

January 2024

## Lusher Elementary's Nicole Fritz Named Emerson Teacher Of The Year



Lusher Elementary School teacher Nicole Fritz has been named the 2023 Emerson Teacher of the Year for the Hazelwood School District.



Fritz, who is in her eighth year at Lusher, encourages teachers to look at each day as a new opportunity to help the students grow.

The third-grade teacher was paid a surprise visit by Superintendent Dr. Nettie Collins-Hart and Assistant Superintendent Dr. Juan Cordova with the announcement. She was selected by the district for her commitment to student development and leadership.

"I am overwhelmed," Fritz said. "I've been in the district for 24 years and love what I do. I love coming to work every day and teaching the students. It's a great honor. We work very hard on making learning fun, making sure that the students feel welcome, and bringing their individuality to the classroom."

"Ms. Fritz is a true example of a teacher who sets high expectations for students," Dr. Collins-Hart said. "Her dedication to students is evident when you walk into her classroom. We are proud of her commitment and willingness to raise her voice for HSD."

The Emerson Excellence in Teaching Awards program annually recognizes educators in the St. Louis metropolitan area – from kindergarten teachers to college professors – who are examples of excellence in their field. Congratulations to Ms. Fritz for receiving this honor.

## Hazelwood School District Hosts Holiday Drives Across The District

The Hazelwood School District is built on community, and during the holiday season, the HSD community shined bright with multiple supply drives throughout the district.

Each year, schools and departments across the district partner with local businesses, food pantries, and non-profits to provide items for the community. Whether it's Armstrong's annual Holiday Heart Project, which provides Christmas presents for students and families at Armstrong, or the annual International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Minority Caucus' Coat Drive, which provided over 200 coats for students in the district.



*"Holiday Drives Across The District" continued on page 8*

# Hazelwood School District

"A Culture of High Expectations and Excellence!"

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- Ferguson
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- Hazelwood
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## Hazelwood School District

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## From the Desk of the Superintendent

Happy New Year, Hazelwood School District Community!

I hope you enjoyed your holidays and are ready to succeed in 2024! The new year presents many great opportunities to raise our voices for HSD!

The Hazelwood School District would like to thank all of our community partners and families who generously gave to the numerous holiday toy drives, coat drives, and other fundraising efforts provided across the district. The community is an integral part of our district's success, and we thank you for your continued support.

It has been uplifting to see all of the great accomplishments of our students throughout 2023. From academic and athletic successes, to scholarship awards, HSD is filled with students accomplishing tremendous things, and we are proud of those students for continuing to strive for excellence.

As we return to classrooms following our winter break, I look forward to many exciting events

planned for the remainder of the school year. It all kicks off with our PTA Founders' Day Celebration, which will be held on February 1st.

We look forward to celebrating the founding of the PTA, honoring Support Staff of the Year, and our district and building Teachers of the Year. The event also serves as a fundraiser for the HSD PTA Annual Scholarship Program.

In addition, I want to solicit the support of our parents and the community in participating in our Manners Matter campaign. Encourage our students to set good examples by showing courtesy, respect, and kindness to HSD staff, their peers, and others. When our students are not with us, they are in our community. Students, parents, faculty, staff, and the community are all critical components of this effort, and we thank you for your continued support.

Finally, I encourage you to continue to volunteer within the district. Parent and community involvement play an essential role in high student achievement. Please consider volunteering today, as the contributions of our community make a huge difference in the lives of HSD students!

Again, we wish you a happy 2024 and look forward to the many great things ahead!

Sincerely,

*Dr. Nettie Collins-Hart*

Hazelwood School District Superintendent

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## West High Students Honored At Vitendo 4 Africa 10th Annual Gala

Congratulations to West High's Greenspan Gachie and Stella Ngugi, who were honored at the Vitendo 4 Africa's (V4A) 10th Annual Gala. Greenspan was presented with the Emerging Leader Award, while Stella received the Community Advocate Award.

"Both of these students are shining examples of the many up-and-coming leaders thriving at West High," said Dr. Demetrius Adams, building principal at Hazelwood West High School. "We are incredibly proud that these students are part of our community and raising their voices for HSD."

Each year, V4A recognizes individuals and businesses in our community who have, through positive actions, stood out among their peers personally, professionally, and in volunteerism.



"I'm proud of myself and seeing all the growth I've made," Greenspan, a 10th-grade student at West High, exclaimed. "Nothing comes easy, so to receive an award like this, I don't

take it lightly. Hazelwood West has played a huge role in building me as a leader. From engaging in group projects to being the captain of my basketball team and captain of my volleyball team, it's given me a chance to learn from people and lead others."

