

September 2025

A Great Start to a Promising New School Year in the Hazelwood School District!

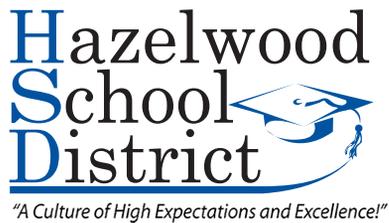
The first day of the 2025–2026 school year arrived on August 18th, and the Hazelwood School District was alive with excitement and anticipation. From kindergartners holding tightly to their parents' hands to seniors stepping confidently into their final year, classrooms came alive with excitement, anticipation, and a fresh sense of purpose.

"We are excited to welcome back our students and staff," said Superintendent Dr. Nettie Collins-Hart. "This year, we're focused on academic excellence, student well-being, and fostering strong partnerships with our families and community. We're ready to make it a great year together, and our theme for this year is Moving in the Right Direction."

As part of the big day, KTVI-TV (Channel 2) visited Central High for a special live broadcast of their FOX 2 News in the Morning Show on the first day of school. The broadcast showcased the energy and enthusiasm of Central High students, staff, and administrators as they returned to campus. Viewers across the region got a glimpse of the school's welcoming environment, spirited students, and the district's commitment to excellence in education.

Here's to a fantastic school year ahead!





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Hazelwood School District

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From the Desk of the Superintendent

a meaningful impact in the world. We are proud of every one of them and look forward to hearing about their future successes. Please join me in congratulating the Class of 2025!

One of the projects we're very excited about for the 2025-2026 school year is the introduction of Montessori teaching at Twillman. Montessori is a teaching approach that encourages hands-on learning. It's designed to help children develop at their own pace while building critical thinking and self-management skills. We are so proud to offer this to Hazelwood School District families. The program is open to pre-K and kindergarten students across the District (which includes transportation).

HSD is leading the way in innovative, student-centered learning with the launch of two dynamic math programs: i-Ready Math for grades K-8 and enVision Math for our high school students. These research-based programs reflect our unwavering commitment to excellence and continuous improvement. By leveraging real-time data, personalized instruction, and rigorous problem-solving, we are equipping students with the skills they need to succeed. Hazelwood is building a stronger foundation in mathematics, and I couldn't be more excited about what's ahead for our students and educators.

As a District, we continue to focus on academic excellence, innovation, and equity. We are also placing special emphasis this year on building strong partnerships between home and school. When families, educators, and communities work together, our students succeed.

Thank you for your continued support and trust. I look forward to another successful and inspiring year together.

Sincerely,

Dr. Nettie Collins-Hart

Hazelwood School District Superintendent

Greetings HSD Community,

As we begin a new school year, I want to extend a warm welcome to all of you on behalf of the Hazelwood School District. Whether you are returning for another year or joining us for the first time, we are excited to have you as part of our school community.

Each new school year brings with it a fresh start, new opportunities, and the promise of growth. Our dedicated teachers, staff, and administrators throughout the District have been working hard over the summer to prepare engaging learning environments that will inspire curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking. We are committed to fostering a safe, inclusive, and supportive atmosphere where every student can thrive.

As we reflect on the accomplishments of the past few months, I want to take a moment to recognize and celebrate our incredible graduates from May and those who completed their requirements over the summer. These students have shown tremendous dedication, resilience, and perseverance, navigating the challenges of their academic journeys with determination and grace. Whether they are headed to college, the workforce, the military, or other exciting paths, they leave Hazelwood ready to make

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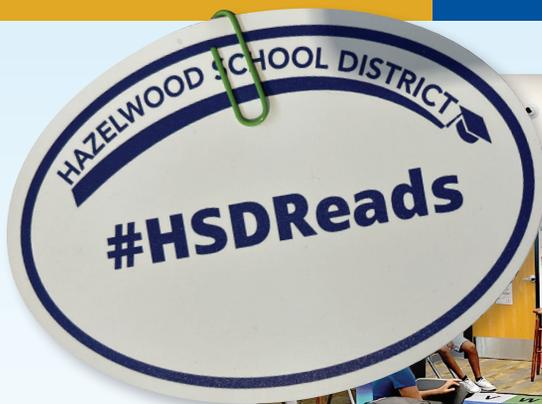
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Building Reading Excitement Over Summer Break

This summer, students across the Hazlewood School District turned pages and made progress in a big way through the 2025 Summer Reading Challenge! We're proud to announce that our students logged a remarkable 172,259 minutes of reading during their break, an incredible accomplishment that reflects both dedication and a love of learning.

