



### roposition Safe Schools

The Dunklin R-5 School District is asking voters to pass a no-tax rate increase bond issue. If passed, the tax levy would remain the same, but the district could borrow up to \$13.5 million for various facility improvements.

As the name of the proposition indicates, it starts with safety. Visitors who are buzzed into Pevely Elementary School or Senn-Thomas Middle School currently have direct access to hallways and classrooms. There isn't a buffer or second step to ensure student safety. This proposition would allow us to relocate administrative offices to the front of those schools. The entrances would be remodeled so visitors would have to enter the office before accessing the rest of the building. Pevely Elementary School has a classroom to the right of the front doors that would become the office. At Senn-Thomas Middle School, construction would be required to build office space to the left of the entrance. The old offices would be utilized so that both schools would have additional classroom space.

The Dunklin R-5 Theatre is a great space that needs to be updated. The lighting and sound systems are 20 years old. The stage lights are like focused spotlights that create bright and dim areas on the stage. When the full band plays, the director runs extension cords and sets up lamps. Without them, the students in the back couldn't read their music. The sound system has a few glitches as well. During plays, the audience is asked to turn off their cell phones as they interfere with the headsets worn by actors. Still, it's not uncommon for microphones to cut in and out during a performance. It's not ideal for the students or their parents.

On the list of improvements is adding a gym at Herculaneum High School. Robinson Gymnasium was built in 1964. At the time, you could buy a Ford Mustang for \$2,320, and if you wanted to write home about it, a postage stamp was only 5 cents. In addition to prices going up, the number of after-school activities has grown as well. We have both boys and girls basketball programs at the high school, each with a freshman, junior varsity, and varsity team. If the boys practice right after school, the girls go home and return at five in the evening. A varsity team may practice at Senn-Thomas when there are conflicts, like a tournament. If one of the middle school's four teams are using the court, then it's off to the elementary school to sink some buckets.

Our wrestling program has grown, and two Blackcats earned a spot on the podium at the state championships this year. The grapplers practice at Taylor Early Childhood Center. They must wait until about four in the afternoon to clear the small gym of toys, carts, and climbing obstacles before rolling out the mats. Afterward, they clean

For updates and District news, including inclement weather, school closing information, follow Communications Director Matt Lichtenstein on Twitter: @BlackcatMatt



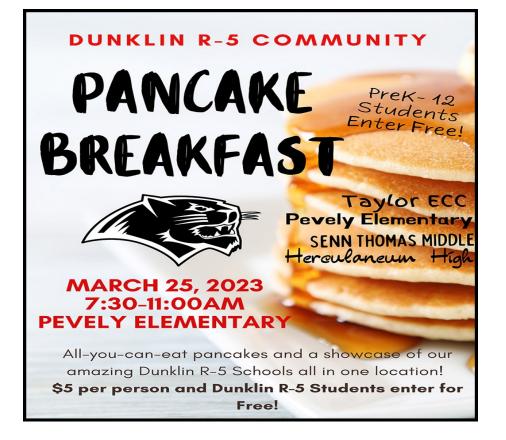
and roll up the mats before putting everything back in place for the preschoolers. Herculaneum's cheerleaders practice in the Senn-Thomas Middle School cafeteria. The dance team practices in the high school choir room, working around school plays and community recitals. Both cheer and dance perform on gym floors but rarely practice on them. A second gym would be better for students, teams, fans, and hosting regional tournaments.

Mach 23, 2023

Herculaneum High School has a 100-yards of real estate that's used about ten times a year. Proposition Safe Schools includes the installation of a turf activities field. It would allow band, dance, cheer, and the football team to practice where they perform. Throughout the growing season, the district posts signs next to the football field, asking people to stay off of the grass. Maintenance employees water, seed, aerate, fertilize, and mow the field during the spring and summer months to prepare for football season. Today's field is a living history of past caretakers planting the one grass they knew would produce a great field. You'll find zoysia, fescue, Bermuda. and a few weeds like clover. All of them fail when 200-pound athletes put on their cleats Friday night to battle a rival. In the spring, workers monitor the rainfall leading up to graduation. A soft field requires extra steps to stabilize the stage and create a safe walking path for graduates. Turf fields have robust drainage systems, and they dry quickly.

