



CHEESEMAKER PRIDE

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MONROE

SUMMER EDITION 2018 - 2019

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MONROE MIDDLE SCHOOL
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WWW.MONROESCHOOLS.COM

MISSION STATEMENT

*The School District of
Monroe will prepare each
student for the future by
developing academic, life,
and employability skills.
To this end, we will foster
partnerships with family
and community to ensure
student success.*

Leading Leaders With Empathy and Ethics



Rick Waski
District Administrator

In my role as the District Administrator, I am the direct supervisor of all building principals, assistant principals, and district-level administrators. While evaluating these employees is one of the most important functions I perform, I have to maintain the delicate balance of being these leaders “boss” while still needing to coach and support them when they need guidance, or in some cases a simple pep-talk.

Being a building principal, or assistant principal, is a rewarding yet stressful job. Every day these individuals make decisions, sometimes difficult ones, in order to efficiently and effectively operate a building with 300 - 700 students, 40 - 90 employees, and access to the general public. While they may enter the day with a clear schedule or a few short meetings, it is not unusual for an entire day and evening to be dominated by the unexpected events of the day.

Unfortunately, people are not always happy when they contact principals. Rarely do parents or guardians reach out to these individuals to compliment them on a safe school, a great teacher hire, or a flawlessly executed spring concert. However, they do get contacted by individuals that are very emotional about an issue and are demanding their chosen resolution, even though they don't know the other side of the story or the circumstances that may have led to a conflict. Don't get me wrong, mistakes are made by school personnel and other students, however, quite often conflicts are a two-way street and mediation is required more than action. Principals, and other building or department administrators, have to sometimes accomplish both of these goals in a manner in which one or more of the individuals involved clearly cannot see the entire picture.

Having served nearly 10 years as principal, I was the one who had to recommend expulsions, tell families their child is not graduating, or contact the police to report abuse or criminal activity. I have no regrets over any of these decisions I had to make, yet they still gnaw away at your soul and cause great stress. I have had vehicles and my home vandalized, I have had family members targeted in response to work-related decisions I have made that have nothing to do with them, and I have lost friendships simply by following district and Board policies to the letter.

Having walked many miles in our principals' shoes, I know that every conflict leads to a reflection. It is natural to question whether you handled something correctly, whether people will understand why a decision was made, and often even question whether doing what was right was worth it. That is where I feel a moral and ethical obligation to support these leaders through the ups and downs of their leadership. As human beings, these individuals will make mistakes. However, they make very few of them, and in the process they suffer numerous gut punches that take their toll on their spirit over time.

School and district-level administrators make a comfortable living, enjoy high-quality benefits, and do have positional authority that allows them to make some

Leading Leaders (continued on page 2)

Leading Leaders (continued from page 1)

decisions that others in our organization cannot make. At the same time, I can assure you that these jobs are difficult and emotionally draining. There is great satisfaction in leading an effective and successful school or department, however, it is anything but easy.

I love my job, I love my administrative team, and I am proud of the quality of education we provide in this district. I have the opportunity to coach our leaders on a daily basis, and in the process, I find great joy in our district's accomplishments. Having done the work they are doing, I know I have to be corrective and at the same time supportive. Our school and district leaders need to lead with confidence and purpose in order to provide the support and guidance our students and staff need.

If you or your child had a positive experience in our district, don't forget to thank your principals when you happen to see them. Their work is often thankless, yet it is absolutely critical in order to live the mission of our district. Have a great summer and GO CHEESEMAKERS!



The Importance of Summer Reading

**By: Sarah Jacobson, Northside Elementary
Special Education Teacher**

At the end of each school year, teachers send their students off to summer for a much needed break after a year of hard work. It is so important for kids to have the summer to play outside, swim, and have fun with friends and family. However, research shows that if a child does not read over the summer, they can lose a lot of the progress they made over the school year. In fact, the lack of reading over the summer is one of the three major causes of low reading proficiency (Gewertz, 2011) and we have our own ample evidence that students' reading levels often backslide to where they were in January of their previous grade. When there is regression, students spend the first few months of school each year making up the progress they lost, which results in an emotional cost to the student and a financial cost to the district due to the instructional supports that are often necessary.

At Northside, we wanted to find a way that would encourage students to continue to read throughout the summer and, as a result, the Northside School Summer Reading Challenge was implemented. The Summer Reading Challenge began in 2013 and has grown every year. In 2018, seventy students participated in the Summer Reading Challenge with half of them earning the highest award, a trophy. In order to earn a trophy, students have to read a total of 2,400 minutes over the summer, which equates to about forty minutes a day. We find it inspiring that students are willing to make that level of commitment to reach a goal.

The reading challenge is introduced at the end of the school year and the students get the information in their report card



envelopes. The students are asked to read just right books as much as they can over the summer and keep track of the minutes they read. When school starts in the Fall, they bring their reading logs back and we determine the level that was met. The awards are given out in the fall and the students are always so excited to receive the recognition that they worked so hard to earn. We are grateful to our Northside PTO who is dedicated to supporting this challenge as they have financed the student awards each year.

