

# PIEDMONT FOCUS

MONTHLY NEWS & UPDATES FROM PIEDMONT PUBLIC SCHOOLS





# PIEDMONT

## Public Schools

### BOARD OF EDUCATION NOVEMBER 13, 2023 MEETING UPDATES

#### ROLL CALL

Derek Jones, Katie Cornman, Steven Cox, and Layne Jones were present. Greg Duffy was absent.

#### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Ms. Amy Nguyen expressed the need for Band and Fine Arts to be a higher priority by the district. She wants to advocate as a parent to leave the program better than she found it.

Mr. Shaun Witt addressed the board regarding support for the Pride of Piedmont Band Program. He called for funds and additional resources to support the needs of the program.

#### BUSINESS ITEMS

A. The board discussed the proposed agreement with Varsity Tutors for the Indian Education program virtual tutoring. This will allow Native American students to take advantage of one-on-one online tutoring. The board unanimously approved this motion. Additional information will be shared regarding the Varsity Tutors for Schools for all Piedmont students.

B. The board approved revising the 2023-24 calendar for high school students only. PHS students will participate in virtual learning on Wednesday, April 10, 2024. 11th-grade students will report to school for the ACT. This will allow students to take the exam in a quiet, more controlled environment.

C. Item C, Discuss and take possible action regarding Form 150 Supplemental appropriation form for the Building Fund to appropriate \$5,189,960, was tabled as the auditor did not produce the form in time for this meeting.

D. The board approved the proposed payment of Extra Duty stipends as listed in Attachment D (Incremental Stipends Not Listed in Negotiated Agreement). These were corrections for the stipends earned but overlooked previously.

#### PRESENTATION

Jennifer Fuller, Chief Financial Officer, provided a recap of the 2023-2024 budget. Forms and totals were reviewed.

#### CONSENT AGENDA

All items on the consent agenda were unanimously approved. This included the schedule for the 2024 Board of Education Meetings. The meeting schedule is as follows:

Tuesday, January 16, 2024  
Monday, February 12, 2024  
Monday, March 11, 2024  
Monday, April 8, 2024  
Monday, May 13, 2024  
Monday, June 10, 2024  
Thursday, June 27, 2024  
Monday, August 12, 2024  
Monday, September 9, 2024  
Monday, October 14, 2024  
Tuesday, November 12, 2024  
Monday, December 9, 2024

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

The board did not convene into executive session.

#### ACTION ITEMS

The board voted to approve employment as listed in Attachment C.

#### NEW BUSINESS

New business included approval of a Change Order for PO to Jim Norton for repairs to the expedition for \$1713.46 CO.

# SUPERINTENDENT REPORT



## THE CULTURE OF PIEDMONT

School culture can be defined in many ways. Michael Fullan defines school culture as the guiding beliefs and values evident in the way a school operates. Fullan states, "School culture can be used to encompass all the attitudes, expected behaviors and values that impact how the school operates."

More simply stated, school culture is "how we do things here." Our focus on outstanding customer service is part of our school culture. Servant leadership and building positive, appropriate relationships with our students is a part of our school culture. Furthermore, our positive interactions with parents and community members, expectations for continuous professional improvement, honesty, transparency, collaboration, and reflection on our practice are all district expectations and the culture for which we strive.

I am proud to report that in a recent teacher survey, our staff believes we have a positive culture, and our culture is heading in the right direction. We will repeat the survey in the spring.

A positive school and district culture will help us recruit and hire great teachers next year. A positive school culture will help us retain the great teachers we currently have.

School is not about any one of us.

School culture is about all of us.



# DISTRICT UPDATES

## CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

A group of twelve educators and administrators from our middle and elementary schools recently participated in the “Reaching and Teaching Children from Trauma” training program. This training was specifically designed to enhance our understanding and equip us with effective tools to better support all students, particularly those who have experienced trauma. We are planning to extend this training to two additional groups, with one group scheduled for January and another for February.

Amy Bixler, Literacy Development Coordinator, and the reading team has developed a comprehensive list of the most frequently used words in text, which we refer to as “Wildcat Words.” These words have been shared with our teaching staff. We also distributed a flyer containing our “Wildcat Words” with suggestions on ways parents can support student learning at home. We are excited for this valuable parent engagement resource. This initiative aims to enhance communication and collaboration between our schools, educators, and families to create a more supportive educational environment for all students.

