

Winter 2025

Lawson Elementary Shows Up First in Attendance

What factors contribute to leading the Hazelwood School District in attendance? According to Lawson Elementary Principal Melissa Adkins, it takes three C's: community, climate, and culture. Adkins would know — Lawson led the District in attendance throughout last semester.

Attendance is a constant priority at HSD. School attendance is a crucial element for students to succeed academically and has a direct correlation to student achievement. Consistent attendance goes hand in hand with higher performance on assignments and tests. In addition, regular attendance and timeliness help to build relationships, increase confidence, establish routines, lead to stability, and allow students to take advantage of support in real-time.

Adkins says that Lawson's success in attendance is a testament to the strong sense of community that thrives at the school. "Our school is built on a positive climate and culture, where students, staff, and families work together to create a welcoming and supportive environment." She added, "This atmosphere is further enriched by a variety



of family events held at least once a month, fostering connections between home and school."

Lawson Elementary's house system, which focuses on mentoring, plays a key role as well. The house system helps in building relationships across grade levels, ensuring that every student feels supported and valued by their peers and teachers alike.

Adkins also credits her staff with creating a warm, caring environment for the students. "At the heart of our success is an incredible staff that goes above and beyond to ensure the success and well-being of our students. Their dedication and passion for teaching create an inspiring and caring learning environment where every child can thrive."

Lawson doesn't have specific programs or incentives in place to encourage attendance but relies on the atmosphere and regular outreach to parents. "We place a strong emphasis on recognizing and celebrating students who attend regularly, which motivates them to continue coming to school." She continues, "We also maintain consistent communication with parents, regularly reminding them of the importance of attendance and how it



directly impacts their child's academic performance. For instance, this is the third time our school has won donuts as an award for attendance, and we make sure to share this

achievement with our parent community, keeping the importance of attendance at the front of their minds."

Congratulations to the students and staff of Lawson Elementary for being a shining example of successful attendance at HSD!

Hazelwood School District

"A Culture of High Expectations and Excellence"

Proudly serving all or part of the following communities:

- Black Jack
- Bridgeton
- Dellwood
- Ferguson
- Florissant
- Hazelwood
- Spanish Lake
- Unincorporated St. Louis County

Hazelwood School District

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From the Desk of the Superintendent

I would like to commend the HSD staff for your contributions to United Way. Our recent campaign yielded nearly \$7,000 for this very worthy cause. Kudos to all who participated.

Finally, I'd like to take a moment to thank two of our community partners, Stifel and the IBEW Electrical Workers Minority Caucus, for their generous contributions. Their donations provided hundreds of winter coats for students in the District, and we are truly grateful for their support. This is yet another outstanding example of our community coming together to support the District.

As you are aware, improving test scores is a priority of the District and in conjunction with that goal, we will be relaunching our ***Be the Best on the Test*** campaign. The goal of the campaign is to raise awareness of the importance of state test scores and engage not only students and staff, but also parents and the community. The campaign will include various activities to encourage and support students to improve attendance and to put forth efforts needed to focus on academics, especially skills needed to perform well on high stakes state tests.

Parents who are looking for ways to help their child with schoolwork can reference our ***Parent Guide for Assisting Students with School Work at Home***. This guide, created by the HSD Curriculum and Instruction and Parent Involvement staff, offers practical advice for parents to help students at all three levels. It's available on our website at hazelwoodschoools.org.

Sincerely,

Dr. Nettie Collins-Hart

Hazelwood School District Superintendent

Greetings Hazelwood School District Community,

As we enter 2025, it's a great time to reflect on the many accomplishments that we've made together. The past year has been a time of growth, resiliency, and innovation. I want to applaud our students for their determination and drive, and our teachers, staff, and parents for your efforts in supporting our students' learning and development. We will continue to embrace our successes and opportunities for improvement.

Among our recent student highlights is a group of the District's high school students who presented innovative healthcare ideas to the staff of Christian Northeast Hospital, including President Rick Stevens. The presentation was part of the District's Center for Advanced Professional Studies (CAPS) program. Initiatives like these allow amazing opportunities for our students and provide invaluable real-world experiences.

I would also like to send huge congratulations to our Class of 2024 Aspiring Leaders Program System (ALPS) participants. The program is a professional development opportunity that provides participants a first step towards leadership. You can read more about this program later in this issue.

