

MT. VERNON

Engage, Educate & Empower Today's Students

Mainstream

SPRING 2023

New MVHS
Principal



A Pathway Emerges

Study and collaboration offer vision for vocational training in Hancock County

The superintendents of Hancock County began meeting in the fall of 2019 to identify pathways to better serve our students' vocational learning needs for grades nine through 12. The four county superintendents assembled a committee of school and community leaders to identify shared beliefs and a vision for vocational learning. At that time, we recognized that our students were attending five vocational

centers outside of our county. The schools quickly agreed that a Career Center in our county, accessible to all county students in grades nine through 12, would allow us

Continued on page 2

School Food Pantry

Serving the community and preparing students

Some of our community members are in need of food; all of our students are in need of engagement and practical preparation for jobs. Putting these two facts together, MVHS special education teachers Brydgette Manship and Laura Hannah have reinvigorated the school's food pantry work.

While the pandemic interrupted the high school's previous food pantry effort, Manship, who teaches Essential Skills for both HS students and transition-age students (ages 18 to 22), and Hannah, who teaches Life Skills, realized that reviving food pantry operations would serve a need and involve students in activities that could develop employable skills.

"We are always looking for things in the community that could translate into employment," explained Manship, who recognized

Continued on page 2



THE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENTS HAVE FORMALLY AGREED TO BEGIN DEVELOPING SHARED PROGRAMMING OPPORTUNITIES IN OUR

SCHOOLS FOR THE PURPOSE OF INCREASING ENROLLMENT TO SEND 400 TO 600 STUDENTS PER DAY TO THE VOCATIONAL CAREER CENTER, HOPEFULLY IN THE FALL OF 2025.

Pathway continued

to significantly bolster our collective programming and encourage hundreds of Hancock County students to participate in receiving high-quality vocational education.

Currently, the four school superintendents are partnering with the Hancock County Education and Innovation Center committee to be a part of that project, which will allow us to have some collaborative space for a school career center. The county superintendents have formally agreed to begin developing shared programming opportunities in our schools for the purpose of increasing enrollment to send 400 to 600 students per day to the vocational career center, hopefully in the fall of 2025. We have polled students, studied high wage and high interest programming, and we have also triangulated that data with programs that are high reimbursement in state Career and Technical Education dollars, which will allow us to fund staff salaries at our collaborative vocational center. This is a wonderful opportunity for our students to develop skills right here in our county.

Jack
Dr. Jack Parker,
Superintendent



Food Pantry continued

that conducting inventory of food items, sorting, packing and shelving could help prepare special education students for any number of retail job opportunities.

Manship, Hannah and students work with Gleaners Food Bank of Indiana. Gleaners gives the school food pantry a budget, and the school – in turn – places an order for each of its scheduled distribution dates.

Manship and Hannah typically order a variety of breakfast, lunch and dinner items sufficient to serve up to 30 or 40 local families per food pantry date. The pantry strives to provide a wide variety of food, including such items as frozen chicken, pizza, breakfast sandwiches, pancakes, chicken parmesan ravioli, lunch meats, cheese, potatoes, salad, brussel sprouts and much more.

In addition to special education students, other students have joined the process – to earn service hours or simply do volunteer work.

The result is that as many as 40 in-district families are able to drive to the school and take home much needed food on select dates, including the upcoming times of **9 to 11 a.m. on April 11 and May 9 and 4 to 6 p.m. on April 25 and May 23.**

THE RESULT IS THAT AS MANY AS 40 IN-DISTRICT FAMILIES ARE ABLE TO DRIVE TO THE SCHOOL AND TAKE HOME MUCH NEEDED FOOD ON SELECT DATES.



Mrs. Brooke Tharp Named Mt. Vernon High School Principal

The Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation has selected Mrs. Brooke Tharp to be the Mt. Vernon High School principal beginning the 2023-2024 school year. Tharp's educational career brings over 29 years to this leadership position with over 20 of them as a special education and English teacher.

Mrs. Tharp is currently serving her second year as the Mt. Vernon Middle School principal. During this tenure, she has led the expansion of Professional Learning Communities and implementation of Trust-Based Relational Intervention. She also has supported high-value instructional strategies and initiatives to hire the best candidates and retain staff. She brings her core values of

integrity, a strong work ethic and positivity into her various roles with students, staff and parents. Tharp has a strong desire to lead and develop skills in others. She believes it is important to grow professionally to best serve students and staff, and is currently seeking her doctorate of Education Administration at Indiana State University.