The non-profit's mission is to welcome, connect, and empower immigrants through training, mentorship, and resource coordination as they enjoy a smooth transition and start their new lives in America.

"It's truly gratifying to be recognized as a leader and to see the impact I have had on others," Stella Ngugi, a 12th-grade student at West High, said. "Hazelwood West has played a big role in developing my leadership skills with the many opportunities they provide with different clubs that work on helping in our community. I would like to thank West High's English Learner instructor, Mrs. Sheri Lawson, for the impact she has made on me. I would also like to thank Vitendo 4 Africa for the astonishing work that they do and for building such a big community for future generations to come."

HSD is proud of Greenspan Gachie and Stella Ngugi and encourages them to continue their efforts in the community as they raise their voices for HSD!



**HSD PROUD PASS**  
**2023-2024**

**60+**

This pass is good for free admission to HS activities and athletics.

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## HSD PROUD PASS

The HSD Proud Activities and Athletics Pass is one way the Hazelwood School District says thank you for your support of our schools. It allows active HSD Hero Readers, active HSD Ambassadors, and district residents aged 60 and over free access to high school and middle school events. HSD Proud Pass holders may receive one free food item and one free drink per event.

For more information visit [www.hazelwoodschoools.org](http://www.hazelwoodschoools.org)



Hazelwood School District alumnus and State Senator, Brian Williams, toured Southeast Middle School and attended the Southeast Middle Mindset Monday Showcase Sampling Day. Senator Williams, a proud graduate of Hazelwood Central High, spoke to students about the importance of their education and their future aspirations.

“Nothing charges my senatorial battery quite like visiting with my community’s future leaders,” said Senator Williams. “I am impressed with everyone’s hard work and inspired by your commitment to each other. Please remember, the study habits and discipline you establish today will lay the foundation for future success. Stay focused on school, listen to the caring adults in your life, and aim high!”

## Senator Brian Williams Visits Southeast Middle School



Hazelwood School District Board members and HSD Superintendent, Dr. Nettie Collins-Hart, also viewed the showcase and were impressed with what they saw.

“I am very proud of the hard work and dedication of our students,” said Dr. Nettie Collins-Hart, Superintendent of Hazelwood School District. “Our young leaders are very eager to share all they have been learning, and I am grateful for Senator Williams’ continuous support of our schools.”

The Hazelwood School District thanks everyone for participating in Southeast Middle’s Mindset Monday Showcase Sampling Day.

## Southeast Middle Hosts Mindset Monday Showcase Sampling Day

Southeast Middle students’ hard work was on display at the school’s first Mindset Monday Showcase Sampling Day. During the first semester, Southeast Middle students learned from community partners through various courses on creative arts, entrepreneurship, financial literacy, and social and emotional development. The showcase served as an opportunity for students to show their peers, parents, and staff all they had accomplished during the first semester.

Sixth-grade student Saiyah Hill participated in Junior Achievement this semester and created a clothing business alongside three of her peers. “We came up with Luv4\_Clothes because we wanted to sell clothes for kids our age,” expressed Hill. “We wanted to provide comfortable, yet stylish, clothes that kids our age could afford.”

“It’s a once-in-a-lifetime deal to be in Junior Achievement,” said sixth-grader Ethan Truitt. “The teachers are awesome. They help you with problems, plus we learn new things we did not know before.”

The Hazelwood School District is proud of what Southeast Middle students have accomplished through Mindset Mondays and looks forward to the full school showcase on February 15.







## Community Family Coalition Supporting HSD Families

The Hazelwood School District is creating the Community Family Coalition to provide support to families of students facing school challenges, such as bullying and fighting. This coalition is the result of several community members wanting to be more directly involved with helping students and their families.

This coalition directly ties into two of HSD's strategic plan objectives: Goal 2, differentiate and expand resources and services for students; and Goal 5, increase parent and community engagement.

"We are grateful for the community's support," said Dr. Nettie Collins-Hart, Superintendent of the Hazelwood School District. "When students are not in school, they are a part of this community, so having partners in the community serving as role models for our students and assisting their families is important."

There are three main components of the coalition's focus: Lunch Bunch, parent support conferences, and POSITIVE PRESENCE community school walks.

During Lunch Bunch, students with long-term suspensions meet with a coalition member at their home school during lunchtime.

While an HSD staff member will be present, this will provide students with an opportunity to discuss challenges with a coalition member and reduce the suspension.

In addition, the parent support conferences will serve as an opportunity for parents to discuss any challenges they are facing with a coalition member. Participation in the parent support conference will also reduce a student's suspension.

