

Muskegon

M I R R O R  
M I B B O B



HAPPY NEW YEAR

*Big Red Nation!*

2021



**Muskegon Public Schools Newsletter • Vol. 52 • January 2021**

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## Welcome! NEW STAFF

Jennifer Alpers.....Secretary .....Oakview  
 Benjamin Berry.....Teacher .....Bunker  
 Scott Boyd.....Maintenance I ..... District Services Building  
 Sherry Essenberg .....Secretary .....Oakview  
 Megan Hanson.....Speech Language Pathologist ..... Bunker  
 Melissa McPherson .....Social Worker ..... Marquette/Glenside  
 Ciara Nash-McGee ..... Secretary ..... Moon  
 Scott Pope.....Teacher ..... High School  
 Robin Wilson.....Secretary ..... Bunker



### HIRING SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS & SUPPORT STAFF

#### Requirements to work as a substitute teacher:

- Official transcripts with a total of 60+ credit hours and a minimum 2.0 GPA from accredited colleges/universities
- Fingerprinting and background check required
- Contact EDUStaff for more information



#### 2020-2021 EDUStaff Teacher Substitute Rates for Muskegon Public Schools:

- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| • \$100 per day                              | <b>Support Staff Substitutes:</b> |
| • \$140 per day (21st consecutive day)       | • \$11.19 – Classroom Assistant   |
| • \$200 per day (61st consecutive day)       | • \$11.00 – Lunchroom Aide        |
| • \$12.64 – Secretary (21st consecutive day) | • \$11.72 – Secretary             |



### HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE

**Open Monday - Friday**  
**7:30 AM - 4:30 PM**

**Tina Wright**  
 Chief Financial Officer and Talent Management

**Sheila Brown**  
 Human Resources Supervisor  
 231-720-2025  
 sbrown@mpsk12.net

**Betty Barnes**  
 Payroll Specialist  
 231-720-2022  
 bbarnes@mpsk12.net

**Amanda Foster**  
 Finance and HR Specialist  
 231-720-2056  
 afoster@mpsk12.net

**Debbie Fox**  
 Administrative Assistant  
 231-720-2008  
 dfox@mpsk12.net



**ALEXIS THURBER**  
**SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST INTERN**  
**MOON ELEMENTARY**

#### *Why did you become a school psychologist?*

I became a School Psychologist so that I can make a significant and positive impact on the well-being of our students and families. I strive to apply my expertise in mental health, learning, and behavior to help our students succeed academically, behaviorally, socially, and emotionally.

#### *What are you looking forward to this year?*

I look forward to continuing to build relationships with our amazing MPS staff, students, and families!



**MEGAN HANSON**  
**SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST**  
**BUNKER ELEMENTARY**

#### *Why did you become an SLP?*

I love watching the progress that little people make in such short spans of time. The feeling that you are making a difference in your students' lives is incomparable to anything else. Working with kids is great as you are vicariously living through their experiences every day.

#### *What are you looking forward to this school year?*

Building stronger relationships with my students, colleagues, and parents. I am excited to continue challenging myself with diagnostics/evaluations, multidisciplinary treatment opportunities, and providing the best possible services to my students!



**SCOTT POPE**  
**MATH TEACHER**  
**MUSKEGON HIGH SCHOOL**

#### *Why did you become an educator?*

I had influential teachers in my life, and I wanted an opportunity to provide the same positive experiences for my students.

#### *What are you looking forward to this school year?*

I am looking forward to using the unique opportunities online learning provides to explore new methods to help kids learn.



**MORGAN BLIZZARD-THOMPSON**  
**TWO WAY IMMERSION TEACHER 2ND GRADE**  
**MARQUETTE ELEMENTARY**

#### *Why did you become an educator?*

"The future of the world is in my classroom." It is a privilege to connect with my students every day and empower them with knowledge & confidence to make the world a better place. I am also proud to be bilingual, and I love sharing the gift of language, culture, and biliteracy with my students.

#### *What are you looking forward to this school year?*

I am looking forward to working with kids from my own community and growing together this year (although at a distance)!



### EMPLOYMENT PARTNERS:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>EDUStaff</b><br><a href="http://www.edustaff.org">www.edustaff.org</a>                      | <b>Dean Transportation</b><br><a href="http://www.deantransportation.com">www.deantransportation.com</a> |
| <b>Enviro-Clean Services</b><br><a href="http://www.enviro-clean.com">www.enviro-clean.com</a> | <b>Chartwells</b><br><a href="http://www.chartwellsjobs.com">www.chartwellsjobs.com</a>                  |



**Matthew Cortez**  
Superintendent, Ed.S.  
Muskegon Public Schools

*Happy New Year!*

**D**uring this last year we have been through such a tremendous amount. Some have fallen ill, others have lost family or friends, and still others are paralyzed by anxiety and fear. At times it seems like the negatively charged dark cloud that has descended upon us will never lift.

**Do not give up!**

Sometimes during the hardest of struggles in life we fail to see the new horizon.

**Do not give up!**

Right now the world appears to be gripped within a race for life, and the questions far outweigh the answers. For too many people the paychecks have vanished, and the outlook is bleak. The lack of social interaction, hugs, support, friends, and just freedom makes it feel as if we're alone.

**Do not give up!**

Rest assured that even the darkest of nights has a dawn. Believe that the sun will rise and with that rising sun 2020 will be in the past, and this pandemic will be soundly defeated. It is now in this holiday season that our Big Red Nation needs to combine our actions, thoughts, and



deeds to support those that need it most and make this world better. It is through our love for one another combined with our humanity and kindness that we can make the darkest of night brighter than the sunniest day. We have the ability and the strength to make it through

this time even stronger and smarter than before. Despite being physically apart, this time will serve to unify our Big Red Nation into what we truly are--A Family.

I wholeheartedly believe we are family, and "Family means no one gets left behind." Let that be our motto. Let that be shouted from every rooftop and school building. Let that be the mechanism for hope to thrive and grow. Make that the reason for this season, and hope will spring eternal. While these words and actions cannot replace or heal what has been lost or broken, they will let each of us know that we are not alone. We are here to help, and we are an email, phone call, text, or letter away. Let's rely on one another for the hope and the strength to carry us through these times.

Our teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, food service, custodial, maintenance, board members, and staff dearly miss our students, our family. We will be together again and will understand how precious the gift of socializing has become. We each long for the day when students walk through those doors and the chattering of news from the weekend or who likes who fills the air with an excitement and energy that is indescribable. I ask for all of us to continue to be strong. The end is in sight and the victory well within our grasp.

