



ISSUE 1 • JANUARY • 2017

Benchmark

MUNCIE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

A Message from the Superintendent

Dear Community Stakeholders,

I would like to thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter and learn more about what is happening in Muncie Community Schools. The revitalization of this newsletter is a direct outgrowth of the community-based strategic plan that was developed by the Board in collaboration with nearly 500 community members and approved last June. MCS is working hard to develop the necessary financial stability and proactive partnerships to move our schools and our families forward. In addition to this newsletter and the comprehensive facilities planning team that is currently at work, one of the most important things to come out of the strategic planning process is the development of stronger partnerships with a diverse range of community stakeholders including the Kiwanis Club of Muncie, which recently donated dictionaries to all MCS third grade students. My children still utilize the Kiwanis dictionaries they received as third grade students as they complete their homework for courses at Muncie Central.

Within this issue of the newsletter, you will learn about how one of our School Resource Officers integrates himself into the school to build good relationships with our students. You will see MCS working to provide a more responsible green footprint by harnessing solar power across the corporation and will learn about the development of a pantry at Southside Middle School which is a model for the corporation. If you have any questions or concerns about MCS programs, I invite you to contact me via phone (765-747-5205) or e-mail (sbaule@muncieschools.org). Thanks again for your interest in MCS.

Sincerely,
Steve Baule

Welcome to the Board Mr. Jason Donati!

Jason Donati, stormwater and recycling educator at the Muncie Sanitary District, is joining our Board of School Trustees. "I am humbled, honored and privileged to have the opportunity to serve as a member of the MCS Board of Trustees," says Mr. Donati. "As a board member, I will encourage us to celebrate our diversity and our uniqueness that sets us apart from other districts and that leads us on a path of great potential and achievement. I am excited to collaborate with the many different organizations, agencies, governmental offices, local businesses, and civic groups that all have a sincere interest in the success of Muncie Community Schools. I am grateful for such an opportunity and look forward to serving and working with all stakeholders." We are thrilled to have Mr. Donati on our Board. We also congratulate Debbie Feick on her second term on the Board and give a special thank you to Michael Long for his two terms of service on the Board of Trustees.



Jason Donati

Mission Statement

The mission of Muncie Community Schools is to provide a quality educational environment that allows every student to maximize his or her potential and, upon graduation, possess the skills necessary to be a positive, productive, contributing member of society.

Board of School Trustees

Debbie Feick

Bev K. Kelley

Kathy Carey

Robert A. Warrner

Jason Donati



Administration

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Muncie Community Schools Set to Implement Solar Power Technology at Every School in the Corporation

Muncie Community Schools is switching to solar power and the project is now underway. Performance Services has partnered with National Energy Educational Development (NEED) to implement solar power technology in every Muncie Community School, as well as provide a science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) energy education component for students.

Dr. Baule, Superintendent of Muncie Community Schools, anticipates that solar technology will help alleviate current financial strains. "Our fiscal situation is tough," says Dr. Baule. Performance Services did an in-depth facilities survey. They knew that we had to make significant financial reductions in

order to remain afloat, so they brought this forward as an option, which became a good option for us."

Michael Austin, Supervisor of Facilities for Muncie Community Schools, says, "If you have the opportunity to utilize something such as solar panels, I think you really owe it to yourself and your community to at least explore those possibilities," says Mr. Austin. "I think when [people] really take a good hard look they'll understand it's the best thing for the school corporation."

"Right now, every district in Indiana has got some sort of fiscal challenge," says Dr. Baule, "and so this is definitely a way to help us get out of that and reduce our energy costs."



Officer Qualls: Teaching Safety, Reinforcing School Subjects, and Building Relationships

Most days at Northside Middle School, you can find Officer Brandon Qualls playing sports in the gym with students. If he misses out because of a meeting, students will pester him, saying, "Where have you been? You weren't in the gym!"

Officer Qualls strives for this kind of

friendly relationship with the students. "Honestly, I just want to make a difference, especially with the way that police officers are being portrayed recently in the media. These

students get a chance every single day to interact with police officers, and I want that to be a positive experience."

Throughout the year, he gives presentations to the whole school and during staff meetings on diverse subjects, such as gun and internet safety, suicide awareness, and active shooter scenarios. He teaches students and personnel how to analyze and react to potentially dangerous situations.

Officer Qualls also participates in classrooms where he provides real-world applications for the students' subject matter. He teaches English students that they need evidence in their writing just like he needs evidence in his crime scene investigations. To teach physics and mathematics, Officer Qualls incorporates his job as a crash reconstructionist. He lays a set of skid

marks in a parking lot and teaches students to calculate the speed at which he was driving when he first applied the brakes.

Officer Qualls works night shifts with the Muncie Police Department and then comes straight to Northside Middle School and stays most of the school day. When asked what keeps him motivated, he said, "Honestly, as cheesy as it sounds, I love working with the kids. I've worked in the schools for about eight years, and I just love it. It's really neat because I've been here long enough now that the eighth graders were sixth graders. I've seen them the whole three years, so I have really good relationships with a lot of them."

For more information on safety at MCS, visit <http://www.muncie.k12.in.us/Safety>.



Officer Qualls participates in Shop with a Cop.