At Northside, we are dedicated to helping each of our students reach their highest potential and we know that the "summer slide" can be detrimental to a student's progress. The Summer Reading Challenge offers all students the opportunity to set a goal, work toward it, and simultaneously grow their love of reading to set themselves up to be an avid reader for many years to come.

**SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MONROE
SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS**

- Dan Bartholf, President
- Teresa Keehn, Vice President
- Rich Deprez, Treasurer
- Nikki Matley, Clerk
- Mary Berger, Deputy Clerk
- Cheryl McGuire, Member
- Dylan McGuire, Member
- Jim Plourde, Member
- Vacant, Member

School District of Monroe
Board of Education Meetings
are held the 2nd & 4th
Mondays of Every Month
7:00 p.m.
Public is Welcome

Please check the District webpage at
www.monroeschools.com

Award Levels			
Level	Total Minutes	Minutes per day	Prize
Believe	600	10 minutes/ day	Ribbon
Challenge	1,200	20 minutes/ day	Medal
Inspire	2,400	40 minutes/ day	Trophy

Reminder to Submit Free and Reduced Lunch Application



Ron Olson, Business Administrator

During the spring and summer, I am always actively involved with looking forward to the next year and building out the school's budget for the coming school year. I wanted to take this time to remind each of our family households to plan ahead and consider filling out a free/reduced lunch application this summer to determine your child's eligibility for free and reduced lunch and breakfast for the coming year. The new applications and income guidelines do not become available until after July 1. You can always find the latest free and reduced meal application and income guidelines by going to monroeschools.com, clicking the "fork and spoon" icon in the upper right for the food service department, and then selecting the "Meal Application" button on the upper left of the food service page.

The National School Lunch Program is a federal program and the District must follow federal guidelines not only regarding what menu items may be offered as a qualified lunch or breakfast, but also for the procedures to follow for approval for free and reduced lunches. Some of the rules for free and reduced lunch applications include the following:

- Families/Households must submit a new application form each year.
- Application forms must list all members residing within the household.
- Application forms must include the income for each member of the household.
- Application forms must be signed.
- Applications may be resubmitted throughout the school year if the household's income situation or number of household members should change.
- Foster children and foreign exchange students can be included in the household.
- Foster children are eligible for benefits and an application need not be submitted for a foster child only. However, proof from a state or county agency of foster child placement is required.
- The District uses direct certification from the state to approve the status of certain children. Households that are receiving Food Share (SNAP), FDIPIR, TANF, or W-2 cash benefits may not have to fill out an application. The District will notify families that are direct certified by the state. If you are not notified with a direct certification letter prior to the start of the school year, please fill out an application.
- Children who are eligible for free and reduced lunches may also have some of their school fees waived or reduced. A separate form needs to be completed and signed that allows the sharing of the free and reduced eligibility status for fee waiver status. The form is located on the website in the same section as the application form. Note: Not all fees are subject to waiver.

Please note that the school district encourages families to apply if they think they may be eligible. The program helps to assure that children have access to quality breakfasts and lunches. Free and reduced breakfast and lunch for eligible children is a federal program funded by federal tax dollars. The school district does not subsidize the cost of the meals provided. The percentage of District children eligible for free and reduced lunches also determines whether the District is eligible for funding for a number of federal educational support programs and the amount of federal funding the District receives. As noted above, children can also become eligible for school fee waivers or reductions if approved for free and reduced lunches.

The District understands that family finance is a very personal matter and your application will be handled with confidentiality and respect. The Food Service Department processes all applications and determines eligibility based upon federal income guidelines and federal regulations. Students receiving meal benefits are not identified in the food service line. All students use the same service line and the computer screen does not identify which students are free or reduced price.

The School District of Monroe Food Service Department is dedicated to the student's health, well-being and ability to learn. If you are looking for the most current income eligibility guidelines or lunch prices, please visit our web page; go to www.monroeschools.com and click on the "fork and spoon" icon.

2019 SUMMER SCHOOL

Session 1: Monday, June 17 - Wednesday, July 3

(No Summer School July 4 or 5)

Session 2: Monday, July 8 - Friday, July 26

Summer School will be held at

Monroe Middle School.





New Elementary Science Curriculum in 2019

Terri Montgomery, Director of Curriculum & Instruction

Last year our K-12 Science Curriculum Committee met to look at our science curriculum across the K-12 grade span. The elementary teachers looked at Next Generation Foss, Engineering is Elementary, Mystery Science, National Geographic, TCI, Inspire Science, and Project Launch. Our middle and high school teachers looked at their current curriculum and how they could update it. After the elementary teachers researched a variety of programs they decided to pilot the Mystery Science elementary curriculum.