So, during this holiday season let's not just rejoice in our personal family and friends, but also rejoice that we are all fortunate enough to have a Big Red Family. Our schools will reopen and we will continue to put the health, safety, and welfare of our students, staff and community as the most important aspect of our actions. We will never be the same due to this pandemic, but will emerge as a unified nation and a smarter district. Our lessons as educators will continue to grow and create a new definition of 21st Century learning, because we did not give up.

Yours in Big Red Pride,

*Matthew Cortez*

Superintendent of Schools



**Bill O'Brien**  
President  
Muskegon Public Schools  
Board of Education

**Happy Holidays to the Big Red Nation!**

I trust you are all strong and well. As our administrators, teachers, coaches, and the entire staff continue to navigate our students through this pandemic, we must dig deep and provide support whenever we can. The future of all of us depends upon how well our students come out of this pandemic. It is too easy to place blame and be upset over things we seemingly have little control of. This is the time we need to focus on what we do have control of. The choices we are making today will affect the ability to make

good choices in the near future. As parents we look at this year and think of all the inconveniences and difficulties we may have had. Our students have made sacrifices this past year that they will not get back. Whether those sacrifices are in academics, sports, band, various other extracurricular activities, or especially on the social side of their lives, we must be there to support our students to ensure they will be at their absolute best when we come out of this. We know we will not all make the best decisions, but if we maintain the focus on our students, they will be the right decisions. Together as the Big Red Nation, we will not be defeated!

**Go Big Reds!**

Bill O'Brien,  
President, Muskegon Public Schools Board of Education  
eobrien@mpsk12.net • 231-578-9844

## K-5 READING AND WRITING by Julie Ray, K-5 Reading/Writing Specialist, Muskegon Public Schools

In March of 2020, the world changed forever, and nowhere was it felt more than in the world of education. Teachers, students, and parents had to adapt at record speed, and it was not easy. It still isn't. While there will be many positive changes that result from this pandemic, one of the most important is the world's new appreciation for teachers. The teachers of Muskegon Public Schools are among the best, and all deserve recognition. This article highlights one of many.

One of MPS' champions is Mrs. Kristine Horan. Mrs. Horan has been teaching at MPS for 21 years. This is her 17th year teaching 3rd grade at Moon Elementary School. She teaches all subjects to her students. It has been a challenge to keep students reading and writing from home, and Mrs. Horan has incorporated many innovative and fun ideas to keep her students engaged and learning.

Google Classroom is the platform that 3rd grade teachers use to deliver instruction to their students, and Mrs. Horan uses the many components of that platform expertly. During writing instruction, she monitors her students as they work using *Go Guardian*, puts her students into virtual breakout rooms, where they can share ideas with each other in small groups, and share their writing with a classmate. She also provides them with scoring rubrics so they can self-monitor their work.

Learning to deliver reading instruction virtually has been especially challenging for our teachers this year. Mrs. Horan creates Google slides for her students, with all of the information they need to successfully participate in their learning. She provides the text they need, questions that need to be answered,

all visible to the students as they work. She also makes use of breakout rooms for reading, providing role cards for the students to use as they practice partner talk and question discussion.

In addition to teaching her whole class each morning, Mrs. Horan also holds small group instruction in the afternoons, delivering differentiated reading instruction based on her students' needs. She recently attended professional development for this work, giving her access to virtual reading materials that make her instruction even more focused for her students. Her students log into their classroom 10-15 minutes early in the morning to listen to a read aloud, if they choose.

Keeping students engaged may be the most challenging part of teaching right now. One of the best things about Mrs. Horan is her ability to have fun with her students in the midst of all this new learning. She is proficient at the "bitmoji classroom", which makes having to do all learning from a computer screen a lot more fun. She adds extensions to her lessons like "Confetti! Confetti!", where the screen explodes with confetti to celebrate students' answers, like stating an answer in a complete sentence, starting with a sentence stem. She uses a zoom soundboard to make fun/funny noises, and has even been known to put stickers on her face!

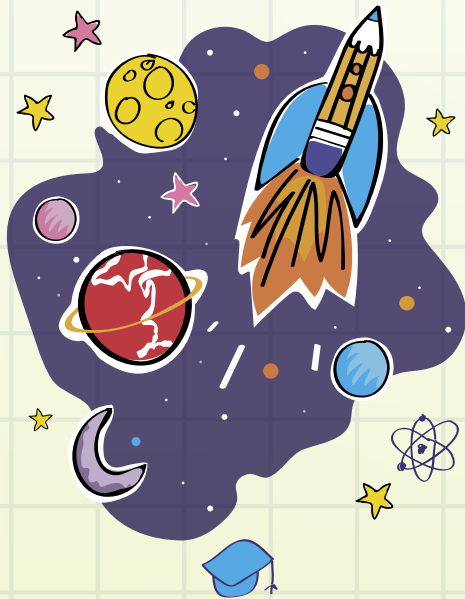
Practices like these can be seen all across our district in our elementary classrooms. Thank you, Mrs. Horan, and all of you, for your creativity, hard work, and dedication to the students and families of MPS. We are lucky to have you!



## Social Studies Teacher Highlight: MRS. MOFFETT, 2nd Grade at Oakview

by Kristy Tolbert

We all know that for the 2020-21 school year, teachers have made huge adjustments in the ways they provide quality instruction for students. For 2nd grade social studies, MPS has been using a project-based learning curriculum for the past 2 years. This is a very hands-on, student-centered approach to learning and has shown great results for learning outcomes when used for in-person instruction. But this school year so far, we are not in-person with our students. And our 2nd grade teachers like Mrs. Moffett at Oakview have had to get very creative with their methods for teaching and learning.



## ONLINE SCHOOL

Mrs. Moffett has been with MPS since 1995 and has taught kindergarten, 1st, 2nd and 4th grades. Mrs. Moffett works to build strong relationships with her students and their families and she has been one of our project-based social studies teachers for the past year. "I miss project-based learning!" she says. "This year I'm trying to make the best of it with lots of videos and online visuals. It was the same last year, except we were actually able to take students to see those places around Muskegon that they saw in photos and videos. Now we have virtual field trips."

All of our teachers have tried new methods to make learning more engaging for kids. But for Mrs. Moffett, she feels the best strategy is to bring her own excitement to virtual learning. "When I'm excited about what we're learning, my students are excited and engaged!"

As we move into 2021, Mrs. Moffett has some encouragement for the parents of our students. "Parents have so much to offer! Interacting and talking with their students while doing simple daily tasks or going to essential places and having conversations about how things are in the world around us is so important. Parents are their child's first teacher, and real life is full of teachable moments!"