There is nothing flashy about a warehouse, but it solves a lot of problems. The district wants to build a small storage faculty next to the bus garage. The additional storage would free up space in all of our schools. Dunklin could buy more items in bulk, including food. The outside freezers at Taylor Early Childhood Center could be removed, adding additional parking. Taylor would also gain space as technology equipment is moved into the warehouse. Employees in the technology department would relocate to the warehouse, opening up classrooms in the high school. It will also have the only dock in the Dunklin R-5 School District.

To pass, Proposition Safe Schools needs 57.14 percent of the vote on April 4, 2023. Although the tax rate will remain the same, bonds require a four-sevenths majority to pass.



### Message From Board President

Here I go again—where did the time go? We are already in the fourth quarter of the school year, and the end is in sight. The hustle and bustle of spring is always an exciting time with all the outdoor sports and activities and praying the rain holds off until after the activities. The biggest event we hope the rain holds off for is our high school graduation on the football field. This is the culmination of all the hard work our students have put into the last 13 years of their schooling. We get excited to see the love and support our community gives to our seniors on their special day.

"It's a great day to be a Blackcat!" or "Every day is a great day to be a Blackcat!" are two statements you will regularly hear from two of our administrators. The pride this community has for our schools and traditions is unbelievable. Even those who have graduated and have moved on to other communities are still proud to say they graduated as a Blackcat. I am an obituary reader, and many times being an HHS graduate is part of a person's written, final heritage of their time on this earth.

Studies routinely show that students learn better when they feel safe and secure in their learning environment. Students are better able to learn and succeed and have better opportunities to grow academically, emotionally, and socially. Most times, we have to put our trust in the parents and school personnel to provide a safe and secure environment, and the rest of us watch from the sidelines. Now

there is an opportunity for the whole community to show their Blackcat pride. The district is asking the community to become educated on the no-tax increase bond issue, called Proposition Safe Schools, and show your Blackcat pride for our students.

This spring concludes my 32nd year as an active Blackcat community member and 18th year, my final, as a school board member. I am so proud of the accomplishments that the district has made in those years with our academics, finances, and facilities. I will continue to look for ways to support the Blackcat community to show my Blackcat pride and challenge you to do the same. Show your Blackcat pride and support our kids at a baseball game, track meet, or golf match on a beautiful spring afternoon. The spring band and choral concerts are on the schedule and open to the public. Join us for the Community Pancake Breakfast on March 25th and see some great displays of our students' works, enjoy a great breakfast, and share in the community pride. Help us show Blackcat pride and participate in the Give Back Day or watch for the workers and thank them for giving up their Saturday to show their Blackcat pride. But most importantly-show your civic and Blackcat pride and VOTE on April 4, 2023! Thank you for your Blackcat pride and support.

With Blackcat Pride,
Susan Hartmann, President
and the Dunklin R5 Board

### **Blackcat Community**

The 2022-2023 school year is about to come to a close. We have been working with a facility planning committee and campaign committee to provide information and awareness of our April 4, No Tax Rate Increase bond issue ballot measure called Proposition Safe Schools. If you have questions, please get in touch with me at 636-479-5200.

We have so many things going on in the next couple of months as the 2022-2023 school year comes to a close. One of those is the Herculaneum High School Commencement Ceremony scheduled for Monday, May 22, 2023, at Dugan Memorial Football Field, with an alternative location of Jefferson College Field House. Please continue to read the weekly newsletter from Pevely Elementary and Senn Thomas Middle School, as the final weeks of the school year are going to be very busy.

We can't wait to see our students at our **Summer School Program** which will be in session from June 1- June 30, 2023.