Teachers were required to teach at least one unit of the Mystery Science curriculum before January 2019. Teachers were then asked to give their input on the curriculum. The response to Mystery Science was overwhelmingly positive. Teachers said their students were very engaged with the curriculum, it was simple to plan, materials were easy to obtain, and the standards aligned and met the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards as well as the Next Generation Science Standards. Many teachers did more than one unit as they found this curriculum to be highly engaging. The kindergarten and first grade curriculum have three units and grades 2-5 have four units. We plan on adopting and fully implementing this curriculum for the 2019-2020 school year.

The following are units that are studied at each grade level with an example of starters from the kindergarten and a fifth grade unit:

- **Kindergarten units:** Plant & Animal Secrets (6-9 weeks) Weather Watching (6-9 weeks) Force Olympics (6-9 weeks)
- **First grade units:** Plant & Animal Superpowers (6-9 weeks) Spinning Sky (6-9 weeks) Lights & Sounds (6-9 weeks)



In this Mystery, students investigate and model how gases cause explosions. In the activity, students experiment by combining baking soda and vinegar inside a sealed bag and observe how the gas bubbles produced cause the bag to inflate—and sometimes pop!

- **Second grade units:** Animal Adventures (3-6 weeks) Plant Adventures (6-12 weeks) Work of Water (4-8 weeks) Material Magic (5-10 weeks)
- **Third grade units:** Animals Through Time (8-16 weeks) Power of Flowers (4-8 weeks) Stormy Skies (4-8 weeks) Invisible Forces (5-10 weeks)
- **Fourth grade units:** Human Machine (4-8 weeks) Birth of Rocks (4-8 weeks) Waves of Sound (3-6 weeks) Energizing Everything (8-16 weeks)
- **Fifth grade units:** Web of Life (6-12 weeks) Watery Planet (4-8 weeks) Spaceship Earth (8-16 weeks) Chemical Magic (5-10 weeks)



In this Mystery, students observe animal behaviors and work to discover a pattern: all animals seek food in order to survive. This activity includes physical movement in which students act out animal behaviors.

Middle School Pilots 3 English Language Arts Curriculum in Spring

In the 2018 school year the Monroe Middle School English Language Arts (ELA) teachers began researching ELA curriculum programs. The following programs were researched and found to be aligned to the Wisconsin Model academic Standards.

- Amplify
- Readers/Writers Workshop
- My Perspectives
- Studysync
- Paths to College & Career
- Lit Bro
- Wit & Wisdom

Of these seven programs, the committee narrowed the search to three programs using a rubric. The three programs that were selected to pilot were, My Perspectives, Studysync, and Readers/Writers Workshop. Publishers were brought in to demonstrate each of these curriculum choices and teachers went to various school districts to observe these various programs in action. Teachers have been piloting one unit from each of these three programs and they hope to narrow their search down to one program by the end of the May. The decision on curriculum that is made at the end of this school year will be implemented at the start of the 2019-2020 school year.



School-Based Mental Health Program

Joe Monroe, Director of Pupil Services

Improving access to mental health for the children of our community has been the main priority for me and my team over the course of the last 16 months. Increased access is necessary because we know local and national data estimates that approximately 19% of all students suffer from a diagnosable emotional, mental or behavioral disorder. Think about that for a minute. One out of every five students suffers from a condition that likely impairs their ability to be successful in school and happy in life. That means that an average classroom will have at least four students with significant mental health issues. This level of need requires a significant amount of support from our schools, medical professionals, private service providers, and the community as a whole.

After much research and discussion with community stakeholders, it has been determined that the best way to address youth mental health needs is to create a school-based mental health (SBMH) program. A SBMH program is a service model that facilitates the delivery of mental health supports by bringing licensed mental health professionals into the schools. This is an effort to remove the barriers that often interfere with students receiving the help they so desperately need by integrating professional care within the school environment. This exploration of creative mental health service delivery is leading to very important and impactful changes in how we serve our children..

Recently, the School District of Monroe reached out to the The Monroe Clinic to explore ways in which they could assist us in serving the mental health needs in the community. After some initial discussion, the Clinic responded with a

major commitment to the students of Monroe. The Clinic has made arrangements to place a full-time mental health professional in the District starting at the beginning of the 2019-20 school year. This position will be provided at no cost to the school district and will be covered via direct billing to insurance providers. In addition, the District is working with the Clinic to potentially identify a plan to provide support for students without medical insurance or Badgercare. This would effectively allow us to ensure that all students would have access to mental health support regardless of socioeconomic status and insurance availability.

It is important to note that all services provided by an outside mental health professional would require the consent of a parent or guardian. All referrals to outside services would first be discussed with parents or guardians to ensure that they approve of involving non-school personnel. Parents and guardians will absolutely have the right to refuse a referral to a mental health provider if they choose to do so.