Lastly, the POSITIVE PRESENCE community school walks are designed to increase the visibility of our community leaders within our schools and show support for all of our students. During these school walks, coalition members' presence will help students feel seen by positive role models in the community, and it will also serve as a feedback loop in the community to share the many good things they see happening in our schools.

All Community Family Coalition members must go through the volunteer application process for a green badge and complete orientation. If you would like to join the Community Family Coalition, please contact the superintendent's office by email at [nscales@hazelwoodschoools.org](mailto:nscales@hazelwoodschoools.org), or call 314-953-5013.

Calling all HSD Heroes! HSD is expanding our HSD Hero/Volunteer program and we can't do that without you! Research suggests that when adult volunteers are present, students see that adults take school and education seriously and respect learning. This promotes positive attitudes toward school. As positive role models and student motivators, volunteers are viewed as contributing to better school attendance, improved grades and test scores, less misbehavior, and better social skills.

It is important for new HSD Heroes/Volunteers to be aware of the process of the District's volunteer program. There are two levels of volunteers within HSD: Fingerprint Background Approved Volunteer and Standard Volunteer. Visit [hazelwoodschoools.org](http://hazelwoodschoools.org) or scan the QR code to view our full volunteer packet.

If you have any further questions, contact: Tamara Walker, HR Benefits Specialist at [benefits@hazelwoodschoools.org](mailto:benefits@hazelwoodschoools.org) or call 314-953-5079.

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TIME TODAY!**



SCAN ME





## Members of Central High's Orchestra and Choir Receive Prestigious Honor

The musical talent at Central High is on display as members from both the school's choir and orchestra have recently received prestigious honors.

The following students from the Hawks choir were selected to participate in the All-Suburban Honor Choir Festival: 10th grader, Herriyah Brookins; 9th grader, Iyannah Caine; 9th grader, Ikee Muhammed; 10th grader, Isaac Barnes; and 9th

grader, Isaac Parker. A special congratulations goes to Isaac Parker for being selected and featured as one of the soloists, who also serves as Mr. Concert Choir and Mr. Freshman of Central High School.

Meanwhile, two Central High orchestra members were selected into the St Louis All-Suburban Orchestra. Hayley Wilson, 12th-grade viola, and Jeremiah Dyson, 12th-grade bass, were accepted

into this prestigious group. "We are proud of these students and their directors for all their hard work," exclaimed Syreeta Holland, Central High's building principal. "Our Hawks continue to soar for success and reach new heights. We look forward to watching our students achieve great things."

The school's choir is under the direction of Toni Towns, and the Hawks' orchestra is led by Kimberly Jackson.

The Hazelwood School District wants to congratulate all those involved in these tremendous success stories and encourage them to continue to raise their voices for HSD!



## East High Esports Student Makes State Tournament

The East High Esports team is celebrating the success of their Varsity Smash team member, Elijah Humphrey, for placing second in the sectional playoffs and going to the state tournament, where he finished 7th overall.

"Going to state finals makes me feel excited," expressed East senior Elijah Humphrey. "I have been playing since eighth grade. I feel like I have

been doing great. I am thankful for making second place. I had no clue I competed against the best player

in Missouri."

Humphrey played against over 30 players in the state tournament at State Tech College in Linn, MO. Esports head coach Charles Brown, assistant coach Chris Mattli, and the remaining Esports team members were there in solidarity to cheer on Humphrey.

"I am so proud of Elijah," said Esports head coach Charles Brown. "He came to us as a senior and helped to put us on the map as far as Super Smash Bros. Ultimate, making us a state-qualifying team. A win for him is a win for us all."

The Hazelwood School District is proud of Elijah Humphrey, who will remain an Esports champion!





## Missouri's First Lady, Teresa Parson, Visits With HSD's JAG Program

Missouri's First Lady, Teresa Parson, visited the Hazelwood Opportunity Center to talk with students from HSD's Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) program. Joining the First Lady were members of her staff as well as JAGS-Missouri board member and President and CEO of Estel Foods, Inc., James Williams Jr.

Parson sat with JAG students from the Opportunity Center and discussed her and Governor Mike Parson's upbringing and how their careers were built on three basic principles: hard work, positive attitudes, and taking advantage of your opportunities.

The First Lady engaged students about future career choices, answered questions about JAG and other opportunities, and posed for pictures. She shared a phrase that she and

Governor Parson have utilized to encourage students across Missouri, "If it is to be, it is up to me."



Founded in 1979, the JAG program works with students to build toward focused career paths using trade or technical skills, as well as college-degree job opportunities. Parson detailed that JAG-Missouri has grown from six programs in six schools serving 225 students in 2014 to 111 programs across 80 schools serving more than 4,000 students today.