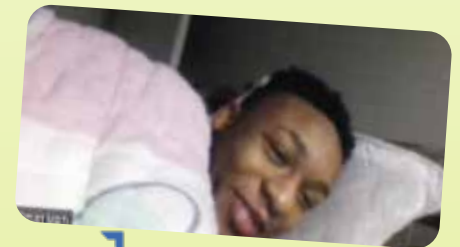
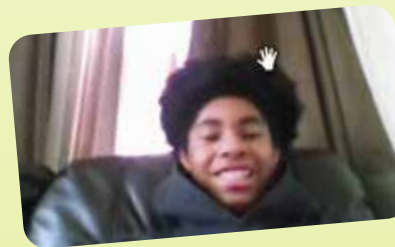
## MEET MRS. NYENHUIS!

Mrs. Nyenhuis is a 9th grade English teacher at Muskegon High School and a reading interventionist at MCEC.

She has been working hard this past year to give her students opportunities to learn in an unconventional learning environment. She is currently using *Nearpod* to engage her students in learning. This interactive piece of technology encourages student voice. Mrs. Nyenhuis has gone above and beyond by implementing our new program *Bluescape*, which is a collaborative platform, encouraging students to work in groups just like they would in her classroom. With these tools at her disposal and student willingness, everyday is a successful day in her classroom.



She has fostered relationships with her students by making sure to check in personally with all of her students several times a week. She shares real life stories with her students to connect on a personal level which helps her students open up to her and makes the learning environment a safe place to be. Because students feel safe, they are experiencing new technology which is changing the way they are learning. They are participating, communicating, and working together as a class. Mrs. Nyenhuis is an exemplary teacher who works diligently to provide opportunity for students to become productive members of society.



## BLUESCAPE



These students are engaged in the Bluescape platform.

## JANUARY SCIENCE UPDATE 2021 by Joshua Presson

The unconventional 2020-2021 school year here at MPS is just about half way over already and time has really flown by! We have all been learning in new and exciting ways. Students are becoming technology geniuses and teachers are more innovative and creative in how they have to teach than ever before. One teacher, Brittini DeWit, from Moon Elementary School has shared how she has embraced our new learning environment and continued to teach our science curriculum to her students.

Mrs. Dewit has been teaching for 10 years with the last four years here at MPS. In college, she completed her student assisting at Moon School and was thrilled to return to Moon to teach from her own classroom.

When asked for her thoughts about teaching science virtually, Mrs. Dewit replied, "We have had a lot of fun with science this year! Being virtual I had to get creative. One way I did this was by creating a Virtual science table. On the table I have all of our science materials for the lesson. There is a camera pointed at the table so that the students are able to see the experiment. I present each experiment as a "challenge" the students have to complete. Presenting the lesson as a game challenge helps with participation. The students are read their lesson challenge and then sent into the breakout rooms to decide what materials their group would like to use (they do not have to use everything on the table):"

Once the students returned from the breakout rooms, they tell Mrs. Dewit what materials they would like to use for the engineering design challenge and she sets them aside for the groups. While the students were allowed to come in to face-to-face tutoring, she would have them build their challenge and then test it live on Zoom the next science day! She leaves all the designs up for the rest of the students to see when they come in for their face-to-face time.

Mrs. Dewit goes on to say, "One of their favorite experiments was the one that we melted ice and then turned it into water vapor. They were so impressed and loved watching the science table camera. They were begging me to do it again so when the kids came in for small groups I redid the experiment (for all 4 small groups):"

Another way Mrs. Dewit's students are getting excited about science are the experiment challenges she gives them. Each week, during her science lessons, she gives the kids an experiment to try at home and encourages them to send her the videos and pictures. "They did awesome!" says Mrs. Dewit, "I loved watching the kids pretend to be youtube stars and send me their videos."

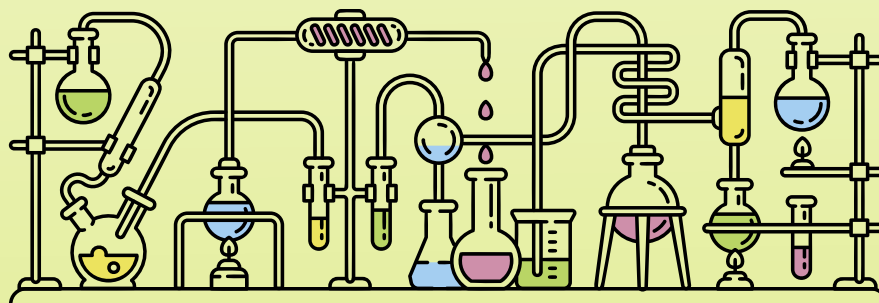
Mrs. Dewit said she was nervous to teach science virtually but has found great success! Her students are very engaged in the virtual science table and love still being in control of the science experiments even though they are virtual. Using breakout rooms and allowing her students to pick their own materials has allowed for the students to work as a team. She loves to hear the students talk science with one another and lead discussions when their engineering design challenge is "tested."

She finished up by saying, "In my classroom and hallway I still display student work. I print off the Seesaw assignments and hang them up. I also do student highlights where I show the class someone's great effort. I remind the kids we are not looking for perfection, we are just looking for their best."

That last sentence sums up what all of our teachers and students are doing this school year where so much is so different. While waiting for a sense of normalcy to return, no one is perfect but we are all doing our best and we are all Big Reds! As always, please feel free to contact me if you have questions about our science program.

Joshua Presson, K-8 Science Specialist • Muskegon Public Schools  
231-720-2030 • jpresson@mpsk12.net

When asked for her thoughts about teaching science virtually, Mrs. Dewit replied, "We have had a lot of fun with science this year! Being virtual I had to get creative. One way I did this was by creating a Virtual science table.



"I remind the kids we are not looking for perfection, we are just looking for their best."



~ Mrs. Dewit

## Health & Wellness Committee Kicks off **EMBARK!** Safe Routes to School Program

The new EMBARK! Safe Routes to Schools Program is off to a great start. After months of planning by the Muskegon Rotary Health & Wellness Committee, volunteers started riding bikes with Muskegon Public School kids and their Physical Education teachers. Kids watch videos and take quizzes on bicycle safety and receive instruction on how to safely ride to and from their neighborhoods to their schools.

EMBARK! was conceived based on a highly successful program in the Traverse City area called *Norte* which has been in existence for 7 years. In that time it has gone from a young couple escorting their child to school on bikes to hundreds of kids in the area walking and riding to and from school. In addition to safe routes to schools, their programming now includes many, many aspects like walking and biking advocacy, biking youth camps and teams, youth leadership, a bike library, a bike shop, and bike maintenance training.

The vision is to duplicate as much of the *Norte* success as possible here in the Muskegon area. The program with the Muskegon Public Schools is just the start. Already, we have collaborated with other organizations to build the program. Mercy Health has provided bike helmets to kids who don't already have one. A gentleman who runs a bicycle repair ministry out of Fellowship Church has provided bikes for kids to use who don't have one. Muskegon Rotary member Darlene Collet even donated a couple of bikes her grandkids



no longer need. Perhaps others have a used bike or two cluttering up their garage that they would like to donate.

