

School Pages

www.bloomingtonschools.info

Spring 2013

District considers beefing up safety, security measures

A message from Superintendent Les Fujitake

Like most schools throughout the nation, we have undertaken a district-wide review and assessment of our current school safety and security measures. We are confident this effort will help identify measures to improve the safety of our schools and facilities.

A safe learning environment is essential for our students. Safety in our schools is a top priority because we know it supports the academic success of each child, giving them the opportunity to learn and achieve in a safe and nurturing environment.

In February, we initiated a two-phase approach that began with a school-by-school analysis to determine the perceived level of safety among various stakeholders, such as parents, students and staff. These facilitated discussions in each of our schools, early childhood centers and district facilities sought input on current safety measures and barriers to improved safety.

The second phase — a formal School Safety and Security Audit conducted by Paul McCullough, a recognized school safety expert and former Bloomington law enforcement officer — has just wrapped up. Our emergency management staff and school leaders are currently reviewing the individual school reports that identify vulnerabilities and potential threats to safety.

We have received wonderful cooperation and support from the Bloomington police and fire departments, and their respective leaders. We have met periodically over the past few months to review and implement additional safety and security measures.

Our approach moving forward will be to assemble recommendations based on the findings of the safety analysis and security audits, which may lead to physical structural improvements, revisions to the district's current emergency response plan, improvement in crisis response protocols and training.



Superintendent Les Fujitake met with Kaye Aho, Bloomington League of Women Voters president before his presentation to the organization. See the feature on the League of Women Voters in the Friends article on page 3.

These recommendations will be presented to the School Board for consideration in late April. We will continue to share our findings and recommendations because working together we have the opportunity to ensure safe schools for every student, staff and family member.



District-wide Food Drive April 29 – May 3

The district's 5th Annual Food Drive is April 29 – May 3. All non-perishable food items and cash donations will go to Bloomington-based Volunteers Enlisted to Assist People (VEAP). Last year, more than 7,200 pounds of food and \$5,300 in cash was collected.

Residents praise public schools

Bloomington's public schools were rated "excellent" or "good" by 80% of respondents in a National Citizen Survey (NRC) commissioned by the City of Bloomington. The results were "much above" Community Quality Benchmarks (average ratings) in a NCS national and similar cities comparison database. More at <http://ow.ly/jjMpd>

Students give lessons in anti-bullying

Jefferson High School students gave anti-bullying presentations at Olson Elementary School. Presentations included definitions of bullying, who's affected, when and where it happens and how to prevent it.



Technology in schools changing education District looks forward to 'Next Technologies for Learning'

Technology has fundamentally changed education. It's used as a powerful tool for learning, collaboration, research and inspiration, and is assisting educators in the effort to develop highly skilled, technologically savvy and information conscious citizens.

In the five years since Bloomington residents approved the technology referendum, the district has met its initial goals of a sustainable replacement cycle for computers, an increase in classroom technologies like SMART Boards and document cameras, and the replacement of an aging phone system.

Over the last five years, the landscape for education technology has changed. There is increased access to tools for classroom collaboration, including Moodle and Google, and new mobile devices like tablets and Chromebooks. Teachers are

creating their own digital content, "flipping" instruction, and are making more of their classroom experiences available to families.

Today, the district is looking forward to the next phase of technology in education — dubbed *Next Technologies for Learning*. This vision lays out the technology goals for the next three to five years, including:

- ▶ **Digital Curriculum & Devices** – Students will carry a personal learning device and can access digital curriculum resources in school and at home.
- ▶ **Anytime, Anywhere Access** – Growing online learning opportunities and working to ensure Internet access at school and home for all students.
- ▶ **Student/Family/School Communication** – Making assessment data and personal



growth information available to families through an online "Hub."

"Our primary goal is to personalize educational experiences," says technology director, John Weisser. "That means students have access to online educational resources anytime and anywhere; teachers can readily assess individual student comprehension; and families will receive more personalized data about their child's progress weekly or daily."

To view the School Board presentation and to provide feedback, please visit bloomingtonschools.info/NextTechFeedback.



