. "Her energy, passion and commitment are contagious

and along with the steering committee are the reason we are standing here today."

"We are humbled by the opportunity to bring such a wonderful facility to our student athletes and community," Kurzynske added.

Becca May, a PHS junior and granddaughter of Bob and the late Betty Van Lannen, said her grandparents were born in the community, lived here all their lives and have always been large supporters of local youths and athletic programs. "Sports have truly always been a big part of the Van Lannen family," she said.

"I speak on behalf of my entire family when I say that we are truly blessed to live in a community like Pulaski and it makes giving back that much easier." May added she is excited to be able to play next year on a soft-

ball field named for her grandmother and to see her younger cousins to play baseball on a field named for their grandfather. She also thanked all the donors who made the project possible.

Batten said she is most proud of the impact the Field of Dreams Project has had on the local community and how it continues to motivate PHS student athletes. "I am humbled by the generosity of our businesses and other donors that realize the importance that these facilities have for our community and our youths," she said.

Batten said one reason the project is so exciting is because students have been involved in promoting it. Ben Otto's PHS marketing class produced testimonial videos for the project. Those students did the first ceremonial breaking of ground with shovels, followed by board of education members and district leadership staff, contractors and then donors.

The first portion of Phase II includes:

- Two baseball fields at PHS
- Two softball fields at PHS
- Press box/storage area
- Concession stands/bathrooms

The second portion of Phase II will include:

- Three additional tennis courts at PHS

- Additional practice fields
- Upgrades to the PCMS soccer complex

The baseball/softball portion of Phase II is expected to cost \$2.3 million with about \$1.5 million yet to be raised. The remaining Phase II work will occur after the baseball/softball portion of Phase II is completed. The \$3.2-million Phase I of the project was completed in September 2016 and was fully paid by pledges and in-kind contributions of materials and labor.

Phase I included:

- Football and soccer field with synthetic surface at PHS
- New track and areas for field events, the band and a community plaza at Saputo Stadium
- A press box, concession stand, restrooms and stadium seating at Saputo Stadium
- Bathrooms added to PCMS soccer stadium

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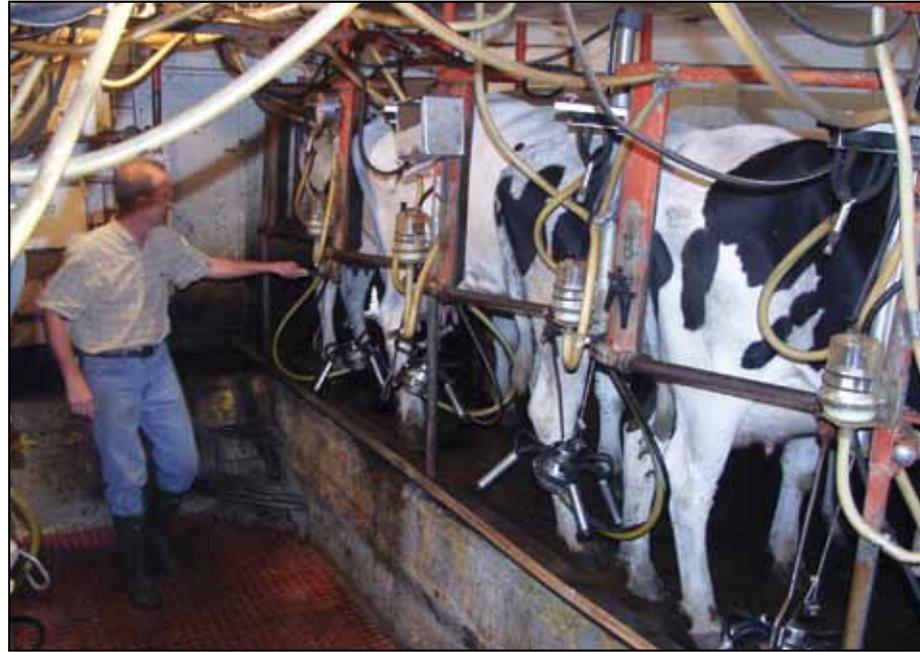
In this issue we are featuring three more essays from our Middle School and High School "Dream Careers" contest. Contest winners were also featured in the previous issue of Teaching Today WI™ (Winter 2017–18, Volume 1, Winter 2018 Volume 2, Winter 2018 Volume 3, and Spring 2018, Volume 1). You can access previous issues on our website at [www.teachingtodaywi.com](http://www.teachingtodaywi.com).