The Hazelwood School District wants to thank First Lady Teresa Parson for visiting with our students and encouraging them to chase their dreams and raise their voices for HSD!

## HSD JAG Program Presenting Students With Future Opportunities

Hazelwood School District's Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) program is dedicated to helping students achieve their great potential despite facing significant barriers. Now in its second year at the Hazelwood Opportunity Center, the program has 44 students with a strong will to learn.

"Our students have talent, grit, and a hunger to learn," explained Derrick Elmore, JAG Specialist at the Opportunity Center. "Our motto is 'Every young person is prepared for future success.' They all want to succeed and have a better life. They want to be productive citizens."

The program services students from all three high schools who are a part of our Hazelwood Success Academy at the Opportunity Center. The goal is to provide students with the knowledge and skills to be employable and successful.

Students benefit from the "JAG Advantage," a set of three strategies to propel JAG into the future: Project Based



Learning (PBL), trauma informed care, and employer engagement.

The program assists students with post-secondary options beyond high school. During the program, students hear from guest speakers, attend on-the-job field trips, and perform project-based activities. These activities will assist with decision-making for their future endeavors.

The Hazelwood School District is proud of the 44 students enrolled in the JAG program and encourages each of them to pursue their dreams and raise their voices for HSD.

## West Middle Students' Artwork On Display At DESE Headquarters



The artistic talents of West Middle's students are on display throughout the headquarters of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Fifty-three student art projects fill the walls of the Commissioner of Education's office, DESE's curriculum office, hallways, and the State Board of Education board room in Jefferson City.

Colorful designs of ice cream, eagles, and flowers are among those chosen to decorate the headquarters. The artwork was also presented at the state's Board of Education meeting on October 17 and can be viewed on DESE's virtual art gallery.

"For the last 25 years, I have had the honor of teaching HSD students and providing the opportunities to help them be recognized for their hard work," Elaine Eversgerd, art teacher at West Middle, explained. "Luckily, DESE has graciously given them this spotlight. However, it is the partnerships that we have established with the community that make it

all possible. The collection of work, which is now on display in Jefferson City, comes from the art created for these venues, and I am super proud of my students and their willingness to go the extra mile."



Since 2004, DESE has invited public schools throughout Missouri to submit samples of their students' artwork. Artwork from the featured school is showcased for a month, with West Middle's artwork being displayed throughout November.

HSD is proud of Mrs. Evergerd and the wonderful students at West Middle for raising their voices and putting their talents on display for HSD!

## Continued from cover "Holiday Drives Across The District"

Other HSD drives include Jury's holiday food box collection, which gathered more than 20 boxes of food, gift cards, and more for families in need. Garrett, McNair, Russell, and Walker student councils hosted food drives at each school and donated over 4,000 non-perishable items to TEAM Food Pantry. Larimore partnered with the Dawn Dillon Foundation to host Coats, Cookies, and Cocoa and provided the community with free coats and utility assistance.

McCurdy collected and donated nearly 100 toys to the Empower North County Affordable Christmas store, which benefits families in the community.

The Hazelwood School District is grateful for the parents, students, and community's generosity, giving spirit, and willingness to raise their voices for HSD and those in need.



## Four HSD Educators Honored With Annual Apple for the Teacher Award

Congratulations to the four Hazelwood School District

educators who were recently honored at the Iota Phi Lambda Sorority, Alpha Zeta Chapter's 42nd annual Apple for the Teacher Ceremony.

Twillman's Dr. Danielle Deloatch, Northwest Middle's Dr. Robert K. Payne, and East High's Dr. Kenton Mereshon and Amber Mitchell were presented with apple-shaped awards recognizing their remarkable contributions to education in honor of American Education Week.

"This is a profound honor that highlights the shared dedication and tireless efforts within our team at Twillman Elementary School," stated Dr. Deloatch, Instructional Coach at Twillman Elementary. "This recognition extends beyond a personal achievement. It serves as a testament to the collaborative spirit that defines our school community. American Education Week stands as a poignant reminder of the pivotal role educators play in shaping the future."

HSD was well represented at the event and takes great pride in the culture of high expectations and excellence these educators establish for our students.



# Prop H Updates Shift Focus To Elementary Schools' Playground



Since November 2022, when the Hazelwood School District community voted to pass the \$130 million zero-tax-rate-change bond issue ballot measure Prop H, the Hazelwood School District has been working hard to make improvements around the district of which students, parents, staff, and the community can be proud.

From revitalized athletic fields to new and improved safety and security updates, the upgrades around the district have been well received.