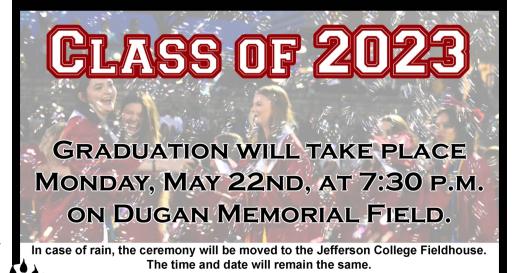
Please make sure you are ready for the first day of school, which is **August 24, 2023.** 

Our mission is "Educating Today for a Better Tomorrow," and we are honored that you are allowing us to be part of your child's educational journey. Please visit our website at www.dunklin.k12.mo.us for the latest updated information.

Also, check us out on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Thank you for a great year!!!

Dr. Clint Freeman, Superintendent of Schools





### **Senn-Thomas Takes 2nd in Future City Competition**

Middle school students were asked to design and model a green city using current and future technologies. Three eighth-grade students in Mrs. Storment's gifted class dived into the months-long project for the Future City Competition at Missouri University of Science and Technology.

Samantha Drinen says, "There were only three of us, so it made for a bigger job." They picked New York City to reimagine, according to Matthew Ford. He says, "Our main electrical source was Pavegen, which is a technology using sidewalks. Whenever you're walking on a sidewalk, it spins an internal flywheel and generates electricity. We also have a hydro plant on the river." Olivia Blair says, "Our buildings were an Urban Sequoia design that can absorb carbon dioxide." Drinen says, "We have rooftop gardens that supply most of our residents with fresh produce. There's also a market with additional produce that's grown on top of the commercial buildings."

Their city may sound like a fantasy, but the technologies are real. The power-generating sidewalks can be found in Berlin, the University of Birmingham, Abu Dhabi Airport, and Hong Kong. The Urban Sequoia design was presented at last year's UN Climate Change Conference in Egypt. Rooftop gardens aren't new, but new studies confirm they help reduce temperatures in cities, sometimes called urban heat islands. The engineers judging the competition tested the depth of knowledge of the competitors. Blair says, "In our presentation, through our essay, and through our model, you could just see how much time we poured into this project." She says their research stood out and allowed them to answer the judges' questions.

In Rolla, the Blackcats were one of 13 teams. There are several stages to the competition throughout the day. Eventually, judges tally their scores and announce the results. Senn-Thomas students earned second place in the Future City Competition. Teacher Michelle Storment is proud of her 8th-graders. She says, "I think they did great. Last year's second-place team did great too. We just have to get an edge to beat St. Clair." The Bulldogs have taken the top spot the past couple of years, and a Blackcat win may start an intellectual rivalry for years to come. It's time for the 7th-graders to step up.

### **Small School - Big Talent**

These seniors will play collegiate sports.

Raven Vance - Cross Country - Greenville U.
Alexis Martin - Cheer - Missouri Baptist
Gabe Watkins - Basketball - Jefferson College
Haley Smith - Lacrosse-Health Sciences & Pharm
Dylan Black - Baseball - McKendree U.
Courtnee Lowrey - Softball - Jefferson College
James Mouyassar - Football - Missouri Baptist
Riley Passananti - Volleyball - Culver-Stockton
Abi Lamb - Cheer - Missouri Baptist
Jackson Dearing - Football - Missouri Baptist



Pictured: Olivia Blair, Samantha Drinen, and Matthew Ford



#### **DUNKLIN R-5 SCHOOL DISTRICT**

497 Joachim Avenue - Herculaneum, MO 63048 - (636) 479-5200

Dr. Clint Freeman, Superintendent Dr. Joe Willis, Assistant Superintendent

#### **BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Susan Hartmann, President Tammy Heidland, Vice President Cheryl Aylesworth, Michael Hicks, John Maddox, Marissa Newman, Dawn Warner