We continue to address the ongoing need for supporting English Language (EL) students, which is driven by the growth in our student population. To meet this need, we have hired an elementary school teacher dedicated to supporting EL students. Additionally, we are making scheduling changes and in-house adjustments at the secondary level to further enhance EL support.

Through collaborative efforts with teachers, we have successfully identified Math Essentials spanning from Pre-K to High School Geometry. This comprehensive initiative aimed to pinpoint the essential math concepts and skills (Math Essentials). This critical information will be seamlessly integrated into our district’s vertical alignment, serving as a clear roadmap for teachers to effectively allocate instructional time and emphasize essential concepts.

We have conducted training sessions for teams consisting of principals, assistant principals, interventionists, and reading specialists to lead the identification of essential reading components. Our goal is to cultivate leadership within our school buildings to drive this important initiative forward.



## CONSOLIDATED REPORT

Lisa Campbell, Assistant Superintendent, and Joy Ruiz, Student Information Coordinator, have collaborated to finalize the Consolidated Report and the First Quarter Statistical Report. Below is an overview of the changes that our sites have undergone from the 2022-2023 academic year to the 2023-2024 academic year.

Site	Bilingual	Economically Disadvantaged	Gifted & Talented	Alternative Education
ECC	-37.84%	+50.81%	0%	0%
NW	+42.86%	+34.35%	+58.62%	0%
PES	-5.26%	+36.54%	+8.82%	0%
SR	+20.59%	+54.33%	+24.39%	0%
PI	+2.33%	+41.40%	-5.71%	0%
MS	-15%	+8.74%	+4.65%	0%
HS	+25.71%	+51.04%	-4.58%	+66.67%



# DISTRICT UPDATES



**PARENT UNIVERSITY**

**THE DANGERS OF OUR DIGITAL WORLD.**

**PRESENTED BY:**  
Brandon Carey, OSSBA Staff Attorney, and Piedmont Police

**THE WILDCAT ATHLETIC CENTER**  
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6TH  
6:00 - 7:00 P.M.

**At this presentation, you will learn:**

- ✔ Title IX: What is it? How does it impact your child?
- ✔ Cyber safety practices and behaviors to monitor
- ✔ Apps you should be concerned about as a parent or guardian
- ✔ How to talk to your child about social media usage
- ✔ The challenges and implications our young people are facing in our digital world

INTERMEDIATE, MIDDLE SCHOOL & HIGH SCHOOL PARENTS/GUARDIANS & STUDENTS ARE WELCOME

## PARENT UNIVERSITY AT PPS

We are excited to present our first Parent University event! Patricia Balenseifen and Mark Melton are working with OSSBA's Brandon Carey on an educational seminar to inform parents and students of the dangers, implications, and consequences of social media, risky applications, and cyber bullying - as it relates to Title IX. This event will take place on December 6th at 6 p.m. at the Wildcat Athletic Center.

## CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

### Middle School

- The roof has been completed
- Finishes have been completed in phase I (classrooms)
- North and South sidewalks to be poured by 11/20
- Indoor furniture will be purchased from KI
- KI will present furniture proposal on 11/14
- Exterior work scheduled for completion by 1/1/24
- Completion of the project is scheduled for 4/1/24

### Coryell Roofing

- Supplies delivered to all school sites
- MSP job completed 10/31
- PES job completed 11/3
- PI scheduled for completion by 11/17
- HS scheduled for completion by 12/1
- SR / NW projects are delayed until Spring. The reasoning behind delaying these projects stems from the concern about the aesthetic finish of the project. It becomes difficult to manipulate the membrane and faux ribs during the low-temperature season. If these were normal flat roofs that were not visible, the concern would not be present.

## PPS BACKPACK PROGRAM

The Piedmont Schools Counseling team has been busy assessing the growing needs of our district-wide food backpack program. Recognizing the growth and challenges within our community, we have successfully increased the number of students served by the program. The PPS Counseling team remains dedicated to fostering a supportive environment and actively seeks opportunities for continuous improvement in meeting various needs of our students.

## SPARKY'S DONATION STATION - HOLIDAY PROJECT

Piedmont Schools continues our partnership with the Piedmont Fire Department to serve families who need assistance during the holiday season. As we quickly approach December, our site counselors are working to ensure we serve every family who may need help.