Right now, since Muskegon Public School kids are attending school remotely, they are meeting one day a week outside their school to ride with their physical education teacher.

Once they are back to the classroom, the expectation is that the kids will ride their bikes to and from school with their parents. The program will continue every week until the snow flies and we expect more kids in the future. They currently ride from 2:15 until 3:15 from a different elementary school each day. With that, we really need more volunteers to ride with these kids to keep them safe and spread the volunteer load. Visit this volunteer survey link to get signed up:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/17QNnL5cli-nMGh9fZj2iyO33qVnbJfS-Ng0w4JPqN4/edit?usp=slack&ts=5f58dfd5>

### STUDENTS WHO WALK, BIKE, OR ROLL TO SCHOOL



Numbers reflected are from 2003 through the most recent fiscal year

Graphic: <https://saferoutesmichigan.org/about/>



# RIDE ON!





This fall at Muskegon Middle School, the School Social Worker and School Psychologist have been working together to provide social-emotional learning opportunities for an identified group of middle school students. The goal of the collaboration is to help students develop skills to become resilient individuals at school and within the community. Ms. Estella Thompkins (School Social Worker) and Mr. Conor Dahlquist (School Psychologist) have been meeting with students virtually in small groups working on the following skills: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social-Awareness, Relationship Skills and Responsible Decision Making skills.

Small group sessions begin with a mental health check-in where students have an opportunity to reflect on their own well-being. As a group, we then engage in an activity that serves as a coping strategy for stress and frustration. Typically we conduct a group breathing activity, some stretching and/or a few yoga poses to clear our minds and relax!

After we are relaxed and ready to learn, the students are presented with a general topic. During the first month of the year the group focused on bullying and we reviewed real-world data and examples that we could relate to Muskegon Middle School and our own experiences. Students engaged in some role-playing and group discussions about the topic area.

The final part of the group is focused on having some fun! We incorporate a group activity or game to help foster relationships between the students. The students are typically very interested in friendly competitions and we have had various contests throughout the group sessions and in between. Our most recent was a virtual Rock-Paper-Scissors contest, which ended with some laughs!

In between group sessions, students are provided with opportunities to check-in with Ms. Thompkins and Mr. Dahlquist. The students are also provided with Monthly Self-Care Challenges in which they are encouraged to engage in activities that promote Self-Care and foster relaxation and self-management.

Our goal is to continue to monitor the mental health and well-being of our students at Muskegon Middle School.



Paul Kurdziel

Muskegon Community Education Center

This school year has been like no other! The hallways are empty. The building is quiet. Even the bells are not ringing to indicate class change. Earlier in the school year, students were able to come to the building for in-person tutoring, which made each day seem a little more normal. For the past few weeks, though, there have been no students in the building.

We miss seeing all of our MCEC family members in person!

We have not been sitting idly by just waiting for school to reopen. The MCEC staff have been working on adding some new things in anticipation of students returning to school. First, we will be opening an MCEC store in our building thanks to the Big Red Education Fund. Students will learn to manage and run the store, which will serve all of the MCEC family. In addition, equipment has been purchased, so students will have the opportunity to create their own concepts for podcasts, learn how to produce podcasts, and then air the podcasts on the internet.



If you have not checked it out yet, the MCEC Fam! Show airs live on Facebook every Thursday at noon.

As soon as students are able to return to the building, we will be featuring students on this platform as well. We have other projects in the works that will provide other opportunities for students to work on their talents.

Winter is here, and holidays during the pandemic are not the same. People are struggling to make ends meet, stay safe and healthy, and meet all of their obligations. Just know, MCEC family, that we are here, and we love you! We anxiously await your return to school and look forward to seeing you again, hearing your voice, and working with you to discern your pathway to success!



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Read the Mirror online at: orshalrdproductions.com/muskegon-mirror/





**Brenda Kota**  
Central Registrar &  
Student Services  
Support

**MPS STUDENT ENROLLMENT**

Muskegon Public Schools will have their online enrollment process back up and running in January 2021. Please visit our website:

[www.muskegonpublicschools.org](http://www.muskegonpublicschools.org), and click on 2020-2021 School Registration block.

You will have to create a user name and password. You will be able to enroll all your students at any time through this system.

If you forget your login information, you can contact **Brenda Kota 231-720-2013** or email **bkota@mpsk12.net**.

**TO ENROLL YOUR STUDENT(S) INTO MUSKEGON PUBLIC SCHOOLS YOU WILL NEED THE FOLLOWING:**

- Student's birth certificate
- Student's up-to-date immunization records
- Parent/Guardian ID
- Two proofs of residency: This may be a utility bill, tax assessment/bill, voter registration, an important piece of mail or if you just moved into our district, your current lease/rental agreement. These must be dated within 30 days of your student's enrollment.
- Guardianship documentation, if applicable

If you have any issues or questions, please contact  
Monday – Friday 8:00 am – 4:00 pm:  
**Brenda Kota**, Central Registrar  
at **231-720-2013** or email **bkota@mpsk12.net**.



**technology department**

**Our address is: 1458 5th Street Muskegon, MI 49441.**

**Call the help desk with any technology questions or concerns and someone will gladly speak with you or return your call as soon as possible.**

**Technology Help Desk number:  
(231) 720-2060**

**CONGRATULATIONS!!!**

Our IMPACT students are doing great things! In addition to taking advantage of the extended academic learning time provided through 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLCs), our students are **"VIRTUALLY"** experiencing youth development opportunities that are enriching and extraordinary!

We CONGRATULATE and are excited our **21st CCLC IMPACT** site at **Oakview Elementary** is 1 of the 10 Michigan sites selected to participate in the **NASA STEM CHALLENGE**. Additionally, we have been selected to be 1 of the 2 Evaluation/Observation sites in the State.

What is the NASA STEM CHALLENGE? NASA in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Education has developed 4 unique science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) Challenges and one Global Observations to Benefit the Society (GLOBE) Science Investigation. Each STEM challenge is based upon real mission data and experiences that occur during human and robotic exploration of the solar system and the GLOBE investigation focuses on science protocols. These content opportunities are designed for grades 3-8, and connect students in 21st CCLC with NASA scientists and engineers to discuss proposed challenge solutions and science protocols in real time.

Under the leadership of Shalon Rankin and Mary Yack, ten of our IMPACT students will work as a team to create and submit brief videos showcasing their responses to the challenge. The U.S. Department of Education leaders and NASA scientists and engineers then select student videos to highlight in a culminating live Web event or to be showcased during state-based culminating experiences.

Our challenge: **Mission onto Mars**

Objective: Students design and build a drag device to slow a spacecraft entry onto the Martian surface.

