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**STEM**  
science, technology, engineering, and math

## FAMILY SPOTLIGHT

**Dad Myron and son Zachary Fletcher** use The American's e-edition to complete science lessons at home. They work together on an experiment found in last week's STEM page, testing the connection between smell and taste.

Photo by LaSonta Fletcher

Teachers and parents, if you are using the St. Louis American's NIE program and would like to nominate your class for a Classroom Spotlight, please email: [nie@stlamerican.com](mailto:nie@stlamerican.com).



**Barrington Elementary 5<sup>th</sup> Grader**

<http://www.stlamerican.com/eedition>

October 8, 2020

## Salute to eight excellent educators

### Craig A. Waddell, Ph.D

“If educators really want to reduce racial disparities, they need to increase student adeptness. Too often, when students perform poorly, we lower the bar rather than raise expectations,” said Craig A. Waddell, Ph.D, eighth grade algebra/math teacher at Hazelwood North Middle School.



**Craig A. Waddell**

“When our graduation rates drop, we relax the grading scale rather than improve learning. When discipline deteriorates, we reduce detentions rather than enhance civility. And when performance declines, we increase seat time rather than elevate engagement. We delude ourselves when we create diploma mills in lieu of high-caliber educational institutions. A high tide raises all ships.”



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# Hazelwood School District sticking with virtual learning while parents have mixed feelings

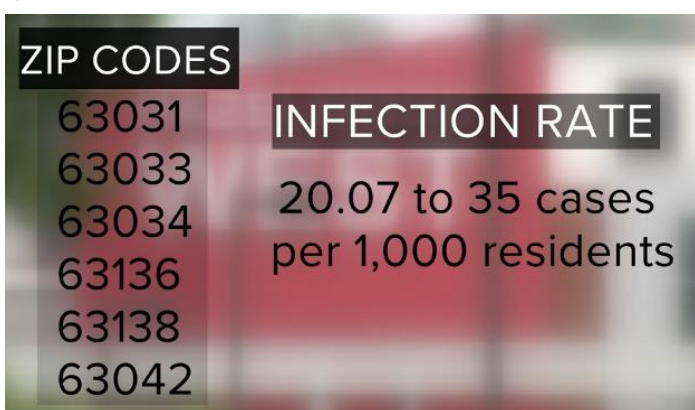
With many schools begin to return back to in-person learning, the Hazelwood School District says they are staying with 100 percent virtual for now. Some parents are not happy with that decision.



HAZELWOOD, Mo. (KMOV.com) - While many schools have started easing back into in-person learning, the Hazelwood School District says they are staying with 100 percent virtual for now. News 4 talked to some parents that are not happy with the decision. Some parents say the stress and strain the virtual learning is putting on families has reached a point where they feel it's time that the students return to the classroom at least part time. Oliver Pittman is a fourth grader in the district. Like thousands of other students, a typical school day consists of sitting in front of the Chromebook. Hazelwood, like other districts, has been making do with virtual learning, but some parents say they believe if a student wants to return to the classroom, they should be able to. Kately Pittman says she believes the matter should be decided on a case-by-case basis. "I see people at the grocery stores, like Target. If you feel comfortable enough to go out to all these other places, why not have kids in school?" The district says right now it is weighing several factors as far as a return to the classroom, but a spokesperson says there are some numbers that the district is looking at that are very concerning. Class for Oliver is sitting in front of a Chromebook screen much of the day. Pittman also has a tenth grader who's also not a fan of virtual learning. Pittman says if your child wants to stay virtual, "Then let those kids stay virtual, let those teachers stay virtual to help those kids. And then the ones that want to go back to school and the teachers want to be back in the classroom with the kids, let us go back. Maybe not full time right away, but at least a couple days a week," said Pittman. "We're listening to what our teachers are saying, our parents are saying and of course what our students are saying," said Anthony Kiekow with the Hazelwood School District. The district says its weighing several factors in its decision. One major point of contention are the numbers. The district serves students in six primary zip codes. Infection rates in those zip codes range from 20 cases to 35 COVID-19 cases per 1,000 residents. The county average is 17.7 cases. The district is looking at transitioning to a hybrid model with younger students coming back first. "We know the youngest learners probably struggle the most with the idea of virtual learning. Additionally, we know that the COVID-19 data suggests that they are not impacted to the same level as some of our older folks," said Kiekow. The district says it is keeping a day check of the numbers, but right now it is just not time to bring students back into the classroom, even on a limited basis. Parent University has partnered with Hazelwood Schools on what they can do to support their children's academic success and well-being. For information, click [here](#).