**Good News**  
AT PIEDMONT PUBLIC SCHOOLS



## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR CHIEF OFFICER OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Patricia Balenseifen earned a nomination from fellow education human resources professionals to assume the role of State Human Resources Officer. We are delighted to announce that she has been elected by the members of the Oklahoma Association of School Personnel Administrators (OASPA) to be one of the three distinguished Human Resources officers in the field of education in the state of Oklahoma. Among these three officers, Piedmont stands out as the only district representing the western region of the state. The trio of officers representing OASPA consists of Patricia Balenseifen from Piedmont, Jay Loegering from Tulsa Union, and Dana Ezaell from Jenks Public Schools.

# DISTRICT UPDATES

We continue to work closely with a panel of community members and Mr. Spears, Principal at PHS, to review and improve our Student Council Selection process. Our goal is to develop a selection process that is fair, objective, and transparent. We believe this will help us choose the best candidates for the council and ensure that the council represents the whole student body at Piedmont High School.

To further meet the needs of our students, we are implementing a new program called "The Village" at the secondary level. The program is designed to provide social and emotional support to students who may need it. Under this program, teachers will identify students confidentially who need extra support and pair them with a trusted adult in the building to provide encouragement and support. We believe that this program will help our students with their mental health, engagement with school, and overall academic success, and will have a positive impact on our school culture.

## ENROLLMENT CENTER

	10-6-2023	11-9-2023
PIEDMONT ECC	618	621
NORTHWOOD ELEM.	485	486
PIEDMONT ELEM.	446	445
STONE RIDGE ELEM.	638	637
PIEDMONT INTERMEDIATE	865	864
MIDDLE SCHOOL	761	757
HIGH SCHOOL	1518	1519
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5333</b>	<b>5339</b>



Piedmont High School hosted its annual fall College & Career Fair on October 13. Students had the opportunity to explore college, career tech, military options, and various career paths, setting their sights on what comes next after graduation.

## HUMAN RESOURCES

The HR team is collaborating with Riley Thomas, PPS Communications Coordinator, to develop marketing materials for a Total Rewards presentation at UCO's Round Table event. The objective is to attract prospective student teachers and December graduates.

Furthermore, We are actively searching for a service provider who can facilitate the conversion of all personnel files into a digital format. This will help us to streamline our HR processes and make them more efficient for all employees.

# DISTRICT UPDATES

## Good News AT PIEDMONT PUBLIC SCHOOLS



**We are excited to share the Piedmont Public Schools Education Foundation and the Carrie Attalla Memorial Fund will fulfill 40 grants for 70 teachers this school year, totaling approximately \$25,000!** Congratulations to the following grant recipients:

**Piedmont ECC:**

Rae Lightfoot, Kala Derichsweiler, Amy King, Tiffany Downing, Debbie Bethel, Anna Barros, Makenzy Sanders, Hannah Lopez, Aislinn Steiner, Kimberlee Morrison, Jennifer Bakewell, Kristeen Westbrook, and Carmen Heath

**Northwood Elementary:**

Jennifer Lawson, Vonda Rempe, Laura Pope, and Julie Rother

**Piedmont Elementary:**

Mandy Lee, McKenzie Miller, and Tahleah Curtis

**Stone Ridge Elementary:**

Courtney Lindenborn, Jessica Fones, Jessica Taylor, Sidney Stafford, Denise Ashmore, Lisa McCormick, Taryn Fischer, Skylar Morrison, Amanda Bowens, and Emily Buckingham

**Piedmont Intermediate:**

Rebecca Willis, Kimberly Crawford, Tammy Stokes, and Suzanne Young

**Middle School of Piedmont:**

Maci Attalla, Chuck Fisher, Christopher Sanbonji, Dirick Hatfield, Marie Spencer, Carrie Koons, Amy Brezina, and Erin Fluman

**Piedmont High School:**

Luke Graves, Lisa Newman, Deanne Strothers, Jayme Roper, Kaleigh Mellendorf, Dee Koehn, Stephanie Payne, Summer Thiele, Kathryn Clark, Connor Gowriluk, Jeff Jahnke, Catherine Harpham, Joe Claborn, Luke Graves, Anthony Moss, Jamie Johnson, Andrea Carpenter, Katie Baker, Logan LaRue, Laura McGee, Andrew Willis, Ken McQueen, Andrew Willis, and Eric Wright

## SPECIAL SERVICES



This month, the Special Services Department participated in several conferences, including the Oklahoma Autism Conference, Oklahoma Directors of Special Services Conference, Applied Behavior Analysis Conference, and Professional Learning Communities Conference.

