

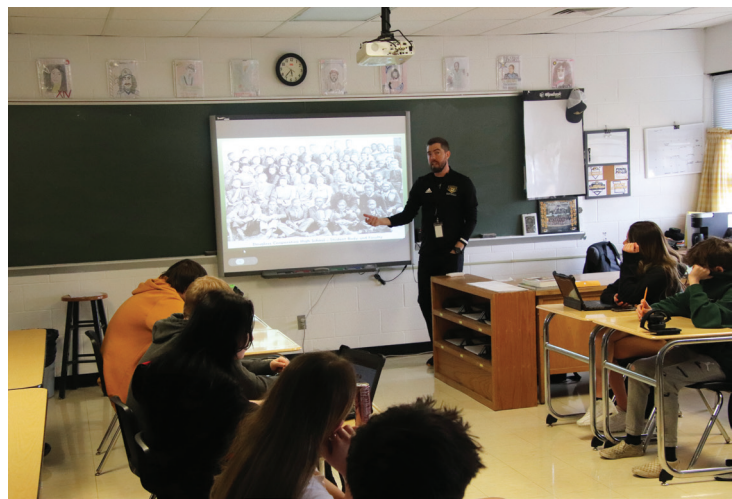


Honoring the Douglass School Legacy

On Wednesday, February 21, Festus High School celebrated the Legacy of the Douglass Cooperative High School in Festus. During the day, students in the high school social studies classes learned about Douglass School’s integral part of the history of the Festus School District.

That night artifacts from the old school, plus news articles about the school were on display in the high school lobby during the school’s boys basketball game versus St. Clair. The varsity team wore throwback Douglass Trojan uniforms during the game.

The Douglass Cooperative School was the school for African-American students in southeastern Missouri. Students from Festus, Crystal City, Herculaneum, Ste. Genevieve, Farmington, and Fredericktown all attended Douglass School. It opened in 1939 and remained open until Festus Superintendent Ralph B. Tynes began to bring students from Douglass to Festus following the landmark 1954 Brown vs The Board of Education supreme court case ending school segregation.



Social studies teacher Mr. Matt Gurnow talks to students about Douglass School's



The Festus varsity boys basketball team wearing Douglass Trojan throwback uniforms.

Letter from our Board President

Dear Patrons,

The Festus School District has another state champion among its students. Congratulations to Mya Hairston who won the District’s first girl’s wrestling state championship last month. In recent years, our high school athletic teams have turned out a number of state champions, including cross country team championships, individual cross country champions, baseball state champions, boys track state champions, and individual state champions in boys and girls track and field. It continues decades of proud athletic accomplishments on the field.

As successful as our teams have been, our academic successes are that much better. The Festus R-VI School District has the best APR score in Jefferson County. In fact, with a 90% score on the state of Missouri’s Academic Performance Report, Festus R-VI had the 26th highest score in the entire state and the fourth highest score in the St. Louis area. Sixty-four percent of Festus students scored Proficient or Advanced in English Language Arts, 64% scored Proficient or Advanced in Math, in Social Studies it was 56%, and in Science 53%.

Success like that doesn’t just happen. It is the product of hard work by teachers, students and administrators. Their daily focus on student achievement helps make it possible. Through their weekly Professional Learning Community meetings during the District’s late start Wednesdays, to Professional Development days throughout the school year, our superintendents, principals and teachers continually look for enrichment opportunities for students who excel and for successful intervention strategies for those students who struggle with some topics.

Academic success also takes a community like ours that is committed to making sure our students have success, not just on the field of play, but in the classroom as well. I’m sure I speak for the entire Board of Education when I say that we thank you for the support you show the Board, our Administrators and our staff. Without your support, both at school and at home, fulfilling our mission to “Educate All Students To Meet Tomorrow’s Challenges” would not be as successful as it is.