"The improvements that Prop H have brought us have surpassed even what I was thinking would happen," said Dr. Lisa Strauther, building principal at Russell Elementary and proud East High alumnae. "We have not seen improvements like this in a very long time, and we're excited that every classroom has ClearTouch panels, that the exterior doors have been updated, and very excited about the playground equipment. We can't wait to have additional security measures with our secure vestibules, and we can't thank the community enough for what they have done for our Cougar scholars and Hazelwood community."

The latest ongoing Prop H upgrades are happening at the elementary school playgrounds, where playground equipment and surfaces are being replaced and improved. Among the most exciting improvements is ensuring the playgrounds are ADA accessible,



which provides access for students with physical disabilities to utilize the equipment.

"We started with the most severe needs at Armstrong and Russell and are working down the list," explains David Dudley, HSD's Director of Maintenance. "All playground units should have a rubber surface installed under the playground unit in place of the certified

mulch, which was previously utilized. This work will take time to complete throughout the district, but we aim to do it as quickly as possible."

"Armstrong is extremely excited about these updates to the playground," exclaimed Dr. Kelly Kozlen, building principal at Armstrong Elementary. "We have not experienced these kinds of updates since the school's inception in 1969, so we are excited to have safe and ADA-accessible playgrounds for our students."

"With these improvements to our playgrounds, Hazelwood School District will continue to ensure that our students can develop their social and emotional skills by being physically active on our safe, ADA-accessible playgrounds," said Dr. Nettie Collins-Hart, Superintendent of Hazelwood School District. "I want to once again thank the community for their support of our schools."

*These ongoing upgrades are generating a lot of excitement across the district.*







## Jamestown Fourth-Grade Student Reagan Gardner Selected As Crossroads Kids Spokesperson

The Hazelwood School District has an influx of students who create high expectations and excellence inside and outside the classrooms, from entrepreneurs and student authors to community leaders. Jamestown's Reagan Gardner is the latest example of the shining stars spread throughout the district.

Reagan, a fourth-grade student at Jamestown, was recently selected as a spokesperson for Crossroads Kids Club's national campaign. Reagan's charisma, confidence, and passion are among the traits she possesses that make her a perfect fit for Crossroads Kids Club.

"I feel amazing and excited to be chosen by Crossroads Kids," exclaimed Gardner. "Crossroads Kids is a fun and exciting place where I and my fourth-grade friends feel safe after school."

As a national spokesperson for the program, Reagan will share information about how students can benefit from the program.

Crossroads Kids Club is an after-school program connecting students and families through a church-led mentoring program serving middle and elementary school students. Jamestown is in its second year hosting Crossroads Kids Club, where coaches create a loving and inclusive environment through meaningful curriculum.

"It was no surprise that Reagan spoke so highly and eloquently about her experience in Crossroads Kids here at Jamestown," said Jamestown principal Angela Haywood-Gaskin. "Reagan is committed to whatever she does as a student, whether it is her academic pursuits or involvement in cheerleaders and being a leader among her peers."

The Hazelwood School District is proud of Reagan for raising her voice and being a positive role model for students across HSD and nationwide.

## Grannemann Only School In Missouri Awarded National PTA Grant

Grannemann's students, staff, and PTA are proud recipients of the Bayer Fund's STEM and Families Science Festival grant. Grannemann is one of only 30 schools, and the only school in Missouri, to receive this grant.

Thirty elementary schools nationwide received the prestigious \$1,250 grant to provide STEM exposure to families, reach underserved families in the community, and deliver an experience where families can engage and learn together.

PTA board members' children expressed their desire to do a science night for the 23-24 school year, stemming from several PTA board members doing at-home experiments with their children.

"When I saw the grant opportunity, I knew it was the right fit for our school and decided to take a chance," explained Grannemann PTA president Tramaine G. Williams. "I believe science is the application of everything our students learn in school. Science is the intersection of the disciplines and life lessons. It contains math, history, critical thinking, formulating

sentences, and formulating opinions and identifying when wrong."

The Hazelwood School District is proud of Grannemann's PTA for receiving this honor.







## HSD Middle School Students Attend Leadership In Training Workshop

Forty-five students from Central Middle, North Middle, Southeast Middle, and West Middle participated in the Leaders In Training Summit sponsored by Preferred Family Health.

Students participated in four sessions focusing on decision-making, leadership, coping skills, and drug education. They also had the opportunity to meet vendors from the community offering a wide variety of education, resources, and other information.

“My favorite part of the event was the breakout session because it taught me how to believe in myself and not worry about other things in life,” explained Norah Wiegand, a 6th-grade student at West Middle.

