



Mount Vernon City Schools DISTRICT NEWS

Fall 2018

Connecting Our Community



Your Thoughts Really Do Matter

A message from Superintendent, William Seder Jr.

At our opening day celebration I challenged our staff to select a Be...word that they could focus on to better serve our students, colleagues and community members and then act upon that word. I chose the word Engaging. It is my desire to engage our community in conversations around educational topics because your thoughts matter!

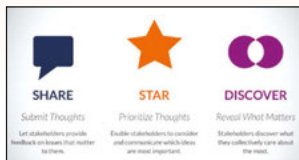
Late last spring we rolled out a community engagement initiative called 'Thought Exchange'.



thoughtexchange

Participants shared thoughts on two essential questions: What are some things we can focus on in order to improve? What are some things you think our schools are doing well?

Your thoughts were then shared with all participants who rated them by assigning stars. The more stars you assign the stronger you agree with a particular thought. In the exchange we had 731 participants who shared 892 thoughts and 32,181 stars were assigned. We have included a sampling of the results. To view the full report visit our website at www.mvcsd.us.



Question #1 What are some things we can focus on in order to improve?

Repairs and Maintenance—"Capital improvements need to be made to restrooms in school buildings and at the stadium. Litter in the parking lot areas needs to be addressed. Children learn best when they have a clean, comfortable environment."

Instruction and Program Delivery—"Less focus on testing, more focus on skills that will lead to successful futures. Students need to be encouraged to be creative, lifelong learners, and problem solvers instead of learning how to take tests."

Please fix the doors in the bathrooms. The students deserve privacy, as well as the community when they use the bathroom at events. Some stalls don't even have doors.

3 ★★★★★ (49)

Ranked #2 of 670



Student Behavior and Discipline—"Bullying! There is too much disrespect for authority or lack of respect for peers. It is important that everyone is respected to create

and live in a kinder society. Choose to be Nice! Choose Kindness!"

Question #2 What are some things we are doing well?

Teachers and Staff—"Wonderful, talented teachers who care about their students. Loving teachers are such a gift!"

Wonderful, talented teachers who care about their students. Loving teachers are such a gift!

4.5 ★★★★★ (21)

Ranked #2 of 194



Curriculum and Programs—"So thankful for the art, gym, library, and music programs! These programs provide a well-rounded education experience."

Safety and Security—"The district is trying to be proactive about security in many buildings. This is such an important topic in our lives today. Feeling safe is crucial to learning."

We heard you loud and clear ... and want you to know that your thoughts really do matter! So, we have invested significant resources to renovate all of the high school restrooms. The renovations should be complete by Thanksgiving.

We Need Your Thoughts Again. Our next Thought Exchange will be conducted from October 29 through November 12. We are seeking your input concerning our facilities.

Your Thoughts Matter

What are some important things you appreciate about our current facilities and what opportunities do you see as we develop a plan to improve facilities for our students both now and in the future.



thoughtexchange

October 29 – November 12
www.mvcsd.us



Facility Spotlight

A message from Superintendent, William Seder Jr.

We are excited to share the news of our **'Education Gateway Project.'** The Board of Education unanimously approved to move forward with the project which includes three important facility initiatives.

First: Gateway initiative is the extension of 'Yellow Jacket Drive'. There are only two ways to enter or exit the MVHS/ MVMS campus. During arrival and dismissal times nearly 2800 students and parents rely on those two access points. With the cooperation of Mount Vernon City, MVNU, and the Ohio Operating Engineers Apprentice Training program, the addition of the Yellow Jacket Drive extension to Cougar Drive will provide a third access point that will improve school safety and the traffic flow throughout the high school/middle school campus.

Second: Gateway initiative includes a new transportation and maintenance building. The current facility was built in 1954 and sits on 1.9 acres off of Harcourt Road. We have a total of 28 buses and several maintenance and plow vehicles serviced by an aging two-bay garage in need of significant repair. A transportation and maintenance building located adjacent to the MS/HS will provide adequate space while providing significant savings and efficiency.

Third: Gateway initiative includes a Community Field House that will serve the students of Mount Vernon and provide expanded opportunities for our community. This much needed facility will include a three-lane community walking track, locker rooms, three courts (lined for basketball, volleyball & tennis), weight room, wrestling room, community classrooms, offices, and an athletic training room.