#### HERCULANEUM HIGH SCHOOL ext. 3

Stephanie Dix, Principal
Ryun Kasten, Asst. Principal
Jason Gillman, Activities Director
Renee Richardson, Guidance Counselor,
grades 11-12
Chelsey Dickerman, Guidance Counselor,
grades 9-10 and A+

#### SENN-THOMAS MIDDLE SCHOOL ext. 2

Connie Ward, Nurse

Dr. Tracy Lewis, Principal
Kyle Borror, Assistant Principal
Tiffany Bungenstock, Guidance Counselor
Heather Shadowens, Nurse
Joycie Gonzalez-Meyer,
School-Family Liaison

#### **PEVELY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ext. 1**

Katie Dunlap, Principal Adam Dixon, Asst. Principal Michelle Liles, Dean of Students Madeline Huelskamp, Guidance Counselor Jessica Rekate, Guidance Counselor Heather Engelbach, Nurse

#### TAYLOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER ext. 5

Charissa Kappler, Director Christina Meyer, Nurse

#### **DIRECTORS**

Nichole Arnold, Director of Food Service Steve Copeland, Director of Maintenance Matt Lichtenstein, Communications Director Ryan Lowe, Director of Technology Tom Moreland, Director of Special Services Sue Sharp, Director of Transportation

#### **Board Meetings are Open to the Public**

The Dunklin R-5 Board of Education meets on a regular basis on the third Tuesday of each month. The meetings are held at 7:00 pm. Check the website for the location. The meetings are open to the public. Patrons may view agendas and items from the meetings by going to our website www.dunklin.k12.mo.us, clicking on the About Us, and then Board of Education.



Dunklin R-5 School District is an equal opportunity employer

### Senn-Thomas StuCo's Polar Plung

The wind was brisk, and the water was cold that Saturday morning in February when members of the Senn-Thomas Student Council ran into lake. Overcoming every natural instinct to stay warm and dry, they pushed forward with the self-inflicted misery to raise money for Special Olympics Missouri. "As we drove in, my husband said look at all that ice," according to Teacher Kayli Newberry. Undaunted and buoyed by the hundreds of spirited people lakeside, they joined the regional fundraiser.

Olivia Tippetts (6<sup>th</sup>) says, "Whenever I got out of the car, I was shivering. I don't know if it was because I was scared, or if I was shaking because it was so cold." Evan Bill (8<sup>th</sup>) took the plunge two years ago, but this was different.

He says, "It was warm last time." The Blackcats waited their turn in line before reaching the beach. Sophie Lewis (6th) says, "When they say go, you just start running. It was pretty hard to run into the water because of how cold it was. I fell on my knees, and I couldn't get back up, so I just got out of the water." Teacher Caitlin Butcher confirmed the lake water was icy. She says, "There were huge portions of it completely frozen over." While most were quick to enter and quick to

Global Vending Group.com

Pictured: Lyla Dearing, Rynnlee Twiggs, and Layla Skabialka





Pictured: Evan Bill. Reese Payne, Kayli Newberry, Caitlin Butcher, Olivia Tippetts, and Sophie Lewis.

leave, that's not how it played out for Reese Payne (6<sup>th</sup>). She says, "I lost both of my water shoes, so I stayed in there for a longer time." Tippetts says, "It was like a cold pinch when you got in, and when you got out, it was still cold for a few seconds. and then your whole body starts burning, so it made you hot, almost."

Payne saw the big picture more than most. She says, "I have a little cousin who has disabilities, so I did it for her. I was very proud. I feel very confident I could do it again next year." The Senn-Thomas Student Council raised \$1,242 for Special Olympics Missouri.

# **Book Vending Machine**

Paper hearts filled the cafeteria as part of a fundraiser to buy a book vending machine and plenty of books. Parents and community members purchased the hearts, and students are the beneficiaries. They get a token for a book when they receive a Bravo Blackcat award for going above and beyond or to celebrate their birthday. The original idea came from Principal Dunlap, but the staff Lighthouse Team made it happen. Dr. Amanda Britain says, "We love to recognize and celebrate our students, especially when putting books in their hands gets to be the reward!"