HSD News is a news magazine created by the district's Communications and Public Relations Department. Our team is comprised of:

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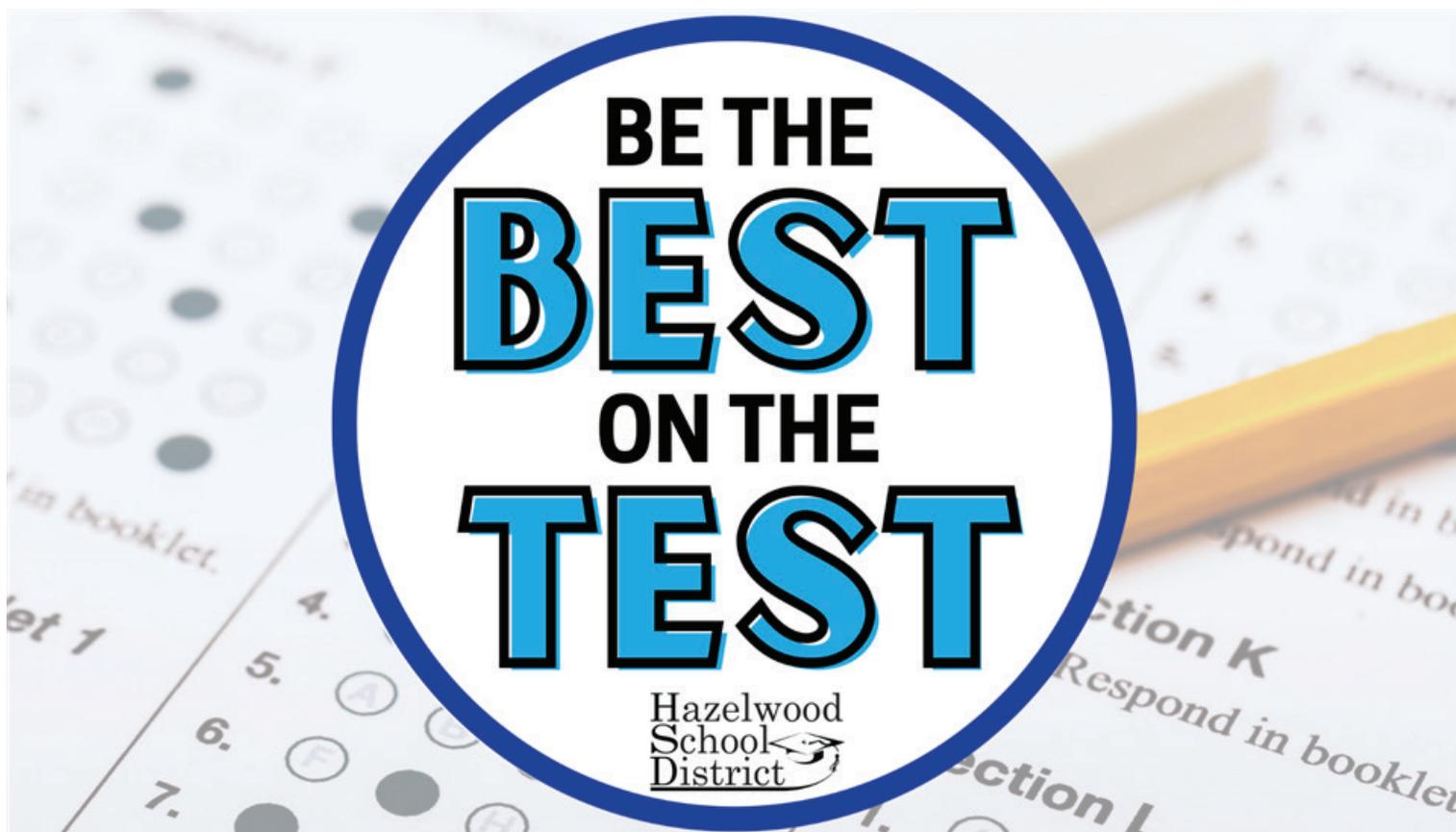
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Be the Best on the Test Campaign Kicks Off — and Why it's so Important

With state testing being a priority for the Hazelwood School District, it's a great time to relaunch our *Be the Best on the Test* campaign. In line with our culture of high expectations, our goal is to increase state test scores.

More activities that will include schools and the community will begin this month.

The *Be the Best on the Test* campaign highlights the importance of high test scores on the annually required Missouri state tests. Additionally, it reminds students and their families to start preparing for the tests by practicing math, reading, and writing skills, participating in tutorials and test prep opportunities, and taking the tests seriously.

But why are state test scores so important? The benefits of performing well on state tests are plentiful. Performance on state tests is the measure by which our schools and school districts are ranked and sorted by the state.

Read on to find out why these scores mean so much for students, the district, and the community as a whole.