Doug Wendel

Doug Wendel
President
Festus R-VI Board of Education

Nominate A Former Employee

page 2

Nominations are now open for the Festus R-VI Distinguished Service Award. The district wants to honor former employees who significantly impacted or made significant contributions to student success. To be eligible, employees must have been employed by the Festus R-VI School District for at least 15 years, must be at least one year removed from employment, must have been involved in student success outside of school hours (club, coach, sponsor, PTO, tutor, community involvement), and nominators must be able to demonstrate the nominees significant contributions to student success. Nominations must include letters of recommendation from the person making the nomination and at least one other person. Last year, the District recognized former head football coach Bob Hollmann as the first ever recipient of the Distinguished Service Award. The deadline to submit nominations is March 31. You can find an online nomination form by scanning the QR code or by visiting the District website at festus.k12.mo.us.



Coach Bob Hollman (center right) receives the Distinguished Service Award from Board of Education President Doug Wendel (center left). Also pictured Board of Education Treasurer Richard Fadler (left) and Board of Education Vice President Mike Wolk (right).



State Wrestling

Festus senior Mya Hairston won Festus High School's first girls wrestling state championship on February 22. Hairston pinned all four of her opponents at the state meet to win the state title in her weight class. She is seen here with Festus Wrestling head coach Jarad Sheppard and assistant coach Steve Holt. Freshman Trinity Butler also brought home a medal. She finished sixth.



A Step Ahead Editors

Seniors Riley Vogel (left) and Kennedy Hale are this year's student newspaper editors. They format the pages of this special section.



The deadline for Festus R-VI Hall of Fame nominations is May 31. This award is for graduates of Festus High School or Douglass High School. Nominees shall have distinguished themselves in the areas of Leadership, Character, Achievement, Service, Suitability as a Role-Model, and/or Contributions to Society as a Whole. The permanent honor of being elected to the Festus R-VI School District Hall of Fame will represent individuals who, through their individual actions, have exemplified the established vision of the Festus R-VI School District. Members of the Festus R-VI “Hall of Fame” shall demonstrate the positive impact that Festus and/or Douglass High School had on them as an individual/student. “Hall of Fame” members are positive role models that provide inspiration, hope, support and relevance to our current students as they progress through their own areas of study, extra-curricular activities, and/or community service. You can find a nomination form on the District website, festus.k12.mo.us. Click in the upper left hand corner, then click on “Hall of Fame.”



2023 Hall of Fame inductee Rita Lovelace.



Nominate Someone Today!

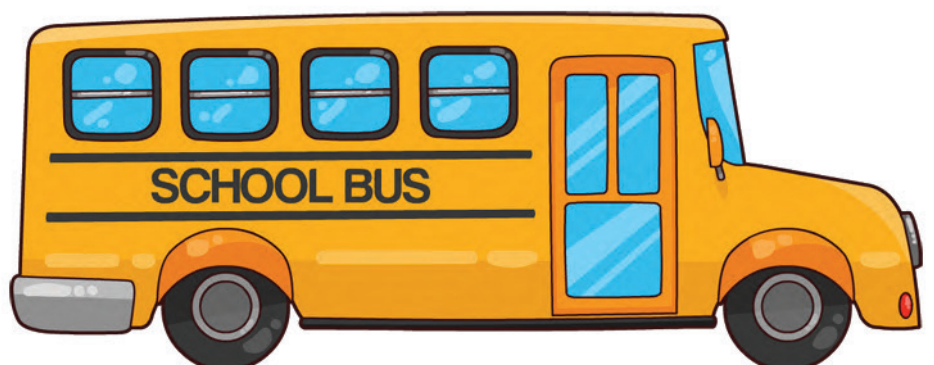
Bus Stop

In the Festus R-6 School District, ensuring the safety of students is a top priority. Recently, the district received fantastic news—earning a remarkable 90% approval rating in school bus inspections conducted by the Missouri State Highway Patrol (MSHP) which awards our district the “Fleet of Excellence” sticker. This achievement highlights the district’s unwavering commitment to providing safe and reliable transportation for students, all while fostering a friendly and supportive environment.