Final Product: Student teams will produce and submit a video featuring the steps of the engineering design process they followed to create their team drag device to slow the descent of a space craft or probe.

Best wishes to the Oakview NASA Stem Challenge Team!

**If you are interested in learning more information about IMPACT AFTER SCHOOL, and your student is enrolled in one of our site schools, please contact the respective site coordinator for additional information:**

Bunker Elementary .....	Ebony Williams .....	(231) 720-2394
Campbell Elementary .....	Monica Banks .....	(231) 720-2061
Marquette Elementary .....	Violet Lipscomb .....	(231) 720-2609
Moon Elementary .....	Shanay Clark .....	(231) 720-2708
Oakview Elementary .....	Shalon Rankin .....	(231) 720-2491
Muskegon Middle .....	Rashonda McDaniels .....	(231) 720-3058
Muskegon High .....	Julaine Foster .....	(231) 720-2940

Kimberly Leavell  
Director, 21st CCLC IMPACT, MPS  
231-720-2557



*Twenty First Century Community Learning Centers are funded in part by a 21st CCLC grant from the US Department of Education.*

**It has certainly been a different school year for the Poppen Programs this year!**

It has certainly been a different school year for the Poppen Programs this year! While we are sad to not be able to see all of our students in person for regular lessons this school year, we are also grateful to be able to help keep our community safe. We do have many students who are still creating amazing art or music through working online with their Poppen instructors this year, and we are still working on new applications.

**Congratulations to the newest students to be admitted into the Nancy K. Poppen Program:**

- **Colbert Bankhead**, 9th grade at MCEC, will be studying creative writing and spoken word
- **Jamina Chervenak**, 8th grade at Muskegon Middle School, will be studying violin
- **Gabriela Figueroa**, 7th grade at Muskegon Middle School, will be studying violin
- **Ka’Niyah Martin**, 8th grade at Muskegon Middle School, will be studying visual art
- **D’Marcus Snowden**, 4th grade at Oakview Elementary, will be studying percussion
- **Bryce Thompson**, 10th grade at MCEC, will be studying visual art

We are so excited to get you started on your journey to developing your talents further!

The Nancy K. Poppen Program is available to low-income students at Muskegon Public Schools, to apply in 3rd through 11th grades, in any of the fine arts: private music lessons, visual arts classes, dance classes, theatre classes, and creative writing or spoken word lessons. Our next application deadline is May 1st, 2021, for classes to begin in fall of 2021.

Students in the program who choose to go on and study their art further in college or with artists’ apprenticeships may apply for Sherman R. Poppen scholarships in their senior year, by February 1st.

Call director Claire Root Benson at 231-720-2040 for more information.



**POPPEL  
PROGRAMS, INC.**



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**BOYS & GIRLS CLUB**  
OF THE MUSKEGON LAKESHORE

**THE CLUB IS OPEN**

COMMITMENT TO SAFETY

**Our doors are open to serve you!**



**WHEN: Nelson Club: Monday- Friday 7:30am-5:30pm**  
**Nelson Teen Zone: Monday-Friday 1pm-6pm**

Steps we are taking to ensure the health and safety of our members and staff:

- 1 DAILY TEMPERATURE CHECKS
- 2 HANDWASHING & SANITIZING STATIONS
- 3 DAILY CLEANING OF ALL PROGRAM AREAS
- 4 STRICT SOCIAL DISTANCING MEASURES
- 5 STAFF & CLUB MEMBERS WEARING MASKS



**bgclubmuskegon.com**  
**231-375-5576**



**BECOME A MEMBER NOW BY REGISTERING ONLINE!**



**LOOKING FORWARD TO SUMMER? SO ARE WE!**  
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**OUR CLUB SITES & LEARN MORE AT BGCLUBMUSKEGON.COM**

## Hello Muskegon High School Families!!



**Tim Hoffman**

Muskegon High School  
Principal

Hello Muskegon High School Families! To say that the 2020-2021 school year has been interesting is an understatement. The Covid -19 pandemic has changed our lives in so many ways since March, but the Big Reds are continuing to persevere, regardless of what comes our way. The administration and staff at MHS have continued to provide the safest and most consistent educational plan in Muskegon County; that is something that we can all be proud of. With the end of the pandemic in sight, let's celebrate the positives that began this school year and begin to envision what we can do to ensure our success when things return to a normal educational and living environment:

With the passing of the bond issue, Hackley Stadium underwent a massive renovation that looks spectacular. Our Big Red football team was able to provide the community with normalcy this fall by continuing their drive to another state championship. While the end of the season is uncertain, we are beyond proud of all they have accomplished. This fall, our other sports were also able to have successful seasons, and we are looking forward to a time when winter sports will get their opportunity to shine. It is my hope that many of you will get to see firsthand the renovations to our Redmond-Potter gymnasium; it looks amazing! It is because of your support that we are able to continue to provide top-notch extracurricular activities during these trying times.

Our student leadership group was able to pull off an amazing week of homecoming activities for students (virtually of course), and both students and staff were excited to participate! Other student groups, like National

Honor Society and Masque Club, are continuing with activities for our students and other students in our community. It is our goal to expand upon these opportunities for our students as we come closer to the end of this pandemic. With the continued uncertainty ahead, Muskegon Public Schools will continue to keep the safety of our students the highest priority. While we can't be sure when in-person learning will resume, I would like to offer some suggestions to keep your high school student engaged in the learning process:

- **Establish a routine M-F** -Get up and out of bed like normal
- **Create a positive learning space at home**
- **Think positively** - the challenges of the pandemic will pass
- **Embrace digital learning** - this challenge is preparing students for life ahead
- **Be physically active** - even twenty minutes of daily exercise will positively impact your mood
- **Give yourself a break from social media** - get some fresh air daily
- **Eat healthy food on a daily basis**
- **Track your students progress on PowerSchool** -Reach out to staff with concerns; we're here to help!

I would like to thank you for your patience during this time, and I wish you continued health as we proceed. I am always available; please email me or call my office at any time if you have questions or concerns about your child's educational experience.

*With Big Red Pride,*  
Tim Hoffman  
thoffman@mpsk12.net  
231-720-2892



“With the passing of the bond issue, Hackley Stadium underwent a massive renovation that looks spectacular.”



**Corry Lohman**  
Muskegon Middle  
School Principal

## HAPPY NEW YEAR BIG RED FAMILY !!

We at Muskegon Middle School are hoping that all of you have a safe, healthy and happy new year! We are in for a busy January, and are hoping to see our students back in the building soon.

This month we have our second iReady diagnostic taking place, students have been clocking a lot of time on their iReady lessons every week. Please continue to encourage your student to complete two or more lessons a week, and watch their Reading Lexile grow! We have monthly competitions happening, so stay tuned

for what prizes may come your way!