Over 200 middle school students across the metropolitan area participated in the training event and heard from guest speaker Koran Bolden, President of the Bold Moves Marketing Agency. Bolden, an author, entrepreneur, and mental health advocate engaged students about leadership and the skill sets needed to become a great leader.

The Hazelwood School District would like to thank Preferred Family Health for providing this opportunity for our middle school students to learn essential leadership skills so they can raise their voices for HSD!

## Brown Reading Specialist Kendra Vaughn Receives The Salute To Excellence In Education Award



Brown Elementary reading specialist, Kendra Vaughn, was honored at the 36th Annual St. Louis American Foundation Salute to Excellence in Education Scholarship and Awards Gala.

During her over 23 years in the Hazelwood School District, Vaughn has received numerous accolades, including building Teacher of the Year twice, the North County Incorporated 30 Leaders in their 30s Award, and the Top Ladies of Distinction Incorporated Community

and Leadership Heroine Award. Now, Vaughn can add the Salute to Excellence in Education Award to that list.

“This award is exceptional for me because I know the St. Louis

American highlights the achievements of African Americans,” said Vaughn. “For their organization to honor me, I am ecstatic about that. It makes me feel like I am going down in history as one of those iconic figures.”

Brown Elementary principal Melanie Davison describes Vaughn as a standout leader, highly deserving of this honor.

“Mrs. Kendra Vaughn is an incredible person, leader, and educator,” said Davison. “She always goes above and beyond for every student and staff member. Kendra is an innovative teacher, mentor, and leader who not only teaches but shapes the character, integrity, caliber, and future of each child and new teacher she interacts with each year. Teachers like Mrs. Kendra Vaughn are the key to a more successful and equitable society.”

The Hazelwood School District is proud of Kendra Vaughn for raising her voice to facilitate elementary school education with excellence.

# The I Define Me Movement Embodies Social And Emotional Learning At Southeast Middle

One of the many goals of Southeast Middle's Mindset Mondays is to focus on enhancing students' social and emotional learning. This integral program brings community partners, such as the I Define Me Movement, into the school to work with students on developing these skills.

The school-based program instills the value of self-esteem, diversity, leadership, and character-building skills in students through social-emotional learning components, restorative justice, and mentoring wellness programming.

"I Define Me has taught me how to be comfortable with myself and not follow others," expressed Southeast Middle sixth-grade student Dakota Weaver. "It is important to have friends you can talk to and not be shy and express your emotions."

For 31 Mondays, the I Define Me Movement works with sixth through eighth-grade girls. Weekly therapeutic support circles allow students to discuss social and emotional issues in a safe space where mentoring wellness and tools to address trauma are focal points.

"When you see students come into the classroom and they take our I Define Me pledge, they are pledging to be a better version of themselves," said I Define Me Movement Founder Tracie Berry-McGhee. "We want students to understand there is value inside. It starts from the inside out. By having social and emotional learning tools, students can become a complete person. They can handle those things and get a quality education."

The eighth-graders also focus on entrepreneurship, creating wellness packs consisting of body butter, lip balms, and affirmation bracelets. Students produce a product from concept



to completion that they can promote as they are learning marketing and business skills.

"I Define Me Movement is a powerful program provided to our students," said

Southeast Middle Principal Marsha Wallace. "They work with close to 300 of our students every Monday. Their work includes empowering our students to develop leadership skills, shifting a mind of defeat to thoughts of possibility, and providing a safe platform to share their stories without judgment but with direction. The I Define Me Movement has reminded our students and staff that everyone has a story, and we must use this knowledge to begin understanding the actions of others to assist them in becoming better than they were yesterday."

The Hazelwood School District looks forward to the I Define Me Movement encouraging students to be the best version of themselves and raise their voices for HSD.



## Tutoring & Social/Emotional Support Line

The Tutoring and Social/Emotional Support Line is a resource for tutoring, homework help, and access to general social/emotional needs.

Teachers and social/emotional staff will be able to assist students and parents with both tutoring and homework help, and will be able to connect families with other resources as needed.

Call the Tutoring or Social/Emotional Hotline: 314-953-5140  
Hours: Monday - Thursday 6pm - 8pm, Saturday 10am - 12pm

Scan the QR code to sign up for the Tutoring or Social Emotional Hotline.







## West High's Elisha Johnson Receives \$10,000 Centennial Scholarship Award

Congratulations to West High's senior and early graduate, Elisha Johnson, for receiving the \$10,000 Centennial Scholarship Award from the Eta Mu Sigma Alumni Chapter of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.