## Dairy Farmer

Cash E.  
Luck High School

I always thought to myself how do people become successful in life. I've always wondered what having dreams contributed to them being successful and now I know the answer. People took their dreams as their guide to a brighter and better future. These people worked hard and sacrificed so much to make their dreams come true. Everyone has dreams of being something or accomplishing something. People's dreams can be anything but most commonly it is what they want to be when they grow up. There are millions of careers you can choose from. From simple ones or to the more complicated ones, but because of this people will be confused for they'll have so many jobs/careers to choose from. Like many people, I myself am confused and often ask myself "what do I really want to be when I grow up?" or "what career is really



meant for me?"

I started thinking of becoming a dairy farmer like my Dad who has been farming for twenty years which he followed his dad's "Johnny" footsteps and bought the farm from him, who started milking when he was thirteen years old and has been farming for eighty years and still to this day he comes

over EVERYDAY to do chores in the morning and in the afternoon. That was my dream when I was in elementary and middle school. I enjoyed working and doing chores in the barn with my Dad and Grandpa Johnny, also working all day out in the field from cutting hay, discing, plowing, raking to picking rock and gopher trapping. It was a lot of work but

I enjoy doing it. But now in high school my thoughts changed, my oldest brother went to work for EJM Pipe Services after he graduated from high school and he likes it even though it is early mornings and long days of hard work and that is the same boring company that my Uncle works for and that my Grandpa Bruce worked for. My dad also wants me to go work there and says I'll be more successful there than taking over the farm. As I was looking into the thing I would be or could be doing there it caught my eye with the hard work and operating big machines which I loved doing on our farm and the other small side jobs I had in grade school and middle school and I thought to myself "this is what I want to" and that is what my dream career wants to be because it doing what I enjoy and good pay and that is where some of my family works. I know working there isn't child's play. I know it takes more than knowledge and skill to work there. I know that simple mistakes could be the end of it. And I know most of all that I need to make sacrifices, minor and major ones. But I'm more than willing to take those risks if it means reaching my dreams and my future. People may laugh at my dreams or put me down, but I am not backing down and not giving up. Because I believe that with my hard work and with the Lord's guidance, my dreams will definitely come true.



## Agriscience Teacher

Molly T.  
Mishicot High School

Throughout high school my heart had been set on something in the agricultural field. I had always enjoyed my science classes including biology, earth science, and chemistry in particular. However, once I became more involved in my agriculture department and began conversing with my teacher Mrs. Jamie Propson I knew agriscience would specifically be what I wanted to go into. As I went through most of the classes in our agriculture department like introduction to horticulture, small/large animal sciences, and power and agriculture mechanics I began to realize my passion for all aspects of the industry. Therefore I saw it best fitting to teach others about the opportunities in agricultural field. My post-secondary plan now is to attend college to double major in Agriculture Education as well as Horticulture.



Though I may not be the typical agriculture major, not coming from a farm or much background in the industry I aspire to teach others my passion for agriscience because I believe that the industry is and will continue to be prosperous for the world. My dream career includes teaching in a more urban area like Green Bay or Milwaukee area to urge students toward urban agriculture. Mainly to provide more substance of how food is transferred

from farm to fork. Which leads up to my main goal as an aspiring teacher; to clear up misconceptions of agricultural life? Coming from a lifestyle where I had ties to my grandparents' farms and most of my neighbors and friends are one or two generations removed from the farm, I am very naive to the common perception of the country on agriculture. Whether it be as simple as chocolate milk coming from brown cows or that all farmers are cruel and

are only in it to make a profit, it is false information that has been spread widely. This is where I want to team up with the estimated 11,000 agriscience teachers in the country to make truth of the misconceptions by hopefully joining the National Association of Agricultural Educators to make an impact on the future adults of our country by starting in the classroom. Overall, my ideal position in a school district would be teaching plant science, food science, and employment related classes because of my familiarity in those subjects. (Hence why I want to double major in horticulture) Yet, I do have confidence in myself that I have the capability to teach beef and dairy science because of my grandparent's farms growing up and through attending college.

Through my time at Mishicot High School it was always preached to me that agriculture is the future. Agriculture has connections to most industries especially the trades, technology, research, and law. I feel that if I joined this teaching community and would be able to live my dream career I could change the perspective that agriculture is no longer just working on a farm by teaching the student who may not have the background I grew up with.

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## This is not your grandfather's technical college education

There's never been a better time for high school students to consider a technical education than right now.

More importantly, students can begin earning college credit while in high school through dual credit opportunities, college credits without the cost of tuition.

The continuing demand for employees in fields such as health care, engineering, advanced manufacturing and information technology ensure that a technical college education is as relevant as ever. This is especially true for the hundreds of employer

advisors who partner with the technical colleges to consult on curriculum and competencies they want for their employees.

Students who start taking technical college courses in high school, are proven to do better in postsecondary programs.