Mount Vernon City Schools goal is to primarily use Non-Taxed Generated Revenues from Casino funds to co-fund the Community Field House project with the Jacket Boosters. The board will utilize Permanent Improvement dollars for the Transportation and Maintenance building as well as the Yellow Jacket Drive Extension.



The Jacket Boosters organization, through a public-private funding model have already started to secure commitments towards the Community Field House with a goal of raising a minimum of \$1.5 million dollars. **We have received a wonderful gift from the Ariel Corporation as they have committed a 1:1 match for every contribution made through the Jacket Boosters.**

For more information on how you can be a part of the Education Gateway Project please contact: Justin Sanford, MVCSD Athletic Director, at (614) 580-0900; email jsanford@mvcasd.us or Bob Tiell, Jacket Booster Treasurer, at (614) 679-6509; email bjtiell@gmail.com.

Facilities Focus

We are carefully evaluating each of our eight (8) school buildings throughout the district this year. We have several buildings that were built in the early 1900's with our newest building, Twin Oak, that was completed in 2005. We have purposely scheduled monthly board meetings at each one of our buildings this year. Following each board meeting we are given a tour of the building highlighting the positive aspects while pointing out the challenges.



We have been working with the Ohio Facility Construction Commission (OFCC) to develop a 'Facilities Master Plan' that will serve our students and community both now and in the future. We will be sharing with you a 'Facility Grade Card' for each building in the hopes of engaging our community in a conversation. Please join us in the conversation beginning on October 29th and continuing through November 12th through our 'Thought Exchange' — Your Thoughts Matter!

District Safety

Rick Shaffer, Director of Maintenance and Safety

MVCSD Families and Community Members: Be assured that we take the safety and security of our students and staff very seriously. We commit, through regular and ongoing all hazards training, to ensure that our schools are places where students can learn and grow, free from concerns about safety.

Our district is a part of a Knox County Community-School-University Emergency Planning Group that meets monthly with all first responders, other school districts, colleges, and Knox Community Hospital. We work closely with national school resources to ensure the training we provide is best practice and is consistent with national, state, and local recommendations.

Daily measures are taken to ensure our schools are safe places. In addition to locking all exterior doors, our staff trains for a variety of crises that may be encountered from health issues, accidents, intruders, fire, and weather related crises. We have protocols and procedures that, in the event of emergency, outline how we will communicate with community responders and parents.

While it is devastating to think of a violent act being attempted in one of our schools, it is important to remember that our students, parents, and staff are our best line of defense. We rely on our entire school community to inform school officials if they are aware of any threat so we can thoroughly investigate, as we take all reports very seriously.

We also share in the social and emotional well-being of our community. Our staff cares deeply for each student and works diligently to provide the support necessary so each individual can grow and be "life-ready" when they leave our school district. Our individual support team members are well versed in identifying, assessing, referring, and assisting students who may be struggling. We have community partners who stand ready to assist parents or students in need.

What can you do as a parent?

- Talk with your student about reporting concerns to district staff or law enforcement.
- Be aware of all surroundings. If something does not seem right, report it.
- If you have firearms or weapons in your home, please secure them.
- Stay informed.
- Listen to your student and help them process any concerns they might have.
- Model appropriate behaviors. Demonstrate healthy ways to express anger and relieve stress.
- Take an active role in your student's education. Visit and volunteer at school, monitor schoolwork, and get to know their teachers.
- Get to know your student's friends and families. Establish a network to exchange information with other parents.



Rick Shaffer discusses safety initiatives with HS Principal Scott Will and SRO Jeremiah Armstrong.

- Monitor and supervise your student's reading material, television, video games, and music for appropriate content.
- Monitor and supervise your student's use of the Internet especially social media.
- If you see something, say something.

In the event of an emergency, we will communicate and provide regular updates to you via our Knox Alerts, OneView, and MVCSD website. We have had several parents question the meaning of a modified lockdown. A modified lockdown would be initiated when school officials have been notified or informed of potential danger in the area but no immediate threat at the school. A modified lockdown means all exterior doors and classroom doors are locked. Students are restricted to stay in the building, recesses are cancelled, limited hallway access, but it is business as usual inside the classrooms. In an actual lockdown all doors would be locked; students would prepare to barricade or evacuate depending on information given. An actual lockdown would be initiated due to a potential emergency or immediate threat happening on or near campus.