Festus R-6 school bus drivers are the embodiment of safety and compassion, ensuring that each child’s journey to and from school is not only secure but also filled with warmth and care. These dedicated drivers greet their young passengers with enthusiasm and kindness, setting the tone for a positive and reassuring commute. Beyond simply driving the bus, they serve as mentors and role models, instilling valuable lessons of responsibility, respect, and kindness in the hearts of the children they transport. Whether it’s helping a shy kindergartener find their seat or offering words of encouragement to a nervous student on their way to a big exam, Festus R-6 school bus drivers go above and beyond to ensure that every child feels valued and supported.

The MSHP employs a comprehensive approach to school bus inspections, meticulously assessing every aspect of the vehicles to ensure compliance with state and federal safety regulations. Trained inspectors thoroughly examine key components, including brakes, tires, lights, emergency exits, and onboard safety equipment. By adhering to stringent inspection protocols, the MSHP aims to identify and rectify any potential safety hazards, thereby minimizing the risk of accidents and ensuring the safe conveyance of students.

In conclusion, the partnership between the Festus R-6 School District and the Missouri State Highway Patrol underscores a shared commitment to ensuring safe school bus transportation for students. Through rigorous inspections, proactive maintenance efforts, collaborative partnerships, and educational initiatives, the district prioritizes student safety at every step of the transportation process. By upholding the highest standards of safety and accountability, the Festus R-6 School District continues to be a trusted steward of student well-being, exemplifying its dedication to excellence in education and transportation.



We are thrilled to announce several exciting projects funded by the E-Rate program that will significantly enhance our school's technology infrastructure and benefit all students, from our Early Childhood Center to the high school level.

What is E-Rate?

The E-Rate program, supported by the Universal Service Fund, helps schools and libraries with affordable telecommunications and internet access. This vital program ensures equitable access to technology resources for all students, regardless of their socioeconomic background.

Our E-Rate Requested Projects:

1. **Increased Internet Speed:** We are pleased to announce an upgrade to our school's internet speed! This substantial increase will provide smoother internet access for everyone, allowing for faster web browsing, streaming, and downloading educational resources.
2. **Wireless Network Management Software:** To further optimize our network performance and security, we will be implementing robust wireless network management software. This will enable efficient traffic management, improved troubleshooting capabilities, and enhanced network control.
3. **Internal Fiber Cabling Replacement:** Upgrading our aging internal fiber optic cabling is crucial for maintaining reliable and high-speed data transmission throughout the school. This project will ensure students and staff have uninterrupted access to essential technology tools.
4. **Wireless Network Equipment at Early Childhood Center:** Our Early Childhood Center will receive new wireless network equipment, offering secure and reliable internet access for our youngest learners. This will support the integration of technology into their early learning experiences.



Josh Bauman
Director of Technology

Counselor's Corner

Our Festus R-6 Counseling Department is excited to partner with Compass to provide additional resources available to our students and families. We love our role in our students' lives providing classroom lessons, group and individual counseling, career exploration, and helping with future planning. We also know that sometimes our students' needs are more extensive than we can help with within our role as school counselors, so we are happy that we get to partner with local agencies to try to meet the needs of all our students.



Our counseling department would like to share some resources that have been made available to our students and families through our partnership with Compass Health Network. Compass currently provides a counseling liaison to all buildings once a week to meet with individual students who require more consistent individual counseling. Compass also has a small clinic in our high school to provide more traditional counseling for students including psychiatry when necessary. Recently, Compass has started providing a resource called "Community Support Specialists" which provides therapeutic based community support services to both the child and the parent or caregiver. We have a community support specialist assigned to our district to come into the buildings and work with the student and also go into the home to work with the family of students who are struggling with mental health or behavior issues.

Compass has also shared with us a Youth Behavioral Health Liaison who will assist youths and their families with finding appropriate resources and treatment options for their behavioral health needs. She has access to many resources in our county and community.

We have also had the opportunity to partner with a prevention specialist from Children's Division. This person has been attending our Attendance Support Team meetings. She has been able to assist families with resources without opening a case through Children's Division.

We are fortunate to have these partnerships with both agencies to provide additional support and programs for our students and families.

