



## **Ann Arbor Public Schools**

### **Superintendent Update**

#### **Board of Education**

**Wednesday, December 6, 2023**

Thank you, Trustees, for this opportunity to provide the Superintendent Update. We are moving forward during this busy time prior to winter break to deepen our fall progress, support our students and staff, and maximize each day of learning during these last few weeks of the 2023 calendar year.

#### **NAACP Freedom Fund Scholars**

The Ann Arbor Chapter of the NAACP recognized over 200 of our high school students for academic achievement at their annual Freedom Fund Dinner on November 5th. We congratulate our students and thank you to the NAACP for recognizing their hard work. You can [read the full AAPS District News story here](#).

#### **Four AAPS Middle Schools Among the Top 25 Middle Schools in Michigan**

U.S. News and World Report released their report of the Best Michigan Middle Schools. We are proud of all of our AAPS middle schools and are pleased to share that four of them ranked among the top 25 middle schools on the list, with three of them ranking in the top 10. Clague ranked #4, Slauson #5, and Tappan #9, and Forsythe at #22. [Best Middle Schools in Michigan](#)

#### **Pioneer High School Vocalist Honors**

Ten Pioneer High School vocalists performed at the Michigan School Vocal Music Association's (MSVMA) Region C High School Honors Choir on Saturday, Dec. 2, along with 125 of southeast Michigan's finest high school singers from southeast Michigan. All 10 performers auditioned for and made it to the distinguished MSVMA State Honors Choir in January.

#### **Other exciting news from the Pioneer Choir**

On Friday, Dec. 1, tenor Paul Appleby led a vocal masterclass. Several students performed for Mr. Appleby, received suggestions on their performance and worked on their vocals in front of the class. Mr. Appleby was visiting Ann Arbor to perform the tenor solo in the UMS production of G.F. Handel's Messiah. The Pioneer Choirs partner annually with the UMS Learning

Engagement Program to bring world-class artists into the building to work with and inspire young singers.

[You can read the full AAPS District News story here.](#)

### **Huron Teacher Honored With National Award for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

Congratulations to Huron Spanish teacher Daniel Verdugo for receiving the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages Award for Excellence in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the Classroom.

Verdugo says, “I am honored to receive this award that celebrates the ideals of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the classroom. As a teacher, I understand my commitment to DEI as an invitation to reimagine the classroom; an opportunity—if seized—to transform education, ourselves, and the world.”

ACTFL—which is the national association of world language teachers—recognized these efforts in the publication of [Ñ! magazine](#), the bilingual magazine of Huron. This project develops bilingual literacy as it invites students to reflect on some of the most pressing issues of their time.

You can [read the full AAPS District News story here.](#)

### **Tonight We Swing Concert**

The entire community is invited to attend a free night of entertaining music at Huron High School on Saturday, December 9th, at 7 PM. The Tonight We Swing Concert will feature the Pioneer High School Big Band, the Huron Jazz Orchestra, the Community High School Jazz program, and the MSU Be-Bop Spartans.

### **Before/After Care**

We are excited to share that we are in the process of re-opening another After Care site! After care will begin at Dicken Elementary School on January 16, 2024. Depending on demand, we may also reopen a Before Care program there. This brings the total number of elementary schools served by Rec & Ed’s Before/After Care program to **nine**.

### **AAPS Winter Giving Program**

The district-wide AAPS Winter Giving program is off to a great start. We are delighted to report that our page dedicated to sharing community resources for food, clothing, gifts and more was viewed more than 1,000 times during the month of November. In addition, AAPS has received over \$6,000 in gift card donations for families in need. We welcome our community to visit [a2schools.org/wintergiving](https://a2schools.org/wintergiving) to learn more.

### **Ann Arbor PTO Thrift Shop**

The Ann Arbor PTO Thrift Shop on South Industrial celebrated its 30th anniversary in November. Payouts from the PTO Thrift Shop have provided more than \$3.3 million in support to our schools since the first sales took place in 1993. We thank all of the individuals who have

donated goods, time working in the shop and made purchases that have supported our students over the years.

[Read more about the PTO Thrift Shop anniversary here.](#)

### **Rec & Ed's Winter Break Camps**

There are only a few spots left in Rec & Ed's [Winter Break Camps](#) running January 3-5 in multiple locations. For the first time ever, we are offering Winter Break Camps for preschoolers (3-5 year olds) at the Westerman Preschool & Family Center.

### **Rec & Ed's Winter 2024 Youth and Adult Class Registration**

Winter 2024 youth and adult class registration begins Tuesday, December 5th - all class info can be found at [aarecedonline.com](http://aarecedonline.com)

### **Communication from the AAPS**

To stay up-to-date with daily updates and information on school and district activities, you may want to follow us on social media.

- Twitter [@A2Schools](#)
- On Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/AnnArborPublicSchools>
- Subscribe to our A2Schools podcast at: <https://a2schools.buzzsprout.com>
- AAPS YouTube channel at: <https://www.youtube.com/AnnArborPublicSchools>.

We also regularly share updates on the work of the Board of Education in the [BOE Update Newsletters](#).

Sincerely,

Jazz Parks  
Interim Superintendent of Schools  
Ann Arbor Public Schools