Parents, it is important that you have updated your email and phone numbers on Knox Alerts and OneView, and please opt to receive text messages. As hard as it may be, it is imperative that parents DO NOT come to the building where the crisis situation is occurring. Emergency responders and staff need to be able to secure the perimeter and focus on responding to the crisis. Having parents arrive en masse to pick up students may make an emergency situation worse by distracting emergency personnel from responding to student needs.

School safety is everyone's responsibility. We appreciate your partnership to ensure that our schools are a safe place where our students can learn and grow, and for your continued trust and support of our district.





Kindness on the Move

Darin Prince, Mount Vernon Middle School Principal

"Remember there's no such thing as a small act of kindness. Every act creates a ripple with no logical end." -Scott Adams

Mount Vernon Middle School started off the year by focusing on the expectation that the Middle School is going to be a place of kindness. To symbolize this commitment, all students from the building designed a chain link with a message of commitment to be kind. The links were attached together to form a "Kindness Chain" during our beginning of the year Kick Off Celebration planned by the MVMS PBIS Committee. The "Kindness Chain" created by all of our students and staff represents our collective commitment to kindness, safety, and the creation of a welcoming learning environment. Students also had the opportunity to create their own kindness rock to be displayed in the school's new rock garden. It was an inspiring day for all involved. Most importantly, the message to the students was that we must remember the spirit of the day and continue acts of kindness throughout the year. Ms. Nina Shoe's class took that message to heart and got started right away doing just that... and something incredible happened.

Ms. Shoe took the momentum started by the kindness rocks and tied it to her instruction about the geography of the United States, creating an incredible lesson that will no doubt leave an impact on her students for years to come. In her classroom, Ms. Shoe displayed her "Be Rock" from opening day convocation with staff. On opening day, Mr. Seder asked teachers to decide what "Be..." they were going to be for our district. The students in her classroom liked the rock so much that they wanted to make one of their own. The first topic covered in Ms. Shoe's class was the geography of the United States. Ms. Shoe knew she wanted to come up with a creative way to teach such an important topic to her students. With the help of some good friends that were getting ready to leave for vacation, the idea for "Kindness on the Move" was born and the students' project was off and running.

Students from the class brainstormed what kindness meant to them, how to spread kindness, and then selected slogans that would go on every rock to be sent out. Two of the slogans selected were "Courage is Stronger than Fear" and "Hate is Never the Answer." Students painted positive words on the rocks along with Ms. Shoe's email address placed on the underside. "The first two rocks went with friends of mine, the Wilsons," said Ms. Shoe. "They took our rocks with them on a family vacation and left one in New Orleans and the other one in South Padre Island Texas." The class mapped out the path that the rocks would be taking. Because many of my students had not travelled outside of the state, pins were placed on the map to indicate the exact location of the rocks. "We tracked and added the mileage from Ohio to South Padre Island, and each stop along the way our rocks would be making," said Ms. Shoe. The Wilsons sent pictures from each state and they were shared with the students.

Over the Labor Day weekend, friends and family visited Ms. Shoe from out of state and she shared the story of our kindness project. They were so moved that they asked to take kindness rocks from the class to New York, Washington DC, and Arizona. Around 9:30 pm on September 11 Ms. Shoe received the first email from total strangers, Emily and Matt. Emily and Matt had found one of these rocks at the 9/11 Memorial and sent her class the following message:

Dear Ms. Shoe's Class,

Hello from two fellow Ohioans who just moved to NYC last week. We found your rock outside the 9/11 Memorial as we visited today, September 11th, to pay respects. As we remember those who we lost here in the US, and those lives lost in the ensuing conflict overseas, combatants and civilians alike, we were moved to find your message of joy and peace. Let us continue to love and understand one another, and strive to build a better future together.

We'll put your rock somewhere good!

