

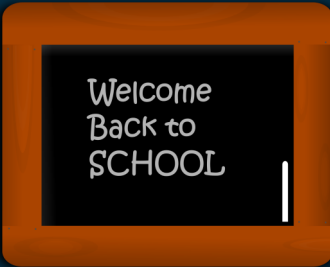


August 15, 2019

Building Beat

Upcoming ...

Monday, August 19:



First Day of School; Full Day of classes!

Tuesday, August 20:

Bond Proposal Community Forum, 6:30-8 p.m. DHS Auditorium

Davison Middle School Open House (Parents Follow Mini-Schedule, 6:30-8 p.m.)

Thursday, August 22:

GSRP Preschool Open Houses—4-5 p.m. for AM Families; 5-6 p.m. for PM Families and 4-6 p.m. for All Day Families.

Friday, August 23:

No School

Hahn teachers get warm welcome back from student

Most students were still sleeping in when teachers arrived back to work on Monday, August 12, but not **Arabella (Bella) Block**. The sixth grader was up bright and early in order to have coffee, hot cocoa and donuts ready for Hahn Intermediate teachers as they arrived to work.

This is the second year that Bella has provided the welcome back refreshments on the first day of school for teachers. Bella's mom, **Hope Block**, said her daughter got the idea after a discussion about how neighbor and teacher Mrs. **Tammy Fellows** had to go back to school before students. Bella did not think it was fair that teachers had to go back to school before the students and Mrs. Block reminded Bella about the kindness challenge that was issued by Literacy Specialist Mrs. Ann Curatti in a summer letter to parents and students.



Bella Block pictured with Hahn Intermediate Paraprofessional Pat Michalek.

"She thought it might be fun to do something for the teachers," Mrs. Block said, adding that Bella exclaimed "all teachers like coffee!"

So, with her mom's help, Bella set up a welcoming station in the teacher parking lot.

"They were excited," Bella said of the staff's reaction to her being there again this year. Bella uses her own money to purchase the refreshments.

Bella has celiac disease and must adhere to a gluten-free diet—which means she could not even eat any of the donuts she served up to Hahn staff.

"She is a really caring kid," Mrs. Block said. "She is fun when you get to know her. Until you get to know her, she is super quiet and always has a smile on her face. Sometimes it's a nervous smile or sometimes it is genuine."

Bella, who has been involved in gymnastics, recently discovered archery and even won a bow in a recent competition. She is planning to participate in a youth league at the Flint Bowmen club.

DHS student attends engineering leadership forum

This summer Davison High School sophomore **Chloe Hinkley** attended the National



Chloe and another scholar work together at the National Youth Leadership Forum in Engineering.

Youth Leadership Forum (NYLF) in Engineering at Georgia Tech. Chloe was nominated for the forum by Davison High School Engineering Teacher Mrs. **Samantha Sny**.

Among the many memorable hands-on experiences, students participated in the Capstone Impact Challenge. Designed and facilitated with the assistance of esteemed faculty members of Villanova University's College of Engineering, this program-long challenge allowed the scholars to apply their newfound skills to develop a sustainable clean water delivery system for their assigned country and gain a better understanding of the Sustainable Development Goals set forth by the United Nations.

"It is a great opportunity for students to grow and network," said Mrs. Sny. "I look forward to hearing more about it when I have her in Principles of Engineering class."

NOTE: If you are a Davison student and have a "What I did This Summer" story to share, we would love to hear about it. Email medwards@davisonschools.org

DTV Teacher Randy Scott selected to state's Innovative Educator Corps

Davison High School DTV Teacher **Randy Scott** is one of 10 Michigan educators selected to join the Innovative Educator Corps (IEC) – a statewide recognition and grant program that recognizes educators who utilize an innovative educational program, methodology or strategy to help prepare their students for future career success in high-demand fields.

"We are proud of how these educators are changing the way they deliver content and improving the way our students learn – ultimately increasing their opportunity for success," said Interim State Superintendent **Sheila Alles**. "The support that comes with this recognition will help these educators expand their programs for more students, and help share their practice with other educators across the state."



Randy Scott

The IEC was authorized under the Marshall Plan for Talent (Public Act 227 of 2018). In order to be nominated to the IEC, an educator must pioneer innovative practices; and embody the passion, energy and professionalism of the teaching profession through dedication to their students and community. As part of the application process, nominees were tasked with providing documentation regarding their students' academic achievement, as well as sharing how successful implementation of their innovative instructional methodologies has prepared their students for 21st Century careers.

Each IEC member receives a \$5,000 stipend in recognition of their work, plus an additional \$5,000 to be used in partnership with their Intermediate School District (ISD) to expand, replicate and share their innovative practices with other Michigan educators.



Central Elementary Counselor Maida Demo “works” for the utility company where many “customers” have found they needed help with paying their monthly bills.