Dual credit challenges students to push themselves harder while taking more advanced classes, it helps prepare students for the academic rigor they will face while in college, and it improves college retention and completion rates overall, once students fully enroll in college.



>> DUAL CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES PROMOTE STUDENT SUCCESS <<



### Counselor

**Riley B.**  
*Wisconsin Rapids Middle School*

My dream job was to be President of The United States of America, but not anymore. I want to become a counselor because I have been talking to one and she is helping me with all my problems. I would like to be a professional counselor for kids and adults. I think I would be excellent at it because I love helping kids or even anyone that is sad or needs someone to talk to. I feel like I'm the perfect one to talk to. The counselor that I talk to has inspired me. She is really good with kids. Making people happy has been one of my favorite things to do. My whole family is believing me. I can talk to adults and kids. My friends come and talk to me if something is bothering them. They tell me, I have the superpower to make people smile, and laugh and push aside those feelings. I know I have not wanted to be a counselor for very long but, it's something I will considering trying. I'm going to try my best to go to a good college for counseling. I believe



anyone can try to become anything they want to be when they grow up. Sometimes I can tell if something is bothering someone. What I do to help with my problems is I tend to write down my feelings or anything that is bugging me on a sheet of notebook paper. Then to end on a good note I put down something positive and/or good that has happened that day. I also love to listen to music because it just gets me going and happy. I really hope one day I will become a professional counselor. My whole family is believing in me. I'm going to try hard to be a good professional counselor and help anyone that needs to talk to someone. Here

is an example of what I would do. Let's say I can tell my friend is being very quiet I will say, "Are you okay?" They would say, "I'm okay" or "No". I can tell if something is bothering someone so I know if everything is okay. Then, I will say, "I can tell something is bothering you, wanna talk about it?" "Yes!" They say. Then I will find a time and a place we could talk at. Then I will do my job! Some people think their dream job changes but mine will not!

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## Special Shout Out Awards for the 2017 Dream Career Essay Contest

### Well done!

#### High School

- Damon M.** — Luck High School, Game Designer  
**Marissa L.** — Luck High School, Dentist  
**Hadley K.** — Northland Pines High School, Politician  
**Riley S.** — Mishicot High School, Inter-arts  
**Aaron X.** — Greendale High School, Sports Journalism  
**Alyssa F.** — Luck High School, Environmental Educator



#### Middle School

- Hailey K.** — River Ridge School District, Computer Game Designer  
**Hani S.** — Milwaukee Public Schools, Lawyer  
**Taylor M.** — Cooper School Milwaukee, Veterinarian  
**Owen C.** — River Ridge School District, Hotshot Firefighter  
**Jacob S.** — Cooper School Milwaukee, Astronomer  
**Becky G.** — Luck Middle School, Traveling



## What's *your* dream career?

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# Energy Efficiency Projects at Kenosha

## Kenosha Unified School District

Kenosha Unified has performed energy efficiency projects for decades. Projects range from lighting retrofits to boiler replacements. In 2013, the district began a new initiative to perform building wide energy efficiency projects that upgrade major systems and components throughout an entire school simultaneously.

The first round of schools to receive updates in this fashion included nine older elementary schools – Bose, Forest Park, Grant, Grewenow, Harvey, Jefferson, Jeffery, Roosevelt and Vernon. These schools were the least energy-efficient buildings in the district, primarily because of the design of the original buildings and systems within them.

The scope of work included new heating and ventilation systems and encompassed digital control systems, all new lighting, in many cases new roofs and/or windows, and a variety of smaller scope items that had an impact on the energy usage of the buildings. The construction activities at the nine schools were executed in 2014 and 2015. The projects were very successful and resulted in a 35.3 percent reduction in utility bills for the schools.

Due to the success of the first phase of projects, Kenosha Unified developed a plan

for a second phase, which includes Bullen and Lance middle schools and Tremper and Bradford high schools. The Bullen and Lance design updates were approved in 2016, and construction began in spring of 2017. The work at the two middle schools will take place over two summers with completion slated for fall 2018.

Design of the Tremper project is in its final stages, and construction will begin this spring. Construction activities at Tremper will be spread over three summers with completion slated for fall 2020. Design for the Bradford project will take place early this year with construction starting in the summer of 2019 and wrapping up in fall 2021.

The scope of work for the second phase of projects is larger than the first due to the size of the buildings, the complexity of the systems at the larger schools and the greater opportunity for energy savings. The phase includes new main entrances at all four schools as well as an expansion of water savings improvements.

These projects are funded through long term borrowing and paid back through the savings generated by the projects. The timing of the loans was planned around debt retirement from previous projects so the loans for the energy savings projects would not result



in a tax increase. One of the requirements of the program is to measure energy savings annually for the life of the loan and to use the measured utility savings to help expedite the retirement of the debt.