*With much love,
Emily and Matt*

It was an incredible moment for Ms. Shoe and her students. But, the kindness on the move didn't stop there, as they also received another message from the 9/11 Memorial. On the night of the Ohio State - Texas football game, a third email was received. The rock that the Wilsons had left in South Padre travelled to Dallas and was photographed with some Ohio State football fans who also sent their pictures.

The emails have inspired the students to continue their work to spread kindness. The students complete a weekly "kindness" project: a journal, a paper, a word wall. "My students have sent kindness rocks with their family members that travel," said Ms. Shoe. "My classroom aide's uncle took one to California, and a rock has gone to Indiana." The students would like to spread kindness to every state in the United States this school year. The students ask each day if they have gotten another email. "Kindness spreads slowly, but it does spread," said Ms. Shoe. There is no doubt that kindness continues to spread due to Ms. Shoe's students and their dedication to this important cause.



Morning Announcement Crew

Darcy Miller, Columbia Elementary Secretary

Morning Announcements read over the PA system first thing in the morning? Just as the kids might write in a text message, our response would be "LOL". It almost seems like ancient history. The age of technology that we live in has allowed for new, innovative ways to deliver announcements to students. At Columbia Elementary, we have taken full advantage of cell phones, websites, video software, smart boards, and creative kids!

Sometimes it isn't always convenient to listen to morning announcements right when the bell rings before class begins, and often the announcements are ignored due to other things going on in the classroom or simply a lack of interest. So we created a team: the NEWS CREW.

In our school, morning announcements are fun to WATCH. Yes, we used the words "fun" and "WATCH" – it isn't a typo. Our students look forward to watching the announcements.

Second grader, Lacie Cook says, "I like seeing the students do the announcements. I like the funny things they do and say."

And even more exciting, our students look forward to having the ability to be a News Anchor or a special announcer on the Columbia Elementary News Crew.

The NEWS CREW consists of 4th and 5th graders who have the opportunity to be News Anchors. The Anchors are required to have A's or B's in all subjects or be highly recommended by their teachers. Each week the Anchors pre-record the next week's announcements, with the capability to add a last minute announcement when needed. Once the announcements have been edited, they are placed on our school website for the entire community to view. This allows teachers to choose the most convenient time in their schedule to play the announcements.



As Kindergarten teacher Melissa Gregory puts it, "I love that we can watch announcements when it fits into our schedule."

Anytime throughout the day, you might walk by a classroom and hear music, a news cast, or lots of giggles and exclamations as they watch the announcements. The older kids love watching their friends as anchors, especially if a "bloop" is thrown in at the end. The younger kids love seeing someone who was just on tv walking around the hallways. Toward the end of the announcements, all students watch in anticipation that perhaps their picture may appear with the many pictures that are posted at the end.

**"I like seeing all the pictures of kids at the end. I like hearing about special things coming up."
- Christian Coscia, Second Grade**

If you have a moment, go to our website and watch a few of our morning announcements. Who knows, maybe a few years from now, we might see one of our News Crew members as an anchor for the Evening News!

#EASTMINDSET

Karly Watterson, East Elementary School Principal

The 2018-2019 school year was set in motion by an open house cook-out where 93% of East's students and families attended. The festivities involved meeting the teachers, each student getting an East Elementary T-shirt with a growth mindset quote, and socializing with other families while having a hot dog on the front lawn. One parent said, "It gave me goose bumps to see so many families walking down the sidewalks, talking about 'their' school — our school! This really was a wonderful way to bring the community together and make everyone feel welcome."

Principal Karly Watterson has challenged both staff and students to embrace a growth mindset this school year. In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point. This view



A bird's eye view of East Elementary's front lawn during the Open House Cook-Out. Photo by Hollie Frackman.

creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for accomplishing great things. East Elementary is excited to showcase our growth mindset — our #EASTMINDSET — throughout this year at other community events.



Twin Oak Awarded National Blue Ribbon

Sue Miller, Twin Oak Elementary Principal

On October 1, 2018, Twin Oak, along with 349 other schools across the United States (one of only 16 schools recognized in Ohio) was named a 2018 Blue Ribbon School. Twin Oak joins East Elementary School (recognized as a Blue Ribbon School in 2014) as the two schools in the Mount Vernon City School District that have achieved this honor. The National Blue Ribbon Schools Program recognizes public and private elementary, middle, and high schools based on their overall academic excellence or their progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups. Every year the U. S. Department of Education seeks out and celebrates great American schools, schools demonstrating that all students can achieve to high levels. Since 1982, more than 8,500 schools across the country have been presented with this coveted award.

