



Bright Spots and Big Moments in Mapleton

Friday, Jan. 23, 2026

Welcome to **Spark! Bright Spots and Big Moments**, your biweekly roundup of feel-good stories, standout moments, and celebrations from around Mapleton. From student achievements to staff highlights, this community newsletter is all about what makes Mapleton shine.

Spark stories:

Bright Spots: Shout-outs and recognitions

Big Moments: Experiences, milestones, and celebrations

Behind the Spark: Staff profiles or features

Community Connections: Events, partnerships, family highlights

High Fives!

[Share your good news!](#)

[Send a "High Five"!](#)

Bright Spots



Mapleton celebrating best four-year graduation rate in more than a decade!

Newly released graduation data from the Colorado Department of Education highlights the meaningful work happening across Mapleton to support student success.

Mapleton's four-year graduation rate for the Class of 2025 is 78.9%, an increase of more than 7 percentage points from 2024.

This marks the highest four-year graduation rate the district has achieved in more than a decade and shows that Mapleton is not only meeting pre-pandemic graduation levels but surpassing them. Mapleton's 10-year growth in graduation rates is up 14.3 percentage points.

"This is exciting news for Mapleton and reflects the intentional work happening in classrooms every day to strengthen learning and improve outcomes for every student," said Superintendent Mike Crawford. Superintendent Crawford acknowledged there is still work to do to reach the state's graduation rate of 85.6%, but said the latest data provides clear evidence the district is moving in the right direction.

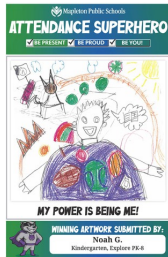
Graduation rates continue to improve for students across all populations, including Gifted and Talented students, Multilingual Learners, and students receiving specialized supports. "This growth is a huge celebration for our community – it reinforces how optimistic we can be about our students' futures as they leave us increasingly prepared for college, careers, and life," he said.

Access 2024-25 State, District and School Level Graduation data on the [CDE website](#).



Congratulations to the winners of our Attendance Superhero Poster Contest!

The following students were selected for their Attendance Superhero design by Mapleton's Board of Education. We are so proud to celebrate these talented students for sharing their creativity and their amazing attendance powers. Their winning posters will be professionally printed and displayed around their schools so their positive message about showing up every day can inspire classmates across our community.



Noah G., Kindergarten, Explore PK-8

My power is being me!



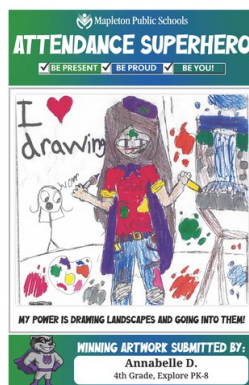
Jacob L., 2nd grade, York International School

My power is being on time!



Joseph D., 2nd grade, Monterey Community School

My power is being proactive!



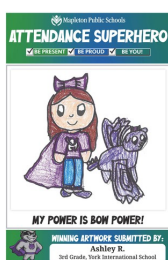
Annabelle D., 4th grade, Explore PK-8

My power is drawing landscapes and going into them!



Sydney O., 11th grade, Performing Arts School on Broadway

My power is super focus!



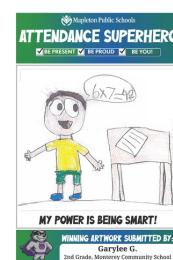
Ashley R. 3rd grade, York International School

My power is bow power!



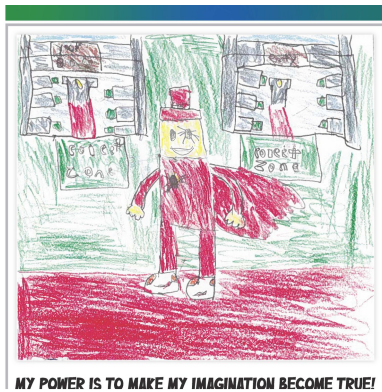
Zoe O., 7th grade, Meadow Community School

My power is everything comes to life when I draw something!



Garylee G., Monterey Community School

My power is being smart!



Adriel G., 4th grade, Explore PK-8

My power is to make my imagination become true!



Anwar E., 4th grade, Explore PK-8

My power is reading!

Big Moments



Monterey second graders set big goals for the New Year

Second graders at Monterey Community School kicked off the new year by setting big goals for 2026.

From reading more words and earning good grades to helping at home and being kind to family members, students in Ms. Erb's and Ms. Litt's classes shared personal and academic goals that matter to them.

As a **Leader in Me** school, Monterey helps students learn how to set goals, make plans, and take pride in their progress, skills that support both learning and leadership from an early age.