In addition to the energy savings, the benefits of these projects are multi-faceted. The district is replacing 50- and 60-year-old equipment with new equipment, which reduces maintenance costs and extends the life of the buildings. Kenosha Unified also will improve the comfort of the schools with better

temperature control and increased ventilation, including the addition of air conditioning at Bullen, Lance and Tremper. Lastly, the overall look and feel of the buildings for students, staff and neighborhoods will be improved.

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# Congratulations!

According to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, sixty referendums were passed between January, 2018 and April 19, 2018.

Here is a partial list of the successful referendums by district with the amount requested, and a brief description of the projects that the money will be used for.

For the full list visit <https://apps4.dpi.wi.gov/referendum/customreporting.aspx>



## Arcadia School District

**\$4,000,000** — Not to exceed 4,000,000 to be used towards a new high school/middle school gymnasium, locker rooms, and weight room to go along with a 12,000,000 donation to add a joint use community center and a 1.2 million donation for an attached public library.

## Brillion Public Schools

**\$5,600,000** — For the purpose of paying the costs of improvements and renovations to the elementary/middle school building.

## Coleman School District

**\$10,850,000** — Base project to upgrade security and infrastructure and cafeteria addition.

**\$2,980,000** —STEAM Renovations and Improvements.

## D C Everest Area School District

**\$59,875,000** — Paying the cost of a district-wide school building and improvement program.

## Fall Creek School District

**\$12,400,000** — High School improvements consisting of: building infrastructure, safety and security, including the addition of a secure entrance; classroom and music room modernization; renovation and expansion of the commons; construction of larger weight and fitness center; and acquisition of related furnishings, fixtures and equipment.

## Fall River School District

**\$7,800,000** — The district will be looking to make the following improvements and updates in the following areas: capital maintenance and building infrastructure; learning space updates; communication and technology system upgrades; safety and security improvements; athletic facility, field and site improvements; and acquisition of furnishings fixtures and equipment.

## Hamilton School District

**\$57,400,000** — Construction and equipping of new Intermediate School and constructing and equipping an addition to High School and related remodeling and renovations; and site improvements.

**\$1,500,000** — Exceed the revenue limit by \$1,500,000 for the 20192020 school year and thereafter, for recurring purposes consisting of operational expenses for the new intermediate school.

## Horicon School District

**\$22,920,000** — The construction of a new elementary school; Junior/Senior High School site renovations including safety and security upgrades; and the creation of a consolidated campus.

**\$3,600,000** — Junior/Senior High School building infrastructure which includes; roofs, plumbing, HVAC, electrical updates, corridor upgrade.

## Luxemburg/Casco School District

**\$11,900,000** — The construction and equipping of an addition to the High School to create an attached middle school; and conversion of the current Middle School to an alternative high school.

**\$15,900,000** — Construction of additions at the High School for a new gymnasium and a secure main entrance; construction of additions at the Primary School for a secure main entrance and classrooms; upgrades and improvements to the High School technical education and family and consumer science space and weight room; districtwide site and facility improvements; and acquisition of furnishings, fixtures and equipment.

## Plymouth School District

**\$31,900,000** — This resolution states the Plymouth Joint School District's intent to issue General Obligation Bonds in an amount not to exceed \$31,900,000 for the purpose of paying the cost of a school building and improvement program consisting of: security improvements, construction of academic and athletic additions, remodeling and site improvements at Plymouth High School; security improvements, construc-

tion of gymnasium, cafeteria and academic additions, remodeling, roof replacement and HVAC upgrades at Parkview Elementary and Fairview Elementary Schools; district-wide security and communications system upgrades; and acquiring related fixtures, furnishings and equipment for these projects.

## Prentice School District

**\$8,500,000** — Purpose of paying the cost of a new school addition, renovations, capital maintenance, and building infrastructure improvements.

## Randall Consolidated School Joint District No. 1

**\$5,500,000** —Facility improvements including security upgrades, classroom additions, cafeteria renovation, roof repair, acquisition of furnishings, fixtures and equipment.

## River Falls School District

**\$45,860,000** — Add Elementary classroom space, create collaborative learning space at all of our schools, invest in our aging facilities, exit the 1920/40's sections of the Academy Building. Efforts would be made to preserve historical woodwork and architectural "keepsakes" from the older sections of the building.

## Shell Lake School District

**\$12,200,000** — Referendum for addition of 4K2nd grade addition to our current school.

**\$3,500,000** — Resolution to build a new gymnasium

## Shiocton School District

**\$2,000,000** — One-half of the proposed Multi-Purpose Facility will be a gymnasium and the other half will be a work-out area complete with fitness and weight-training equipment.