"I'm pleased to celebrate with you as your school is named a National Blue Ribbon School," said U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos in a video message to the honorees.

"We recognize and honor your important work in preparing students for successful careers and meaningful lives. Congratulations on your students' accomplishments and for your extraordinary commitment to meeting their unique needs." When Twin Oak was announced as a 2018 Blue Ribbon School, a loud cheer could be heard around the school. Students, teachers, and staff members were excited to be given this award which recognized their hard work as well as their academic success.

Now the Twin Oak community is busy working on ways to celebrate this extraordinary honor. Twin Oak has great things going on for students every day, and is planning ways to continue the celebration of this award. Students in all grade levels are making banners and posters to hang around the school. A 'blue out' was quickly called and everyone wore blue to signify the Blue Ribbon recognition. In November, a team from Twin Oak will travel to Washington, DC to receive a Blue Ribbon flag and plaque. When they return, a large celebration is planned for Blue Ribbon Week at Twin Oak. It took a lot of hands to make this award possible and we want to thank our parents, our retired teachers, and the community members who come to Twin Oak each day to volunteer and help our students. We share this award with all of you.



UPCOMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER

- 9 • Musical - Junie B. Jones - HS Theater - 7:30 p.m.
- 10 • Musical - Junie B. Jones - HS Theater - 3:00 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.
- 15 • 6th Grade Band and Orchestra Concert - MS Gymnasium - 7:00 p.m.

DECEMBER

- 10 • Winter Program East (Grades 3, 4, & 5) - Memorial Theater - 7:00 p.m.
- 11 • Winter Program Pleasant Street - (Grades 3, 4, & 5) Memorial Theater - 7:00 p.m.
- 11 • Winter Program Columbia (Grades 3, 4, & 5) - Faith Baptist Church - 6:30 p.m.
- 12 • Winter Program Dan Emmett (Grades 3, 4, & 5) - Memorial Theater - 7:00 p.m.
- 13 • Orchestra Winter Concert - High School/Middle School - HS Theater - 7:00 p.m.
- 17 • Sounds of the Season Choir Concert - High School / Middle School - MVNU Chapel 7:00 p.m.
- 18 • Winter Band Concert - High School/Middle School - HS Theater - 7:00 p.m.
- 19 • Winter Program - Twin Oak (Grades 3, 4, & 5) - Memorial Theatre - 7:00 p.m.
- 20 • Winter Program - Wiggin Street - Memorial Theater - 7:00 p.m.

Call 740-397-7422 or email Terry Streby at tstreby@mvcsd.us for times and other details regarding events

Continuing to Build a Tradition of Fun and Academic Excellence at Wiggin Street Elementary

Matthew J. Dill, Ed.D, Wiggin Street Elementary Principal



It is a tradition at Wiggin Street Elementary to encourage students to read over the summer months. We strive for our students to be Champions — in all areas of their lives. We want students to excel in their reading abilities as well as fostering a love of reading. As a part of our summer reading program our students could earn a bronze award, silver award or go for the gold award. The gold level award was to earn a two hour Wet & Wild afternoon Reward Party. This Wet & Wild Party consisted of six different stations: 1) Mega Slip 'N' Slide, 2) Duck, Duck, and Splash, 3) Water Paint and Chalk Art, 4) Ping Pong Water Toss, 5) Duck and Cup Races, and 6) Floating Rubber Duck Station. We also had a surprise visit from the College-Monroe Fire Department, which provided a giant sprinkler for all of our students from a water deck cannon on the fire engine.

Students put in a great deal of time reading this summer and as a school community, we wanted to provide them with an event that they would love. Student Elizabeth Lebold agreed, "this was the best summer reading prize yet!" Hopefully students understand that we appreciate all of the reading that was done over the summer and as a result of their hard work, had the opportunity to earn this gold level award. Each grade level had specific criteria they had to meet: all current first and second graders read 45 books, all current third and fourth graders read 800 pages, and all current fifth graders read 1,000 pages. We are very proud of all 71 of our students that achieved this great accomplishment!