"West High is full of students accomplishing tremendous feats, and Elisha is just the latest example of the Wildcats raising their voices for HSD," Dr. Demetrius Adams, building principal at Hazelwood West High School, exclaimed. Elisha will major in business and entrepreneurship at the University of Missouri-Saint Louis

(UMSL) while working as an apprentice in the construction industry next year.

"This opportunity has given me self-confidence and assurance that I'm worthy of being granted competitive scholarships," Elisha said. "This accomplishment has proven through self-improvement and personal growth I can overcome any adversity that is thrown my way."

The Hazelwood School District is proud of Elisha Johnson for receiving the Centennial Scholarship Award, and we wish him the best as he continues to pursue his dreams and raise his voice for HSD!

## Parents As Teachers' Tonya Brooks Honored As January's #TeacherProud Tuesday Winner

Tonya Brooks is a parent educator for the Hazelwood School District Parents As Teacher program, and in her 23rd year with HSD, her support and generosity with students, parents, and the community shines through all that she does.

"Ms. Tonya is an excellent educator for children in preparation for kindergarten," wrote Regina E., HSD parent, in her nomination. "Her support has helped my children to be strong readers. She provided tools to prepare my daughters for kindergarten. She is fantastic!"

HSD is dedicated to being a great place for all students to learn, and educators like Tonya Brooks are vital to the success of our mission, which is why she is being honored as HSD's January #TeacherProud Tuesday recipient.

"I am so excited, surprised, and honored to be considered for such an award," exclaimed Tonya. "I love my job and the families I work with. I have the pleasure of working with them as their parent educator, and having a good educational start is

very important to me. I try to instill that into my parents in the hope they will pass it on to their children."

The district is excited to recognize Tonya for her dedication to HSD students, parents, and the community. HSD is proud of her efforts to create a culture of high expectations and excellence for her students and their parents while providing top-of-the-line customer service.

#TeacherProud Tuesday is a regional initiative that celebrates those currently serving in the profession, and Tonya Brooks is a shining example of the educators HSD wants to spotlight.

Congratulations to all teachers nominated for HSD's #TeacherProud Tuesday in January. Visit [www.hazelwoodschooldistrict.org/teacherproud](http://www.hazelwoodschooldistrict.org/teacherproud) to nominate an HSD educator for #TeacherProud Tuesday.



The key to achieving the campaign goal is participation from all stakeholders. The information explains specific ways each stakeholder group can support the campaign.



The No Guns in School campaign specifically targets guns and mobilizes students, parents, and the community to partner with the district to achieve one goal: No Guns in School. **Did you know that a student who brings a gun to school will be suspended for up to 180 days? Additionally, barring extenuating circumstances, the student will be expelled, which means they will not be able to attend any public school in the state of Missouri.**

## Larimore, Keeven, and Grannemann's Guitar Clubs Thrive in Popularity

Students at Larimore, Keeven, and Grannemann are developing discipline, reading, notation skills, and hand-eye coordination through the assistance of the St. Louis Classical Guitar Society.

Larimore's after-school guitar program is successfully in its fifth year, led by the music specialist, Larissa Young, alongside St. Louis Classical Guitar teaching artist Miss Ma.

"The Larimore Elementary Club has 21 members from kindergarten to fifth grade," said Young. "Amazing and magical things happen when watching students pick up guitars for the first time and, in a few weeks, be able to perform musical selections with much confidence and excellence."

"Being in the guitar club makes me feel I can accomplish more when I am older," said Larimore fifth-grade student Leah Hamber. "I like being here with all of my friends because they are very supportive in helping me to learn the music."

Meanwhile, Keeven and Grannemann guitar clubs have grown in popularity during their first year at the schools. Both clubs began their memberships with twenty students comprised of 3rd, 4th, and 5th

graders alongside guest teaching artist Ben Osborne. Through the Maritz Arts Grant in 2019, Keeven's Vocal Music Teacher, Kimberly Payne, received 22 classical guitars now in good use.

"Guitar club motivates these young students in different ways," said Payne. "They are part of a special group they are proud to be part of. I have seen how excited they are when we practice with our guest teaching artist, Mr. Ben Osborne."

"The guitar club is fun to be part of," exclaimed Keeven's fourth-grade student, Kaiden Robinson. "I don't usually like to wake up early, but I will wake up at 6 am for guitar club."

"It has been a lot of fun learning to play the guitar," emphasized Grannemann's third-grade student, Jekobe Reese. "We have been learning new songs, meeting new people, and making new friends."

The Hazelwood School District looks forward to seeing the guitar clubs' continued growth in popularity among students.



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## Northwest Middle's Nurse Alex Schmidt Wins Rising Star Award

The Hazelwood School District would like to congratulate Northwest Middle's Alex Schmidt for being selected for the St. Louis Suburban School Nurses' Association's (SLSSNA) Rising Star Award.