Our District's top three schools went above and beyond in leading the charge:

- 1st Place: Lawson Elementary School
– 52,563 minutes logged
- 2nd Place: Lusher Elementary School
– 23,053 minutes logged
- 3rd Place: Garrett Elementary School
– 16,385 minutes logged

“Summer reading isn’t just about minutes logged, it’s about building habits that last a lifetime,” said Dr. Sherry Jordan, coordinator of teaching, learning, and curriculum. “Our students set the bar high this summer, and we’re excited to keep that momentum going as we head into the school year.”

In addition to the impressive school-wide totals, 17 students

met the ambitious goal of reading at least 900 minutes over the summer! These outstanding readers will be recognized in their individual buildings.

The celebration doesn’t stop there — any student who logged 100 minutes or more will receive a certificate, a free book, and a prize, courtesy of our District’s English Language Arts team. These items will be delivered to school buildings within the first few weeks of school.

Thank you to all the students, families, and educators who supported this effort. Our readers have made us proud, and we’re excited to carry this energy into the rest of the school year!



Hazelwood Seniors Excel: Class of 2025 Graduates with Pride

Families, friends, and loved ones gathered at the University of Missouri-St. Louis on Saturday, May 25, to celebrate Hazelwood School District's Class of 2025 at this year's commencement ceremonies. In total, HSD graduated 1,277 students in the Class of 2025. The graduating class earned \$28 million in scholarships.

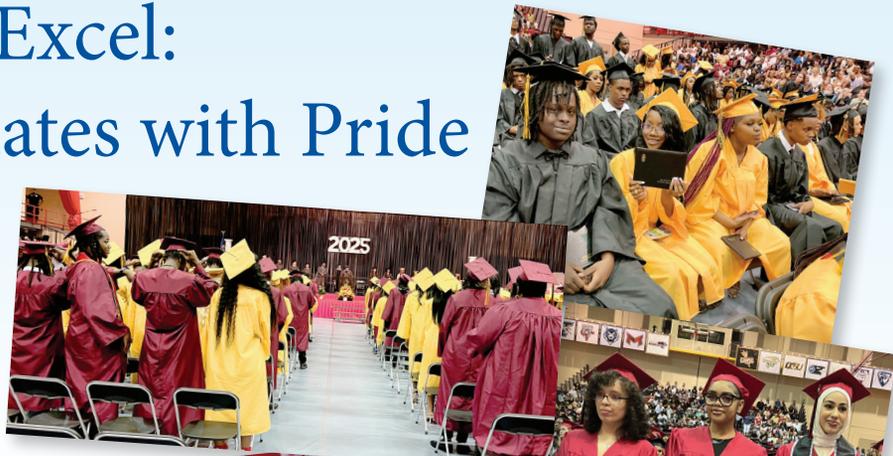
All of the hard work and dedication the Class of 2025 has shown was recognized as the graduates walked the stage to receive their diplomas. In three separate ceremonies for each high school, the students and audiences heard speeches full of advice and celebration from fellow graduates, HSD staff, and members of the HSD Board of Education.

The day started with West High's ceremony, in which 478 seniors received their diplomas. The West High seniors earned over \$17.6 million in scholarships.

Next, Central High celebrated their 438 graduates. Central High's graduating class received over \$6.5 million in scholarships. The final ceremony of the day was East High, in which 339 graduates walked the stage. East High's graduates collectively received more than \$4 million in scholarships.

In addition to HSD's May graduates, 22 students earned their diplomas over the summer. These graduates were recognized at the summer commencement ceremony in July at West High School.