Maintenance Check

As you might have heard, campus this summer will be very busy. Middle School will see progress on the new 6th grade wing addition as well as a Rooftop unit replacement that affects 6 classrooms. We are also going to be looking at bids to continue our bathroom renovations at Middle School. If approved this will mean a new face to the main 7th and 8th grade bathrooms.

Elementary will also see several changes, first being the replacement of 18 split system units in the 3rd grade hall. This will be in conjunction with roof replacement in the same section of the building. We will also be looking at bids to finish the partial renovation of the 8 classrooms in the 1st grade stack up area.

We will be completing our phase 2 renovations at the Early Childhood Center in preparation for the program's expansion.



The Nurse's Office

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Amy Horrell RN, BSN
Coordinator of Staff and Student Wellness

In the state of Missouri, it is required for school-aged children to be immunized against vaccine-preventable diseases including diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, measles, rubella, mumps, hepatitis B, and varicella or to provide proof of exemption to sustain positive health at school.

Students new to the district as well as students entering preschool, kindergarten, 8th grade, and 12th grade must submit proof of up-to-date immunizations. These can be obtained from your healthcare provider and can be hand delivered, emailed to the building nurse, or faxed to the nurse fax line at 1-636-392-4008.

We are aware of special circumstances, so if your child is eligible for an immunization exemption please submit the exemption card obtained from your healthcare provider or the Jefferson County Health Department.

Our district nurses work diligently to keep our system updated for the more than 3,000 students enrolled in the Festus R-6 School District. We appreciate your help ensuring current immunizations and immunization records for your student.

If you have any questions regarding requirements for your student, please contact me or access the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services website at health.mo.gov.

The Cook's Kitchen



Brooklyn Ragsdale
Food Service Director

The second half of the school year is off to a great start in your Festus Food Service Department. Make sure you pay close attention to the menus as we are finding exciting, new options! A few we have tried so far are Walking Taco, Chicken Alfredo, Taco Snack, and Popcorn Chicken Bowl. You can find updated monthly menus on the website under the Food Service Department section or on the homepage under "Quicklinks." Please note, menus are subject to change.

I would also like to remind parents that you can apply for Free and Reduced meals anytime during the school year. Festus R-VI School District relies on these applications being filled out for numerous federal reports that help with funding throughout the district. Free and Reduced requirements are different from Food Stamps. Even if you do not qualify for Food Stamps, please apply for Free and Reduced. The Free and Reduced application can be found on the school website, in any of the school offices, in the Infinite Campus Parent Portal under "More" then click on "Meal Benefits. It can also be sent home with your child. No matter your income, please do not hesitate to apply. Forms can be turned in by students or parents, they can be emailed to ragsdalebrooklyn@festusedu.com, or they can be faxed to 636-937-3650.

If you have any questions, please contact the Food Service office at 636-937-7747.

The Festus Food Service Department greatly appreciates your continued support!

Student Services



Cara Pellerin
Director of Student Services

It's file destruction time. Each spring, the district mails out letters to former students who have records kept in our special education files. These students are now at least 24 years of age and the records are no longer needed. Please look for the separate notice in this edition of The Step Ahead for a detailed explanation of what records we will be destroying. Please bear in mind that we are not destroying the entire file at this time, but many of the documents and test protocols will be shredded appropriately. If you have any questions about our file destruction process or need further information, please do not hesitate to give me a call.



Early Childhood Education

Celebrating Dr. Seuss Week

The Festus Early Childhood Center celebrated Dr. Seuss Week February 26-29, leading up to the birthday of Dr. Seuss Theodor Geisel on March 2. Students wore pajamas on Monday, and mixed-up/silly socks on Tuesday. Wednesday was Wacky Day and in celebration of Dr. Seuss's most popular book "Green Eggs and Ham," Thursday was Green Day. In addition to wearing green clothes, students also enjoyed green snacks.