Summer Programs

Summer Spectrum* – 8-week program offering fee-based enrichment, recreation, music and art classes for pre-k to grade 9 students. June 17-Aug. 16, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Call 952-681-6129.

GRASP – Fee-based reading and math correspondence lessons at home for grades 1-8. Register by April 12. Call 952-681-6125.

Camp SAFARI* – Full-day, fee-based child-care services for families. Themed programs and two field trips per week with breakfast and snack. For pre-k to grade 6 students. June 11-Aug. 16, 6:30 a.m.-6 p.m. Call 952-681-6129.

Super SAFARI* – Week-long, fee-based child care services for k-6 students. Field trips, breakfast and snack. Aug. 19-23, 7:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Call 952-681-6129.

Operation Adventure* – Fee-based trip for students grades 7-12 to explore geology, social studies, physical education, camping and canoeing in MN and WI state parks and forests. June 10-14, June 17-21. Call 952-681-6559.

Camp Invention* – Fee-based, hands-on science and creativity day camp for grades 1-6. June 17-21, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. 800-968-4332.

Kennedy 9th Grade Academy – High school transition prep course for incoming 9th grade students. July 9-25 (Tuesday-Thursday), 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Call 952-681-5058.

Jefferson 9th Grade Academy – High school transition prep course for incoming 9th grade students. July 9-25 (Tuesday-Thursday), 9 a.m.-12 p.m. Call 952-681-5058.

Youth Enrichment and Private Music Lessons – Recreation, art, performance and other classes, group and individual music/instrument lessons. For pre-K to adults, scheduled times once a week. br.thatcommunityed.com.

Bloomington & Richfield Community Ed. Aquatics* – Fee-based swimming lessons, open/lap swim and water fitness classes, WSA classes and lifeguard training. Ages 6 months-adult. June 17-Aug. 16. Call 952-681-6134.

*Programs and classes meet Monday-Friday.

Principals Hill, Millerhagen bid goodbye

Principals Steve Hill (Jefferson High) and Jon Millerhagen (Washburn Elementary) began their careers in the district together. Now, after 16 years, they are going out together. Hill will retire at the end of the current school year, while Millerhagen will become the Executive Director of the Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association (MESPA) on July 1.

Steve Hill

After 14 years as a teacher, coach, dean of students and athletic director at Apple Valley High School, Hill accepted the Kennedy High School assistant principal position in 1996. Five years later he became principal of the 1,600-student Jefferson High School, a position he said continues to be challenging, fun and rewarding every day.

"I've been blessed to spend 16 of my 37 years as an educator here, working with outstanding staff, supportive parents and students who really value their high school experience," said Hill.



Jefferson High School principal Steve Hill shares a few laughs with students in the lunchroom.

Hill said he's most proud of Jefferson's designation as a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence in 2009. Hill is also a two-time MN Association of Secondary Schools Principals' *Principal of the Year* honoree (Hennepin Division), which he said reflects "the outstanding performance of the whole school."

In his retirement, Hill plans to stay active by biking, kayaking, golfing, traveling, spending time with family and attending as many Green Bay Packers and Wisconsin Badgers games as possible.

Jon Millerhagen

Millerhagen has been the Washburn Elementary School principal for 16 years. He was a teacher and principal in the Austin and Forest Lake school districts prior to coming to Bloomington.

Millerhagen has led a strong team of educators and support staff in helping

students be successful, which has also helped to close the achievement gap at Washburn. The school has earned a School of Excellence designation twice by the Minnesota Elementary



Washburn students know how to make principal Jon Millerhagen smile.

School Principals' Association (MESPA).

"It's exciting to be part of a team that leads the state in innovation and instruction," Millerhagen said in praising his staff, parents and a dedicated community of volunteers.

In his new position with MESPA, Millerhagen will provide support for elementary school principals through professional development opportunities, legislative work and advocating on behalf of principals.

Principal Search Begins

The district has begun the search for new principals at Washburn elementary and Jefferson high schools.

Assistant superintendent Chris Lennox is leading the process and currently seeks feedback from parents and staff of each school. A survey can be accessed on each school's websites through April 7, 2013.