Congratulations to all of the 2025 graduates! HSD is so proud of how hard you all have worked, and we can't wait to see what you do next. Best of luck in your future endeavors!



East High Graduate Qualifies for FBLA Nationals



Over the summer, class of 2025 East High graduate, Meya Elam, made history as the first student to qualify for the Nationals in the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) competition for personal finance in over a decade! The 2025 FBLA National Conference was held in Anaheim, California, at the Anaheim Convention Center. Roderick Allen, chair of the HSD FBLA program, East High personal finance and business management educator, and co-op coordinator, enthusiastically described this experience.

“This was big for us — we have not had anyone go to nationals in FBLA in maybe 12 years,” Allen explained. “Everybody competes in the districts, but Meya’s win in the district competition was not close. After that, she took second place in the state competition, which was a significant achievement. Because she placed second, she qualified for the nationals. The top four go to nationals. It was so exciting, like nothing I’ve ever seen!”

The Future Business Leaders of America program is similar to a school club; however, it is recognized as a national organization where students compete against other schools in 52 different events, ranging from public speaking to information technology to cybersecurity. Students can qualify for state competitions by placing in the top four at districts or through “straight to state” events on presentation topics like community service, real estate, and personal finance.

FBLA competitions advance from districts to state to nationals, with the top performers progressing at each level. District competitions are held in November, and state competitions are held before spring, around February.

National competitions are held at the end of the school year, in June and July. Twelve to fifteen members are taken to district competitions at Mid Rivers Mall in St. Charles, to increase participation to at least 22 members this school year. Missouri holds the most FBLA chapters across the country.

A celebrated athlete, Meya played both softball and basketball while at East High, earning recognition as the most valuable player on her basketball team. Her competitive drive gave her the edge she needed to qualify for the nationals.

“Me ya was focused, but I think she approached it as a sport, as a challenge, as an athlete would in a sport,” Allen added.

In the fall, Meya will begin her college journey at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

As far as the future of the FBLA program, Allen is excited to expand beyond co-op students, as this is one of their requirements.

“We would like to grow it so we could pull from robotics to compete in the robotics or cybersecurity events,” Allen detailed. “We want to pull from journalism. We want to pull from a lot of different places, not just co-op, so we can say we are Hazelwood, and these young people are our talents!”

The Hazelwood School District is proud of Meya’s remarkable accomplishment and looks forward to the expansion of the FBLA program.



HSD Students Build Community Through Science at the CLIMB Program



Over the summer, five Hazelwood School District students — Charlotte “Charlie” Saunders and Imani Mu’Min from East High, Vajah Bassett from West High, and recent graduates Jolaade Bada (Central High) and Makayla Glenn (West High) — took part in the CLIMB (Collaborative Laboratory Internship for Mentoring Blueprint) program at the University of Missouri–St. Louis (UMSL).

Now in its 11th year, CLIMB offers a paid six-week research internship for students from several local school districts, including Hazelwood. Interns work in UMSL research labs Monday through Thursday in fields such as biology, chemistry, psychology, and computer science. Fridays are devoted to college and career preparation.

Recent West High graduate Makayla Glenn, now headed to Grand Canyon University as a pre-med student, praised the mentorship and support she received. “We learned so much, not just about labs but also about college life, resumes, and even Excel,” she said.

For East High senior Charlie Saunders, CLIMB confirmed her passion for lab work and a future in medicine. “I greatly enjoyed it. It reassured me this is what I want to do,” she said.

Jolaade Bada, a Central High graduate entering Washington University, joined CLIMB to explore medical research. “I’d shadowed doctors before, but never saw what happens in research labs. It was eye-opening,” she shared.

East High senior Imani Mu’Min, already familiar with STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) programs, found that CLIMB challenged her in new ways. “Usually I’m the smartest in the room, but this made me think differently. I learned so much about Alzheimer’s, cell research, and the precision needed in lab work.”