For Students

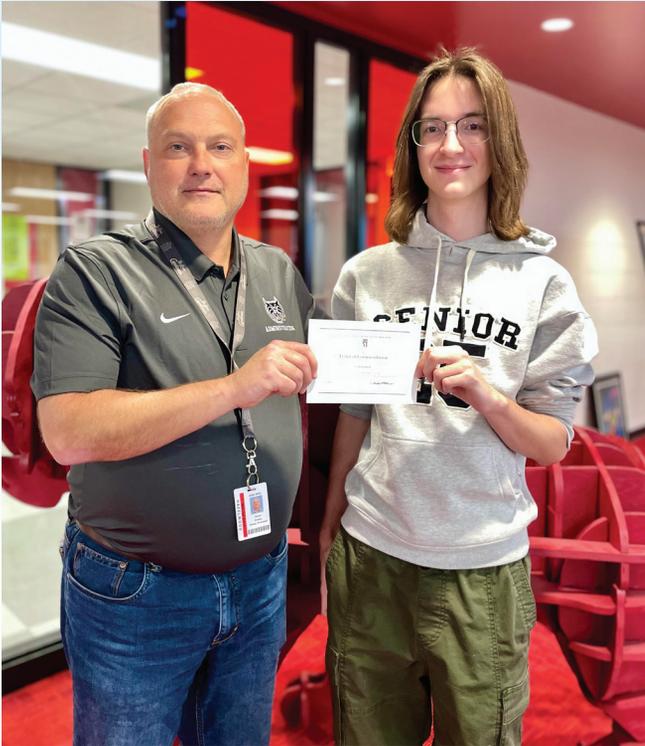
- Increasing student confidence
- Additional scholarship opportunities
- Dispelling myths about the likelihood of first-generation college students succeeding
- Creating a culture of high achievement
- Attracting college recruiters

For the District

- Remaining fully accredited
- Dispelling false narratives about predominantly Black school districts and students of color
- Remaining financially stable
- Additional community partnership opportunities
- Attracting more students and employees

For the Community

- Attracting new residents and businesses to the area
- Higher property values
- Additional tax revenue
- Increasing community pride in our schools



Hazelwood West Student Caleb Roe Recognized by National Merit Scholarship Program

Caleb Roe, a senior at Hazelwood West High School, aspires to attend medical school and pursue a career in psychiatry. With his latest accolade, Caleb is headed in the right direction — he was recently named a Commended Student in the 2025 National Merit Scholarship Program.

The National Merit Scholarship Program is a nationwide competition for recognition and awards conducted by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC). Caleb qualified by taking the 2023 Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) last October and received a National Index Score of 211. Students who scored over 208 were recognized as Commended Students.

Regarding the award, Caleb attributes his success to his experience in timed tests. He humbly added, “I was happy and excited to receive the award.” He continued, “Definitely, it’s a big achievement.” Caleb’s family was rightfully very proud of his success as well.

Congratulations to Caleb on this outstanding honor, and we are looking forward to seeing what’s ahead for him.

West High Student Earns Perfect Score on The Biology EOC Exam

West High junior, Robert Lowery, achieved an impressive accomplishment by receiving a perfect score on the most recent Biology End of Course (EOC) exam — a first in the Hazelwood School District for Biology. Since 2020, more than 4,000 students have taken the Biology EOC exam, with only six scoring 98%. His achievement continues to stand out as a remarkable milestone.

“Robert was a great student in the class and it’s exciting to see that his effort in class reflected on the End of Course exam,” said West High science teacher, Jeff Morrison.

The EOC exam tests all Missouri Life Science learning standards. Topics include DNA, molecules found in all living things, and ecosystems. Students also explore genetics and how genes influence variety and diversity. There are over 20 learning standards, and students can be tested on over 50 questions, with 500 points possible.

The Hazelwood School District is proud of Robert Lowery’s record-breaking achievement!





Hazelwood Students Showcase Medical Innovation for Christian Hospital President and Staff

Students from East, Central, and West High highlighted their ideas for medical innovation to Christian Hospital professionals, including President Rick Stevens, during a presentation at the hospital at the end of the fall semester. The students identified specific problems currently facing hospitals and came up with innovative ideas to provide solutions. The presentation was part of the district's Center for Advanced Professional Studies (CAPS) program.

Necole Cheung, executive director of the Christian Hospital Foundation, remarked about the presentation, "I was truly inspired by the CAPS presentation! It aligns perfectly with the Christian Hospital Foundation and Community Engagement team's mission to build healthy communities." She added, "Furthermore, it reaffirms our investment in the Hazelwood East and Riverview Gardens School-Based Health Centers."

The students will have a follow-up session in the second semester, where they will have an additional presentation on their year-long research projects and share their findings to that point.

CAPS is a forward-thinking program created to engage Hazelwood students in real-world experiences, personalized learning, and internships with professionals in their chosen career fields. Through this course, students will gain valuable hands-on work experience by participating in internships, mentoring, and job shadowing. Additionally, students will develop the professional skills essential for success in their chosen careers.