Dr. Freeman Dr. Willis High School Activities @BlackcatUpdates STMS Activities **Pevely Elementatry** 

@DrClintFreeman @JoeFWillis **@STMSActivities** @MissKatieDunlap



**Dunklin R5 School Disrict** Herculaneum High School Senn-Thomas Middle School Taylor Early Childhood Center



### Student Council Spreading Kindness



The Herculaneum Student Council is spreading kindness. They've painted rocks with positive messages to be placed around campus. Pictured above are: Clayton Anderson, Mason Gorza, and Belle Milojevic.

### Girls on the Run



Pictured: Back Row: Coach Meda, Naomi Washington, Lorelei Duncan, Aubree Jones, Miley Brown, Abbi Zipprich, Anna Asinger, Zoey Hubbard, Adysynn Gonzalez, Alaina Baer, Lexus Keeney, Ariana Stevens, Rylee Herman, and Coach McCulley. Front Row: Coach Cappozzo, Laci Snyder, Lilly McDole, Lydia Robinson, Kynsell Roberts, Hannah Lammert, and Coach Cheney.

The first morning practice session came to a close, with everyone in good spirits. These students are participating in Girls on the Run!

The program is designed to unlock the power and potential of young women. It culminates on May 13<sup>th</sup> with a 5K fun run in Forest Park.





The Heculaneum High School Theater Department presents Clue - High School Edition, the first weekend in May.

Based on the screenplay by Jonathan Lynn
Additional Material by Hunter Foster, Sandy Rustin, and Eric Price
Based on the Paramount Pictures Motion Picture
Based on the Hasbro board game CLUE
Original Music by David Abbinanti



### Blackcat Wrestlers Make State Podium

Five Herculaneum wrestlers qualified for state, and two of them earned medals. Shea Eberhardt finished sixth in Class 2 at 285 pounds; on the girls' side, Eddyson Reeves finished fourth in Class 1 at 130 pounds. The others competing at state were Josh Hurt, Keaton Reeves, and Tyler Pieper.

"I started wrestling to get better in football, but now I really like it," says Eberhardt. He's one of the bigger students walking the hallways, but the football lineman often battles larger competitors. He tips the scales at 230 pounds, which is on the low side of his wrestling weight class of 215 to 285 pounds. He says, "When you're undersized like I am, the biggest thing is speed." He attributes his success this year to lifting weights, wrestling over the summer, coaching, and experience. Coach Chris Bahr says he's very coachable, and his conditioning ensures he can out-work his opponent late in the match. Preparation is vital, according to the grappler. He says, "The six minutes that a wrestling match lasts is harder than anything I've ever done in sports." Eberhardt is proud of his season, but there's a twinge of disappointment when he reflects on finishing sixth at state. That may serve as motivation in the months ahead. He says, "I want to place higher on the podium next year."

Eddyson Reeves is a female wrestler, but it doesn't come close to defining her. Like Eberhardt, she's a junior and a member of the National Honor Society. Reeves is a cheerleader in the fall, runs track in the spring, and sings in the choir. She moves easily through social groups with a shy demeanor. Why wrestling? "Because it is hard. Not everybody can do it," says Reeves. As the only female on the team, her difficulty level





Pictured: Eddyson Reeves and Shea Eberhardt

goes up. She has to find someone to warm up with before a tournament. Reeves says, "I have to have my little sister come, or I have to find another school (with a female wrestler) like DeSoto." When it's her turn to compete, you can see her focus, shutting out everything beyond the circle. Coach Bahr says, "She is a fierce competitor that doesn't like to lose." Some battles leave a mark. In the accompanying picture, you may see a spot on her forehead. That's a mat burn from her head being pushed across the wrestling surface. Through it all, the Blackcats stick together and support one another. Eberhardt says, "You have to respect someone that puts in that much work." The feeling is mutual. Reeves says, "We all have an actual bond."

