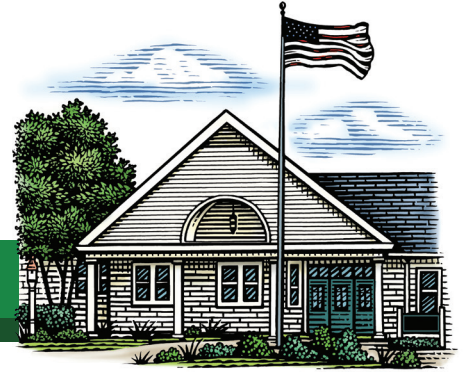


# Bannockburn Bulletin

BANNOCKBURN SCHOOL DISTRICT 106

SPRING 2019



## Q&A with New Bannockburn Principal

Bannockburn District 106 recently appointed Adam Mihelbergel as the next principal of Bannockburn School. He holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Kansas and two master's degrees, one from National Louis University in Special Education and one from Concordia University in School Administration as well as a Special Education Director endorsement from the University of Saint Francis. He has 11 years of experience as a teacher and spent the past year as the Director of Students Services at Bannockburn School.



*New Bannockburn Principal Adam Mihelbergel answers questions from students recently.*

### **Q. What is your vision for Bannockburn School?**

First and foremost, it is an honor and a privilege to serve the Bannockburn School District 106 community. My vision is for Bannockburn School to serve as a model of innovation for other school districts. With our incredibly talented students and staff, and the support of our community, we are positioned to serve as a leader in cutting edge instructional and social emotional learning practices within an asset-based organizational model.

### **Q. How do you define student success?**

In an asset-based environment, student success is more readily defined and recognized as we start with students' strengths and set goals from that point. Too often, as educators, we focus on students' deficits instead of focusing on all of the amazing things

they can do. It is our responsibility as educators to identify each student's strengths and leverage those to provide them with the best possible school experience. That experience should provide opportunities to innovate, imagine and produce.

*“My vision is for Bannockburn School to serve as a model of innovation for other school districts.”*

### **Q. What are you most looking forward to in your role as the new principal?**

I am most looking forward to continuing all of the great work that we've started this year! It's a new role for me but I'm not new to the district, so our work has already begun. I'm incredibly

proud of what we've accomplished this year and I am so fortunate to have been entrusted with the opportunity to lead us moving forward.

### **Q. How will you connect with students?**

The only way to truly connect with students (or anyone) is to interact with them in an authentic way. In other words, by being yourself. In my current role as Director of Student Services, you will always find me in classrooms working with kids and learning from the students everyday. Effective leaders are on the ground level with students and teachers in classrooms, hallways, the cafeteria and playgrounds. I will continue to be teachers' and students' partner in learning.

### **Q. How will you connect with parents?**

One of my favorite aspects of working in Bannockburn is our parent commu-

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## Director of Teaching and Learning Named

A familiar face has been named the Director of Teaching and Learning at Bannockburn School. Liz Loughnane, who has spent the past five years as the technology coach at Bannockburn School, was recently appointed to the role. Prior to arriving at Bannockburn, she spent time as both a kindergarten and first-grade teacher.



Liz says she wants to continue to integrate technology tools in the daily curriculum and provide students with 21st-century skills aligned with the ISTE technology standards. "Successful technology use at Bannockburn School allows for students and teachers to innovate, construct and create," she says. "Technology is used to empower student voice and allows them to share work along with collaborating in a global society. As a leader, I am here to support and cheerlead the students and teachers with technology usage and work alongside them to problem solve and make them all into global learners."

Liz has a bachelor's degree from Ball State University and two master's degrees including one in educational technology from American College of Education and one in policy, organization and leadership from the University of Illinois.

## Running Toward a Goal

This year Bannockburn School started a Running Club as a way to introduce middle school students to the idea of running as a sport, as well as to help students understand how to set goals and reach them through hard work and effort.

"It is great for the kids to see themselves getting better at something through consistency and effort," says Lauren McMillin, one of the Running Club coaches. "We hope this will encourage students to participate in cross-country during high school."

There are nine students that participated in Running Club and all have gained confidence and grown as runners. "It is a rewarding feeling for the students to start with a one-mile run being a struggle and building up to a three mile run," McMillin says. "That is a great life lesson for the students."