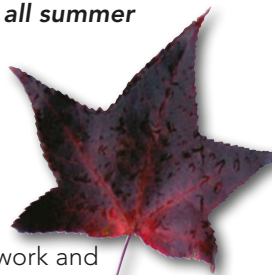
Since this was a first year rewarding our students with a Wet & Wild Day for their Summer Reading, we really were focused on the kind of feedback that we received from our students for future planning. Below you will see just some of the comments we received from our students:

"Water Day was so much fun! I loved it. I am so glad the staff took their time to set it all up. It was so worth reading all summer (Kennedy Howard)."

"It was AMAZING! I hope to do it again next year. But maybe one more station (Collin McFarlane)."

"Water Day was so fun. I was not expecting a water hose from the Fire Station (Layla Grimm)."

It is important to continue to have a balance of hard work and a lot of fun at Wiggin Street Elementary. We are especially proud of how students have started off the 18-19 school year. It is our vision to continue to build an organization of sustainable academic student growth that encompasses both a love for learning and enjoying the elementary years of each child's life. We are looking forward to see each of our students' future successes in and outside of our classrooms.





Creating a Positive Climate for Success with School-wide PBIS

Teresa Weaver, Pleasant Street Elementary Principal

During the summer months, many Pleasant Street staff members were busy working to prepare for PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports). By implementing PBIS we intend to increase academic performance and student safety, decrease problem behaviors, and establish a positive school culture with consistency. Teachers have commented that, "We have already seen big differences on our playground with PBIS, schedule changes, and the addition of recess activities."

Our mission statement is: "To create a safe and positive learning environment that challenges every student to be his or her best." Posters are hung throughout the building with our Junior Jacket expectations identified under these categories: "Be Respectful, Be Responsible, and Be Ready to Learn." Homeroom teachers have been busy training their students in each of these areas.



Classrooms are being recognized by Pleasant Street staff for their outstanding behaviors through our building HIVE awards. Individual students who have modeled HIVE behaviors are also being recognized by staff through our Junior Jacket Awards. These students are recognized in front of their peers during morning announcements and their award is hung on the PBIS bulletin board for all to see. Classes or individuals who have received these awards have shown that they are Honest, Industrious (hard working), Valiant (courageous), and Encouraging. Trever, who recently received a Junior Jacket award, was overwhelmed with emotion. "I have never been good enough to get a prize." He has shown an increased commitment to continue the HIVE behaviors.

Our PBIS kick-off assembly was held on October 5th. Our students were joined by high school students, the pep band and the Yellow Jacket mascot. As one PBIS team member has said, "This is a great time for us to have a fresh, clean start with a lot of purpose and intentionality."

If you happen by our building, you will likely notice students wearing their new Pleasant Street Junior Jacket t-shirts and practicing the Pleasant Street Pledge.

Notes from the Nurse

Laine Shoemaker, RN, BSN

As the new school nurse for the Mount Vernon City School District, I'd like to share some of the improvements we have made recently.

A fantastic new improvement is the addition of a health assistant position in each of our elementary buildings. The assistants have been learning and working exceptionally hard providing daily care to our students. It's hard to imagine what we did without them. If you see one of your health assistants, please thank them for their hard work!

Our school website is a wonderful place to obtain information and learn about school happenings. We have made an addition to the website by adding new standardized health forms that can be viewed and printed from home. This has been done to add a cohesiveness throughout the district and to make it easier for parents to get the forms completed and returned to school.

Another exciting improvement is the addition of the Medical Alert icon to ProgressBook. This icon allows teachers to be aware of important medical issues regarding their students. This

addition greatly improves the communication system among staff and is an example of how we are putting our students' safety at the forefront.

October is a busy month in the health area of public schools. The district's immunization recording deadline is rapidly approaching and I can't stress enough the importance of getting vaccinated.

Vaccination is one of the best ways parents can protect infants, children, and teens from 16 potentially harmful diseases. Vaccine-preventable diseases can be very serious, may require hospitalization, or even be deadly – especially in infants and young children. - CDC

October is also the beginning of vision and hearing screenings. Parents, please be on the lookout for permission slips that will be heading home soon regarding these screenings. Also, keep in mind these are just screenings and they do not take the place of the actual health care provider examination.