The Medicine and Bioscience portion of the program will adhere to the Project Lead the Way Biomedical Science curriculum while also providing students with training in professional skills and hands-on experience in the medical field. During the first semester, students have been acquiring essential skills for navigating professional environments, familiarizing themselves with medical terminology, examining case studies, and interacting with guest speakers from medical professions. In the second semester, students will have the opportunity to engage in internships, job shadowing with medical professionals, and conduct research to address a real-world problem presented by experts in the field.

Here is the list of students who participated:

Central HS

Moyosoreoluwa (Moyo) A. Adeyeri
Jolaade R. Bada
Davion M. Shumpert
Raqeebah B. Sowemimo
Alaiyah Wood

East HS

Melissa P. Balley
Celina M. Bryant
Richelle W. Lacy
Ryleigh W. Lacy

West HS

Arianna Cole
Jayla Foster
Makayla M. Glen
Nishaben Joshi
Victoria C. Mitchell
Jaylen K. Stokes



HSD Students Serve as Election Judges

Eighteen Hazelwood School District students served as election judges for the St. Louis County Board of Elections during last November's election. Their participation was part of the election board's Student Election Judge Program, aimed at local high school students. The program encourages students to participate in the electoral process, in a non-partisan capacity.

HSD had the 3rd highest participation among St. Louis County school districts. The students received first-hand lessons in democracy as they assisted fellow citizens in exercising their right to vote. The duties performed included helping to set up equipment, arranging polling places, assisting in completing certification forms, and checking in voters.

Linda Bell of the election board said, "We are incredibly proud that the Hazelwood School District ranked 3rd among the county's school districts." She was also enthusiastic that participation has increased over the years, adding, "We are thrilled to see the student's strong involvement now."

The students who participated were:

Hazelwood Central

1. Ciarra Brabson
2. Jolaade Bada
3. Jada Harrell
4. Ellicia Lumsden
5. Alicia McCain
6. Karrington Rainey
7. Rageebah Sowemimo
8. Treshaun Turks

Hazelwood East

1. Gian Cayetano
2. Zamouri Lee
3. Amber Lucas

Hazelwood West

1. Gavin Hart
2. Jeremy Holland
3. Frank Mwangi
4. Aniya Shearer
5. Elyse Townsend
6. Kyndall Winters
7. Andre Wynne

NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

FOR

HAZELWOOD EAST MIDDLE SCHOOL 8TH GRADE CENTER

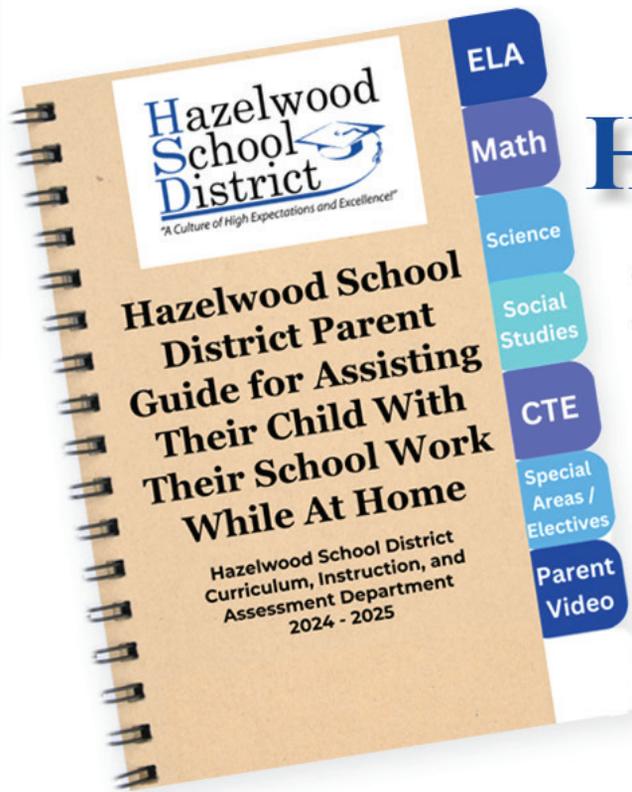
Located at Hazelwood East High School, the 8th Grade Center offers students innovative classes to prepare them for careers in growing professions.

East Middle offers students an accelerated program where they take both middle and high school courses and graduate in three years, a four-year program where students take courses at the community college and graduate with both a high school diploma and an associate's degree, as well as accelerated job training and career certifications.

Innovative | Futuristic | Redefining College Ready

For more information, visit www.hazelwoodschoools.org/ems





HSD Parent Guide for Assisting Students with School Work

Are you a parent who is looking for effective ways to help your child with their school work? We're here to help!