2017 Calendar of Events

JANUARY

- 5 No School—Teacher Record Keeping Day
- 6 Professional Development at MCHS
- 9 Classes Resume

14 MLK Youth

- Citizenship Awards at MCHS 10-11am
- 16 No School—Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- 17 English Learners Parent Night

FEBRUARY

- 4 Black History Month Kick-Off at Minnestrista 9:30-11am
- 20 No School—Presidents' Day

Southside Eighth Grade Students Balance Adult Responsibilities in the Reality Store

On November 18, 2016, Southside Middle School eighth grade students envisioned their lives 12 - 15 years into the future. They experienced adult responsibilities in the Reality Store, such as having a job, paying bills, and providing for a family.

Students drew popsicle sticks to determine their marital status, whether their spouse worked or stayed at home, and the number and ages of their children. The Reality Store, a product of Indiana Women's Education

Foundation, Inc., allows students to choose any career they want from a provided list; however, in order to increase authenticity, Southside faculty and staff grouped career options into four categories based on grade point average. Someone with a 3.5-4.0 GPA had the flexibility to choose any job they wanted from the list, but someone with a 2.0-2.9 GPA had fewer options.

After determining their careers, marital status, and number of children, students visited sixteen different stations in the gymnasium where they had to make decisions about essentials such as housing, student loans, child care, and food. If they had money left over after visiting the essential stations, students could visit nonessential stations, like entertainment, travel, beauty, and pets. If students ran out of money before finishing the essential stations, they could consult a financial advisor and possibly obtain a second job.

Faculty and staff hope the Reality Store motivated students to strive harder in school. "The Reality Store is a reality check," said SWAGGER Recovery teacher J.D. Craft. "Your GPA follows you through life."

"We want the kids to understand that what they're doing in school now can affect them later in life," said Kim Conner, Student Assistance Coordinator. "It's kind of like the fork in the road—you need to decide which way you're going to go."



Kiwanis Club of Muncie Donates 472 Dictionaries for Muncie Community Schools' Third Grade Students



At the Muncie Community Schools (MCS) School Board meeting on Tuesday, November 15, 2016 the Kiwanis Club of Muncie presented the corporation with 472 dictionaries—one for each third grade student—in partnership with The

Dictionary Project. The Kiwanis Club provided dictionaries to enrich students' learning experiences. "If a child has

their own dictionary to take home with them, it increases their ability to learn and their ability to be involved," said James Warrner, Lieutenant Governor of the Muncie district. Michael Long, former MCS Board President, presented a certificate of recognition to Dr. Charles Payne, President of the Muncie Kiwanis district, Mr. Warrner, and Ed Moran, Treasurer (left).

The Kiwanis Club partners with MCS for a variety of projects. On an ongoing basis, Kiwanis covers the cost of eye exams and glasses for students referred by a school counselor. This program has assisted hundreds of students since its inception in the 1950s. The club also provides the annual Harvey Thomas Scholarship for a Muncie Career Center graduate who plans a career in the dental field, as well as donates \$1000 annually for Muncie Career Center's Icerman Dental Clinic to purchase supplies.

At the end of the school year, the Kiwanis Club will hold its annual Juniors Honor Banquet to recognize the top 25 outstanding juniors from Muncie Central High School. "Scholastic achievement, involvement in activities, citizenship, and personal integrity are all part of the nomination process," said Mr. Warrner.

The Kiwanis Club is always looking for new members to join. Meetings are held at noon on Wednesdays at Vera Mae's Bistro. "If you like trying to improve the community, and you like working with young people, this is a great group to be a part of," said Mr. Warrner.

MARCH

17 End of 3rd Quarter
20-24 Spring Break

APRIL

14 No School—Good Friday
28-30 46th Annual K-12 All City Art Show

MAY

11 MACC Adult Education Graduation
16 Celebrate Excellence at Minnetrista 5:30-8pm—Tentative
18 MACC Career & Technical Education Awards Program

24 Last Student Day

25 Last Teacher Day

29 No School—Memorial Day

JUNE

5 Muncie Central High School Graduation

Southside Middle School's Panther Pantry Sends Food with 160 Students to Last Thanksgiving and Christmas Breaks

one bag of food with four students for Thanksgiving break," said Mrs. Huston. "Exactly a year later we sent home backpacks with 160 students."

For Thanksgiving this year, instructional assistants, life-skills students, and volunteers worked diligently to fill 320 reusable shopping bags with canned meats, pastas, vegetables, snacks, and more. The Panther Pantry has received strong support from the community. Recently, MutualBank donated a new park bench made from recycled bottle caps. MutualBank's COO Pat Botts presented Mrs. Huston with a check to sponsor five families for the Christmas Dinner Program in which students received boxes containing 18 days of food. These included a five-pound ham, potatoes, vegetables, and much more. "They had a full dinner," said Mrs. Huston.

The Panther Pantry also provides a monthly food giveaway, every third Thursday of the month, open to all students of Muncie Community Schools. "My parents taught me that there are always people less fortunate than you,"

Mrs. Huston said.

When Mrs. Huston started working for Muncie Community Schools, she saw children whose basic needs were not being met. "I saw children were hungry. They didn't have clothes. They had holes in their shoes." She was inspired to start the Panther Pantry to provide for students' basic needs. "It just exploded from there," she said. "It's all about giving to other people."



Thanks to the Panther Pantry, 160 Southside students took home enough food to last Thanksgiving and Christmas breaks. Students registered for the program normally receive one bag of food every Friday to last the weekend. Debra Huston, the instructional assistant who leads this initiative, and her team work extra hard before school breaks to ensure students have enough food until they return to school.

"A year ago ... when we opened the Panther Pantry at Southside, we sent home



Mrs. Huston, front left, receives a recycled bench from MutualBank.



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