The hiring process is expected to conclude in early May.

High schools to compete in new Metro West Conference

Jefferson and Kennedy high schools will accept an invitation from Eastern Carver County School District to join a newly formed MN State High School League (MSHSL) athletics/activities conference.

The Metro West Conference will align mid-size high schools from the Twin Cities' west and south metro beginning in 2014. The conference will

offer a full complement of Minnesota State High School League-sponsored activities and athletics. Others joining the new conference are Chaska, Chanhassen, Richfield, Robbinsdale Cooper and St. Louis Park high schools.

"I think the new conference will be a good mix of schools," said Brian Fell, activities director at Jefferson High School.

"The schools are an excellent match based on location, demographics and competitiveness."

A key aspect of the new conference is the balance of competition. "Kennedy and Jefferson schools were the smallest in the South Suburban Conference," said Kristin Krenz, activities director at Kennedy High School. "I'm confident this new conference will give our students the best opportunities to be successful."

Eastern Carver County Schools is currently accepting applications from other high schools interested in joining the new conference.



JEFFERSON
HIGH SCHOOL



Chamber members share leadership skills

Business and marketing students from Jefferson and Kennedy high schools attended a Future Leaders Conference — "Adversity and Diversity: How to Be a Winner in Today's World," sponsored by the Bloomington Chamber of Commerce. The students and Chamber members discussed ethics, decision management, hiring, social media, customer service and marketing in a diverse, multicultural world.



Westwood Elementary hosts health fair

Westwood Elementary students partnered with local businesses and Normandale nursing students to participate in the school's annual Health Fair. Activities ranged from Zumba, yoga and kung fu to learning about healthy snacking. The students also collected 200 pounds of canned fruits and vegetables, which were donated to VEAP.

Friends of Bloomington Public Schools

Contributors to our future leaders

Bloomington Public Schools thanks its business and community partners for their contribution to the district while making education a part of business. In each issue of *School Pages*, a circle of Bloomington friends will be recognized for their collaborative relationship.

Minnesota State University, Mankato

Who they are: Minnesota State University, Mankato is an innovative, student-centered learning community that promotes learning through effective undergraduate and graduate teaching, scholarship, and research. Graduate and undergraduate programs are available at its main campus and the Edina location, 7700 France Ave..

Contributions: MSU Mankato partners with Bloomington Public Schools to create a strong network of teacher candidates through the Bush Foundation's Network for Excellence in Teaching (NExT) project. In June 2011, MSU Mankato released a video documentary highlighting the success of the co-teaching model demonstrated at the school district. The video can be seen at www.bloomington.k12.mn.us/academic-student-services/next/about-next

Weber Shandwick

Who they are: Weber Shandwick is a Bloomington-based public relations firm. It supports local non-profit organizations through pro-bono client relationships, mentorships, work projects and an annual day-long workshop designed to help non-profits effectively tell their stories.

Contributions: Through the District's Volunteer Connection program, Weber Shandwick employees volunteer at Poplar Bridge Elementary School. Volunteers also participate in

reading with students in the Early Childhood Family Education program at Pond Center as part of a Chamber Community Outreach Committee activity.

Thermo King

Who they are: Thermo King is committed to being the global leader in transport temperature control systems for trailers, truck bodies, buses, shipboard containers and rail cars. What started as a simple ingenuity in 1938 continues to shape the global industry of transport refrigeration.

Contributions: Thermo King's Bloomington location offers the time and talent of its staff to work with the district's students. Most recently, Thermo King sponsored Kennedy High School's robotics team, which won the 10,000 Lakes Regional FIRST Robotics Competition.

League of Women Voters

Who they are: The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Contributions: The Bloomington LWV coordinates forums, seminars, community service projects and other events throughout the year. They work with Jefferson and Kennedy high schools by providing information on voter registration to students who have reached voting age.

Supporting Academic Success at Home

District Launches Family Engagement Plan

Research consistently identifies a strong correlation between family engagement and academic outcomes. But, not all families have the resources or knowledge to participate in their child's education due in part to barriers associated with culture, language, differing expectations and a lack of knowledge about education.