We are thrilled to share that our Special Olympics Unified Volleyball team secured the runner-up position in the OSSAA State competition. It is an incredible achievement, especially considering it was their first year competing at this level.



# DISTRICT UPDATES

## DRIVER SPOTLIGHT

**LESLIE STAMBAUGH**  
BUS #



Leslie has been driving in Piedmont for 4 years. Her favorite thing about driving is getting to be with the kids. When Leslie is not driving she likes to spend time with her pets, watch movies and have family dinners. If Leslie could travel anywhere she would go to Cuba for the Latin music, culture and food. We are thankful Leslie is part of the Wildcat family!



## TRANSPORTATION

A total of 2,440 students are currently enrolled for bus transportation services.

Our team is excited for the integration of new bus tablets and software. Tablets have been successfully activated and installed across all buses operating on regular routes. We are training our team on the new technology, giving the bus drivers and substitutes turn-by-turn navigation assistance throughout designated bus routes.

## ATHLETICS & ACTIVITIES



### MARCHING BAND

#### CONGRATULATIONS TO THE OBA Class 5A State Champions!

Outstanding Music, Outstanding General Effect, Fan Favorite

OSSAA West Class 5A/6A Regional Marching Competition

Straight 1's and Superior Rating

### CHOIR

Central Oklahoma Choir Directors Assoc. Regional Honor was held Nov. 2nd in OKC. The following students auditioned and made the Honor Choir:

Antonio Bianchi (12)

Byron Wilkison (10)

Bostyn Short (9)

Erin McLeod (8)

Casey Elrod (8)

Markella White (7)

### FAST PITCH

#### CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS 5A State Champions! (Three State Championships in a Row)

Season Record 39-3

Ranked #8 in the United States

Most wins in classes 3A-6A

10-0 versus top 5 ranked teams

13-0 versus top 10 ranked teams

24-0 versus Class 5A competition

COAC Conference Pitcher of the Year – Payten Schibbelhute

COAC Conference Coach of the Year – Keith Coleman

COAC Conference 1st Team – Payton Gray

COAC Conference 2nd Team – Addison

Underwood, Taybor Moss, Hannah Nieuwenhuis

2023 All State Selections – Payton Schibbelhute and Tylar Short



# DISTRICT UPDATES



## ESPORTS

Multiple teams with zero losses or one loss on the season. The teams play each Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday versus other schools across Oklahoma remotely. The current games being played consist of Splatoon 3, Super Smash Brothers Ultimate, Rocket League, and Mario Kart. OSSAA Playoffs take place later in November.

## UNIFIED VOLLEYBALL

Wildcats played for the OSSAA State Championship in the team's inaugural year.

### Unified Volleyball State Runners Up

## Cross Country

Men

Class 6A West Regionals Third Place (All seven runners finished top 40)

Class 6A State Meet Fourth Place

Dade Humes – 7th Place

Nelin Kimery – 17th Place

Cohen Mcintosh – 23rd Place

Riley Pauley – 33rd Place

Beckham Humes – 59th Place

Women

Class 6A West Regionals First Place (Five runners finish in top 26)

### Class 6A State Meet – Runners Up

Claire Collins – 9th Place

Brooke Collins – 11th Place

Emily Caldwell – 15th Place

Anna Caldwell – 23rd Place

McKenna Auringer – 46th Place



## VOLLEYBALL

Season Record 16-14

Coweta Tournament Champions

Choctaw Tournament Runners Up

Stillwater Tournament 5th Place

Class 6A Regional Runners Up

COAC All Conference 1st Team – Zoey Hughes

OCA All State – Zoey Hughes (1st Alternate) Grace Robison (6th Alternate)

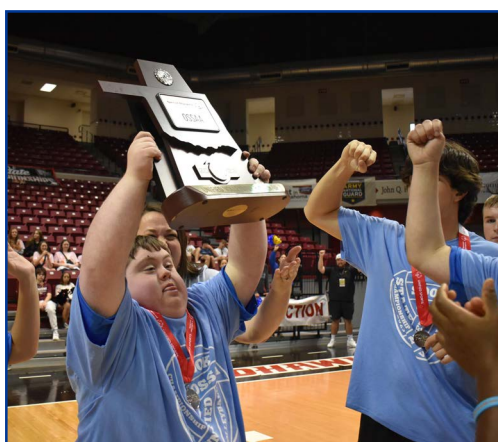
## Football

Overall Record 7 Wins 3 Losses

District 5A-2 Record 3 Wins 2 Losses (Guaranteed Fourth Place Finish)