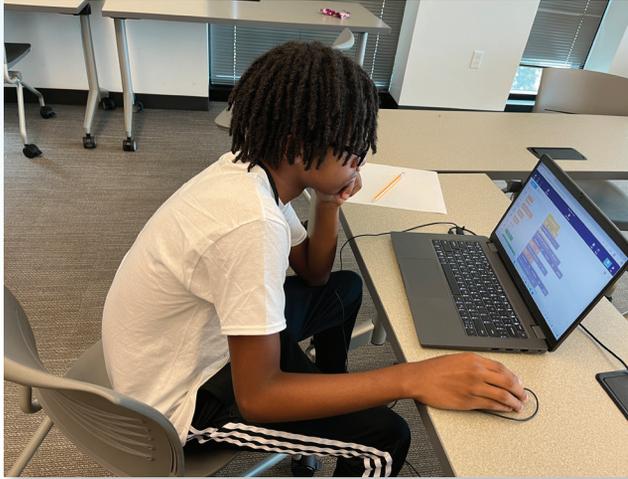
Dr. Bethany Zolman, CLIMB Director and UMSL biology faculty member, emphasized the program’s

broader mission: “Our goal is to expose students to scientific research, lab work, and college life — and to build community through science.”

The Hazelwood School District celebrates the achievements of its CLIMB interns and looks forward to their continued success in STEM.



Maryville University Hosts Hazelwood Students for Coding Camp



In July, 74 Hazelwood School District students participated in a week-long coding camp hosted by Maryville University. The camp aimed to spark interest in computer science and technology through hands-on learning. Students from Central High, Central Middle, East High, East Middle, North Middle, Northwest Middle, Southeast Middle, West High, and West Middle attended. High schoolers attended morning sessions, while middle schoolers participated in the afternoon.

The camp began with an orientation, followed by three days of design work. On the final day, students explored each room to see the projects they and their peers had created.



“Students come from various districts, collaborate, design, and build. It’s engaging, hands-on learning,” said Dr. Ashley McGhaw, co-director of the camp.

In addition to exploring STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) concepts, many students enjoyed the college campus experience.

“I learned to create escape rooms and animate objects with code,” said Terrell Davis, an eighth-grader from East Middle. “Being on a college campus and seeing how big it is was exciting.”

Other students also shared positive experiences.



“We tried different types of coding. My instructor, Cassie, was really nice and made sure we understood everything,” said Taya Miller, a seventh-grader from Northwest Middle. “Everyone was friendly and helpful.”

“It’s my first year, but I like it so far,” said Ethan Mbugua, a seventh-grader from West Middle. “Creating characters for the escape rooms was my favorite part. It was a great way to spend my summer.”

The Hazelwood School District is proud of its students’ participation and looks forward to continuing this enriching opportunity next year.

Striking a Chord: Hazelwood Students Thrive in Growing Music Program

Hazelwood School District is marching towards more options and opportunities this school year with an expanded band and orchestra program throughout our school buildings.

Instrumental music enhancements for the 2025-2026 school year include increased exposure at the elementary level, maintained commitment to middle school electives, and expanded high school opportunities, as well as the addition of Dr. James Garrett, Hazelwood's new band coach. The changes to the program aim to ensure seamless progression and skill development from 4-12, and increase participation and access to instrumental music.

"There's a real buzz in the air this year," said Garrett. "Our music educators are thrilled to see more students engaged in band and orchestra, and our students are equally excited about the new opportunities. Expansion means more access to instruments, instruction, and performance experiences, which allows us to reach more young musicians and nurture their talents from the earliest grades through high school. We're building not just ensembles, but a stronger, more connected musical community."

Elementary students across HSD will be able to take band and orchestra classes as part of their regular schedule, eliminating the previous barriers of time before school and transportation.

Middle school students will have more choices for music education with the opportunity to select from a variety of electives for additional music-related explorations. These options include beginning piano techniques, drum lab, guitar lab, and sectional classes including brass, percussion, and woodwind classes.

At the high school level, this year marks the inception

of HSD Marching 101, which is a combined marching band consisting of Central and East High students, led by Garrett. This band is a high-energy, HBCU-style marching band that brings spirit and tradition to every performance. West High's amazing marching band will continue in its traditional format.