A new district initiative aims to provide schools and families with the tools to become better partners in helping all students succeed. The district's new Family Engagement Plan is designed to educate and nurture families to become more involved in their children's education. The plan's goals include the following:

- ▶ Providing parents with a better understanding of the public education system.
- ▶ Building relationships with parents, schools and staff to increase the level of family involvement in students' education, and parents' participation in school decisions.
- ▶ Offering creative ways for parents to support children at home.
- ▶ Preparing students to graduate high school ready for college and career.
- ▶ Preparing teachers for increased participation from diverse communities.
- ▶ Creating a welcoming environment at schools.

"Family plays a vital role in student performance," said Superintendent Les Fujitake. "The family engagement plan is directly tied to our district's strategic outcomes to prepare each child to be college and career ready."

Family engagement practices have been employed in the district for many years with programs like the Pond Center's Family School, Kinderprep, Family Academy at Washburn and Valley View elementary schools, and the work of the Office of Educational Equity.

The district is also introducing a Family Academy for parents and families this fall. The eight-week course – similar to the successful school-based Family Academy models at Washburn and Valley View elementary schools – will provide families with a broad overview of Bloomington Public Schools and the public education system, and specific strategies to help their children at home.



PERFORMING ARTS CALENDAR

Jefferson High School

Beauty and the Beast

Tuesday, April 30 – 4 p.m.

Senior Preview

Wednesday, May 1 – 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, May 2 – 7:30 p.m.

Friday, May 3 – 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 4 – 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, May 5 – 3 p.m.

Kennedy High School

The Hobbit

Thursday, May 2 – 7 p.m.

Friday, May 3 – 7 p.m.

Saturday, May 4 – 7 p.m.

RIG Concert

Friday, May 17 – 7 p.m.

Saturday, May 18 – 7 p.m.

Band Pops Concert

Tuesday, May 21 – 7 p.m.

Spring Masterworks

Orchestra Concert

Thursday, May 23 – 7 p.m.

Olson Middle School

Orchestra Concert

Tuesday, May 7 – 7 p.m.

Gr. 6 & 7 Choir Concert

Thursday, May 23 – 6:30 p.m.

Gr. 8 & Dolce Choir Concert

Thursday, May 23 – 8 p.m.

2013 Testing Schedule

DATE	GRADE	TEST
March 11 - May 10	6-8	MCA Math
March 18 - May 10	5-8	MCA Modified Reading & Math
March 18 - May 10	3-8, 10, 11	MTAS Reading/Math Science
March 18 - May 17	5, 8, HS	MCA Science
April 16	9, 12	GRAD Writing
April 16-17	3, 5	MCA Reading
April 16-17	10	MCA, MCA Modified Reading
April 16-17	11	MCA, MCA Modified Math
April 22 - May 24	2-7	MAP Reading and Math
April 23-24	3-5	MCA Math
April 23-24	6-8	MCA Reading
May 7-15	11	GRAD Reading
May 7-15	12	GRAD Reading and Math
July 23	10-12	GRAD Writing
August 6-14	10	GRAD Reading
August 6-14	11	GRAD Reading and Math
RETEST ONLY		
April 23	9, 12	GRAD Writing
July 24	10-12	GRAD Writing

POINTS OF PRIDE

Valley View Middle School's Latino student performance ranked among the top 10 middle schools in Minnesota, according to the Minnesota Campaign for Achievement Now. MinnCAN's "Top 10" lists distinguish the state's top performing elementary, middle and high schools in student performance to close the achievement gap.

David Floeder, a 7th grader at Olson Middle School, won first place in the National K-12 United States Chess Federation Chess Championship, which featured nearly 2,000 competitors. Floeder will represent the U.S. at the World Youth Chess Championship in the United Arab Emirate in August.



Westwood Elementary School principal **Carolyn Hartwigen** (left) is a 2013 Minnesota Elementary School Principals' Association Division Leadership Achievement Award recipient.