Playoff Qualifier on the Road Round 1 vs. Elgin

Post Season Conference Awards (TBD)



## Region 1 Coaches of the Year

Kelly Beck - Cross Country

Keith Coleman - Fast Pitch Softball

Tom Williams - Volleyball

# PRINCIPAL REPORTS

## #PIEDMONTPROUD

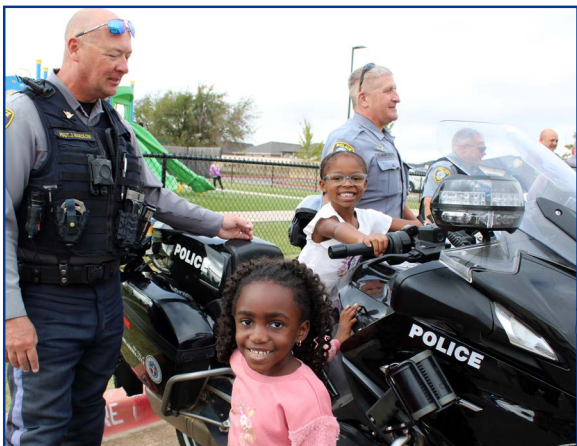
Our Piedmont community is the driving force behind the success of Piedmont Public Schools. The support, active involvement, and dedication to our students contribute significantly to our thriving educational environment.



### COMMUNITY HELPERS AT PIEDMONT ECC

On October 26, ECC hosted its annual Community Helper Day, providing a valuable opportunity for students to engage with various community representatives. The event featured participants from OKC Police, EMSA, OKC Bomb Squad, County Sheriff, OKC Canine Unit, OKCPD Tactical Unit, OKC Fire Department, and OKC Police Motorcycle Division.

During this event, every student had the chance to interact with our community helpers and gain a hands-on understanding of their roles and responsibilities. The knowledge and insights shared on that day are sure to make a lasting impact on our students. It is essential for them to appreciate the vital roles that these dedicated men and women play in ensuring the safety and well-being of our community.



### FIRE SAFETY AND PUMPKIN FUN AT PIEDMONT ELEMENTARY

Our Piedmont Fire Department and Piedmont EMSA crews dropped by every morning to kickstart Fire Safety and Prevention Week. The students had a blast exchanging high fives and showing off their dance moves to Sparky, our friendly fire safety mascot.

On October 18 and 26, our 1st and 2nd graders headed out on field trips, and we had some fantastic parent volunteers who stepped up to the plate. They made sure our students had a safe and enjoyable time throughout the day, even handling lunch and helping transport pumpkins back to school. Their support added an extra layer of support and fun to our students' field trip experiences.



### GREAT PTO SUPPORT AT NORTHWOOD ELEMENTARY



On October 11th, our 2nd-grade teachers attended a virtual professional development session called "The Phonics Dance" while staying at school. However, we still needed substitute teachers in their classrooms. Due to a shortage of available substitutes, several PTO members graciously volunteered to fill in. These volunteers not only covered the classrooms but also assisted during lunch and recess. Thanks to their dedication, we avoided disrupting the schedules of our teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators, ensuring uninterrupted learning for our students.

# PRINCIPAL REPORTS

## #PIEDMONTPROUD

Our Piedmont community is the driving force behind the success of Piedmont Public Schools. The support, active involvement, and dedication to our students contribute significantly to our thriving educational environment.



### PHS HOSTS SPOOK-TACULAR DANCE

On October 28th, our PHS Spanish club organized an engaging event, the "Mummy and Son" dance, which welcomed children from various grade levels and their parents. The event was filled with a mix of activities, games, and, of course, dancing.

Families had the opportunity to enjoy not only some fun dance moves but also participate in games and activities designed to bring everyone together. Additionally, the event featured an exciting costume contest for Mummy and son duos, with prizes awarded to the top three pairs. It was an enjoyable and interactive event that allowed parents and their kids to have a great time while strengthening their bonds. This event encapsulated the spirit of our school community, offering a blend of entertainment and togetherness beyond the classroom.