Five years ago, only a handful of students participated in the program. Coach Bahr says this year, they had 11 middle school wrestlers and 13 in high school. Next year may be better yet. Josh Hurt was the only senior among the five wrestlers that went to state. Tyler Pieper and Keaton Reeves, Eddyson's brother, are freshmen. Moreover, another Reeves will join the high school team. Emerson Reeves will enter 9th grade. While young, she is no stranger to wrestling, and the sisters will leave their mark on the wrestling program at Herculaneum High School.



### **Pevely Named Lighthouse School**



Pictured: (back) Tori Dittman, Katie Dunlap, Kristyn Valleroy, Amanda Britain, Michelle Liles, and Adam Dixon. (front) Chase Thebeau, Rylan Braloski, Bella Gunn, Alyssa Ditch, Calia Whitt, and Lux Eder.

"When you walk the halls, your worth potential is affirmed, so being a kid in this building is powerful," says Leader in Me Coach Amy Dittmar. She was part of the team tasked with determining if Pevely Elementary School was worthy of earning the Lighthouse School designation. Pevely became a "Leader in Me" school in 2017. The program doesn't replace core subjects but becomes part of the culture. They believe all students have unique strengths and that everyone has the ability to be a leader. The bullet points are from the bestselling book, The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People. Only 12 percent of the 5,500 Leader in Me schools have achieved the Lighthouse status.

Pevely Elementary Principle Katie Dunlap announced to the staff and students late last year that they are a Lighthouse school. She says, "We have seen amazing results from implementing the Leader in Me process at our school." There have been two dozen published studies about various aspects of the program, and they all confirm the benefits, like higher test scores, fewer absences, and better behavior. Dunlap says, "It has truly taken every staff member and student in our school to achieve this goal."

Pevely's Tori Dittman says, "It's important for students to take ownership of their own learning." She says it changes the engagement level. "They get to see their own progress, and they're encouraged by it. Then they can continue to set goals and continue to take risks to achieve the goals they've set for themselves."

Teacher Kristyn Valleroy has students pick a job at the beginning of the year. It may be holding the door for classmates, passing out papers, or being a custodian. Soon they are helping each other with the tasks and taking responsibility for classroom operations. Those passing out

papers won't skip over the desk of an absent student. They make a packet of missed assignments for their classmate. She says, "They are taking that leadership role on themselves, but you have to model it every day." Valleroy's first-grade students are six and seven years old.

Assistant Principal Adam Dixon handles many of the discipline referrals. He says there has been a shift from defensive students trying to justify their behavior to kids recognizing where they went off track. He says, "That's the first battle. Them recognizing the mistakes without you having to point it out to them." Today students are more likely to use the language of the seven habits. They may say, "I wasn't thinking Win-Win. I could have shared the ball."

Three people from FranklinCovey, the parent company of Leader in Me, spent time at Pevely Elementary School to determine if they met the criteria to become a Lighthouse school. They asked students a lot of questions. How do you see yourself as a leader? How are you growing as an individual? How are you better today than you were yesterday? What opportunity do you have to be engaged in your classroom and school? "They could answer them all," says Leader in Me Coach Dittmar. She was so impressed with our students and staff that she asked Pevely to host an event for another district that will become a Leader in Me school. Early this month, educators from the Woodland R-IV School District in Marble Hill, Missouri, took a student-led tour and learned organizational details from Dr. Amanda Britain, Dittman, and Dunlap.





