

THE DISTRICT DISPATCH

School News & Updates
for the School District 197
Community
Summer 2021

Henry Sibley High School Renamed Two Rivers High School

At its June 21, 2021, meeting, the School District 197 School Board approved the change of Henry Sibley High School to Two Rivers High School. During the meeting, Daymond Dean, a community member and member of the High School Name Change Committee, provided the following information about the name Two Rivers High School, which includes information provided by fellow committee members:

"The name Two Rivers is representative of the actual union of two rivers in the area....It is because of the confluence of these two rivers and their navigability that this area was inhabited—first by the Dakota, and later by the traders, farmers, and military that settled here."

The district has launched the process of changing the high school name to Two Rivers High School.

For more information about the name change, visit <https://www.isd197.org/district/namechange>

Interested in running
for the school board?

See page 7!



On June 6, the members of the Henry Sibley High School Class of 2021 participated in their commencement ceremony at Roy Wilkins Auditorium in St. Paul. For more photos from the event, visit pages 4-5.

Together, We Thrive!

The 2020-2021 school year was difficult for everyone. Like so many other communities across the world, our community struggled with the loss, fear, and uncertainty presented by the global pandemic. For our teachers and staff members, the 2020-2021 school year meant changing, changing, and changing again to accommodate the learning and social-emotional needs of our community's children during the pandemic. In-person learning, distance learning, hybrid learning (meaning a combo of both) meant our staff members were reinventing and rethinking almost every aspect of their jobs "on the fly" throughout the year.

We also went through the process of changing the name of Henry Sibley High School to Two Rivers High School. I am thankful for the time, talent, and commitment of the members of the High School Name Change Committee who stepped up to ensure the community had a voice in the process. Now, more than ever, our students are aware of the legacy of Henry Sibley and we will ensure future generations of students know about his complex story.

As we look to a new school year, we are excited to return to in-person learning. We will certainly learn from this past year and make every effort to support and connect with our students as they transition fully back to the classroom.

At the core of it all, I am thankful for the empathy, energy, flexibility, resiliency, and "can do" attitude repeatedly shown by our 1,000+ staff members. Together, we really do thrive in School District 197.

Peter Olson-Skog
Superintendent

Nurture. Inspire. Prepare. Together, we thrive.



District Debuts New Summer Preschool Program

The School District 197 Early Learning program received funding from the state of Minnesota to offer a preschool class for students going into kindergarten this fall. This class targets students who were unable to get an in-person preschool experience during the school year due to COVID. Seventeen students are registered for the class, which is taught by Karen Kasprzyk. During the 16-day class, students receive 100 hours of class time focused on kindergarten-readiness skills in the areas of social-emotional learning, self-help skills, and pre-academics.



Garlough T-Shirt Contest Focuses on Kindness

Garlough students participated in the school's annual t-shirt design contest, which focuses on The Garlough Way. The Garlough Way consists of five character traits — kindness, respect, responsibility, safety, and effort — with kindness as the spotlight for the 2021-2022 school year. According to Cathy King, Garlough's magnet facilitator, the winning design was created by Alejandra, who had an opportunity to tour the t-shirt printing company and learn about the printing process.



Somerset Students Learn the Economics of Opening a Business

This spring, 3rd grade students at Somerset Elementary School leveraged social studies, math, and writing lessons via an Economics Fair. According to Denise Bannie, who teaches 3rd grade along with Elizabeth Harris, Melanie Hill, and Karl Kohnen, students learned how consumers pay for goods and services and they explored how profit is accomplished. "Students practice making choices with money and learn the process of becoming an entrepreneur," she explained. Bannie said students use money counting and change making skills from math and develop business plans using persuasive writing skills. "We hope the students walk away from the economics fair thinking about what they learned about opening their own business," Bannie explained.

Moreland Reimagines 4th Grade Musical in Time of COVID-19

Traditionally, Moreland Arts & Health Sciences Magnet School produces a musical each year that stars the school's 4th grade students. The project supports many of the school's educational goals and acts as a showcase for the music program. Considering COVID restrictions during this year and with support of funds from the ISD 197 Educational Foundation, Katie Wiley, the magnet coordinator at Moreland, partnered with teaching artists Erin Schwab, Emily Villano, and Martin Dowling to re-envision the musical. The finished musical, titled *What's It Like to be a 4th Grader in 2021? An Original Time Capsule Musical*, was presented via video and combines scenes created by the cast during rehearsals they had on Zoom as well as video clips, poems, and art collected from students at school and from those learning at home.