# 'Our priority is the safety of our students' | Hazelwood School District to continue virtual learning

"It's not just bringing a student back into the building, you're basically bringing your entire household into the building," the district's spokesman said



HAZELWOOD, Mo. — While most schools are getting ready to welcome students back in person, one St. Louis County School district has decided to go another route and stay completely virtual. "We consistently say that our priority is the safety of our students, faculty and staff, and this decision is the proof of that," said Anthony Kiekow, the communications director for the district. Kiekow said the district's board of education chose to continue learning outside of the classroom.

**RELATED:** [Hazelwood school district to continue all-virtual learning](#)

"My son is bouncing off the wall, my 16-year-old is ready to pull her hair out so that has been a challenge," said parent Quinn Gay. Gay's 16-year-old daughter attends Hazelwood West High School, while her son attends school in another district. She said virtual learning has had its strengths and challenges. "She talked to me the other day about feeling a little disconnected and even a little depressed," Gay said, talking about her daughter.

Kiekow said this decision wasn't made lightly. They are focusing on the numbers. "All of us want our students to be back in our buildings for in-person learning, it's just that right now we are really focused on the safety of our entire community and right now this community isn't healthy," said Kiekow. "While the numbers throughout St. Louis County may look like they're headed in a positive direction, when you zero in on the communities we serve it's a completely different story." According to the St. Louis County Department of Health, as of October 5, the infection rate in these zip codes 63031, 63033, 63034, 63136, 63138, and 63042 ranged from 20.07 to 35 cases per 1,000 residents. "It's not just bringing a student back into the building, you're basically bringing your entire household into the building. So, everyone that their parents are in contact with in the school are all connected and that can have a dramatic impact on the number of positive COVID-19 cases," said Kiekow. Gay said even with its occasional challenges, she's trusting the experts. "If they're deciding to do that, I have to believe in my heart it's for the best interest," she said.

# Brewers' Devin Williams named Baseball Digest's Relief Pitcher of the Year



MILWAUKEE — Devin Williams was named Major League Baseball's Relief Pitcher of the Year by Baseball Digest on Monday. Williams received 12 of 17 first-place votes and 39 points overall, seven ahead of Oakland right-hander Liam Hendriks, who had four and 32, respectively.

The rookie right-hander put together one of the most dominant seasons in MLB history, going 4-1 with a 0.33 ERA after allowing just one earned run over 27 innings. He struck out 53 of 100 batters and finished with 17.67 strikeouts per nine innings.

Opposing batters hit .090 against Williams, who posted a 0.63 WHIP and tossed 24 $\frac{2}{3}$  scoreless innings after allowing his lone earned run of the season — a solo home run by the Pirates' Colin Moran — on July 27 in his second outing of the season.

He made nine appearances in September and struck out 24 batters over 11 innings but was left off Milwaukee's roster for the NL wild card series against the Los Angeles Dodgers because of soreness in his right shoulder.

Williams, 26, was the Brewers' second-round pick in the 2013 MLB draft. He made his big-league debut Aug. 7 last season and appeared in 13 games, posting a 3.95 ERA with 14 strikeouts in 13 $\frac{2}{3}$  innings.

- Atlanta first baseman Freddie Freeman was named Player of the Year and Cleveland right-hander Shane Bieber was a unanimous selection for Pitcher of the Year by Baseball Digest's panel of 17 baseball writers and broadcasters, former players, managers and executives.

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