Mapleton's Air Force JROTC Off to a strong start in 2025–26

Mapleton's Air Force Junior ROTC cadets had a very busy first semester of the school year, taking part in service projects and events that build confidence, discipline, and character.

The cadets hosted the district's annual Patriot Day Observance Ceremony in September, volunteered to help clean the Platte River, and supported a Veterans Day flag-folding ceremony at the Aurora Veterans Home. They also launched their first-ever Saber Team, a specialized drill unit that performs precise, choreographed routines with ceremonial swords.



In just one semester, the cadets completed nearly 800 community service hours, reflecting the program's strong emphasis on service and responsibility. As the program enters a new drill season, cadets are looking to build on last year's success, when the Mapleton Raiders earned 16 trophies. The program is led by award-winning instructors recognized nationally for excellence.

Families interested in their students joining Mapleton's Air Force JROTC program next year can [learn more here](#).



District Performing Arts gearing up for a busy spring

Mapleton's Performing Arts programs are gearing up for a busy spring, with concerts, festivals, and competitions planned in the months ahead. That full schedule is no accident. Mapleton offers many ways for students to participate, including band, orchestra, choir, theater, marching band, color guard, and mariachi, a combination that's not commonly found in a single school district.

Beginning in sixth grade, students can explore band, choir, or orchestra during the school day. In grades 7–12, students can also join Mapleton's Zero Hour ensembles, which meet before school and bring students together at the Skyview Campus or the Mapleton Arts Center. These groups perform at concerts, festivals, and events across the metro area.

Recently, Mapleton Early Career Prep sophomore Daniel F. was named a first alternate on flute for the Colorado All-State Band and may perform during All-State Band Weekend, April 9–11. He joins a growing list of Mapleton students who have earned All-State honors in band, orchestra, and choir in recent years.

Learn more about Mapleton's performing arts programs and how students can [get involved here](#).

Mapleton celebrates Colorado All-State first alternate

Congratulations to Mapleton Early Career Prep (MEC) sophomore Daniel F., who was just named a first alternate on flute for the Colorado All-State Concert Band!

He said he was shocked when his teachers told him the news. "I was really happy because I didn't think I was going to touch All-State this year," Daniel said. "I thought I was warming up. I'm only a sophomore, and I still have two more years of high school left."



To prepare for the audition, Daniel began practicing last summer, working through two required pieces and a range of scales before submitting his audition recording in late November. He currently practices flute about five hours each week and is part of Skyview's Jazz Band.

Daniel began playing flute in sixth grade but says his biggest growth came in eighth grade, when he joined a high school wind ensemble that forced him to rise to a higher level. He credits former

band teacher Kirby Dillmann with helping grow his passion for music through the pieces she selected and the challenge they provided as his skills developed.

As a first alternate, Daniel still has a chance to perform at the festival and plans to keep practicing through April. The All-State Band Festival will take place April 9–11 at the University of Northern Colorado.

Looking ahead, Daniel hopes to continue improving and serve as a role model for younger musicians in the district who are just beginning their musical journey.

Strong seasons and standout athletes in Mapleton Athletics

Mapleton's athletic programs enjoyed a strong fall season, with Skyview Wolverines teams finding success across multiple sports.

The Skyview Lady Wolverines volleyball team captured its fourth straight Colorado League championship, continuing a run of consistent excellence. Boys soccer also won its second consecutive league title, and the district launched its first-ever girls flag football team this fall.



Winter sports are now underway, with more success already being celebrated. Mapleton Early Career Prep senior Ariyah A. recently earned her 100th career wrestling win.

In Mapleton, students from multiple high schools compete together as the Skyview Wolverines, making it possible to participate in a wide range of sports while still attending small, personalized schools that fit their academic needs.

Learn more about [Mapleton athletics here](#).

Behind the Spark

Meet the team helping families enroll in Mapleton

For families exploring Mapleton Public Schools, enrollment often begins online. But behind the scenes, three staff members help answer questions, review paperwork, and make the process easier.

Esmeralda Loera and Barbara Vallejos, who staff the Welcome Center on the Skyview Campus, and Kimberly Mendez, who supports enrollment from the district's Administration Building, are often the first points of contact for families enrolling in Mapleton.



Together, they assist families helping them understand next steps, gather required documents, and submit enrollment applications for any of Mapleton's 20 schools. The Welcome Center provides bilingual support in English and Spanish and works with interpretation services to support families across a wide range of languages, including Farsi, Dari, and Vietnamese.



As a District of Choice, Mapleton allows families to choose the school that best fits their child, regardless of neighborhood boundaries — based on location, program model, and more. Families living more than one mile from their school of choice may receive transportation to help make that choice possible.