Mendota Students Care for Class Plants in School Garden

The Mendota Elementary Garden is back in action! Mendota third grade classes had a chance to head out to the garden and plant their class cabbage plant. For the remainder of the school year, each class was responsible for watering and caring for their plant. At the end of the school year, each student took home their own giant cabbage plant to grow at home!



Pilot Knob Students Learn to Build, Create, and Reimagine Upcycled Plastic Products

Pilot Knob STEM Magnet was awarded a grant through the ISD 197 Educational Foundation for the purchase of supplemental STEM resources that use engaging picture books to either hook students into the concept or provide more background knowledge. 4th grade teachers Matt Beniak and Courtney Nelson worked with their students on a lesson where students learned about recycling, upcycling, and pollution. According to Beniak, the classes started by reading, "One Plastic Bag: Isatou Ceesay and the Recycling Women of The Gambia" by Miranda Paul. Students then used the engineering design process to create a plan for designing their own upcycled plastic product. "Students had a blast building, creating, and reimagining how to repurpose everyday paper and plastic items," says Beniak.



Heritage E-STEM Recognized as PBIS Sustaining Exemplar

Congratulations to Heritage E-STEM Magnet School for once again receiving Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Sustaining Exemplar Recognition! According to the pbismn.org website, "The purpose of Minnesota PBIS Sustaining Exemplar Recognition is to identify and recognize exemplar schools that have completed PBIS implementation and are continuing to achieve positive student outcomes." Heritage Principal Karen Allen said, "I owe much of the success to Leah Martin, our PBIS coordinator, and the PBIS Committee. Our entire staff continued to focus on student culture and climate throughout the pandemic. The students' needs were always at the forefront of our work. It was important that each student felt cared for, valued, and supported by staff and the student body."



High School Tech Ed Students, Teacher Volunteer to Build Swim Platforms for Aquatics Center

High school tech ed teacher Brian Whalen and a team of his woodworking students volunteered to design and build two swim platforms for the new aquatics center. Younger children use the swim platforms to stand on during swimming lessons. The platforms reduce the water depth and provide a railing for the children to hold onto during their lessons. A HUGE thank you to Brian Whalen and his students for their hard work and ingenuity!



High School Students Explore the Teaching Profession

This year, 19 high school juniors and seniors participated in the College in the Schools course "Exploring the Teaching Profession" taught by Linda Zurn. This is the third year that students from our district have learned about the teaching profession through this University of Minnesota-Twin Cities course. According to Zurn, some of the graduating seniors are planning to attend colleges in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Montana. "Hopefully these future educators will return to School District 197 and join our staff!" Zurn said.



Friendly Hills Fundraiser Supports Purchase of Books, Books, and More Books!

Friendly Hills students raised \$5,540 during their recent "I Love to Read" Read-a-thon and books, books, and more books have been purchased with this money! Classroom libraries were updated with exciting new titles and the Student Library Committee members selected new books to be purchased for the school library. Many, many thanks to all of the students who participated in the Read-a-thon and to their sponsors for their generous donations.

Congratulations to the Henry S



ulations

Sibley High School Class of 2021!

On Sunday, June 6, families, friends, and staff members gathered in person at Roy Wilkins Auditorium in St. Paul to celebrate the accomplishments and perseverance of the 306 graduating members of the Henry Sibley High School Class of 2021. These students certainly didn't let the unique obstacles created by the pandemic stand in their way. We are so proud of the Class of 2021 and wish them all the best!



Two Rivers High School Welcomes New Principal & New Associate Principal

Al Johnson, an administrator with the St. Cloud Area School District with previous experience in St. Paul Public Schools and Hopkins Public Schools, has been named the new principal of Two Rivers High School effective July 1. "I am excited to continue the legacy of academic excellence and use it as a foundation to build on in a culture where every stakeholder feels cared for and welcomed," says Johnson.

Jessica Cabak has been named an associate principal at Two Rivers High School. The position is new to the school. Cabak comes to Two Rivers after seven years as the dean of students at John Glenn Middle School in Maplewood. Prior to that, she was a math teacher and instructional coach at John Glenn. "I'm honored and excited to be joining the School District 197 community! I'm looking forward to partnering with students, families, and staff," Cabak says.