Take advantage of our guide titled, "Hazelwood School District Parent Guide for Assisting Their Child with Their School Work at Home." This handy guide was created by the HSD Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Department. You'll find practical advice for parents to help students at all three levels (elementary, middle, and high school) through math, science, social studies, and English language arts.

In addition, our Parent University video will help you access your child's digital classroom in a few easy steps. You can find the guide and video on our website at hazelwoodschoools.org.

Keeven Elementary Wins Award from SLU PRiME Center

Keeven Elementary School recently received an honor they can be very proud of — they placed 20th in mathematics growth across the entire state for all students in the 2023-2024 school year. The recognition was just announced as part of the PRiME Center Growth Awards from the PRiME Center at St Louis University, which promotes outstanding student growth.

"With the district putting such a premium on growth and academic excellence, we are proud of Keeven's students and staff for this outstanding recognition," said Hazelwood Superintendent Dr. Nettie Collins-Hart. She continued, "This recognition puts a spotlight on our students' ability to solve complex problems and think critically. We look forward to building on this achievement on a school and district-wide level as we strive for more successes in the future."



The Policy Research in Missouri Education (PRiME) Center is a research center housed at the St. Louis University School of Education. Their statewide PRiME Growth Report was published in January 2025, covering growth scores from 2022-2023 and 2023-2024. The center's research focuses on student growth from year to year in subjects including math and reading. The report highlights discrepancies between proficiency scores and growth scores and serves to urge stakeholders, including educators and parents, to consider a metric other than MAP scores and proficiency rates when discussing student achievement.

Class of 2024 ALPS Participants Continue Their Path to Leadership

The HSD Aspiring Leaders Program System (ALPS) is billed as, “the first step on the path to leadership.” It’s a professional development opportunity that gives the leaders of tomorrow a chance to build their leadership skills today. The Class of 2024 celebrated its graduation at the administration building last semester. This class included:

Nichole Bolanos, Russell
Sharee Buress, Grannemann
Dr. Monica Diggs, HR/TLC
Nakeesha Jenkins, Grannemann
Dr. Kenton Meshon, East High
Molly Morgan, Barrington
Isabel Stern, Jury
Collin Underwood, Jury
Chrystal Williams-Alberty, Grannemann

ALPS participants receive year-long professional development and exposure to leadership situations that will prepare them to pursue future leadership roles. The initiative offers an opportunity to build leadership skills and take on meaningful leadership roles.

Dr. Evelyn Woods, director of human resources, extolled the virtues of the ALPS program and remarked, “When educators take on leadership roles, it can lead to improved student achievement by allowing them to navigate challenges more effectively, advocate for students, and inspire both students and colleagues.”

Participants attend leadership training throughout the school year, along with a host of targeted learning opportunities, followed by an end-of-program culminating experience. In addition, participants receive training from current district leaders which provides opportunities for participants to reflect on growing skills. The goal is to make sure that future leaders have the skills they need to take HSD to the next level of success.

A big round of applause to the 9th cohort, and we wish them well on their path to leadership.





One Semester, One Cause: Celebrating Three Honorees for HSD's Teacher Proud Tuesday

The 2024-2025 Hazelwood School District's first-semester Teacher Proud Tuesday campaign is privileged to honor three exceptional educators who embody the very heart of teaching: Jack Gillespie, a Cold Water pre-K teacher; Walker Reading Specialist Molly Jones, and Corbin Conaway, a Brown first grade teacher. Through their compassion, they create safe spaces where every student feels valued. With empathy, they meet their students where they are, offering understanding and support. Their creativity ignites a love for learning, making lessons come alive in ways that inspire curiosity. With patience they guide their students through challenges, encouraging growth and resilience.

"Every day, I am trying to guide students to take responsibility, to be resilient, and to work together," Gillespie emphasized. "I want my students to learn how to do school. If I can spark the quest for knowledge with empathy, I am making the impact I seek."

Cold Water Principal Nick Traughber echoed Gillespie's sentiments about fostering a community stating, "Mr. Gillespie has been a great addition to the Cold Water staff. He's done an excellent job creating positive relationships with students, parents, and staff." Traughber added, "He differentiates his daily instruction to meet all of his students' needs."

Walker reading specialist, Molly Jones, wears a myriad of hats. Last year, Jones created a Free Little Library outside her classroom for students to borrow and keep to add to their libraries. Additionally, she takes and collects photos, and manages the Walker Facebook page.

Upon learning about her nomination, Jones was thrilled, a testament to her hard work and dedication.