### MIDDLE SCHOOL FCCLA BRINGS FALL SPIRIT TO PIEDMONT

Our MSP FCCLA students have been busy volunteering at the Piedmont Service Center Pumpkin Patch this month! Mrs. Graham and our students have been traveling over after school to help load pumpkins into the carts for patrons and rotate each pumpkin to make sure they stay in good shape and to help prevent molding. This service project allows our students to get involved and be a giant help to our community. MSP students worked hard and provided a great service to our community! The proceeds of the Pumpkin Patch benefit the Piedmont Service Center.



# PRINCIPAL REPORTS

## #PIEDMONTPROUD



### SOCKTOBER SUCCESS AT STONE RIDGE ELEMENTARY

We joined forces with the YWCA Women's shelter for our Socktober event, aiming to collect 10,000 pairs of socks to support their cause. However, our community's generosity exceeded all expectations as we gathered an impressive total of 11,241 pairs of socks! This remarkable achievement marked a significant increase from the previous year when we collected just over 8,000 pairs of socks.



### COMMUNITY TRICK OR TREAT NIGHT AT PHS

Piedmont High School celebrated Halloween by hosting a lively community "Trick or Treat" night. Numerous students from different organizations, clubs, and sports teams participated in making it an enjoyable evening for all who attended. The event was filled with candy, entertainment, and a fantastic time for all!

## UNLOCKING THE MAGIC OF LEARNING *Where School Meets Fun*

### MIDDLE SCHOOL OF PIEDMONT

In October, a fun event occurred at the Middle School of Piedmont as students, staff, and administrators came together to sign a ceremonial beam, symbolizing the 2020 bond election and embodying the community's investment in education. The Lippert Construction team has integrated the beam into the ongoing construction. Progress continues on the construction project as students and staff are anxiously awaiting the opening of our newly renovated building.

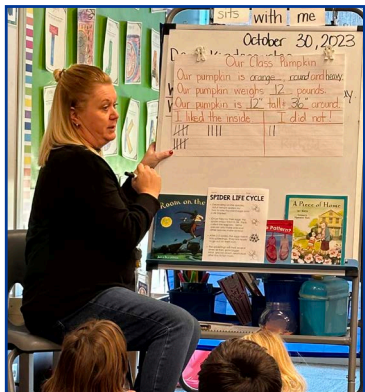


### NORTHWOOD ELEMENTARY

In Ms. Kimmel's LEAP class, students created Bottle Cap Art using math concepts. They entered their art in the Litter Education - Uncapped Contest by Keep Oklahoma Beautiful. Students also wrote essays on recycling and the harms of littering. Northwood LEAP class's entry is now in the finals, and the winners will be announced on November 17th.

# PRINCIPAL REPORTS

UNLOCKING THE MAGIC OF LEARNING *Where School Meets Fun*



## PIEDMONT EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

In Mrs. Rietveld's Kindergarten class, pumpkins became a versatile tool for exploring a range of math concepts. Students delved into discussions about the physical attributes of pumpkins, including size, color, shape, and texture. They actively participated in measuring and recording the pumpkin's height, weight, and circumference. Moreover, the students had a blast getting their hands into the action by scooping out the pulp and seeds. This hands-on approach made learning both fun and educational.

## PIEDMONT ELEMENTARY

In October, Fire Safety Month, our Wildcats had the unique opportunity to visit the local Piedmont Fire Station for the first time in several years. During this visit, students gained valuable insights into the station and learned important fire safety lessons.

The students were enthusiastic about exploring the inside of the station and the firetruck, trying on real firefighter coats, and even getting hands-on experience by spraying a fire hose. The highlight of the visit was meeting Sparky the Fire Dog.



## STONE RIDGE ELEMENTARY

In the weeks surrounding Fall break, our 3rd-grade classes transform their hallway into an exciting "bat cave." This unique space serves as an interactive backdrop for their science lessons. The bat cave not only engages students but also provides them with valuable bat facts that adorn the hallway.

Upon returning to the school, Mrs. Penington's first-grade class engaged in a creative activity. They labeled a firetruck and then wrote stories about their favorite parts of the fire station. This exercise not only allowed them to express themselves but also reinforced writing skills, emphasizing complete sentences with capital letters, complete thoughts, and proper punctuation.

The students had the opportunity to share their stories with their classmates, reading them aloud and displaying their illustrations, making the experience both educational and interactive.

The tradition of the bat cave has left a lasting impression on our 4th graders, who fondly recall the experience, and it generates high anticipation among upcoming 3rd graders. This hands-on and immersive approach to learning has become a treasured tradition that continues to inspire curiosity and excitement among our students.