Since this is a new service delivery model, there are likely to be many questions. The District is currently working closely with the Monroe Clinic and other service providers to develop answers to those questions and create a system that will ensure that students and families receive timely mental health care. More information will be available in August of 2019.

If you have any questions, concerns or feedback, please feel free to contact me via email at josephmonroe@monroe.k12.wi.us or by calling me directly at 608-328-7184.

Thank you for placing your trust in us as we work to provide the support and educational experience your children deserve!

BYE BYE BIRDIE, ANOTHER GREAT PERFORMANCE BY MHS STUDENTS





Abraham Lincoln Students say THANK YOU!

Jenna Trame, Abraham Lincoln Elementary School Principal

Rockford Discovery Center, Madison Children's Museum, Galena Historical Walk, Dubuque River Museum, Cave of the Mounds, The Rocky Mountains (Virtual Trip)... these are some of the wonderful places our students will visit this spring due to the generosity and support of our parents, community members, friends and relatives during our PTO Hansen Foods Spring Fundraiser!

This spring the PTO set a lofty goal to reach \$13,000 in products sold. Our students crushed this goal by selling \$21,000 in products! Our PTO profited \$8,500 from this highly successful fundraiser. Thank you to the wonderful teachers and parents that organized this fundraiser, all the students that worked to sell items, and everyone that supported it by purchasing something.

Our PTO donates funds annually to support various projects and events including transportation and admission costs for student field trips, classroom furniture, playground equipment, music concerts, assemblies, parent/family engagement activities (grandparents day, open house, treats for dads, muffins with mom).

This year, students highlighted the following as some of their favorite things supported by the PTO:

- New recess games (bean bag toss, ring toss, Jenga-made by MHS students)
- Special assemblies
- FREE pizza and a chance to win prizes at Spring Open House
- The Book Fair

The work of a school PTO is a vital component of a positive school culture. When parents and teachers work together to support students it can make a significant difference in school atmosphere and student success! These special activities and school events are often the memories our students recall well beyond their school years. School leaders and PTO groups are always looking for volunteers that want to help with tasks of all sizes.

How can you contribute?

- Support school fundraisers by purchasing items or making a donation.
- Save box tops and drop them off at a school.
- Volunteer to read with students in a classroom.
- Donate books your children have outgrown.
- Sign up to work a shift at a school event (book fair, family night).
- Drop off cookies to thank teachers during teacher appreciation week.
- Attend a PTO meeting.
- Donate food or supplies for classroom parties and school celebrations.
- Call the school office and ask for information about the PTO and how you can get involved!



The Regulation Station

By: Amy Garwell, Linda Bushee, and Amanda Janes, Abraham Lincoln Special Education Teachers

The Regulation Station at Abraham Lincoln Elementary School is a room with seven stations where all students can go to regulate the seven sensory systems of their body. The seven stations include tools that address needs in the proprioceptive system (involves the way our brain coordinates with our muscles and nerves so that we understand where our bodies are in space), vestibular (involves our sense of balance and the workings of the inner ear), visual (stimuli that we take in through our eyes), olfactory (stimuli that we take in through our nose), tactile (stimuli that we take in through touch), auditory (stimuli that we take in through our ears), and oral (stimuli that we take in through our mouth).

The goal of the Regulation Station is to provide tools that students can access for self-regulation, to move their mind and body into a state of optimal learning. If a student is not regulated no learning will occur. Self regulation is a skill that needs to be taught and the Regulation Station provides those learning opportunities. We are moving towards students advocating for themselves, understanding how their body and mind interact, and knowing what tools work best for them. The hope is exposing students to all kinds of different tools helps them to develop their own schedule and be able to ask for the proper tools to aid them in regulation. Ultimately, when students are able to self-regulate and advocate for their own needs, they will be successful in all areas of their day.



This project was graciously funded through the Monroe Excellence in Education Foundation this year. Full implementation of the room started January, 2019. MHS art students and Ms. Julia Genrich have made this space even more welcoming by adding a mural to the wall. As of today, there are on average 80 visits per week to the room. We are hoping for another grant to be funded this spring to increase the number and variety of tools in each station.



Supporting the “Whole” Child

Todd Paradis, Parkside Elementary Principal

Our mission at Parkside is to engage, inspire, and empower all of our students to become confident, compassionate, responsible citizens of the future. As a staff, we are committed to accomplishing this mission by supporting all students in their social and emotional learning, in addition to their academics. A student growing socially and emotionally sets the stage for their ability to learn in important academic areas like math, reading, and writing. It also gives them the tools to be successful in managing social situations and navigating through conflicts with peers.

Social and emotional learning includes the ability to manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. Additional skills that we teach are problem solving, listening, following directions, asking for help, and using calming strategies. These are life-long skills that will not only help them at school, but with future clubs, teams, or jobs outside of the school setting.

How Do We Promote this Learning?