Students and teachers celebrated Dr. Seuss week.
Front row (L to R): Mrs. Donna Myers (teacher), Joesphine Pugh, Adalynn Boyer, Charlotte Wilke
Back row (L to R): Aiden Boyer, Elliot Osmankic, Silas Yochum, Joseph Hunt, Eli Carwright

Space Lessons

Students in the Early Childhood Center had some out of this world lessons in February. They learned all about space. They became Tiny Tiger astronauts by participating in a space obstacle course, they created a small solar system, landed their astronauts on the moon, built space rockets and took a virtual field trip on a space shuttle.



Students get a virtual tour of the space shuttle with paraprofessional Rachel Hunt



Romeo LaBerta and Arlo Jenkins are "sending their astronauts to the moon."

Kindergarten Registration This Month

Kindergarten registration for the 2024-25 school year is coming up this month and appointments are now open. Registration will be held March 14-16 at Festus Elementary School. Children who will be five-years-old on or before July 31, 2024 can attend kindergarten in the fall. Parents can make an appointment by visiting the Festus R-VI School District website at festus.k12.mo.us and clicking on the story for more information. Parents of students attending the Festus Early Childhood Center do not need to make appointments for registration because their students are being tested by Parents and Teachers. Those parents do still need to click on the story for information about completing the online portion of the process. An additional date for kindergarten registration will be added during the month of April.



Parents As Teachers education Katie Shemwell tests Henry Mouser at the Festus Early Childhood Center.



Scan this QR code to be directed to more information about Kindergarten Registration

Students Celebrate 100 Days of School

On Friday, February 2, the Festus R-VI School District marked 100 days of school for the 2023-24 school year. At the elementary school, students in kindergarten, first and third grades celebrated with various activities centered around the number 100. Third grade classes all held glow parties to celebrate. Students in second grade waited until Tuesday, February 6 to celebrate the 102nd day of school.



Third grade students playing a tic-tac-glow game featuring the number 100



Beckham Hammock and Levi McWay celebrate the 100th day of school with a special hat

Celebrating Perfect Attendance

14 students at Festus Elementary school had perfect attendance for the first semester. In January those students got a special treat. They got to watch a movie with Dr. Siefert and Mrs. Benack. They also got popcorn, a necklace and a certificate. Congratulations to these students for being at school every day.



Front row (L to R): Ruby Sangster, Keegan Rogers, Leona Ellison, Owen Jackson, Cordelia Byerley, Jackson Evans, Emmett Brown, Claire Ryerson
Back row (L to R): Baylee Seabaugh, Aiden Davis, A'Zaria Taylor, Remi Rundel, Karolina Najera, Amara Dolde

Daddy-Daughter Dance

The Elementary School gym was rockin' on Saturday, February 10. That was the night of the annual Daddy-Daughter Dance. The event, sponsored by the Elementary PTO gives the elementary school girls a chance to spend quality time with their dads, or other important men in their lives. In the spring the PTO will also sponsor an event for the elementary school boys and their moms or special women in their lives.



Daddy Daughter Dance 1: Daughters and their dads (special guys) pack the gym floor for the Daddy-Daughter dance.

Festus Intermediate School

Play Unified Basketball

Sixth grade students played in the annual "Play Unified" basketball game on Friday, February 23. Play Unified brings together high school students and sixth grade students of all abilities to forge relationships. The high school student council students organize the basketball game and coach the sixth graders for eight weeks. It culminates with a game in front of the rest of the sixth grade students in the gym. The high school cheerleaders and jazz band help make the atmosphere extra special.



Andrew Ward goes in for the shot. Kate Lindsey is right behind. Austin Habsieger, Jayden Beffa, Shane Reese and Caroline Beard follow behind the play.



Logan Walsh (right) keeps the ball away from Logan Toeniskoetter. High school student Dylan Clinton (back to camera) helps.



Aiden Bowman, Landen Spence, Annabelle Buttner, Braxton Allen, and Gavin Evans cheer on the players from the stands.

Festus Intermediate School is helping to build an archery program in the Festus School District. Beginning in the fifth grade, students at the intermediate school can begin archery instruction after school. Thanks to a grant from the Missouri Conservation Department, and with help from NASP, the National Archery in Schools Program, teachers Austin Burgert and Jill Braddy are teaching students how to properly handle a bow and arrow and how to shoot. Nearly 60 5th and 6th grade students took part in the program this winter. Burgert and Braddy hope to one day expand the program into the Middle School.