# PRINCIPAL REPORTS



## ACADEMIC FOCUS



Mrs. Carney and her Art I and Art II students have been diligently working on a creative project, adorning our temporary hallway walls with colorful murals. These vibrant artworks draw inspiration from Contemporary Pop Art, particularly influenced by American artist Jen Starx.

Excitingly, we have a special guest scheduled to visit MSP soon, engaging with our art students to discuss mural creations and the artist's career. The presence of these captivating murals adds a vibrant and artistic dimension to our hallways, showcasing the talents of our MSP Wildcat Artists in action!

## CULTURE & CONNECTION

### STONE RIDGE ELEMENTARY

Our teacher celebration committee has been given a sparkling new name, the Sparkle Squad! They recently extended a warm welcome to our staff members who participated, offering them a thoughtful gift. They also kicked off the second quarter with a delightful apple bar on the first day. Furthermore, we've introduced a weekly tradition of celebrating our students.

### NORTHWOOD ELEMENTARY

At Northwood, character education takes center stage with a focus on monthly character words. Developed with guidance from our counselor, Emily Little, these words become the month's theme. We highlight them during morning announcements, morning meetings, counseling lessons, and recognize students' efforts during Wildcat Wake-Up and with Golden Tickets.



### PIEDMONT ELEMENTARY

At Piedmont Elementary, our Connection Crew Committee continues to organize fun events and activities for our staff. This month, our teachers engaged in "spooky pals," and the 2nd-grade team arranged a delightful teacher luncheon on Halloween Day. We also celebrated Book Character Day, a student-favorite event. Looking ahead, we're excited about our upcoming Chili-Cookoff and the recognition of our Students of the Month and Far Out Teacher Features.



### PIEDMONT INTERMEDIATE

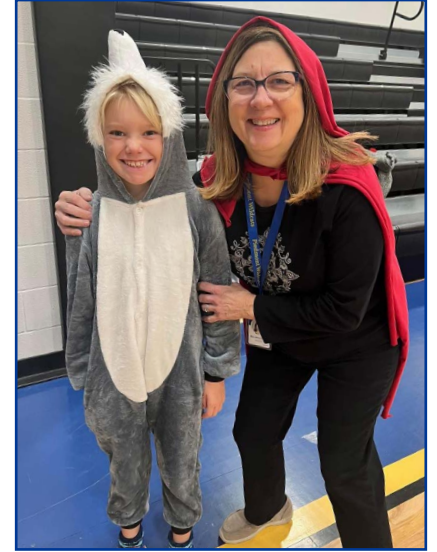
This month has been filled with enjoyable and teacher-driven activities at Piedmont Intermediate. Our staff chili cook-off, led by Veronica Pinion, was a hit. Megan Burlison organized a "Spooky Pals" week of gift exchange, bringing daily surprises to all participants. On Halloween, Brenda Payton orchestrated the annual Staff Trick-or-Treat around the building, ensuring that every adult had their candy pail filled by day's end. It's always a joy for our students to see our teachers having fun.

# PRINCIPAL REPORTS

## WILDCAT WOW FACTOR

### PIEDMONT ELEMENTARY

This year, the elementary-level SAS team (Spanish, Art, STEM) welcomed Mary Johnson Runion, a skilled Spanish teacher who has become a valuable addition to our school. Due to her role within the SAS team, Mrs. Johnson Runion has limited time at our school site. Nevertheless, she has made it her mission to ensure that every student receives at least ten Spanish lessons during her rotation at PES. Mrs. Johnson Runion goes above and beyond by assisting students in completing activities and making up missed lessons, even during her planning time. She brings learning to life for students through hands-on, relatable activities, such as the jack-o-lantern skeletons project. In this activity, students created jack-o-lanterns and labeled the eyes, nose, mouth, etc., with the proper Spanish terms for the various body parts. Mrs. Johnson Runion's dedication and teamwork are invaluable to our school community, and we feel fortunate to have her at Piedmont Elementary.