## Sparta Area School District

**\$28,500,000** — Paying the cost of acquiring land, preparing the land for construction and constructing and equipping a new elementary school.

**\$4,000,000** — Paying the cost of constructing improvements and updates to Southside School, Maplewood School, Lakeview School and Lawrence-Lawson School.

## Valders Area School District

**\$275,000** — The project is to upgrade technology equipment and infrastructure.

**\$6,375,000** — The project is to repair and upgrade roofing, plumbing, HVAC, and bond issuance.

## West Salem School District

**\$1,500,000** — School building and improvement program consisting of renovating, expanding and improving the high school automotive repair facility; continuing construction at the multipurpose sports events center; and acquiring any related fixtures, furnishings and equipment.

## Wheatland J1 School District

**\$8,450,000** — Facility improvement program consisting of: updates to science and STEM classrooms and building mechanicals; safety, security and capital maintenance improvements; facility remodeling, additions, and renovations; site improvements; and acquisition of furnishings, fixtures and equipment.

## Whitnall School District

**\$16,160,000** — Paying the cost of a school building and improvement program consisting of: District-wide infrastructure and building system improvements; updates for ADA compliance at Edgerton Elementary School; construction of additions for classrooms and a secure main entrance, site improvements and related demolition of portions of the building at Hales Corners Elementary School; science lab renovations and updates for ADA compliance at Whitnall Middle School; technical education, art and business education renovations, updates for ADA compliance, pool improvements and site improvements at Whitnall High School; and acquisition of related furnishings, fixtures, and equipment.

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## New Learning Spaces at Franklin Public Schools



### Franklin Public Schools

Franklin Public Schools has a mission to inspire personal success through learning experiences that focus on student needs and active partnerships with family and community. Achieving that mission requires not only innovative courses and programming for students but also instructional spaces that can support student learning needs.

To meet those needs for current and

future students, the District partnered with the entire Franklin community in 2016 to pass a \$43.3 million referendum for the creation of a new 6th through 8th-grade middle school building. Community members, staff, and parents provided input for the referendum by participating in surveys, attending meetings and events, voting, and contacting the district for more information.

“There is an incredible amount of

excitement around moving into our new learning spaces,” says Superintendent Dr. Judy Mueller. “We are grateful to have the support of our community in Franklin.”

The new two-story Forest Park Middle School is designed with learning at the center and a design philosophy focused on spaces that are flexible and integrated, providing opportunities for students to be creative, collaborate, and have fun while learning. Furniture in all learning spaces will be flexible, movable, and varied, and technology will be integrated into every location.

Upon entering, visitors and students will encounter a large, open and bright cafeteria space, adjacent to a set of learning stairs where students can study, collaborate, or perform. At the heart of the building is a 4,000 square foot manufacturing and engineering center that will provide students access to hands-on learning experiences in manufacturing and technical education.

Classroom wings for all core subjects will provide for students to comfortably flow between the classroom and adjacent collaborative spaces that can accommodate individual learners, small groups, or multiple classes all in the same space. Dedicated science spaces will include lab stations, as well as other areas for experimentation and design. Family

and consumer science spaces will include updated kitchens. Art spaces will include space for varied types of artistic expression, and the physical education space will include a three-station gym. The new common areas will better support the student population and allow for more facility access for the entire Franklin community.

Ensuring that learning experiences at Forest Park Middle School prepare students for college, career, and life requires more than space design, however. One of the key benefits of the new Forest Park Middle School will be in the expanded course offerings that will be provided to students once the building opens in September 2019.

“It is an exciting time for Franklin Public Schools,” says Mueller. “We look forward to opening the new building with our school community and continuing to provide the highest quality educational experiences possible for Franklin students.”

[www.franklin.k12.wi.us](http://www.franklin.k12.wi.us)  
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## New 9th Grade Center at Oak Creek



### Oak Creek Franklin Joint School District

Oak Creek High School’s Class of 2021 is the first class to attend their freshman year in the new 9th Grade Center. “The creation of 9th Grade Center is an opportunity to serve the freshman students of Oak Creek High School in a new, targeted way in order to ensure that they develop the skills and abilities they need throughout high school and their lives,” says 9th Grade Center Principal Chris Weiss.

The 9th Grade Center is located on the corner of Puetz Road and Howell Avenue in front of the existing high school. The District worked with Eppstein Uhen Architects. The 192,798 square foot two-story building is designed to serve 1,000 students. The floor plan includes basic core academic classrooms, separate gym with one main basketball court and two secondary courts, and additional flexible spaces to accommodate collaboration and to create

opportunities for future growth. The new building also includes a designated area for a future Personalized Learning Center slated to open in August 2018.