Mason Jungewaelter and Abigail Reece



Logan Toeniskoetter



Ava Grass and Harmony Poirrier

6th Grade Band Performs

On February 15, 123 members of the intermediate school's sixth grade beginning band held their first public performance. The students have been learning how to play their instruments since school began in August. The students performed 23 beginning band favorites including Merrily We Roll Along, London Bridge, Jingle Bells and the all time favorite Hot Cross Buns. The 6th grade band performs again on April 18.



The 6th grade band performs

Kindness Counts at FIS

Students and faculty celebrated Kindness Counts Month February 5th through February 28th. The theme this year was "Building A Great Wall of Kindness."

Students had the opportunity to fill out "Kindness Notes" and place them on the Kindness Wall displayed in the foyer throughout the month of February, recognizing other students and staff that have shown them kindness.

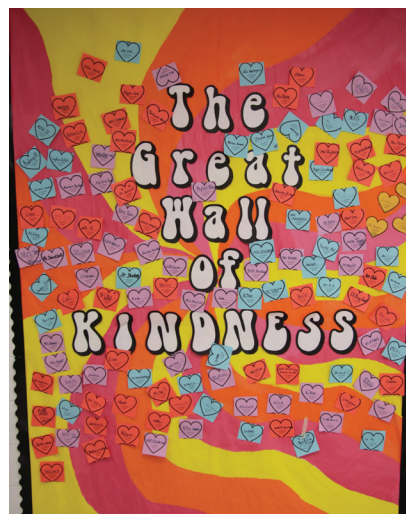
Students had an opportunity to fill out "Kindness Notes" in their classrooms as well. Every classroom door was decorated with a Kindness Poster and students posted kindness notes all around their posters to recognize fellow classmates.

In addition to all the beautiful displays of kindness at the Intermediate School this month the classes also played Kindness Bingo. Each classroom had a bingo card. During the daily announcements, the office called out a "Kind Act of the Day." Classes with the act on their card marked it off. All students were encouraged to put that kind act into action each day. The first class to bingo was Mrs. Tate's fifth grade class. Also during the daily announcements, students and staff recited the "Kindness Mantra."

It was a great month celebrating quality character traits that we hope to instill in our students for a lifetime.



A kindness poster on a classroom door



The Great Wall of Kindness



Mrs. Tate's fifth grade class, the first class to bingo.

FMS Tiger Talent On Display In Musical



(From L to R): Brayden Siefert (Lucas) and Gwen Kort (Wednesday)

The Festus Middle School Tiger Talent presented “The Addams Family - Young@Part” over five performances in early February. The musical is a shortened version of The Addams Family Broadway musical. Dozens of 7th and 8th grade students served as performers, directors, backstage crew and technical help on the production.



(From L to R): Lehla Edwards (Morticia), Elizjah Whitlock (Gomez), Gwen Kort (Wednesday), Brayden Siefert (Lucas), Hazel Overturf (Ancestor), Jacob Newberry (Mal), Brayden Rector (Ancestor)



(From L to R): Essence Dinkins (Thing), Sophia Crossland (Usher), Alexis Hoffmeister (Cousin It), Audrina Sitner (Usher)



Middle School Basketball Sweeps JCAA Titles

The Festus Middle School 7th and 8th grade boys and girls basketball teams made a clean sweep of the Jefferson County Athletic Association Conference Championships in January. On the girls side, the 7th grade girls beat De Soto 32-22 and the 8th grade girls beat Hillsboro 29-21. For the boys, the 8th grade downed Hillsboro 47-26 and the 7th grade boys knocked off De Soto 43-42 in overtime to take the conference title.