### PIEDMONT INTERMEDIATE

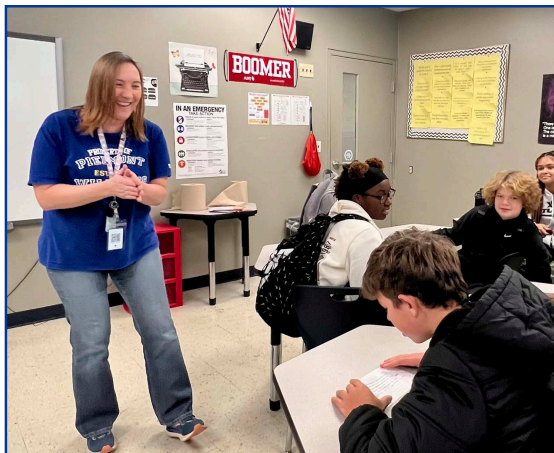
Barbara Walker is a veteran 6th-grade science teacher at Piedmont Intermediate. Mrs. Walker employs diverse tools and strategies to make lessons engaging for her students. Most recently, her students participated in a "Glow Stick Lab," where they applied the Scientific Method just in time for Halloween. Mrs. Walker's enthusiasm for teaching extends beyond the classroom, as she is dedicated to continuous self-improvement through professional development throughout the year. Each morning, she greets students at the school entrance with an uplifting smile, setting a positive tone for the school day.

### NORTHWOOD ELEMENTARY

Emily Little, our first-year counselor, has had a significant impact on the Northwood School community. Since her first day at our school, Mrs. Little has been dedicated to assisting our students, teachers, and the school community. She not only delivers engaging classroom lessons on topics such as friendship, cooperation, and kindness but also conducts routine check-ins with students dealing with anxiety, behavioral challenges, and friendship issues, among other concerns. Mrs. Little builds relationships with students by engaging in conversations with them around the school building and during lunch periods. Her commitment to our school and counseling program is truly remarkable.



# PRINCIPAL REPORTS

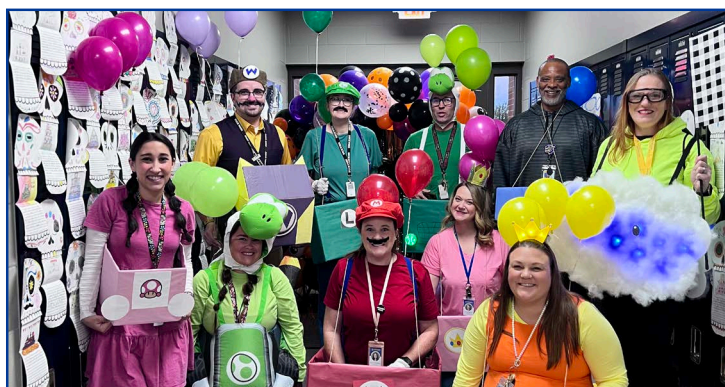


## MIDDLE SCHOOL OF PIEDMONT

Elizabeth Wustrack, our 8th-grade English Language Arts (ELA) teacher, is a former Piedmont Public Schools graduate with 11 years of teaching experience, six of which have been at MSP. Her exceptional classroom management skills and enthusiasm for instruction create a supportive atmosphere where every student feels valued, respected, and eager to learn. Mrs. Wustrack's commitment to understanding individual student needs fosters an environment that promotes academic and personal growth. Recently, her students collaborated on an anticipation guide for Edgar Allan Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart," and their enthusiasm for learning reflects Mrs. Wustrack's outstanding teaching skills.

## PIEDMONT HIGH SCHOOL

At Piedmont High School, our team of teachers embodies our core value of FUN, as demonstrated by their recent Halloween attire. Each hallway had a dedicated theme, and every teacher participated, making the experience enjoyable for both our team and our students. Our teachers prove that school doesn't have to be monotonous, even at the high school level. Let's have fun while we learn!



## PIEDMONT EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

Charity Lane, one of our kindergarten teachers, has made a positive impact on our youngest students in her first year as a Piedmont Wildcat. With nine years of experience in creating engaging and positive classrooms, Mrs. Lane is a team player who collaborates with her grade-level peers to develop instructional materials and engaging lesson plans. Her dedication and support for our youngest Wildcats' educational journey are admirable.

## STONE RIDGE ELEMENTARY

Jordan Menge, a new 1st-grade teacher at Piedmont Public Schools, has been an exceptional addition to our school. Her classroom is well-structured, organized, and engaging, with students continuously learning and enjoying their lessons. Mrs. Menge is an interactive and focused educator who uses various tools to connect with her students. For instance, she sent a video of herself reading a book to her students before the first day of school, creating a fun introduction. Mrs. Menge consistently demonstrates her commitment to her students' education.