"I was super happy to hear I was recognized by one of my

colleagues. While I can only service a certain number of kids daily, every reader in our building is important to me. I try hard to provide our staff with resources that they can use to help our kids be successful. I love collaborating with my staff, and I am so lucky to work with the teachers at Walker daily."

Walker principal, Dr. John Koeneker, expressed how awe-inspiring Jones was to the team, sharing, "Our reading specialist, Mrs. Jones, is such an indispensable asset at Walker. She makes us smart with reading. She makes us shine with social media, and she makes us awesome by being on our team!"

Brown first-grade teacher, Corbin Conaway, received several nominations, which spoke to his communication skills with parents and his caring heart for his students. He was humble about his recognition and summed up his sentiment with a quote from the fictional Batman character Alfred Pennyworth: "Why do we fall, Bruce? So that we can learn to pick ourselves up." Conaway added, "This quote represents me because I make mistakes and recognize them. The only way to learn from them and help children succeed is to get back up and try again. I want my students to be able to do the same by watching and learning from me."

Brown principal, Melanie Davison, emphasized how outgoing Conaway's interaction has been with students, adding value to their connection and classroom culture.

"Mr. Conaway goes out of his way to make learning fun. He loves his students and always goes above and beyond for them daily. Mr. Conaway loves superheroes and Marvel. To his students, he is their superhero."

Congratulations to all three of our Teacher Proud Tuesday honorees. We appreciate their ability to raise their voices daily and make a difference in students' lives.

Former Hazelwood School District Cafeteria Worker Now Serves Up Lessons in the Classroom

Healthy eating habits are developed by understanding food groups and the body's anatomy to improve overall quality of life. For East High family and consumer science teacher, Karen Parker-Higgins, a love of food science transitioned her background in food service management and nutrition into the classroom.

"I felt a strong connection with the students I interacted with in the cafeteria," Parker-Higgins remarked. "I wanted to have a greater impact by teaching them about nutrition and healthy eating."

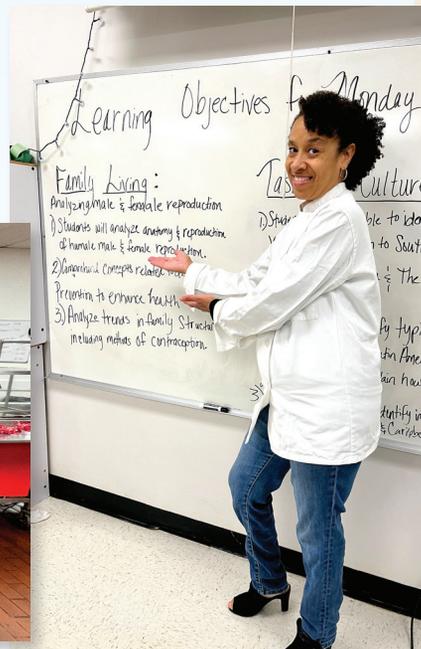
Initially, Parker-Higgins pursued a career as a registered dietitian; however, family responsibilities arose that prevented her from completing the required internship. Persistence kept her focused on maintaining her connection with food and nutrition.

After working in food service management for many years, including during the COVID-19 pandemic, she decided to shift gears and pursue a career in teaching. She was inspired after attending a presentation in HSD about recruiting teachers. This led her to enroll in a master's program in teaching at St. Louis University, which she is currently completing while working as a family and consumer science teacher.

"I want to teach my students to view food as medicine," Parker-Higgins explained. "I want them to understand the connection between the foods they eat and their health, and to be able to identify the nutritional value in the foods they consume — empowering them to make healthier choices throughout their lives."

As a first-year teacher, Parker-Higgins is striving to become better daily. For her, educating and empowering students on the importance of nutrition comes with excitement.

As Ms. Parker-Higgins continues to raise her voice about the importance of nutrition, we look forward to her sharing her knowledge with Hazelwood students.





Twillman Principal Honored with Making a Difference Award

Twillman Building principal Carla Leggett is elated to be honored by the Phi Nu Zeta Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated for “Making a Difference” in the lives of students, staff, colleagues, and community members. Leggett’s impactful leadership in public education makes the teaching and learning process possible through dedication and selfless service in ensuring the future of the youth.

“I am truly honored to be recognized by Zeta Phi Beta Sorority Incorporated, Phi Nu Zeta Chapter, as a difference maker in education during National Education Week 2024,” Leggett shared. “This recognition isn’t just about me—it’s about the work we do together at Twillman Elementary, living out our motto: One School, One Team, Making a Difference. As a resident of the Hazelwood School District, I am deeply committed to improving public education in my community because I

believe every child deserves access to the tools and support they need to succeed.” She continued, “Phi Nu Zeta’s dedication to scholarship, service, and helping others grow in mind, body, and spirit is an inspiration. Together, we show that teamwork and a shared purpose can make a real difference in the lives of our scholars and their futures.”