Many of these skills are learned through our Second Step Guidance Curriculum that students receive once per week from Ms. Graham, our school counselor. Classroom teachers also provide lessons and learning opportunities during their daily morning meetings. These meetings allow students to greet, share, and work together through relevant problems during the year. For the last two years, we’ve also used Monday mornings for all-school assemblies to discuss and incorporate all-school activities where students work together to practice and discuss these skills.

Using Play and Recess Time

One of the best ways to promote the learning of these skills is through “play” and free time inside and outside of the classroom. This is a time where students are more physically active and have more freedom to interact with peers while practicing and applying skills in real scenarios. Physical activity and play helps students learn problem solving skills, how to solve peer issues, and make responsible decisions. In the classroom, it helps students with recall of information and staying focused when learning.

At Parkside, kindergarten students are still given 30 minutes daily to play in their classrooms and all students in grades K-5 receive 40-60 minutes of recess every day.



Therapy Dog

One new idea that has assisted us with social and emotional learning is the use of Maximus, the therapy dog. Maximus visits the building weekly to interact with students. His presence helps with anxiety, mood, social isolation, and the learning of many social skills. He has also been great at listening to students read.

The work we do with social and emotional learning helps support our mission of helping all students with all of their needs, all of the time.

Exploring and Being Creative with Music

By: Jill Leuzinger, Parkside Music Teacher

As a music teacher in the Monroe School District for 23 years there are two things I often hear from parents. The first is, “How did you get my child to do that?” and the second is, “We never did any of that stuff when I was in music class”. I love to hear both because it reassures me that music education is evolving in the right direction. Music class is no longer just “singing songs” and that is because in order to awaken the musical potential we all inherently possess we must involve students in activities that combine speaking, singing, listening, notating, moving and most of all playing.

I pride myself on my ability to manage a classroom. Looking back I see how my students may have been learning music and they may have been enjoying music but they weren’t experiencing the music, exploring and being creative with the music. Now I believe that students must be at the center of the music.

I love the look on the faces of the students when we get to the last day of a lesson and we put everything together for the final run through. It is during this time that they hear what all of the parts sound like as a whole, and it amazes them that they could create something so awesome. What started out as a simple poem evolved into a performance piece because the students created the body percussion, the melody, the rhythmic ostinatos and movement. More kids attend the evening concerts and I strongly believe it is because of the ownership they have in creating it. To me, that is the greatest reward and what teaching music is all about.





Milken Award Winner, Teacher Sarah Compton!

Amy Timmerman, Northside Elementary Principal

On the morning of February 22, the Northside staff and students thought the primary reason for the special assembly was to welcome Wisconsin’s new State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dr. Carolyn Stanford Taylor, but they learned within a few minutes that more was unfolding.

Fifth grade teacher Sarah Compton received the surprise of a lifetime by being honored with the Milken Award, otherwise known as the “Oscars of Teaching”. Ms. Compton was one of thirty-three educators in the country to win the award which came with an unrestricted \$25,000 cash prize. Ms. Compton was the only Wisconsin educator to receive the Milken Award and, moreover, the last Wisconsin educator to receive it since 2014. Pictured to the right, Greg Gallagher, Senior Program Administrator for the Milken Foundation, kept the audience in suspense with the total cash surprise amount by adding numbers incrementally.



The Milken Foundation was established thirty years ago and their mission is to give greater recognition to deserving educators. The foundation searches across the country for successful teachers in their early to mid-stage career as there is no general application or nomination process involved. State departments make confidential nominations to the foundation and the ideal candidates possess the following: “exceptional educational talent as evidenced by effective instructional practices and student learning results in the classroom and school; exemplary educational accomplishments beyond the classroom that provide models of excellence for the profession; individuals whose contributions to education are largely unheralded yet worthy of the spotlight; early- to mid-career educators who offer strong long-range potential for professional and policy leadership; and engaging and inspiring presence that motivates and impacts students, colleagues and the community.” (www.milkeneducatorawards.org) Pictured above is Dr. Carolyn Stanford Taylor, Wisconsin State Superintendent of Public Schools, and Rick Waski, District Administrator, presenting Ms. Compton with the Milken Award.



In March, Ms. Compton joined all of the 2019 Milken Educator Award winners in New Orleans to celebrate the distinction and discuss her future educational leadership opportunities at the local, state, and national levels. She is excited about the possibilities that this award is bringing to her both professionally and personally. The district is honored to have Sarah Compton be the representative of excellence that is widespread in all of our schools!

Northside Elementary Happenings

Fifth graders work for months to think of an innovation or invention that will survive the Shark Tank. Creativity, organizing, problem-solving, and using persuasive writing are just a few of the skills that are required for the project.



The first and second graders showed off their musical talent to families in March.



Every year, students have a fancy lunch day where the cafeteria is completely transformed and this year the red carpet was rolled out to fit the year’s “Hollywood” style theme of “YOU Set the Stage”. Students love it!