Annie Lewine Joins Heritage as Associate Administrator

Heritage E-STEM Magnet School welcomes Annie Lewine as its associate administrator. Annie joins Heritage after four years in Intermediate District 287's Care and Treatment division, where she taught middle and high school students who were in a Partial Hospitalization Program to address severe mental health needs. "I am so excited to be joining School District 197 and to be part of the Heritage E-STEM Magnet School community," she says. "I look forward to learning from and working with teachers who are passionate about what they do and committed to helping all students succeed."

SCHOOL DISTRICT 197

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Have You Registered Your Child for Bus Transportation?

All students entering grades K-12 who plan to ride a bus during the 2021-2022 school year **MUST** register for bus service each year. To register your student for bus transportation, visit <http://bit.ly/197busregistration>. To be eligible for bus service, students in grades K-4 must live more than 0.75 of a mile from school, students in grades 5-8 must live more than 1 mile from school, and students in grades 9-12 must live more than 2 miles from school. Please only register for service when you are sure your child will be riding a bus. Complete one form per child. Forms are due August 1, 2021. If you have any questions, please call 651-403-8320.



School District 197 Announces 2021-2022 School Hours

For the 2021-2022 school year, School District 197 is (for the most part) returning to the pre-COVID school day start and end times:

- Elementary: 7:45 a.m. to 2:15 p.m.
- Middle School: 8:45 a.m. to 3:20 p.m.
- High School: 8:25 a.m. to 3:05 p.m.
(Note: Starting 5 minutes earlier and ending 1 minute later than the 2019-2020 school year)

The first day of school for grades K, 5, and 9 is Wednesday, September 8. It will be their orientation day to the new building. Grades 1-4, 6-8, and 10-12 will start on Thursday, September 9. If your child will be participating in Early Learning programming in School District 197, please refer to communications from the Early Learning Program as your child's start and end times are based on their class.

To view the 2021-2022 school calendar, please visit www.isd197.org/district/calendar



Warrior Profile: Carmen Pineda de Munoz Cultural Liaison, Early Childhood Special Education Coordinator, Parent Academy

“I find it most fulfilling to empower families and students to develop their own voices and understand what it is they need to succeed. I also love being able to contribute and mold the ongoing conversation to address a culture of equity at the school and community.”



November 2021 School Board Election Information

The School District 197 School Board has seven members who are elected at large to four-year terms. Elections for school board members are held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday of November in odd-numbered years.

The terms of three school board members (John Chandler, Marcus Hill, and Maureen Ramirez) will expire at the end of December 2021. Filing dates for those open seats will be July 27-August 10, 2021.

A candidate for the school board must meet the following qualifications:

- Be at least 21 years old at the time the term of office begins
- Maintain a residence in the school district for 30 days prior before the general election
- No conviction for an offense for which registration is required under Minn. Stat. 243.166
- Have not filed for any other office in the upcoming general election

Affidavits of candidacy will be available beginning July 27 at the School District 197 District Office (1897 Delaware Avenue, Mendota Heights, MN 55118). The filing fee for this office is \$2. Office hours are 7:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 7:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. on Fridays. On Tuesday, August 10, the office will remain open until 5:00 p.m. The deadline for candidates to withdraw their Affidavit of Candidacy will be 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 12 and that needs to be done in person in the District Office.

An information session will be offered on Wednesday, August 4, 2021 beginning at 5:00 p.m. in room A264 of Two Rivers High School.

District administrators will provide an overview of the various district departments and talk about the role and responsibilities of the school board. This is a great time to learn more about the school district and ask any questions you may have prior to the filing deadline of August 10. If you have any questions related to the upcoming school district election or wish to attend the board information session, please email or call Mary Amidon at mary.amidon@isd197.org or 651-403-7002.



West St. Paul + Mendota Heights + Eagan Area

1897 Delaware Ave.
Mendota Heights, MN 55118
www.isd197.org

District Dispatch

Community Volunteers Make Durable Mats for Metro People Who are Homeless

Members of School District 197 Community Education's Umbrella Project work on numerous service projects throughout the community. Most recently, members have been creating durable, washable mats out of plastic shopping bags. Each mat takes approximately 40 hours and 700-800 bags to make. The mats are donated to local organizations that serve homeless people in the Twin Cities metro area.



Branch Out Hosts Graduation Celebration

Congratulations to the students, staff, and families with the Branch Out Transition Program! The program hosted a graduation celebration at Thompson Park Activity Center on June 2 with messages from district and Branch Out staff. Way to go, Branch Out students!