"The Marching 101 will be performing at all home football games, community parades, and select district events," Garrett said. "Our community can look forward to seeing us at the homecoming celebrations, holiday parades, and other special district performances."

"Summer band camp was a huge success! We saw incredible growth in our students—both musically and as a team," Garrett said. "The energy was high every day, and our musicians worked hard while also having fun. It was inspiring to watch students from different schools come together, connect, and build a unified sound. The dedication and teamwork they showed during camp have set a strong foundation for an exciting year ahead."

The community can stay updated on the band's performance schedule by keeping an eye on their social media and school announcements for dates and locations.





HSD Launches New Math Programs to Boost Student Success

As the new school year gets underway, Hazelwood School District is taking a bold and strategic step forward in mathematics instruction with the implementation of two new, research-backed programs: i-Ready Math for grades K–8 and enVision Math for high school.

These programs were selected to align with Missouri Learning Standards and to enhance student performance on state assessments by offering more personalized, data-driven learning experiences.

i-Ready Math brings a powerful approach to elementary and middle school classrooms by using diagnostic assessments to tailor instruction to each student's needs. With this tool, teachers receive real-time data that allows for targeted support and timely interventions — ensuring students get help where they need it most. Additionally, the program is vertically aligned from kindergarten through 8th grade, providing a consistent and connected path for student learning year after year.

At the high school level, enVision Math focuses on building both conceptual understanding and procedural fluency, which are essential skills for success on End-of-Course exams. The program offers a rich blend of interactive digital tools, scaffolded support, and rigorous problem-solving opportunities that equip students for the challenges of today and the possibilities of tomorrow.

“These programs represent a cohesive, rigorous, and data-driven approach to math instruction,” said Dr. Erik Melton, assistant superintendent for instruction. “I’m confident they will help us lay the foundation for lasting student growth and achievement.”

With these updates, the District is committed to ensuring every student is equipped with the skills, confidence, and support they need to thrive in math — and beyond.

Innovators in Action: West High Students Compete at 2025 TSA Conference

Four West High Technology Student Association (TSA) members — Jaxon Paulette, Harmony Winston, Aleyah Brown, and Boston Hammond — attended the 2025 National TSA Conference in Nashville, Tennessee, held during the last weekend of June. This year's theme, "Tune in to Technology," was perfectly suited for "Music City, USA."

The National TSA Conference brings together over 10,000 students from across the U.S. and abroad. It offers students opportunities to develop leadership skills, explore careers in technology, and compete in national-level events. Attendees participated in meetings, the annual national business session, heard from national officer candidates, and took part in the traditional state pin trading activity.

West High students competed in several events:

- Jaxon Paulette and Harmony Winston, both freshmen, entered the Board Game Design competition.
- Harmony and senior Boston Hammond teamed up for the Structural Design challenge.
- Aleyah Brown (sophomore) and Jaxon represented West High in Technology Problem Solving.
- Aleyah, Harmony, and Boston also competed in the fast-paced Technology Bowl.

Aleyah qualified for the Photographic Technology event at Nationals after placing second at the Missouri state level. Boston and Jaxon also advanced to Nationals with Boston's Fashion Design entry, which earned state-level recognition.

It was an exciting and rewarding experience for the West High TSA team at this year's national conference!





Hazelwood Schools Honored for Exceptional Academic Growth by PRiME Center

The Hazelwood School District is proud to announce that five of our schools have been recognized by the PRiME Center at Saint Louis University for demonstrating outstanding academic growth in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics over the past three years.

As part of the PRiME Center's upcoming Special Edition Growth Report, which highlights sustained academic improvement from 2022 to 2024, our schools received a total of seven awards—an exceptional accomplishment that underscores the dedication and hard work of our students, teachers, and school leaders.