The community got a first-look at new 9th Grade Center at the ribbon cutting ceremony which was held on August 21, 2018.

The 9th Grade Center of Oak Creek High is part of the District’s master plan. In the fall of 2014, residents of the Oak Creek–Franklin Joint School District approved a facilities referendum of \$59,095,000 to address student enrollment growth and facility needs as the next step in the District’s Master Plan. The referendum authorized the district to borrow funds not to exceed \$59,095,000 to construct a new elementary school for grades 4K–5 on district owned land located at Drexel Avenue and 20th Street and a new 9th Grade Center on district owned land next to the existing high school. The new elementary school, Forest Ridge, was completed in August of 2016 and opened its doors to students and staff for the 2016–17 school year.

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## Bringing the Farm to School

### Medford Ag Department Barn Project Aims To Enhance Student Learning About Animals



Jenessa Freidhof

Agriculture students at Medford High School could soon move their classroom to the barn as the ag department nears the end of a \$150,000 project that aims to help all students experience what it is like to raise animals.

Fundraising for the barn project, which is privately funded through donations and grants, started in early 2017. Lisa Kopp, one of Medford's two agriculture instructors, said they have raised a little more than \$100,000 toward their

goal.

"It is hard to believe we have only been fundraising for about a year. We have come so far and now just need a little push to get to the end," Kopp said. She said it has been amazing how generous the community has been toward the project, both through monetary donations and material donations.

As the project nears completion, they are still about \$40,000 short on funds and need one last push to get the inside of

the barn completed in time for students to start classes in fall 2018. A farm scene mural inside the barn will recognize donors through various animal-associated donating levels: \$10,000-plus donors will be cows, \$5,000-plus will be horses, \$2,500-plus will be pigs, \$1,000-plus will be chickens and \$275-plus will be ears of corn in a cornfield.

Kopp said the scene, which will be painted by the art department, will be a nice touch to the

barn in recognizing all the people who helped them get to this point.

"We are truly grateful to have a community that supports us. We have had people come to us and ask if they could donate items they are no longer using, like barn mats or animal feeders, and we are always excited to get them," Kopp said. She said many of the students have also contributed items for the barn.

Kopp said the idea for the school barn came when she first started teaching at Medford in 2014. Many of the students she was teaching did not live on farms and were several generations removed from production agriculture. Kopp wanted to give these students the chance to know where their food is coming from and learn

Continued on Page 21

## New Aquaponics System Supports Learning in Sustainable Agriculture



Stoughton Area School District

Stoughton High School students this semester have been learning about how fish and plants work together to support agriculture that is natural and sustainable.

An aquaponics system was installed in the school greenhouse earlier this winter for use by its ag science students. Both the system and supplies were donated by the Stoughton FFA Alumni.

"Aquaponics is the combination of aquaculture (raising fish in captivity) and hydroponics (growing plants in oxygenated water)," said Mike Vaughan, Ag Science teacher.

Through this cycle, the nutrient-rich water from raising the fish provides a good fertilizer for the plants. The plants in turn help purify the water for the fish, according to Nelson & Pade, a provider of aquaponics systems and training.

"We have 35 healthy tilapia (a species of fish) which have been with us since December and are about six months old. The 'aquaponics cycle' is 1) fish eat and produce waste; 2) bacterial microbes gather on submerged netting and convert liquid and solid waste into nitrates; 3) the nitrates are fertilizer for the

floating plants; 4) the plants filter the water which returns to the fish."

Vaughan said that FFA Alumni had been interested in acquiring an aquaponics system for the school for several years, ultimately raising about \$3,200 for a 100-gallon fish tank and two 3'x5' raft tanks. Vaughan underwent training on the new system over the summer at Nelson & Pade in Montello. Room was made in the SHS greenhouse for the unit.

"The students laid brick pavers in the greenhouse for the foundation and assembled all of the wooden frames, tanks and plumbing," Vaughan said. "It was quite the endeavor but we have talented students who enjoy following blueprints and using tools!"

The curriculum that accompanied the F5 system helps students learn about subjects such as fish anatomy and physiology, the nitrification cycle, plant care, fish care, photosynthesis, water testing and more.

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## A Passion for Science and Making a Difference at Hillcrest School



*Kenosha Unified School District*

Hillcrest School is a Specialty School for Grade 6–12 students who have been unsuccessful at other school placements. Many of our students have been diagnosed with ADHD, or have experienced trauma and ongoing crises, and benefit from frequent exercise. At Hillcrest School, we have 12 acres of grassy area that were seldom used, other than a small portion used for physical education classes. Because of this, Special Education and Science Teacher, W. Jay Robinson, wrote a grant to apply for funding for a 9 hole disc golf course. We received the grant and the students, staff, and parents worked together to install the baskets and signage. Students helped design the course and cut down brush and invasive species to create the course. It has been a great success and enjoyed by students, staff and the community.