Let's all work to make this fall great and help limit preventable illness. Always remember the best way to prevent spreadable infections is proper hand hygiene. Let's do it!

Kindness — Starts with Healthy Soles

Erin Gottke, Middle School Reading/Language Arts Teacher



What do you do when you see a need? Two Mount Vernon Middle School students asked themselves that same question in February 2018. Current 8th graders, Mack Hanna and Tysen Henry, saw a classmate who really needed some new shoes. They found this really cool pair of shoes that they hoped would brighten his day and show their support. They had a big problem though, where to get the \$80 to pay for those shoes? They decided on creating a GoFundMe page and within 48 hours had over \$1300 in donations. Money came from classmates, business people, parents, and strangers from across the country. This one simple act of kindness has turned into a big movement.

"We encouraged him to think bigger than one pair of shoes because we thought it had some promise," said Bill Hanna, Mack's father. Their simple idea has now become Healthy Soles. "I wanted to do more than just one piece of good. I want to keep passing this on," said Mack.

Healthy Soles is now a Donor Advised Fund established through the Community Foundation. A small board of students and teachers' mission is to identify needs within MVMS. The Healthy Soles fund currently stands at \$5000 with 10% being available to buy shoes for students who are in need. Even Mount Vernon Nazarene University has stepped up to help get shoes at a discount so that more students can be reached.

"His mom and I appreciate the support that Healthy Soles has received and we are very proud of Mack and Tysen for what they started, but we want the focus to move away from the boys. The focus should now be on Healthy Soles and helping kids in the future."

Healthy Soles is proof that good can come from one small gesture. Kindness is spreading one step at a time.



Dan Emmett's Tiger Pride Club

Margy Arck, Dan Emmett Elementary Principal

United Way of Knox County, in cooperation with Dan Emmett Elementary School and the Mount Vernon City Schools, is kicking off an after school program serving the Dan Emmett School area called the Tiger Pride Club.

The purpose of the program is to provide services (tutoring, art, music, drama, physical activities, and club programs) for children in grades 3-5 in the Dan Emmett School attendance area. Emphasis is placed on social and educational mentoring programs geared to the elementary child. The focus and services provided in the program reflect the commitment of Dan Emmett Elementary School to improve student achievement and social emotional learning.

The program is regularly held on Monday through Thursday from 3:30-5:00. Students in need of transportation will be provided KAT transportation, free of charge. A snack will be provided each day and 35 minutes will be dedicated to tutoring help with a highly qualified teacher, while the other 35 minutes will be dedicated to a physical/enrichment lab.





Finding Your Way

Scott Will, Mount Vernon High School Principal

I was on the phone with my brother a couple weeks ago. He lives north of Fayetteville, North Carolina, and most recently experienced the impact of Hurricane Florence. As I was talking to Michael, he filled me in on his first trip back to Fort Bragg after the hurricane had passed. While he was able to get to base fairly easy, the trip home was another story. His trip to base was roughly an hour with a couple detours along the way due to flooding. When he arrived he was immediately sent home due to some power outage issues on base. The ride home was not easy. In that hour that he had been gone, the main roads that he would usually travel had been closed off due to the increasing depth of flood waters. Now he had to maneuver through unfamiliar back roads that, at times, proved quite challenging to navigate. What normally took around an hour turned into a three hour journey. In his remarks, the greatest challenge expressed was simply finding the best route for him to get home.



Another year brings one class towards the end of the journey while another will get its beginning. There will be those times when the journey will go as anticipated, and other times that hurdles will have to be addressed when the road begins to close or forks off in a different direction. While MVHS has so much to offer in terms of educational options and opportunities, there is no single path to success. There are many paths with challenges along the way. There are many experiences to be enjoyed and lessons to attain from those experiences. The variable in that path is the student.