7th Grade Girls: Front Row (L to R): Hallie Dobrynski, Kensi French, Vera Sellman, Harper Erxleben

Middle Row (L to R): Karsyn Counts, Sophia Martin, Faith Bidlack

Back Row (L to R): Lia Kohler, Emma Wilson, Audri Sauer



7th Grade Boys: Front Row (L to R): Cooper Finney, Rylee Gray, Declyn Arms, Mason Metteer, Brendan Robinson

Middle Row (L to R): Colton Brinkley, Elijah Hinkle, Tyler Singleton, Bennett Spraul

Back Row (L to R): Coach Partney, Cole Parker, Keegan Womack, Joseph Hindman



8th Grade Girls: Front Row (L to R): Maliah Lucas, Brianna Oaks, Olivia Clinton, Paisley Landholt, Molly Roth

Middle row (L to R): Parizitta Skaggs, Maryah Farries, Lauren Whitehead, Abby Abrams

Back row (L to R): Me, Peyton Green, Mylah Dolde



8th Grade Boys: Sitting front row: James Arms, Quinn O'Brien, Keyshawn Hall, Landon Mercer, Carter Rush

Kneeling middle row (L to R): Dallas Carter, Eli Tilley, Beau Canaday, Aiden Schirmer

Standing Back row (L to R): Cameron Hofmeister, Myles Farries, Hudson Bates

December Student of the Month

Lainey Coplin



Lainey Coplin was the Festus High School December Student of the Month. She is the daughter of Jodi and Cody Mothersbaugh. Her favorite class is AP Calculus. Lainey is a member of the dance team, the tennis team, she was a marching band drum major, and she plays in the FHS Jazz Band. She is also the student council vice president of the senior class and she is a member of the National Honor Society. After graduation Coplin plans to attend Miz-zou to seek a degree in music or math.

January Student of the Month

Jimmy Wacker



Jimmy Wacker was the Festus High School January Student of the Month. He is the son of Dan and Caroline Wacker. He says he is happy and proud to be named student of the month. "It's definitely an accomplishment. It's about your body of work for four years. I was definitely very proud to be recognized. His favorite classes are Calculus and Cadet teaching physical education at the middle school. He is involved in cross country, track, basketball, National Honor Society, and student council. This year he was named a National Merit Scholarship Finalist. He plans to attend Missouri S&T University to study Civil Engineering.

February Student of the Month

Kennedy Hale



Kennedy Hale was the Festus High School February Student of the Month. She is the daughter of Doug and Jenna Hale. She says she was excited to learn she had be named student of the month. "It is an honor to be chosen out of so many students," she said. Her favorite class is AP Psychology because she gets to learn about the brain and human behavior. She is the president of the National Honor Society. She is also involved in Key Club, Student Council and she is a member of the archery team. After graduation, Kennedy plans to attend Southern Illinois University at Carbondale where she has already been accepted into the school's Radiologic Science program. She plans to study radiation therapy.

High School and Beyond Was A Huge Success

On January 31, Festus High School and the FHS counselors hosted a night designed to help students, and their parents, prepare for the rest of their high school career and beyond. Hundreds of students and their parents attended. The night included a large meeting with eighth grade students and parents to discuss the transition from middle school to high school. Teachers were also available to speak with students and parents from all grades to discuss class offerings and what is expected of students. Small breakout sessions were also available that touched on a variety of topics including dual credit and AP classes, the A+ program, college recruitment, a look at the various clubs and activities at FHS, how parents can track their students' academic progress, and so much more. Counselors and administrators say they were extremely happy with the new, improved format.



Ms. Pruneau (left) and Ms. Van Bibber (right) talk with students and parents about ELA at the high school.



High school counselors met with eighth grade students and their parents in two large groups.



Students (from left to right) Hope Munoz, Calvin Ellis, Cecilia Meppiel and Emme Coplin give students and parents tips about high school.

SME Program Gives FHS Students Real-World Work Experience



Senior Madison Austin stocks the shelves as part of her job at Schnucks.