The lack of trees on the property led to an idea to develop an arboretum that would enhance the disc golf course and provide an opportunity for students to study trees for science class. Robinson wrote a grant that covered the cost of 10 new 2-inch diameter trees and signage, providing a great start towards an arboretum. Students have planted

the trees and taken pride in maintaining them. The improved appearance of the property has resulted in an increase in play at the disc golf course and hiking the grounds.

A third project idea has been developed as a result of the first two projects. Robinson wanted to teach our students how to grow trees from seeds, nuts, and seedlings. Then students could share their knowledge with other schools (Service Learning). He was given permission to use a sizable portion of Hillcrest land to develop a nursery for the purpose of providing other schools with sugar maple trees. Hillcrest will grow seedlings into 2-inch diameter sugar maple trees for transplanting and future maple syrup tapping at local schools by our students. Our arboretum includes 2

large sugar maple trees that we have tapped for the sugaring process over the last 3 years and students love to learn the process.

A fourth project is an ongoing experiment with a large red oak tree at our site. The grass under the tree had always been mowed, which resulted in all of the fallen acorns unable to produce new trees. We roped off the perimeter of the tree canopy so that a new habitat for seedlings would emerge. We added tree mulch and the following spring we found over 50 new red oak seedlings emerging. We have begun to transplant these to different areas of the arboretum, which enhances the disc golf course. Seedlings have also been made available to the community.

Robinson's first goal is to inspire his students to become passionate about science careers and to help them envision how they could make a difference in their community and world to slow global warming.

His second goal is to develop a tree research farm where students would grow sugar maple trees from seedlings that would become mature 2-inch diameter trees, which our students would transplant at Kenosha Unified School District elementary and middle schools.

This service learning project would utilize Hillcrest School students in training others to tap sugar maple trees for syrup. Because of emerald ash borer issues in the Midwest, there is expected to be an extreme shortage of trees available from nurseries within 2 years. Funds from this grant would enable us to purchase all items needed for the tree research farm.

Robinson's third goal is to publicize this tree research farm model as an example for other schools throughout the world to follow in order to make a significant measurable impact on global warming. Our class has studied about carbon sinks and why artificial trees are unable to make a significant impact. Artificial trees are not large enough, cheap enough, or efficient enough to make an impact.

His final goal concerns his own professional development and areas of study. He feels the need to become an expert in the areas of

growing trees from seeds and measuring the impact of different varieties on the environment. He would like to become a resource for other schools in helping them determine which trees to grow in their zones to result in the greatest impact on slowing global warming.

Creative students and supportive staff and KUSD administrators have made this all possible. The administrators include Dr. Eitan Benzaquen, Hillcrest Principal, and Dr. Sue Savaglio-Jarvis, KUSD Superintendent. A 2016 grant from the Herb Kohl Fellowship Foundation Award has also helped to make recent projects successful.

Students have planted the trees and taken pride in maintaining them. The improved appearance of the property has resulted in an increase in play at the disc golf course and hiking the grounds.

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## Bringing The Farm To School Continued from Page 19



the responsibilities associated with caring for animals. She set the goal to have a school barn within five years.

"I realized last year that I only had two

years left (in my goal) to build the barn and I thought I better get going on it," Kopp said.

Many different location ideas were considered before planners settled on an old farm the school bought to the west of the high school. The site already featured an old stanchion barn and farmhouse.

It was decided that a 46-by-50-foot barn would be built. This facility would include a classroom, tractor restoration area, animal stalls and bathrooms. There would be space for one beef animal, one pig, rabbits, chickens and an extra pen for short-term animal visits. Fencing would be installed outside to provide a space for animals during nice weather.

With some funds secured and the design and location in place, a ground-breaking was held last fall. The mild fall weather allowed for solid progress to be made, and the barn shell is nearly complete, with the next goal being to finish the inside.

In the meantime, students have been learning about animal care in the old stanchion barn, which houses chickens, pigs, sheep, rabbits and a cat.

Agriculture students are responsible for caring for the animals each day and take turns coming in on the weekends to care for them. When asked



about the project, students responded with their own favorite animals and responsibilities.

"I never really worked in a barn before this class. Through interacting with the animals, I've learned so much this semester," said Morgan Hartl, a student.

"A lot of our other classes are all book work. With this class, we talk about what we are doing in the classroom and then we go out and do it in the barn. It is really hands-on and I enjoy that," said Tyler Klement, another student.