The principal position at Mt. Vernon Middle School is posted through April 3 on the Mt. Vernon Community School Corporation's website: www.mvcsc.k12.in.us/employment. Mt. Vernon anticipates a large number of applicants which will ensure the selection of a top-notch leader for Mt. Vernon Middle School students and staff.

Safety and Security Updates



THE ADDITION OF
NEW SRO'S COMPLEMENTS
OTHER SAFETY AND SECURITY MEASURES
THE DISTRICT HAS INSTITUTED IN
RECENT MONTHS
AND YEARS...

Safety and security top
the priority list for any school
district. MVCSC is no exception.

The community's approval of the 2022 operating referendum paved the way for further bolstering security by providing the funding that provides for one School Resource Officer (SRO) in each of our schools and to increase – from one to two – the number of SRO's at Mt. Vernon High School.

The addition of new SROs complements other safety and security measures the district has instituted in recent months and years, under the guidance of Director of Operations Derek Shelton and Assistant Director of Operations Dave Merica. While it is best practice for schools to refrain from publicly detailing all such efforts, it is safe to share that:

- Referendum funding also allowed MVCSC to make adjustments for more secure locks.
- Available to all staff is the Rave app and software system, which facilitates a wide variety of instant communication among staff and first responders.
- MVCSC continues its strong working relationships with area law enforcement. This includes providing off-hours access for such things as SWAT and K-9 training, giving law enforcement a detailed knowledge of the school facilities.
- MVCSC has a great relationship with Hancock County 911, which has access to all building maps, along with camera access and the ability to access school buildings.

Wellness Initiative for Staff

In addition to our PTO's supporting our hard-working staff, MVCSC also supports our staff's whole-person wellness. From setting up a staff coffee bar to hiring 12 new behavioral coaches, supporting staff during stressful times is a priority.

Under a new corporate partnership, Hancock Health has waived enrollment fees for all MVCSC staff. Employees can utilize any of Hancock Health's three Wellness Center locations that provide exercise equipment, child care, physicians' offices and comprehensive wellness programs.

When it comes to financial wellness, staff now has free access to Your Money Line, a product to help people manage day-to-day and long-term finances. This is accomplished through 1:1 certified financial experts and relevant, personalized content with no products to sell employees. Your Money Line is specifically designed for public employees and the issues they often face.

Building-Level TOY and SOY



Congratulations to this year's building winners for Teacher of the Year (TOY), and Staff of the Year (SOY)!

This year's building TOY winners are: **Jill Chastain** – Fortville Elementary School (FES), **Kayla Negley** – McCordsville Elementary (MES), **Liz Moan** – Mt. Comfort Elementary (MCE), **Karen Riesterer** – Mt. Vernon High School (MVHS), **Courtney Stroup** – Mt. Vernon Middle School (MVMS) and **Dana Hochstedler** (Admin/multiple buildings). SOY winners included the following: **Dawn Teschendorf** (FES), **Emily Snider** (MES), **Wendy Mayo** (MCE), **Jennifer Hohnbaum** (MVHS), **Julie Wilson** (MVMS) and **Lisa Heitman** (Admin). Special thanks to the Mt. Vernon Education Foundation for sponsoring Mt. Vernon's TOY and SOY.

All of our honorees have been nominated by colleagues on criteria of dedication, team player, caring, student-centered, lifelong learner, and innovative.

The Mt. Vernon Education Foundation (MVEF) will announce the districtwide TOY and SOY winners at the Mt. Vernon Education Foundation's Black and Gold Gala on April 1.



MT. VERNON

COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION

1806 W. State Rd 234, Fortville, IN 46040

KINDERGARTEN ROUNDUP



It is Kindergarten Roundup time –
APRIL 4 or 6

Why so important? It is essential that all kindergarten students attend Roundup so that our schools may prepare enough teachers to keep class sizes low.

MVCSC offers full-day kindergarten only for students who are age 5 on or before August 1, 2023 at Fortville, McCordsville and Mt. Comfort Elementaries.

SETTING UP YOUR CHILD FOR KINDERGARTEN IS A 3-STEP PROCESS:



First, online registration (excluding current Mini-Marauder preschoolers).

The **second** step is visiting your child's school for Kindergarten Roundup on April 4 or 6, where required documents are brought in and students will be screened for hearing and academic skills.

Third is attending Back to School night so kindergarten students can meet their teachers. Check the website for all details.



The MVCSC website at bit.ly/KDGRoundup2023 (or the QR code) provides all the information you need concerning how to register and what to bring to roundup.