MMS wanted to take this opportunity to share with you our FoodCorps program. This team is doing their best in our virtual world to educate students in elementary and middle school the importance of growing, cooking and eating healthy foods.

"I chose to do FoodCorps because I am passionate about the food system. I love working with kids, their curious minds are wonderful to spark big picture thinking! FoodCorps combines those two concepts cohesively through service at schools" says Toni Marano, a FoodCorps member serving Muskegon Public Schools.

"I chose to do FoodCorps because I am passionate about connecting kids to hands-on food-based lessons like the cooking and garden-based lessons we offer! I have become increasingly interested in promoting scratch-cooking and healthy food options in school cafeterias and classrooms" said Sydney Sayre, also a FoodCorps member serving Muskegon Public Schools.

Toni and Sydney are FoodCorps members based in Muskegon, MI, but, are part of a much larger national organization of dedicated service members whose mission is to connect kids in schools to healthy foods through hands-on education, encouraging healthy school meals, and promoting a school-wide culture of health.

This year, Toni and Sydney have been working with Bunker and Oakview Elementary students to deliver a standards-aligned garden and nutrition-based curriculum. Recently, Toni and Sydney offered cooking lessons to students at Bunker Elementary! As well as offering lessons to Muskegon students, Toni and Sydney have been working on projects aimed at connecting students to opportunities that offer a hands-on, experiential learning component. FoodCorps partnered with King Arthur Baking Company to offer 800 Muskegon students take home baking kits and virtual baking lessons with all the materials required to explore fundamental baking techniques!

The FoodCorps members also manage and teach lessons from the school garden located at Bunker Elementary. Currently, FoodCorps is recruiting members to join a school garden committee that will oversee and plan expansions for the school gardens! "We are hoping that the school garden committee will bridge the gap between the schools and the community," says Sydney. She added, "the gardens belong to all of us and we are hoping to find dedicated community members to help build this program to be even stronger for our students!"

If you are interested in being a part of the school garden committee, please contact FoodCorps members at:

[sydney.sayre@foodcorps.org](mailto:sydney.sayre@foodcorps.org) or [toni.marano@foodcorps.org](mailto:toni.marano@foodcorps.org)



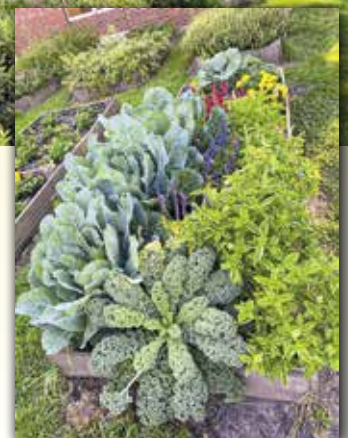
### 21st Century Fall Event: Toni Handing out Fall Treat Bags & Herb Growing Kits



### Cooking Lessons With 4th Grade Students at Bunker Elementary



### Bunker Elementary School Garden



# THANK YOU! COACHES!!

The Muskegon High School Athletic Department would like to take some time to say **THANK YOU** to all of our coaches and support staff.

We know that this has been a trying year with many ups and downs. It has caused almost everything that we've become accustomed to at MHS to be altered at some point. Without your time, ingenuity, and perseverance many of the things that we have been able to do up to this point wouldn't have been possible. With the hope of things getting better soon, we know that all of the hard work will pay off, and we will continue to be the standard for student-athlete achievement in our area.

The Muskegon High School Athletic Department would like to congratulate the following student-athletes on being named to the OK Green All Conference teams for the Fall 2020 season.

## FALL OK GREEN ALL CONFERENCE FOOTBALL

Amari Crowley  
Tayvid Elmore  
Damari Foster  
Jacarri Kitchen

Tyrese Oakes  
Julius Sims  
Kayden Smith  
Myles Walton

## HONORABLE MENTION

Quinshawn Clincy

Jonathan Adams

## FALL COLLEGE SIGNEES

### FOOTBALL

**JULIUS SIMS - BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY**

Julius has signed to play for the Falcons of Bowling Green next fall. Bowling Green is located in Bowling Green, OH and is an NCAA Division 1 member of the MAC (Mid-American Conference) East Division.

### BASKETBALL

**MICHEAL REED - NORTHERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY**

Micheal will play basketball at Northern Michigan next winter, which is located in Marquette, MI. They compete in the GLIAC (Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference) and is an NCAA Division 2 conference.



**GO MUSKEGON  
BIG REDS!!**



**Okeelah McBride**  
Bunker Elementary  
School Principal

**ENGAGING FAMILIES AND  
COMMUNITY PARTNERS...  
THE BUNKER WAY!**

To say that 2020 has been unusual is an understatement. Bunker has had to reimagine what partnering with the community and parent engagement looks like. Administration and staff have had to think outside of the box on engaging our community partners and families this school year and we are off to a great start!

The halls of Bunker are eerily quiet, but walk past any of our classrooms and you will hear teachers and students engrossed in online learning. Thanks to our community partners, we are able to provide resources and incentives to

keep our students motivated and engaged throughout the process. Harbor Hospice and Harbor Palliative Care is one such partner.

Although Muskegon Public Schools has temporarily halted in-person tutoring, the school year began with two afternoon sessions where students were able to get the in-person help needed with their academic work. Staff quickly realized that many of their students were coming to school either not having had lunch or just needing that little boost of nutrition to keep their attention on learning. Thanks to Harbor Hospice and their generosity, Bunker students have been provided with over 1,800 pre-packaged snacks and juice boxes!

Bunker continues to be grateful for our community connections. Many thanks to Raymond James & Associates for donating school supplies. We look forward to returning to full time in-person learning and putting those to good use! Thanks to Port City Church, each and every one of our students have their own, brand new, white boards. When the 1st grade teaching team came up with a creative way to keep their students motivated to log in each day, the folks at Central United Methodist Church took up the challenge to collect trinkets to give away as prizes... no small feat when you consider that

their congregation is not in person!

Neighborhood Associations play an integral role in the health and vitality of Muskegon neighborhoods. Bunker looks forward to partnering with The Lakeside Neighborhood Association as our doors are once again open to hosting when they resume in-person monthly meetings. The Nelson Neighborhood Improvement Association (NNIA) was a tremendous support to Nelson Elementary staff and students and their support has not stopped despite the school closing. When NNIA heard that 95% of Nelson staff and students were transferred to Bunker, they willingly continued their backing with a generous check going towards new books and a grant currently under consideration.