Soft Skills for Middle School Students at MMS

Brian D. Boehm, Monroe Middle School Principal

I want to take a moment to remind families of a continuing area of focus at Monroe Middle School and that is MMS Tracks to Success. This initiative focuses on two character traits that we believe are critical to the success, employability and happiness of our students. They are Mutual Respect and Personal Responsibility. Under each trait, there are a number of important sub skills that we introduce, discuss and practice during homeroom throughout the year.

MMS Track to Success fits perfectly with our ongoing work in Nurtured Heart. In Nurtured Heart, it is vital to be absolutely clear about rules and expectations. Displaying Mutual Respect and Personal Responsibility will be the cornerstone of our expectations for all students. In addition, staff will be providing frequent recognitions to students who are displaying these two traits. Staff giving their time and energy to recognize positive student behaviors is critical to Nurtured Heart. It is not just “catching students being good”. Instead, it is shaping and growing behaviors that are fundamental to a successful life. It is amazing to see how quickly students will orient their behaviors to receive these positive recognitions. I encourage families to discuss the importance of displaying Mutual Respect and Personal Responsibility and be sure to recognize your children when they display these traits. It is important for our school and families to work together to build our children’s inner wealth. If you would like to learn more about Nurtured Heart, please visit the website: <http://www.childrensuccessfoundation.com>.

In getting to visit and speak with employers in Monroe and Green County it is not surprising that the traits of Mutual Respect and Personal Responsibility are very high on their list of “look fors” in new employees. It turns out that being responsible, respectful, motivated, collaborative, goal driven and a good listener makes you a more attractive candidate for jobs. The business owners I spoke with all said that they could teach new employees the skills necessary to do specific jobs but that new employees need to have the soft skills listed above to be job ready. We are excited that our work at MMS is helping to grow good citizens as well as employable young people.

A Coordinated and Sustained Welcome to MMS

By: Matt Brown, Monroe Middle School Assistant Principal, Brian Bruggeman, Ashley Thompson, Claire Tibodeau, and Jake Whitstone, Monroe Middle School Teachers

WEB, which stands for “Where Everybody Belongs”, is a middle school orientation and transition program that welcomes sixth graders and develops a sense of community throughout their first year of middle school. Built on the belief that students can help students succeed, the program trains mentors from the eighth grade class to be WEB Leaders. This training provides our eighth grade leaders with the skills and tools necessary to be effective leaders. WEB provides the structure for sixth graders to receive support and guidance from 8th graders who have been through the challenges that middle school poses and understand that the transition to a larger school can sometimes be overwhelming.

The objectives of the WEB program include:

- empowering eighth graders as role models for sixth graders
- increasing academic success through peer support
- developing leadership skills in students on your campus
- allowing successful older students to pass on positive traditions to younger students
- exposing students to a variety of individuals at school in positive situations
- teaching students that by working together they can be successful and enjoy one another
- helping create a supportive and positive atmosphere on your campus



The School District of Monroe adopted the WEB program and on April 1 - 3, Matt Brown, Brian Bruggeman, Ashley Thompson, Claire Tibodeau, and Jake Whitstone (pictured with Mary Beth Campbell, WEB co-founder and lead trainer), attended the initial workshop in Itasca, Illinois. These five individuals completed the training and are certified WEB coordinators, who will be working on all facets of the program.

The WEB program has a proven track record of improving: attendance, grades and test scores, positive social and academic behaviors, sense of belonging and community, and building school culture and pride.

The MMS WEB coordinators are excited to start the WEB program and have already shared the positive impacts of the program with the MMS staff. The staff is now in the process of spreading the news to our current seventh graders about the program specifics and encouraging all to apply to become eighth grade WEB leaders.





Monroe High School Attendance and Discipline Update

By: Jeriamy Jackson, Monroe High School Associate Principal

Regular school attendance is part of the foundation for student success in high school and beyond. This should come as no secret to any of us, the more you are in class the better chance you have of learning and gaining credits towards graduation. However, there is a concerning trend that is sweeping the nation, that of students missing more and more school and the overwhelming majority of these absences are not students skipping school, they are due to students being chronically called in as “excused” by parents.

Over seven million students nationally miss over one month of school per school year; that is one of every seven students. In a study by the US Department of Education, “... nearly half (49%) of parents believe that it is okay for their children to miss three or more days of school per month – and that they won’t fall behind academically if they do. In reality, missing just two days of school per month makes children more likely to fall behind and less likely to graduate.”

The community of Monroe is not immune to this problem, we have been aware and trying to address this for several years. In reviewing the Monroe High School attendance data it is clear that some work still needs to be done in the area of “Excused Absences”. In the 2017-2018 School year, we had 27% (190) of our students have more than the 10 days excused that are allowed by law without prior approval or medical/legal documentation. This 27% of students accounted for 3,491 days missed; that is 3,491 days of instruction lost that

makes learning that much harder. Of these students, 49 (7%) of them had more than 20 days excused. This makes teaching and learning incredibly hard and “catching up” after missing four weeks of school can be extremely hard and stressful. When students miss numerous days it is not fair to them nor their instructors as it creates added work and stress on both of them.