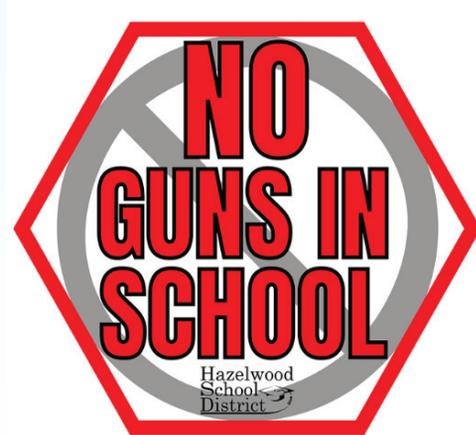
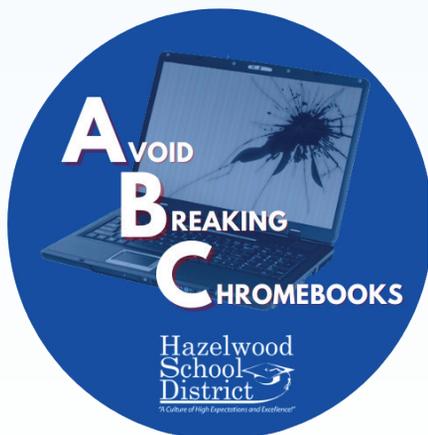
We are thrilled that Carla Leggett’s invaluable contribution to the Twillman school community is in the spotlight and shared in the celebration of the difference she continues to make.



HSD PROUD PASS

The HSD Proud Activities and Athletics Pass is one way the Hazelwood School District says thank you for your support of our schools. It allows active HSD Hero Readers, active HSD Ambassadors, and district residents aged 60 and over free access to high school and middle school events. HSD Proud Pass holders may receive one free food item and one free drink per event from a concession stand.

For more information visit www.hazelwoodschoools.org



Hazelwood School District's Robust Resources Cater to Student Needs

The Hazelwood School District's commitment to students and learning is well-recognized. However, did you know the district has over 50 in-house resources to support student graduation, secondary education, preparation, and overall wellness? Resources are categorized into mental health, academic, family, medical, and general needs.

"Our goal is for students to graduate and prepare to thrive in the community as productive citizens," said Dr. Jazell Thomas, coordinator of school counselors and social workers. "Secondary educational choices are increased and enriched by community resources. Ensuring the child's overall wellness is a priority, so we have increased mental health services."



Partnering with outside agencies is a big part of the mental health services. "Community partners, including CHADS for suicide prevention and the Timeout Initiative to address bullying, are key examples of ways to provide students a safe space to discuss social and emotional circumstances," Dr. Thomas explained.

The career education program, which includes internships and externships, serves as a vital resource for professional development, offering comprehensive support to students, staff, and parents. A prime example of this initiative is the district's newest thematic school concept at Central High, which features dual enrollment classes and career-focused activities designed to introduce students to the real world. Since its inception, students have visited the St. Louis Zoo, Wood River Refinery, Kemper Art Museum, Heru Urban Farming, and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit. Exploring a variety of career fields can illuminate the exciting opportunities available to HSD students, showcasing the many paths they can pursue.

Dr. Thomas cited how a recent visit benefited a group of elementary students. "This year, all of our fifth graders in the Hazelwood School District visited Junior Achievement BizTown in Chesterfield," Dr. Thomas shared. "During their visit, they had the opportunity to experience and work



in various industries for a day. This hands-on experience allowed them to learn about different careers and engage with those careers directly." The resources extend to health needs as well. For instance, students can hop aboard the Eye Thrive van and step off sporting brand-new glasses. Students may access the tools they need to thrive by receiving such options as tele-mental health services. With online therapy options and supervision for younger grades, help is just a click away.

"By meeting these needs students can focus on their education," Dr. Thomas explained. "Parents feel connected to our school and know they are in partnership. We are in service of our students and parents, ensuring our overall purpose of the district is in alignment as well."

HSD has ensured that supportive services are readily available to every student, covering all bases through community support. We encourage students and families to utilize the District's numerous resources.

Grannemann School Welcomes Generous Coat Donation from Stifel

Thanks to the incredible support from Stifel, Grannemann Elementary School is thrilled to announce that every student received a warm coat this season! This generous donation keeps students cozy and fosters a spirit of community and caring.