With online learning, parents and guardians district wide are stepping up to the challenge in supporting their scholars, and Bunker Elementary is no exception. Our families are sacrificing so much during these unprecedented times, and we miss their presence in our building. Nowhere is this more evident than in the absence of family engagement events. Grade level teams were approached to consider putting together parent engagement nights via Zoom and WOW... did teams get creative! Each grade level team chose a date and time and invited their families to an evening Zoom session centered on creative ways to engage in Math together as a family. All supplies were ready in the office for pick up before the evening. Over 90 families took part in the events. It might not have been ideal however, it was a wonderful time watching families learn, play and laugh together! We are already thinking ahead to another family engagement event for March Reading month; stay tuned for more details on this as they emerge.

Famous author James Baldwin wrote, "For these are all our children. We will profit by, or pay for, whatever they become." The trying times created by the COVID pandemic; the sudden ceasing of our usual routines, the isolation created through social distancing, and the general stress this is causing our families and school means our children need a village now more than ever. Thankfully the response from our families, and our business, non-profit, faith, and community partners show us that the village surrounding Bunker is up for the challenge.

**Perfect  Attendance!**



**JAYLEN WYRICK & DAD**



**ORIELLA WYGANT & MOM**



**LAYLA UPSON & MOM**



## Success For All (SFA) Solution Teams are Working Hard at Marquette Elementary

You may know that Success For All (SFA) is the new reading program at Marquette. But did you know that there is more to SFA than reading? SFA Solution Teams that involve all staff members at Marquette are the backbone of many of the activities that happen in the school. There are five solution teams that meet on a regular basis. The teams set, implement and monitor quarterly goals. The Solutions Team Coordinator for Marquette School is Kathy Coffey.

### TEAM #1: The Good Morning Sunshine Attendance Team

The quarterly goal for this team is to improve school wide attendance by 5% compared to that of the 2019-2020 school year, and to decrease the chronic absentee list by 5% as well. This team monitors student attendance and works with the administrative team to support families that are having a hard time getting their students to attend school. This is important work!

Team Members include: Sandy Elder, Michelle Schuitema, Christy Bellaoud, Brian Sikkenga, Megan Olsen, Heidi Zuniga, Hannah Kempker, Marti Knoll and Amado Perez.

### TEAM #2: Coo-Cu Crew Cooperative Culture Team

The job of this team is to monitor the implementation of Getting Along Together (GAT) lessons taught weekly in each classroom, Class Council weekly meetings and the recognition of students with the Cool Kid status each week. They also set a weekly Cooperative Challenge for classrooms. An example of a Cooperative Challenge is:

#### Active listening

- Keep video on when possible
- Get rid of distractions
- Eyes on your screen
- Say it back
- Ask questions

Students set weekly goals and check in each day to see how they are doing on the Cooperative Challenge. Every week Cool Kids are selected for each classroom. The Cool Kids are recognized by their classmates for the great choices they make. A slide show is prepared by the team and published! Students love being the "Cool Kid"!

Team members include: Katherine Lohman, Karyn Baker, Angelica Herrera, Nicole Malseed, Angie Poe, Hank Malseed, Maricela Jimenez, Amy Zeeff, Meghan Dziedzic, and Tiffany Hirdes.

### TEAM #3: The Marquette Movers & Shakers Intervention Team

The job of this team is to make certain all students are receiving the appropriate academic and behavioral support they need. The team helps teachers identify students and provide support to these students. The team has been working hard to train all teachers on intervention programs. The work they do has a direct impact on student success!

Team members include: Cassidy Bloom, Stephanie Plescher, Amy Brewer, Stacey Pallett, Mary Scott, and Andrea Wood

### TEAM #4: Parent and Family Involvement Team

The focus for this team during the first quarter has been to monitor the completion of online assignments. Virtual learning has certainly presented new challenges to students, families and teachers this year. The work of this team is to raise the awareness of the amount of work students are doing while they are

learning on their own at home in the afternoons. The next goal for the team is to make sure student Success Cards are sent out to all students. Look for these cards to arrive in your mail soon!

Team members include: Sarah Holliday, Amanda DeHaan, Kim Budnik, Mary Yack, Yesenia Lazo and Angela Perez.

### TEAM #5: Front Porch Rockers Community Connections Team

The job of this team is to establish relationships with the Marquette community. The team has two goals that they are working on. The first goal is to connect Volunteer Listeners to classrooms to support student readers and the second goal is to work with the Marquette Neighborhood Association. A strong relationship between the school and community is needed for the success of the vision of the school, which is to have all students performing at grade level. Contact the school if you want to volunteer.

Team members include: Courtney Waid, Kitty LaVigne, Morgan Blizzard-Thompson, Alberto Saenz, Stephany Saavedra, Sam Nesselroad, Amanda VandenBerg, and Chantelle Berles.

## Marquette Teachers Are Thankful

The Marquette Staff was asked what they were thankful for at the end of the SFA Quarterly meeting on November 24, 2020. This is what they said. The Marquette Staff was asked what they were thankful for at the end of the SFA Quarterly meeting on November 24, 2020. This is what they said.

### I am thankful for...

- Seeing the smiling faces of my students
- My students who show up for zoom class, do their asynchronous lessons and come to tutoring! They fill my bucket!
- A staff that never gives up!
- The relationships I have built with my students!
- Our fantastic staff, our incredible students and our resilient families!
- Colleagues who graciously extend flexibility, forgiveness, and understanding!
- Parents messaging me asking how they can help their kids!
- The ability to at least SEE my kiddos.
- Parents that continue to ask for ways to help their students learn at home
- Students that participate in Zoom class!
- The opportunity to meet every week with the "K" Crew from 11:00-11:30 regardless if we are F2F or via zoom. Great team!!!
- All of the wonderful colleagues that I get to work with
- Cozy pants during virtual learning. I am thankful for POSITIVE and encouraging students during this time. It's great when students are engaged.
- Kiddos who always come to zoom class.
- Our tutoring times!
- That virtual learning is allowing me time to think carefully about using time efficiently to get at learning goals during lessons. It has helped me think carefully about creating activities in our curriculum to use on Zoom.
- Health, my family and our school family.
- Students wanting to learn while on zoom
- Students who show up and try their best every day
- The time I have to connect with my students more personally during the tutoring time
- Everyone that fills a role that isn't their "normal" job
- My students' personalities shining through
- My co-workers
- Classroom parents being so understanding during this time
- Being able to work for MPS as a teacher!
- My colleagues
- Students attending/participating and being involved!



## Moon Elementary First Quarter Update Review



### Perfect Attendance for Marking Period 1

Congratulations to our Moon students who attended school every day for the first marking period, September - November 30, 2020.