"I didn't realize all the work that went into (caring for the animals) every day. I've learned a lot about the different animals and what each one requires," said Korissa Hruby, an agriculture student.

"Having the barn takes a lot of responsibility. On the weekends, we have to take care of the animals, too. If it is your turn and you don't, then it won't get done and that is bad for the animals," said Taylor Crass, a student.

Kopp said she has enjoyed watching her students learn about caring for the animals and taking charge of the various responsibilities. Although she has had to remind students to care for the animals from time to time, for the most part, they have done very well with the project and responsibility.

"I have students who are not even in my classes that really enjoy working with the animals and asked to be given a job on the schedule. They come in every day and do what they need to do," Kopp said. She also has been able to work with other departments like Special Education and invite some of those students to work with the animals.

The plan is to keep the older barn for additional animal space as needed and eventually do a little work on the structure so it would be available to use for years to come. Medford FFA also used the old farmhouse for a haunted house this past fall, raising about \$4,000. Kopp said they plan to keep the farmhouse for at least another year and hope to run the fundraiser again in the fall.

Once the new barn is complete, Kopp said,

she hopes to be able to tie the animals into her classes even more. With the animal area just a room away from her classroom and windows between the two that allow supervision of students working with the animals, she said the opportunities for how students can learn with the animals would be endless. She also would like to create more opportunities for other departments in the school to use the animals.

"Maybe in the future, we will create curriculums that other teachers can just come out here and grab a folder with a lesson in it and use it with their classes," Kopp said. "The opportunities are endless."

The growth and development of the agriculture department will not end once the dust from the barn project settles: Kopp already has her sights set on the future and other learning opportunities for students, such as honeybee hives this spring and planting apple trees near the old stanchion barn. The department also received a grant that will allow them to build a high-tunnel greenhouse that can be used to grow a variety of plants for the school and community.

Looking at the long term, Kopp said it would be a neat opportunity for students if a food-processing or meat-processing lab could be built so they could learn about the entire animal life cycle, but that is still very much in the distant future.

"The school board, community and FFA alumni have all been very supportive of this project. It is the support that makes it complete," Kopp said. "At the end of the day, this project is for the students and finding ways to show them the opportunities that are out there. I'm excited to see this project finished and continue teaching these students about agriculture."

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## Sweet Science in Cedarburg



*Kendra Swanson, Scientist in Residence  
Cedarburg School District*

If you were to drive past Parkview Elementary School in Cedarburg at the end of winter, you would have seen smoke and rising steam from the schoolyard. But there is not need for concern. . . .

Parkview Elementary has been actively engaged in a time-honored Wisconsin tradition over the last few years. It all boils down to one thing: maple syrup.

In 2013, Principal Jayne Holck teamed

up with 5th grade teacher Steve Keller to apply a Maple Syrup start-up grant from the Cedarburg Education Foundation. The generous \$3500.00 grant enabled allowed the purchase of an evaporator and pan, collection bags, spiles, hydrometers, a maple syrup shed, and a handful of other necessities. Fortunately, Parkview is also the home of a Certified School Forest, and the maple tree supply was the final resource needed to bring the project to life.

"I myself have very fond childhood

memories of tapping trees at my elementary school in Northern Wisconsin, and checking the sap daily until we could finally taste the fruits of our labor," Holck shared in the proposal. The generous grant from the foundation has allowed Parkview pre-K-5th grade students at Parkview to enjoy the same wonderful experience.

Steve Keller and his 5th grade students continue to play a key role in the project. Mr. Keller has embraced this annual event, and he anxiously waits for the perfect weather conditions that indicate the sap is beginning to flow. He and his fifth grade students are some of the star players of the project. They meet after school to identify and tap trees. They literally do most of the heavy lifting. Those sap collection bags get heavy!

"I always appreciate Mr. Keller's enthusiasm for enriching the education for our children and I admire his willingness to work hard to make this project such a great success," remarks Mrs. Holck.

"We've averaged 3-4 gallons (of syrup) each year," says Keller. In "maple sap math," that means that around 150 gallons of sap were carried by his students each year. The sap was then boiled for many hours by Keller, or school volunteers. Keller's father was an amusing and memo-

orable helper.

Besides the volume of syrup, there are other quantifiable objectives. Maple syruping has a lot of educational applications, including helping the 4th grade students learn about plants, and the 3rd grade students learning about tree identification. Cedarburg School District's new Scientist in Residence, Kendra Swanson, is looking forward to partnering with teachers to generate place-based cross-curricular lessons that feature and celebrate the project.

But the pure magic, sweetness and experience of maple syrup is an objective in and of itself too.

"Any experience that brings the outdoors into the classrooms will provide lasting memories and help our students become stewards of our earth," says Holck.

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