There is good news and it is not surprising to many of you that the large majority (73%) of students DO NOT miss an excessive amount of school and are doing exactly what they need to do. We have great students and families in Monroe, but we are always striving to be better!

Studies also show that there is a high correlation between attendance problems and discipline problems. So far this year, Monroe High School students have had 234 Office Discipline Referrals (ODR’s) from 95 total students. These 95 students amount to 13% of our total student population and of those, 54 students only had one ODR. Of the 234 total referrals, 63% of them are accounted for by 25 students, or 3% of our student population.

We can take a lot of pride in the other side of these numbers as well! This means that we have 624 students (87%) here that have never had an ODR this year and this is amazing! Far too often we tend to focus on everything that may not be going so well, and of course we will keep working at that, however, we don’t celebrate everything and everyone who are excelling every day.

MHS Sponsored Biannual Fine Arts Festival on April 25 - 26

By: Kathy King, MHS Art Teacher, Jan Douglas, MHS Art Teacher, and Susan Anderson, MHS English Teacher



MHS Fine Arts Festival organizers (L to R): Susan Anderson, Kathy King and Jan Douglas.

The Festival was started in the early 1970s by social studies teacher Al Stauffacher, and art teacher Walt Pawlowski. The festival was a way for all students to be exposed to and connect to the arts because there was no room for it in the high school curriculum, nor was there funding available for those opportunities. After Walt passed away in 1997, Kathy King was hired to take his place as an art teacher and co-chairman of the festival. In early 2000, a Fine Arts Festival foundation was created to help fund the festival if community fundraising fell short. The foundation continues to grow to support this important mission.

Kathy King has continued Walt’s passion to expose all students to the arts alongside many other co-chairman over the last 22 years. Al retired after several festivals but continues to contribute to the now two-day festival, and Gail Eiserman continues to help organize the empty bowl dinner. Former co-chairmen Marilyn Rolfsmeyer and Mat Anderson have also continued on as visiting artists.

The festival has grown in leaps and bounds over the years. In Kathy King’s first festival, there were 10 events. This year, chairmen Kathy King, Susan Anderson, and Jan Douglas offered 3 field trips, 8 PAC events, and 72 workshops under the theme “Spread Your Wings and Explore the Arts.” Students had opportunities to choose and participate in 10 of the 83 offerings during the school day over the course of the two-day festival. These events were extraordinary opportunities for our students to explore arts and cultures from across our state, the country, and the world.

In fact, the diverse opportunities included an African-inspired drum ensemble, pottery demonstrations, a Wisconsin chef, an Illinois playwright, yoga and meditation, a filmmaker, a published author, acting workshops, and a dance performance.

Fine Arts Festival (continued on page 11)