“On behalf of Grannemann Elementary School, we want to express our deepest gratitude for Stifel’s incredible generosity in providing a coat for all 456 scholars in our school,” Grannemann Principal Kimberly Beck exclaimed. “Their thoughtful gift not only brings warmth during this chilly season but also shows our scholars the kindness and care in our community. The smiles on their faces as they received their coats were priceless.” She continued, “Stifel’s support has made a meaningful difference in their lives. It’s not just about the coats—it’s about their compassion. Thank you to Stifel for being a shining example of generosity and positively impacting our school community. We are truly grateful and inspired by your kindness.”

Every year, Stifel, a full-service brokerage and investment banking firm, and the Stifel Charitable Foundation purchase over 2,000 coats to distribute annually to inner-city and county schools.

“It was amazing to see all the support for our students at Grannemann Elementary,” Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Dr. Erik Melton, shared. “The large number of coats that were provided by Stifel, in various sizes, colors, and styles surely made a large impact on how our students stay warm during the winter months. We deeply appreciate our community partnerships and look forward to the many ways that we can continue to work together to support our students.”

We are so grateful for this wonderful contribution, which ensures no child will face the cold unprepared. Let’s celebrate this amazing partnership, which is making a real difference in the lives of our students!





Central High's Overwatch 2 Team Celebrates Success in Esports State Competition

Central High's esports team is celebrating a successful finish after

securing third place in Overwatch 2 in Missouri Scholastic Esports Federation's Fall Brawl. This is their highest finish since launching the esports program under coach Bryan Hindrichs. Two solo players also found success in the Super Smash Bros tournament at the Fall Brawl, as Qua'lon Skinner placed 7th and Nehemiah Torrance-McDaniel placed 9th.

Coach Hindrichs was pleased about the Overwatch 2 team's accomplishment remarking, "It was an incredibly close match with the Hawks winning in the last seconds of the final match." He added, "We are proud of what the Overwatch team has accomplished. This was the first time the five have played together, and they came together this season and accomplished great things."

The Overwatch 2 team of juniors — Keegan Daniels, Morgan Wilbret, Larry Parker, Jayden Nadeau, and Camren Watson — highlighted important skills such as teamwork, maintaining a positive mindset, problem-solving, leadership, and taking initiative.

"We had to keep our mindset right throughout the whole game or we were just going to crumble," Wilbret, Overwatch 2 team

co-captain, noted.

"Half a year ago we began playing together, taking esports seriously and we built a team," Nadeau explained. "In Overwatch 2 your team has to be better. You have to stay on top of each other. Leadership is essential. It is not about the best player on the team, but the player with the most experience."

"In this game, you must be quick to execute once you get to a certain level of playing the game," Daniels emphasized. "You can't get too down or upset after a round loss; positivity goes a long way."

"If you work hard, you can execute almost anything, given a plan," Parker expressed.



While participating in the Fall Brawl, a state competition held in Union, Missouri, a representative from Midland University in Nebraska offered a \$24,000 scholarship to all players who qualified for the state tournament. This offer also included juniors, who would retain the scholarship for one year.

The Hazelwood School District is excited about what's in store for the spring season with Central High's esports team!





Oscar Chatman



Semaj Flowers



Bobby Cole III

Three East Football Players Named to All-State Team

When a high school football team has a player to make the all-state team, it's an impressive accomplishment. But when a team has three players to make the all-state team, that's incredible! And that's exactly what happened for the Hazelwood East football team this season.

Defensive lineman Oscar Chatman (first team), linebacker Semaj Flowers (second team), and free safety Bobby Cole III (third team) were all named to the Missouri Football Coaches Association (MFCA) Missouri Class 5 All-State Football Team. This designation recognizes the most outstanding players in the state.

Hazelwood East Head Football Coach Bobby Cole says that the recognitions are a testament to the hard work of the players. The Spartans had a successful season, which included winning the Suburban Green conference, reaching the Class District Championship game, and earning key victories over rivals such as Hazelwood West, Hazelwood Central, and Parkway North.

Regarding Oscar, Cole lauded him as the leader of the team

and the backbone of the defense. "His maturity, focus, and vocal leadership make him invaluable to our program." He added about the two-time team captain, "Oscar's dedication and character have earned the respect and trust of his teammates, setting him apart both on and off the field."

Cole noted that Semaj, who was also a two-time team captain, embodies the phrase, "lead by example." Cole explains, "He never complains — he simply puts in the work. When the lights come on, he shines bright."

Coach Cole is particularly proud of Bobby Cole III — after all, that's his son! The coach says he has watched his son play since the age of five, and watching his growth on the field has been life changing. About his son's skills on the field, the coach said, "His versatility — whether tackling in the box or covering over the top — makes him one of the best free safeties in the area."

Congratulations to these outstanding players and to Coach Cole for the exciting season and for continuing the proud tradition of Hazelwood East football.



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