SLSSNA recognizes new school nurses who have

impacted their school or community as emerging leaders in school nursing. Alex was presented with the award for her achievements at the annual 2023 Fall Dinner Conference.

"Nurse Schmidt makes sure that her students and staff leave her office feeling a part of something healthy and, in turn, loved and cared for," detailed Christian Bertel, Coordinator of Health Services for the Hazelwood School District. "She has stepped up to mentor, meeting clinic aides and their nurses while fielding calls of concern, triumph, and questions. The team responds to her high energy and has started utilizing her equitable approach as they form their structures on-site."

Schmidt won the award through nominations and recommendation letters from her colleagues and principal at

Northwest Middle.

"She brings great energy, joy, and love to her position as a nurse at Northwest Middle School," exclaimed Dr. Patty Ulrich, building principal at Northwest Middle. "She is an integral part of our team, and I can attest to her exceptional qualities and unwavering commitment to our school and community. Her compassion, expertise, and tireless efforts have made her an indispensable asset to the Northwest Middle School community."

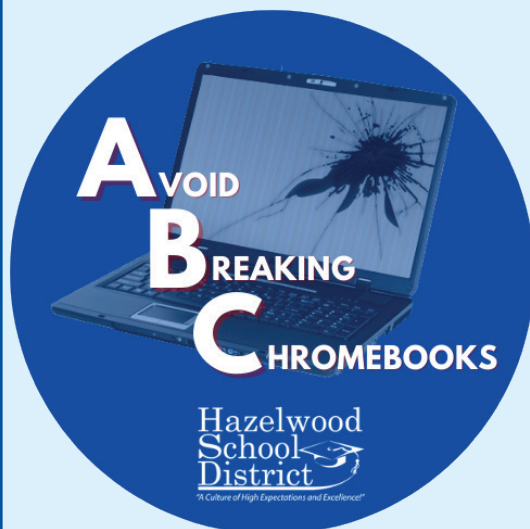
Schmidt is a constant source of joy at Northwest Middle, and she can be counted on to lift the spirits of everyone she comes in contact with. Whether posting a positive thought or a daily joke for students and staff, her enthusiasm is contagious and creates a welcoming environment.

"To be acknowledged, believed in, and supported by my leadership and peers makes me feel cherished and valued by my school and our health services community," Schmidt said. "I am so lucky to have a position that I love and thrive in. I get to take care of, advocate for, and invest in nearly 1,000 kiddos. These kiddos bless me with daily reminders to be thankful for the amazing things happening around us! Be humble, spread joy, and invest freely in others!"

Once again, congratulations to nurse Alex Schmidt on this distinct honor, and thank you for creating a culture that we can all be proud of while maintaining high expectations and excellence at Northwest Middle. Keep raising your voice for HSD!



[www.hazelwoodschools.org](http://www.hazelwoodschools.org)



Hazelwood  
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"A Culture of High Expectations and Excellence"

## HSD IS HIRING!

### Building Aides

Pay Range: \$16.15-\$18.47 / Per Hour

### Bus Drivers

Pay Range: \$17.84-\$24.76 / Per Hour

### Child Nutrition

Pay Range: \$15.15-\$21.36 / Per Hour

### Custodians

Pay Range: \$15.48-\$28.67 / Per Hour

### Clerical

Pay Range: \$15.15-\$38.44 / Per Hour

### Nurses

Pay Range: \$39,000-\$83,496 / Per Year

### School Safety Officer

Pay Range: \$17.12-\$23.74 / Per Hour

### Teacher

Pay Range: \$47,000-\$89,914 / Per Year

### Teacher Assistants

Pay Range: \$16.68-\$20.33 / Per Hour

### Employee Benefits

- ✓ District Paid Medical, Dental, & Life Insurance
- ✓ Holiday & Vacation Days
- ✓ Tuition Reimbursement
- ✓ Employee Assistance Program
- ✓ Tuition-based early childhood classrooms in every elementary school! The cost is \$100 per child, per week, including pre/post care for HSD staff.

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**SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 2024**

**FLORISSANT GOLF CLUB**

**50 COUNTRY CLUB LN., FLORISSANT, MO**

**4-PERSON SCRAMBLE**

**SIGN-UP DEADLINE FRIDAY, APRIL 12, 2024**

**SHOTGUN START: 8:00A.M.**

**COST \$125/GOLFER**

This includes 18-holes of golf, cart,  
continental breakfast, lunch, and gift bag!

**Become an HSD Foundation Sponsor:** Several  
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