These awards specifically celebrate growth in high-poverty schools across Missouri, making this recognition a testament to the resilience and excellence present throughout our District. The following Hazelwood schools received awards:

- **Armstrong Elementary**
 - Ranked 16th in English Language Arts Growth among High-Poverty Schools
- **Brown Elementary**
 - Ranked 15th in Mathematics Growth among High-Poverty Schools
- **Garrett Elementary**
 - Ranked 11th in English Language Arts Growth
 - Ranked 16th in Mathematics Growth among High-Poverty Schools
- **Keeven Elementary**
 - Ranked 11th in Mathematics Growth among High-Poverty Schools
- **Lawson Elementary**
 - Ranked 14th in Mathematics Growth
 - Ranked 19th in English Language Arts Growth among High-Poverty Schools



Each of these schools will be honored by the PRiME Center in recognition of their achievements.

“We are incredibly proud of our students and educators,” said Dr. Nettie Collins-Hart, HSD Superintendent. “This recognition reflects the relentless commitment to academic excellence and equity across our schools.”

Congratulations to all the students, teachers, and administrators who have contributed to this success. Your hard work is making a measurable difference in the lives of our students and the future of our community.

HSD Leaders Reflect on a Summer of Adventure

Hazelwood School District administrators Juanita Shaw (North Middle assistant principal), Dr. Kelly Kozlen (Armstrong principal), and Dr. Veronica Macklin (Central High principal) spent their summer embracing bold experiences — from cross-country travel to skydiving.

For Juanita Shaw, summer meant a solo motorcycle journey to Alaska, covering Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska, South Dakota, Montana, Idaho, Washington, Canada, North Dakota, and Minnesota. A seasoned Harley-Davidson Road Glide rider, Shaw has logged over 90,000 miles across North America in the past eight years, including 43 states and four coast-to-coast trips.

“I travel to see the beauty of our country and to share those experiences with students,” Shaw said. “We’re all lifelong learners. Exploring new places and cultures helps me encourage students to pursue their dreams, no matter how big.”

Dr. Kozlen spent 11 days in Ireland, exploring the Cliffs of Moher, the Ring of Kerry, and historic landmarks like Dublin Castle and the Rock of Cashel.

“The landscapes were breathtaking, and the people were incredibly kind,” Kozlen shared. “Travel builds empathy and reminds me why our work with students is so important. Ireland should be on everyone’s bucket list.”

Meanwhile, Dr. Macklin took her sense of adventure to new heights — literally — by skydiving.

“I jumped out of an airplane not just for the thrill, but to show that growth comes from stepping outside your comfort zone,” she said. “Fear doesn’t have to win. Whether you’re jumping out of a plane or into a new challenge, believing in yourself is key.”

The Hazelwood School District celebrates these leaders for modeling courage, curiosity, and a lifelong passion for learning — encouraging students to boldly explore the world around them.



New Faces, Global Perspectives: HSD Welcomes International Educators

This school year, Hazelwood School District proudly welcomes 28 international educators who are bringing their passion, expertise, and global perspectives to classrooms across the District. These new team members come from diverse parts of the world — including Africa, Mexico, Venezuela, and the Philippines — and are poised to make a lasting impact on students and the school community.

The international cohort includes 20 teachers from the Philippines, five teachers from Africa (including 3 from Nairobi and 2 from Ghana), two teachers from Mexico, and one teacher from Venezuela.

These educators bring a wealth of experience, with teaching careers ranging from 7 to 30 years. Their dedication to education is further reflected in their academic achievements: 23 hold advanced degrees in education or their content areas, including one with a doctorate and a master's degree focused on molecular immunology and microbiology.

The teachers will support students in 6th-12th grade in math,

science, and Spanish.

In addition to enriching the academic environment, these educators are also becoming part of the Hazelwood community. Several are relocating with their families, including one married couple who are both teaching in the District, and two families whose children are enrolling in Hazelwood schools. Five teachers are joined by their spouses, contributing to the diverse and vibrant fabric of the District.

Keith Bausman, assistant superintendent of human resources, commented, "We are excited to welcome these passionate educators to Hazelwood. Their expertise and diverse perspectives will not only strengthen instruction in critical subject areas, but also foster greater cultural awareness and global understanding among our students."

Hazelwood School District is excited to begin this new chapter with our international teachers and looks forward to the growth, collaboration, and innovation they will bring to our schools.