Maliah Aleem  
Miles Cervantes  
Jeremy Gardner  
Travis Moline  
Roman Soliz  
Selena Walker  
Syria Williams

J'Breon Almon-Gay  
Malik Davis  
Alaysia Johns  
Ke'Ona Robinson  
Mike Stephen  
Conner Wilea  
Brooklyn Wright

Justice Blackmon  
Mikiaylah Davis  
Marilyn Manurs  
SrMarri Robinson  
Ayden Thompson-Brown  
Lola Wilea

**AWESOME!**

### A WESOME JOB Moon Parents!!!

On behalf of our entire staff, we would like to say THANK YOU to all of our **Moon Parents** for the support that you have provided to ensure that your student was present, engaged and completing assignments during our first marking period. According to the No Child Left Behind Act, the impact of parent participation shows up in the following ways:

Increase in academic achievement

Better classroom behavior

Reading together greatly improves reading skills

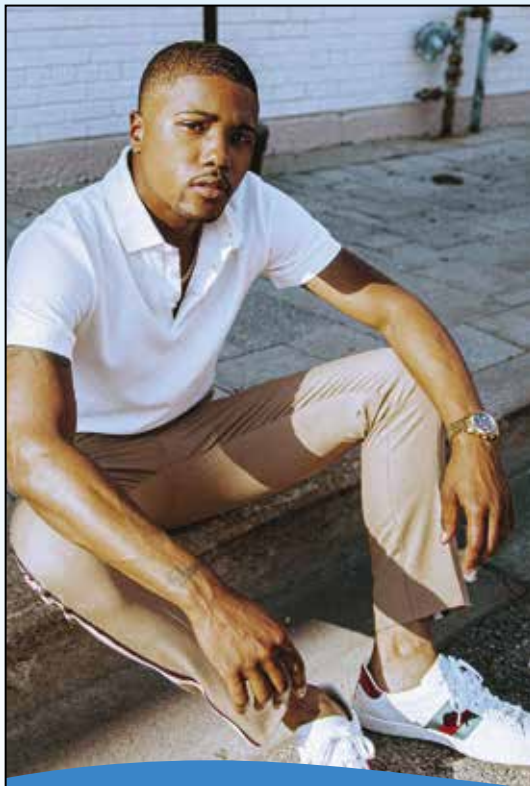
Lifts teacher morale to have a supportive partnership

The following parents and grandparents will be recognized by the Moon Staff for their commitment and support. As I stated at the onstart of the school year, it takes a village to raise a child. We appreciate all that you do to reinforce the remote learning expectations during this time. Take a bow Moon Parents!!! The fruits of your labor are evident in each students success!!!

Alisha Williams  
Amber Davis  
Artheona Sewell  
Crystal Cervantes  
Dominique Smith  
Flossie Bell  
James Ridge  
Jose Coleman  
Latora Howland  
Lisa Lopez  
Michael Jamison, II  
Sade Matthews  
Sequita Hershberger  
Tammy Bonebrake  
Trishauna Piggee

Amanda Bell  
Ann Evans  
Brittany Nealous  
DeVonte Drones  
Elizabeth Kaat  
Hayley Soliz  
Jennifer Gill  
KeAirra Raglin  
Latrice Sargent  
Dawn Tice  
Rasheika Sims  
Sara Grummet  
Shannate Drone  
Tawanda Pendelton  
Victoria Colburn

Amanda Gardner  
Ann Southland  
Cassandra Gager  
Diamond Porter-Coleman  
Eva Martinez  
Heather Wright  
Jessika Slone  
Kristen Grinnell  
Leah Lopez  
Mania Dooley  
Natasha Gerdes  
Sarah Ritter  
Tamara Blackman  
Tawanda Watson



"I attended the Career Tech Center to learn something a little more hands-on. My experience in the Graphic Production program led me to my degree in Advertising and Promotion."

-Justice Smith,  
CTC Graphic Production  
student, 2012-13

**CONTACT YOUR HIGH SCHOOL COUNSELOR TO ENROLL.**

**THANK**  
you  
VERY MUCH!



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# EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS (GLENSIDE, MARQUETTE AND OAKVIEW)

In the recent unit of instruction the early childhood programs have had the opportunity to explore "our environment".

Some of the key foci include environment and habits (local and coral reef), Earth resources, environmentally friendly practices, numbers, and data. During the instruction, the children process, and think about comparing and classifying, observing, communicating, cooperating, being curious, creating, imaging, and innovating.

In another section in this unit, the children were introduced to science concepts including the purpose and processes of landfills and recycling centers...like what happens to materials in each, step by step. They also learned the differences between recycling and reusing. The concepts that are abstract and difficult for the children initially but gradually became clearer through reading and watching videos; eventually, the children talked consistently about recycling in the classroom.

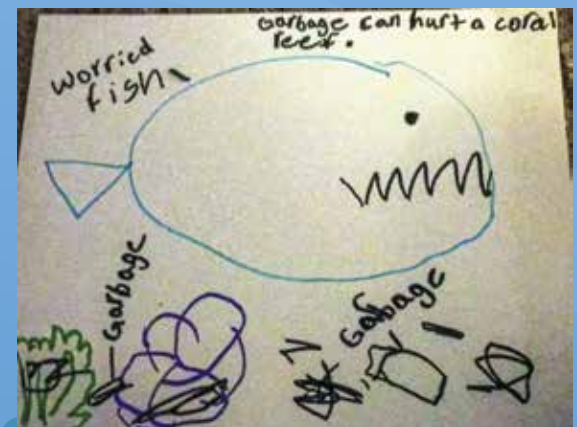
When it came to the coral reef, time ran short, however, they did talk about what a coral reef is; the plants, animals, and earth features associated with it; and what endangers coral reefs. See below some of the artwork created by the children. They also began talks on symbiotic relationships such as that between the clownfish and the sea anemone; differences among earth, plant, and animal features, and how those elements are interconnected.

The next unit will focus on Building...Stay tuned for more on Early Childhood Programs...preparing our youth. Where children explore, play, learn, and grow up to be BIG REDS!

If you know of a 3 or 4-year-old not in preschool, we have options for in-class learning or virtual. Call today about enrollment 720-2540.



Students drew what they saw while watching a virtual tour of an aquarium.



Students drew the impact of not following environmentally friendly practices on the coral reef.



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**BIG REDS,**  
*Lets cheer for our retirees !!*

We thank them for their service and commitment to the district over the years. Their hard work and dedication has made a positive impact on our school community and we wish them all the best for an enjoyable retirement.

<p><b>Kurt Chester</b> Maintenance II District Services Building 34 Years</p>	<p><b>Jeff Hentschel</b> Maintenance II District Services Building 25 Years</p>
<p><b>Lora Derks</b> Para-Educator Muskegon High School 33 Years</p>	<p><b>Nancy Hulka</b> Social Worker Nelson Elementary 23 Years</p>
<p><b>Colleen Johnson</b> Director of Dining Services Chartwells - MPS 23 Years</p>	



**BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2021**

**Black History Month Programs are FREE and VIRTUAL**

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