Frustration. Helplessness. Sadness. These are just some of the emotions experienced by Davison school teachers during a three-hour poverty simulation held this week as part of the District’s professional development program. The simulation, presented by Community Economic Development Association of Michigan, provided staff with a small glimpse of the every day challenges faced by those living in poverty. Teachers were assigned the name of a fictitious person and given the details of their circumstances. Some were single parents, some were homeless. Some had no transportation and had to rely on bus passes. Some had to deal with their electricity being shut off because they didn’t have enough money left over after they bought groceries.

Superintendent **Kevin Brown** wanted to bring the simulation to Davison after he participated in a similar exercise at a February conference held for Genesee County superintendents.

“We all know poverty exists in our community,” said Supt. Brown. “But most of us don’t really understand what it means to live in poverty on a daily basis. Hopefully, this simulation will give our staff a small glimpse of the day-to-day struggles of people living in poverty.”

While the economy has shown signs of improving since a historic recession 10 years ago, nearly 50 percent of Davison students qualify for the district’s Free and Reduced Lunch program.

Assistant Superintendent **Matt Lobban** handled the logistical task of organizing two days and four sessions of the poverty simulation in order for every single one of the district’s nearly 300 teachers to participate. Representatives from the Community Economic Development Association said this was its biggest simulation to date. According to the reactions of staff, the simulation was a success.

“This had the most impact on me than any other professional development I have been a part of,” said Central Elementary teacher Mrs. **Monica Martin**. “It was very hard to ‘shake off’ as I went through my evening ... and that is good!”

Hahn Intermediate Music Teacher Mrs. **Susan McMartin** said she was very im-



Teachers process what it means to be homeless after they learn the characters they are portraying live in a homeless shelter.

pressed with the simulation.

"Having the opportunity to experience firsthand the deep struggles that some of our families in Davison deal with was both humbling and very meaningful to me," she said. "I think many of us appreciated this powerful reminder that we, as educators and a community, need to continue in our efforts to provide support systems for our students and parents whenever possible. We may not always fully understand what our students are going through, but we can always show kindness and compassion first."

"The Poverty Simulation was an eye opening experience in the day-to-day struggles some of the families within our community face," said Mrs. **Amy Chorley**, a teacher at Thomson Elementary. "The training allowed us to gain insight and enhance the perspective of not only the children, but for the parents who live in poverty as well and how it impacts the family as a whole. At the end of the morning, staff members left with a greater sense of understanding, empathy and compassion."



Davison High School Teacher Jennifer Orkisz becomes frustrated when a lack of childcare forces her to miss work.

Teacher Rachel McKinnon finds herself in a desperate situation and makes a deal with an unethical character portrayed by Principal Christy Flowers.



Davison High School Teacher **Raina Palso** was given the role of a 57-year-old paralyzed man who was completely dependent on social security and his family—a daughter, son-in-law and 15-year-old granddaughter.

"In my 23 years at Davison, I thought it was one of the most interesting and eye-opening professional development opportunities that I can remember," Ms. Palso said. "Many people consider Davison to be an affluent area, and I think poverty that exists here can often be downplayed or minimized. Many think that the "real poverty" exists elsewhere, but today's simulation showed what it is like to be part of the "working poor" who can't seem to get ahead. Although this was a simulation, I left with a new understanding of the weight that poverty must put on the shoulders of so many in real life. While my four siblings and I were raised by working-class parents who had to muddle through their fair share of financial setbacks, I am so thankful and grateful that I never experienced anything as severe as what my fictional family in this simulation endured. Poverty has and always will be among us, but this simulation taught me how far compassion and understanding can go to alleviate its effects. As human beings, we have the ability to care for one another. As teachers, that might mean going the extra mile for a student who has to work an after-school job, or for one who misses school for reasons beyond his or her control. As teachers, maybe we can keep a few extra granola bars in our desks for the kids who can't learn because they are hungry. As teachers, maybe we can participate (and encourage students who are able to participate) in community wellness opportunities. If those opportunities do not already exist, then maybe we create them ourselves."



District Librarian Chris Ruterbusch serves an eviction notice to a "family."



“The poverty simulation was an incredibly insightful experience. The simulation allowed us to experience what poverty looks and feels like on a daily basis and what challenges they face. The discussion at the end allowed us to hear other teachers perspectives as we each had a different situation. As a teacher, it gives me a new appreciation for what these families and students experience.”

Blake Smith
DHS Teacher



“The poverty simulation experience was extremely valuable since it made us see how much poverty affects the educational lives of our students. Students in this unfortunate life circumstance may see our classrooms as an escape from their grim reality, so it's critical that we maintain our empathy and realize poor behavior, bad grades, or absenteeism may stem from this, not laziness or apathy.”

Shannon Kelsey
DHS Teacher