*Students in the running club that started this year have learned many exercise and life lessons.*

## Q&A with New Bannockburn Principal *continued from page 1*

nity. The daily visits and impromptu conversations at arrival/dismissal allow us to stay easily connected. With respect to broader connection, I have received positive feedback about Bannockburn School's social media presence and we will continue to grow that to ensure parents are seeing all of the incredible learning opportunities occurring each

day. My ears are always open and I welcome feedback at any time as I will continue to strive to ensure students have the ultimate learning experience and parent input is a key to that! I look forward to meeting any parents who I have not yet met. I also want to continue the dialogue with the parents I have met. Please stop by and see me soon!

**Q. What is one thing you would want the students and parents to know about you?**

Simple...we're in this together! The only way that we can continue to be better everyday is for all of us to take an ownership stake and hold each other accountable to our common goal: student learning/growth/happiness.

## A Fond Farewell to Two Retiring Administrators

Bannockburn School is losing two administrators to retirement at the end of the school year including Principal Debbie Barnes, and Director of Technology Ginni Glass.

### Debbie Barnes

Debbie spent a total of 31 years in education where she served as a special education teacher, elementary teacher and principal for 18 years at Bannockburn School.

What she loved most about her years at Bannockburn School was the relationships she developed with the students, staff and parents. Last summer one of her former students visited before heading off to college as a freshman and shared that Bannockburn School is "like a family and I can truly say, I loved

coming to school every day."

Debbie believes one of the biggest impact she has had at Bannockburn School is the strengthening of the schools professional community and the implementation of instructional practices that impact student achievement.

"It has been a gift and my greatest honor to lead this school," Debbie says.

### Ginni Glass

Ginni says Bannockburn School's staff is second to none with respect to teamwork. "Our staff has cheered for one another, cried together and supported each other every single day," she says.

Ginni spent 18 years at Bannockburn as part of her education career. Her favor-



*Debbie Barnes and Ginni Glass*

ite memory is walking into the school on her first day and finding 60 boxes of new computers that she says were about to change the building's technology landscape. "This was the first of many changes to come throughout the years as I worked with teachers and staff to embed technology throughout the school and curriculum.

## Support Staff Members will be Missed

Bannockburn School is losing two support staff members to retirement this year including Carrie Codell and Janice Michel.

### Carrie Codell

Carrie spent more than 20 years in education including 10 as a special education teacher and three as a kindergarten teacher. She spent seven plus years at Bannockburn.

"To be a part of an amazing and caring staff who always put children first and are always supportive of each other is what I loved most," she says.

"I believe my most important role at Bannockburn School was serving as a reading ambassador, working to build and strengthen reading skills while encouraging our students to develop a lifelong love of reading," she says.

### Janice Michel

Janice spent 20 years in education and she began at Bannockburn in 2013 as a substitute and in the fall of 2015 began as a reading paraprofessional.

"I love the way the staff supports and collaborates with one another and is committed to each individual student's



*Janice Michel and Carrie Codell*

success," Janice says. "My favorite memories are of watching students grow up over the years. I love reflecting on how much they have grown and matured as people and as learners."



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## Impacting Students through Fine Arts

Students at Bannockburn School are heavily involved in the arts from band, to chorus, to orchestra, to art classes. The arts hold important value for students because they offer an opportunity to explore connections to areas of learning and enhance understanding of skills taught in core curriculum subjects. They also provide an opportunity for students to explore a more emotional, imaginative and creative side of themselves that is not always possible in other subject areas.

“Often the fine arts classes are a time where we really see students shine,” says music teacher Liz Ciko. “It isn’t always easy to see some of the talents that our students have when they are working in a traditional classroom setting. When they are given the tools, time and permission to be creative and inventive with their learning, they are more willing to show their authentic selves and share their talents with not only their teachers, but an audience.”



*Students participate in many fine arts activities including band.*

The school is thoughtful about creating a well-balanced, comprehensive set of classes and activities for the students and then creating a schedule to make it easier for students to participate in multiple extracurriculars and additional courses. The retention rate for band and chorus is above 90% each year.

“Students enjoy their experience so much each year that they continue throughout their time at our school,” Ciko says. “They enjoy the various performance opportunities that are available and the camaraderie that exists among students in these classes.”



**ON THE WEB:**  
[bannockburnschool.org](http://bannockburnschool.org)



**ON FACEBOOK, SEARCH:**  
 Bannockburn School  
 District 106



**ON TWITTER:**  
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Visit the Bannockburn School District 106 website at [bannockburnschool.org](http://bannockburnschool.org) to keep up with the latest updates and access the most recent information about the school district.