From the Classroom to the Capitol: North Middle Student Honored by Missouri Legislators

This summer, Madison Farr, an eighth-grade National Junior Honor Society student and standout softball player at North Middle, was honored by Missouri Governor Mike Kehoe. Madison received a medallion from the governor after being named a top player in Missouri for the Class of 2030 by Legends & Legacy Softball. She also received official proclamations from State Representative Chanel Mosley and State Senator Angela Walton-Mosley.

“My trip to the governor’s office was cool,” Madison said. “I met Senator Mosley first—she gave me a proclamation. Then I got to meet the governor. His office was huge! We talked for about 20 minutes. He was cool — his kids played travel sports too. I gave him a signed softball, and he gave me a medallion. It was the best thing!”

In addition to her state-level recognition, Madison is ranked 83rd nationally and third among first basemen for the Class of 2030 by Legends & Legacy Softball. Line Drive

Media ranks her 15th overall, seventh among infielders, and sixth in the Midwest. She is also a two-time USA Softball All-American and a three-time USSSA Softball All-American Direct Invite.

Madison’s recent honors include an invitation to the USSSA Select 30 Camp, where she helped lead her team to victory in the Select 30 Game. She also received the Kendall Johnson Futures Award, recognizing athletes who embody Johnson’s legacy, and the “Glory of Missouri” award for law, honoring her commitment to honesty and fairness.

The Hazelwood School District proudly celebrates Madison’s outstanding achievements in both academics and athletics. Her recognition by Missouri leaders is a testament to her impact, and we are confident she will continue to inspire others.

Tutoring & Social/Emotional Support Line

The Tutoring and Social/Emotional Support Line is a resource for tutoring, homework help, and access to general social/emotional needs.

Teachers and social/emotional staff will be able to assist students and parents with both tutoring and homework help, and will be able to connect families with other resources as needed.

Call the Tutoring or Social/Emotional Hotline: 314-953-5140
Hours: Monday - Thursday 6pm - 8pm, Saturday 10am - 12pm

Scan the QR code to sign up for the Tutoring or Social Emotional Hotline.



West High Musician Hits High Note with Sphinx Training at Juilliard



West High student Sabrina Bush spent a portion of her summer at the Juilliard School for an intensive musical performance program, where she further developed her skills playing the double bass.

The Sphinx Performance Academy is a full-scholarship intensive summer chamber music and solo performance program for string musicians. For two weeks, Sabrina participated in private lessons,

masterclasses, recitals, career enrichment sessions, and received mentorship.

With hopes to attend Juilliard following her time at the Hazelwood School District, her acceptance into this program was very valuable to Sabrina. She said she first picked up the

bass three years ago due to her interest in the electric bass.

“My post graduation plans are to attend Juilliard and enhance my skills as a musician. When I found out I made it into the program, I was in a state of disbelief because I was first waitlisted. This program will not only help me hone my craft to a level it’s never seen before, but it will also give me lasting connections that I will keep through my music career,” Sabrina said.

Her mother, Samantha Bush, said seeing Sabrina get accepted into the program filled her with pride, as she has worked so hard and made many sacrifices for her musical aspirations.

“More than just the outcome, I’m so impressed by the effort and perseverance she has shown along the way. She has given up so much to accomplish her goals. She tackled every challenge with such strength, and it’s wonderful to see her hard work paying off so beautifully. I’m truly beaming with pride with all of her accomplishments,” her mother said.

The Sphinx Organization recognizes the lack of access to classical musical training within Black and Latino communities, and aims to provide more talented young artists with opportunities to advance their skills. Sabrina said this mission aligns with her own personal goals.

“I want to add diversity of all kinds to music so that no matter socioeconomic status, skin color, or disability, people around the world can explore music,” Sabrina said.

HAZELWOOD CONNECT

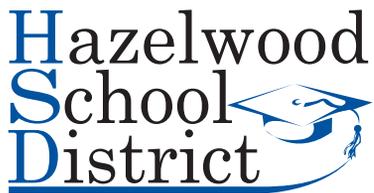


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PLEASE CONTACT KEONNA REYNOLDS AT 314-953-5204
OR VISIT HAZELWOODSCHOOLS.ORG.



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