Kennedy High School earned an Honorable Mention for Overall Performance and Achievement in Dance in its production of *Hairspray* as part of the Hennepin Theatre Trust's *SpotLight Musical Theatre Program*. Individual awards went to **Edward Pribyl** for an Outstanding Performance in a Leading Role, and honorable mentions for **Victoria Udeh, Ravel Ward, Kalie Coyne, Tyler Eliason, Sariah Jackson, Denisha Montgomery** and **DeShawn Cavanaugh**.

Bloomington Public Schools received a 2013 Environmental Leadership award by the Freshwater Society and Fortin Consulting for efforts to dramatically reduce sand and salt chlorides used during winter maintenance.



The 34-member **Jefferson High School** varsity cheerleading team (left) claimed the National High School Cheerleading Championship for Super Large Varsity Division teams.

Kennedy High School students **Connor Graf, Sarah Hochman, Brittanie Rodriguez, Carly Warden, Nicole Westlund, Kendra Wheately** and **Derrick "DJ" Wilburn** received honorable mention awards in the MN Scholastic Art Awards program.

Metro South Adult Basic Education is one of three programs in the state to receive the 2013 ABE Program of Excellence award by the MN Department of Education and the Literacy Action Network.



Valley View Elementary opens early childhood addition

Valley View Elementary School opened its new 3,780-square-foot addition for early childhood programming including programs for English language learners and low-income students, early childhood family education services, and early childhood screening. Funding for the expansion includes a \$695,589 grant from the Minnesota Department of Human Services.

Renowned gifted program expands to high school level



Bloomington Public Schools is unveiling a first-of-its-kind high school program for profoundly gifted students. Bloomington's Dimensions Academy, the district's internationally recognized program for profoundly gifted students in grades 4-8 is expanding to the high school level.

Dimensions Academy High School will begin offering courses in the fall of 2013 for qualified students in grades 9-10 who are ready to tackle college-level courses prior to their eligibility to complete Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) in grades 11-12.

The new high school program is a joint venture between Bloomington Public Schools and Normandale Community College, designed to accelerate profoundly gifted students into college

level courses in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM).

Students in the program will attend two course hours per day at the Normandale Community College campus. Students will then return to Jefferson or Kennedy high school to complete the remaining four periods of the school day.

"The Minnesota Department of Education has indicated the program is an innovative approach to address the needs of gifted secondary students," noted district consultant and former Gifted and Talented Director Dr. Richard Cash. "Students could amass a total of 60 college credits with the completion of two years in Dimensions Academy High School and two years in PSEO, and potentially earn an Associate in Arts degree in Engineering or other science related fields."

Interested families can attend an information meeting April 9 from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. at the district's Educational Services Center, 1350 W. 106th St. Families across the metro-area are encouraged to attend.



Hillcrest students spend a day in an immigrant's shoes

Fourth graders at Hillcrest Community School took on new identities for Immigration Day. Dressed as their ancestors, they crammed into a small "ship," had their passports checked, and took a medical exam, journaling about their immigration experience along the way.

Prodigy nominations sought

Nominations are now being accepted for the 2013 Prodigy Awards, which recognizes excellence in teamwork that improves the educational environment within Bloomington Public Schools.

Prodigy Awards will be presented to groups of colleagues that demonstrate outstanding teamwork in the following new categories:

- ▶ **Excellence in Administrative Team** (administrator and support staff) of schools and the district office.
- ▶ **Excellence in Employee Team** (all other non-administrative staff) may also include parent volunteers, students or community members as part of the group.

Prodigy Awards are funded by the Education Foundation of Bloomington (EFB), and will be awarded to seven teams. Of all winners, one team in each category will be selected to receive special recognition. The Administrative Team's special recognition will be a scholarship award that must be used to enhance the educational experience of students attending the winning team's school.

"The purpose of the awards are to recognize team efforts in making our schools a positive and safe learning environment for our children and staff," said Flora Tsukayama, coordinator of the Prodigy Awards for EFB. "The more we care about each other, the more our environment improves, productivity rises, turnover decreases and our children benefit more from the caring environment."

Nominations for awards come from co-workers, parents and community members. Nomination forms — due by Friday, April 26 — are available at: www.bloomingtonschools.info or by contacting the district's Community Relations Office at commrelations@bloomington.k12.mn.us

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