Our hope is that in the midst of what is required, students find their own path. While we will always encourage involvement, we know that many times it has to be the right activity at the right time. We want students to feel empowered and encouraged to take chances at stretching

their academic abilities with the appropriate supports from the staff at MVHS. From Kokosing River trips in AP Biology to taking online courses at our own Mount Vernon Digital Academy, we want students to find their own path and experience education in the way that best fits their talents, passions and abilities. We pride ourselves in serving our students with disabilities with many of the same types of lessons enjoyed by our non-disabled students. We want our students to find their way to success at MVHS and will work tirelessly to create the paths necessary for that journey to unfold.

Spending Allocations Match District Priorities

A message from Treasurer, Judy Forney

Operating a public school district is expensive. Often we think about teachers' salaries and benefits when we consider the costs of operations, but here in Mount Vernon we like to think about what we call the Function of our expenditures when we review our budget for each year.

For the last fiscal year, which was July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018 our General Fund paid for services in the following functions, allocated in these portions (%).



■ INSTRUCTION: 62.84%

- From the minute our students enter the building, our focus is to provide them with top quality educational opportunities. So we are pleased to say that nearly 63% of what we spent from the General Fund last year was used for everything that directly impacts our students in their classrooms. That means not only teachers' salaries and benefits but also supplies, materials, equipment and other services that directly provide education for our students.

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Spending Allocations Match District Priorities

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■ LEADERSHIP: 11.64%

- Every organization needs leaders and schools are no different. In public schools, building Principals, curriculum experts, special education experts, financial experts and top level administrators work together to be sure that the district is compliant with local policies, and state and federal laws. In addition, daily issues of discipline with some students who are sometimes reluctant to comply with building rules are handled by our district leadership.



■ MAINTENANCE: 8.04%

- Think about what it takes to maintain our buildings and grounds. Remember that the lawns have to be mowed and the landscaping has to be maintained. Driveways and parking lots must be cleared in the winter. And that is just outdoors. Inside our buildings we maintain clean, safe and attractive classrooms, offices, and other areas so that our kids have the best environment for learning. Our maintenance staff works year round to be sure that this important job is done.



■ GUIDANCE: 5.78%

- Our district Guidance Counselors interact with students on many levels. In addition to helping high school students explore career options and help them to find the right fit for their 'after high school' choices, they work with our students every day to assist students with personal, mental health or family matters that can detract from the education that students are trying to embrace.



■ TRANSPORTATION: 3.56%

- Four times a day, our bus drivers pick up and drop off our students. Because the Middle School and High School begin classes earlier than the Elementary buildings, there are two routes in the morning to pick up students at their homes or bus stops in the morning and two routes to deliver students home. Our bus drivers are often the first school employees kids see in the morning and sometimes the last ones they see at the end of the day. We are blessed that they are welcoming and caring employees, helping students have a great start to their day. Our bus drivers also drive students to extra-curricular and co-curricular events.



■ TECHNOLOGY AND LIBRARIES: 3.11%

- Even though many students have technology and 'instant information' at their fingertips throughout the day, the use of technology in the classroom is a crucial tool that our teachers have available to them. Our libraries are important resources for our students as well. Our technology and library employees do a great job to ensure that our students have access to any and all information they need to optimize their educational experience here in Mount Vernon.



So, as you can see, we are very proud of how we spend the funds that we receive. Targeting more than 2/3 of our funds to what is our primary purpose – classroom education – shows that we have the right priorities. This is how we intend to continue allocating our resources.





Mount Vernon City Schools

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Senior Citizens Luncheon

We are excited to announce that Thursday, November 15 at 12:00 noon, is the date and time for our annual Fall Senior Citizens Luncheon and Program! The event will be held in the gymnasium at Mount Vernon High School.

There is no charge for this event, thanks to The Community Foundation of Mount Vernon and Knox County and the Mount Vernon City Schools Board of Education. Our Master of Ceremonies, Superintendent Bill Seder, is busy planning an entertaining and informative afternoon for area senior citizens.

If you have attended our luncheons before, you know what a great time we all have when we get together. Please join us for some good food, fellowship with each other, and an awesome time sharing with students.

So, don't hesitate!! R.S.V.P. by calling Terry Streby at 740 397-7422, ext 6025, or email her at tstreby@mvcasd.us by Monday, November 12.



Senior Citizens Fall Luncheon

November 15, 2018

Noon - 2:00 p.m.

Mount Vernon High School

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