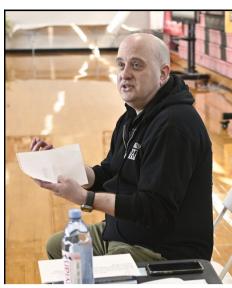
# Under The Spotlight



County Executive Dennis Gannon in Robinson Gymnasium

The Dunklin R-5 School District hosted two high-profile events back to back. The first was the River Summit, where three school districts came together for a professional development day on Friday, February 17th, at Herculaneum High School. The following Monday, Presidents Day, we hosted the State of the County. Top elected officials, business leaders, and municipal employees joined us for the breakfast meeting that concluded with a speech from County Executive Dennis Gannon. Both events were challenging, but the organizers hammered out the details and created smooth, memorable experiences.

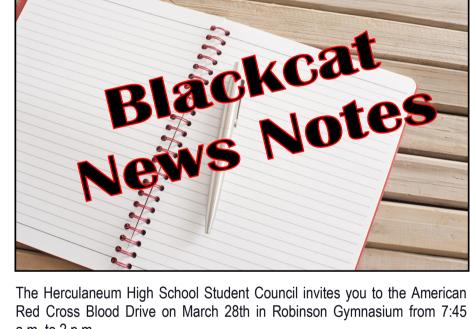
Windsor and Ste. Genevieve teachers started arriving at the River Summit at about 7:30 a.m. for a continental breakfast. Organizer Courtney Stenzhorn says 450 registered for the event, and educators were able to choose from 32 different presentations. She says, "Dr. Lewis was a great help in getting things done and ensuring the day was beneficial for all in attendance."



Speaker Dr. Bryan Pearlman.

Many presenters were Blackcats, but some came from the visiting schools. Pooling resources allows for a featured speaker, who was Dr. Bryan Pearlman. He's the author of Maslow Before Bloom: Basic Human Needs Before Academics. Pearlman started as a teacher and administrator before becoming a counselor. He connected quickly to the audience and, using his own experiences, led them to better understand student behavior.

Teacher Kim Weible took the lead in organizing the State of the County. She balanced the requirements of the Jefferson County Growth Association with the desires of Dunklin staff to create a spirited event. Cheer and dance teams kick things off in Robinson Gym. The Jazz Band performed during breakfast; the emcees were seniors C. J. Asinger and Carmen Weier. The first speech was from Dr. Clint Freeman, followed by JCGA President Dan Govero. County Executive Dennis Gannon started his remarks with this area's rich history and concluded with an optimistic vision of the future. When the last round tables were rolled off the gym floor, Weible was pleased. She said, "I think our district shinned. Our kids did a fabulous job, and our staff was so supportive. Anything I asked them to do, they were onboard and exceeded my expectations."



a.m. to 2 p.m.

Congratulations to Girls Basketball Coach Riley Blair on 200 career wins.

Spring Break is April 6th-11th. Students return on April 12th.

Blackcats Give Back will be on Saturday, May 6th. You'll see our students throughout the district working on community service projects.

Congratulations to Jason Dieckhaus and Eddyson Reeves, who will represent Herculaneum High School and attend Missouri Boys and Girls State this summer at Lindenwood University.

Dance Team: At the State Dance Championships, they finished 4th in Mix and 2nd in Precision Jazz.

Congratulations, Dr. Tracy Lewis. She was named the Administrator of the Year by the Southeast District of the Missouri Association of Student

FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America): Jack Shadowens, Matt King, Lucas Bach, and Payne Hawkins qualified for state. In April, they will compete in E-Business, Intro to Information Technology, Computer Problem Solving, Digital Animation, and Video Game Design.

Prom is on April 29th at Oak Valley Golf Course and Resort.

Band: The middle school spring band concert is May 9th at 7 p.m., and the high school spring concert is May 11th at 7 p.m.



FREE and REDUCED: Please take a couple of minutes to complete the Free and Reduced Lunch Form. If you need help, please reach out to

Nichole Arnold, Food Service Director, at narnold@dunklin.k12.mo.us.

The last day of school is May 24th, an early release day.

### Congratulations!



Kindergarten Teacher Bonnie Jernigan is the Teacher of the Year!



**HHS Secretary Kelly** Watkins is the Classified Employee of the Year!