To support that choice, Mapleton uses a centralized enrollment process. Families enroll through the district website, the Welcome Center, or the Administration Building rather than at individual schools. This approach helps ensure consistency and allows schools to focus on welcoming students once enrollment is complete.

Combined, Esmeralda, Barbara, and Kimberly bring nearly 50 years of experience working in Mapleton. Their knowledge, patience, and dedication are especially vital during enrollment season.

Families can get started [by clicking here](#).

Community Connections



Nominate an employee who is making a difference in Mapleton!

It's time to nominate an outstanding employee who exemplifies one or more of the values in our Standards of Excellence and advances the mission of Mapleton Public Schools.

As we elevate our Awards for Excellence to align with [Mapleton's Standards of Excellence](#), we've simplified this year's nomination essay to one powerful question:

In what ways does this person bring Mapleton's Standards of Excellence to life?

Please share a story that captures your nominee's impact — a story, example, moment, habit, or action that demonstrates one or more of our shared values: [High Expectations](#), [Authenticity](#), [Belonging](#), [Integrity](#), [Equity](#)

Employees may be nominated in three categories:

- Classified Employee of the Year (Paraprofessionals, Custodians, Transportation employees, Nutrition Services employees, Central Admin employees, etc.)
- Licensed Employee of the Year (teachers, any licensed staff)
- Administrator of the Year (school principal, assistant principal, department director)

[Submit your nomination!](#)

Nomination Guidelines:

- Nominations must be submitted by **4 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 30**.
- Nominees must be nominated by a current Mapleton employee, family/community member, or student.
- All nomination essays must be between 500-600 words in length, and must tell a detailed story about how the nominee meets one or more of [Mapleton's Standards of Excellence](#).

Nominate a worthy staff member here

High Fives!

Submit a High Five!



"High Fives" are a quick and fun way to celebrate the people who make Mapleton shine. From kind gestures and creative ideas to everyday excellence, these shout-outs recognize those who go above and beyond and remind us of the many ways our community makes a difference.

[If you know someone who deserves a "High Five", submit your appreciation using this form.](#)

Delicia Johnson, Mapleton Early Career Prep

"DC helped facilitate a restorative conversation with a student that went very well! We are so lucky to have DC as a trusted, supportive adult in our building. She goes above and beyond in her work and truly cares about relationships between staff and students. You rock, DC!"

Submitted by Nick Sabri

Kevin Diep, Technology

"Thank you, Kevin, for your patience and guidance in fixing an issue with the sound system in the main gym on the Skyview Campus. We had issues with both playing music and using the microphone and you took multiple calls, all off the clock, to determine the cause and helped guide me to a quick resolution so our players and fans could enjoy some warm-up music and for our announcer to provide play-by-play. We greatly appreciate you taking time out at home to help out! You're a true life saver!!!"

Natalia M., Meadow Community School student

"Thank you for being a kind friend. And she's about to lose her two bottom teeth."

Submitted by Ashley Webb

Amanda Logan, Mapleton Early Career Prep

"In my five years being here, Amanda has regularly shown that she is a competent provider and expert in her field. She is always willing to be flexible, help others, and provide tough love to students when necessary. She is always prepared, doesn't steal the spotlight from others, and is able to organize everyone's thoughts when things are chaos. She truly exemplifies all of the qualities you would want in a leader and I'm thankful she's on my team."

Submitted by Mary Applonie Wight

Tessa Crooks and Dana Young, Explore PK-8; Myrna D  a and Monica Ramirez, Monterey Sam Hernandez at Performing Arts School on Broadway

"Avengers, assemble! A huge high five and thank you to these ladies for helping track down our anonymous Attendance Superheroes. With some impressive detective work, they helped me identify the names and grade levels for over 30 student drawings that came in without any identifying information. I truly couldn't have done this without them!"

Submitted by Karina Kucherova

Payroll/Business Services

"A heartfelt thank you to our Business Services team for your incredible dedication in finding a payroll solution that seamlessly integrates with iVisions! This improvement ensures staff can easily view their accurate time-off balances and helps lighten the workload of managing time and attendance.

The time, effort, training, and heavy lift that went into making this happen have been truly extraordinary, and is deeply appreciated. Thank you so much to the Payroll team and the entire Business Services Department for your hard work and commitment!"

Submitted by Tara McMachen

Submit a High Five!

Spark! Bright Spots and Big Moments – Call for Submissions

Do you have a bright spot or big moment to share? Email communications@mapleton.us, or call 303.853.1020 to share your ideas!