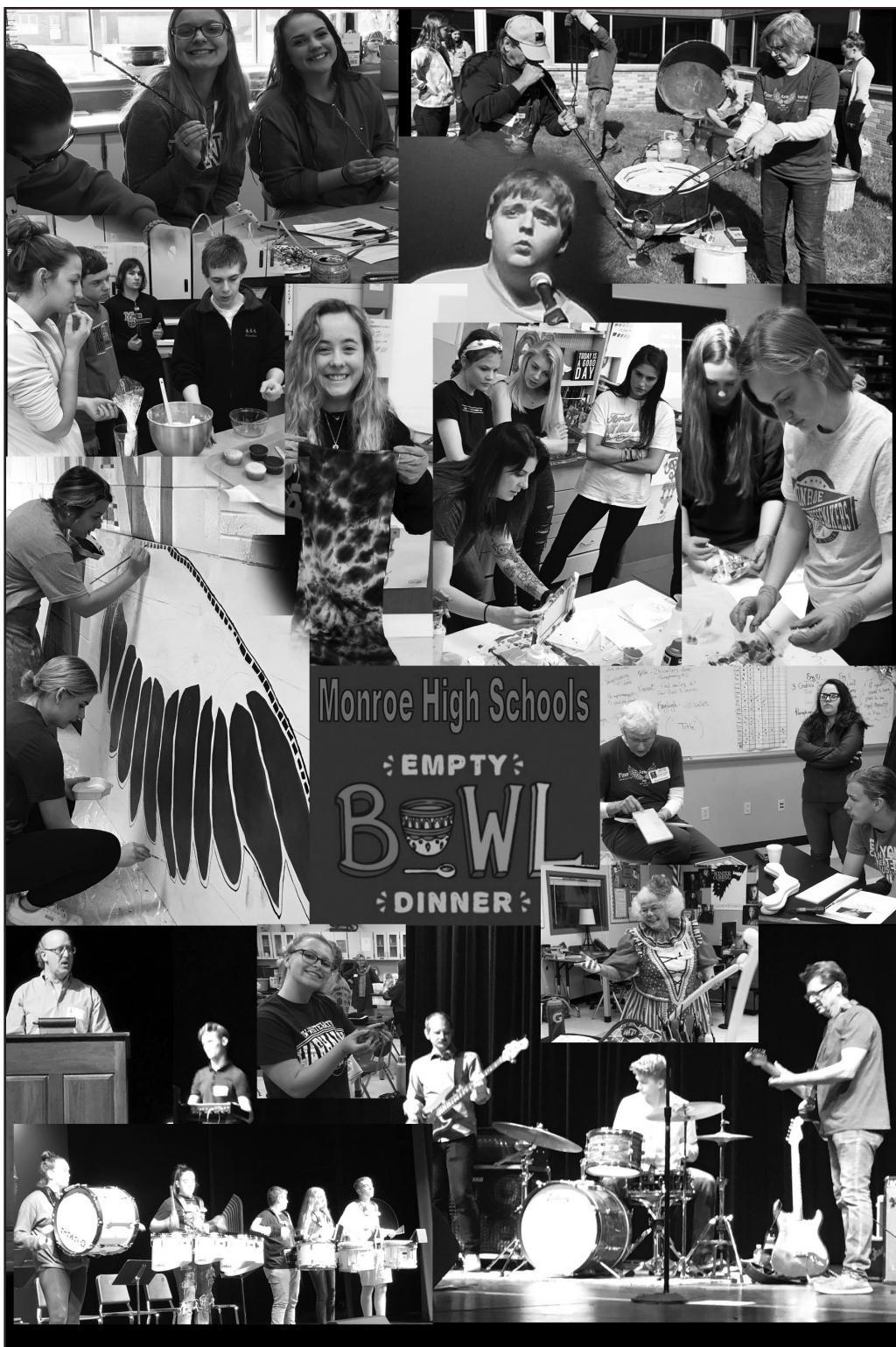
Fine Arts Festival (continued from page 10)

Furthermore, there were interactive workshops in painting, sculpting, metal forging, drawing, fabrication, culinary arts, old-world crafts, creating and using antique tools, soapmaking, candlemaking and even two virtual workshops from Texas and Florida; and this list is just a few of the highlights!

In our community, businesses, organizations, families, and patrons of the arts, donated close to \$9,000 this year. Their generosity allows the festival to run at no cost to the students or the district. Special thanks to the Monroe Arts Center that co-sponsored our headliner, Buckets and Tap Shoes who came down from the Twin Cities. Our gratitude also extends to Colony Brands who donated food gifts for all of the artists as well as treats for the teachers throughout the two-day festival. Finally, thank you to The Black Walnut Kitchen, Poncho and Lefty's, Baumgartner's, Perks, Suisse Haus, and Turner Hall who donated soup for the empty bowl dinner, which raised over \$2000 for our local Green County Food Pantry.

Our community was invited to attend public events on April 25th in the M-Room and the Performing Arts Center. One event was our MHS Spring Art Show that highlighted our seniors and talented art students. We also were proud to see so many community members at "The Empty Bowl Dinner," the ceramics classes' community service project, which is an important fundraiser for our local food pantry. This year, we had over 250 bowls crafted by high school pottery students and community potters. Additionally, senior Breanne Wilhite directed her peers in Rebecca Gilman's original one act play titled "House Hunters." Rebecca is a playwright from Northwestern University, who joined the festival as a visiting artist and stayed to watch our students perform her work at the evening show on April 25. And lastly, we celebrated the Monroe High School Academic Awards Night to highlight this year's outstanding students in each department.

Kathy King is retiring this year but is assured that this important festival is in good hands. Jan Douglas and Susan Anderson will continue this long-standing tradition.





SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MONROE

925 16th Avenue, Suite 3

Monroe, WI 53566

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SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MONROE CALENDAR

Monday, May 27	No School - Memorial Day Holiday
Sunday, June 2	MHS Graduation
Monday, June 3	All Day School - No Early Release
Wednesday, June 5	Last Day of School
Monday, June 17 - Wednesday, July 3	Summer School Session 1
Thursday, July 4 - Friday, July 5	No Summer School
Monday, July 8 - Friday, July 26	Summer School Session 2
Tuesday, September 3	First Day of School for Students in Grades 4K - 5, 6, and 9
Wednesday, September 4	All Students in Attendance - First Day of School for Grades 7, 8, 10, 11, and 12



ATTENTION NON-RESIDENTS OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MONROE

This newsletter is provided to all residents of the School District of Monroe. The most affordable process used to circulate this newsletter throughout the district is to use saturation mailing. It is costly to avoid a few non-residents from receiving our newsletter. We apologize for your inconvenience but wish to provide important information to all residents. Thank you.