Festus High School students are gaining some real-world work experience and earning high school credit through a program that is gaining rave reviews among students. The class is called the Supervised Marketing Experience or SME. It's a program approved by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) that spells out clear objectives for the class. It provides on-the-job work experience while attending school. Students get the opportunity to leave school as early as one o'clock on a school day in exchange for working at least ten or 20 hours per week. According to DESE "Students can make connections with real world expectations in terms of accuracy of work, production, staying on task, and responsibility for work... The SME program facilitates the transition from the classroom to the workplace." Seniors Madison Austin and Sophia Hensley are two of about 30 Festus High School students in the SME program this school year. Austin works different positions at the Festus Schnucks and Hensley is a teller at Bloomsdale Bank in Crystal City.

The SME program has two different levels. There's the 20-hour program and a 10-hour program. Students working at least 20-hours per week are allowed to leave school at 12:55 every day. Students in the ten-hour program work between ten and 20 hours per week and are allowed to leave school at 1:45. Students are supervised by the program's teacher, Mr. Rob Propst. "They are required to work those hours and provide pay stubs to verify they have com-

pleted their requirements," he says. "Along with pay stubs, students are asked to complete assignments related to different aspects of the business world. The assignments are geared toward bringing up topics that they may not really think about when it comes to working in a job or career like, safety instructions, internal communication methods, the role of human resources, or the role of the government in their particular job, just to name a few." Austin says those assignments help them with real world experiences, "I feel like that teaches us all responsibility and accountability."

Propst says the program has a lot to offer students, both tangible and intangible, "Students gain real world experience, earn money for themselves and their families and get out of school a little earlier than everyone else. They also can earn up to 2 elective credits that could really help their GPA." Austin and Hensley say the program also helps them manage their time more efficiently. "Going into senior year I only needed my English credit and so I just think the SME program is valuable because I am able to not take up all my time getting credits that are not beneficial to me," said Austin. "I can use that time more wisely, in my eyes, which is going to work and making more money which is something I am passionate about." Hensley, who works at Bloomsdale Bank, says without the program, she would not be working where she does now, "I now work at a job that closes at five so if I wasn't in the SME program I wouldn't get any hours at all"

Through both the SME program and other classes and programs at Festus High School, students are able to get a look at different careers and learn more about what interests them. Hensley says her experience in the SME program changed her mind about what she wants to do in the future, "I always wanted to be a teacher until I got into Mr. Propst's classes, until I took accounting here at school." Hensley continued, "If I would have never done marketing I would have never thought about becoming an accountant. So it really helped set me up and we have people who actually work in our bank who are accountants, so they teach me a lot about numbers and all of that stuff." Austin says the program helped give her ideas about what to pursue in the future, "Something that I really want to look into whenever I go to college is becoming a financial manager. Mr. Propst has really let us dig deeper into our jobs with the assignments. Getting a broader perspective. With senior year I'm trying to figure out what I want to do and math is something I'm interested in and bookkeeping was one of those things that was a light bulb and I thought that might be a good experience."



Senior Sophia Hensley working as a teller at Bloomsdale Bank.

Both Austin and Hensley say they wholeheartedly recommend this program to students and the numbers show the class is growing in popularity. "I feel like it's really beneficial for the people who have that strong work ethic and want to work and want to make money and support themselves," said Austin. "Having the extra time to work helps me to save money. So I am really grateful for this experience." Hensley says the assignments digging deeper into her job make it worthwhile, "I think it's really good. That way it isn't just a program just to leave school early, it's more about figuring out stuff about other people's main career and how you can get forward with that." Propst says the success he has seen has been fantastic, "The popularity continues to grow with each semester and hopefully we can somehow expand what we offer for our students."



Festus High School

Winter Sports 2023-24

Varsity Boys Basketball



From Left to right: Jimmy Wacker, Jeremy Davis-Mayes, Dashawn Bridgett, Aiden Clifton, Drew Johnson, Brayden Beers, Nate Womack, Izik Stafford, Jackson Smith, Braydon Wilkes, Hayden Bates, Carter Roth

Photo courtesy:
Wagner Portrait Studio

Varsity Girls Basketball



Sitting (L to R): Olivia Madden #14, Madison Souders #10, Anna Berezowski #21, Joselynn Yates #11
Kneeling (L to R): Elizabeth Skaggs #20, Avery Schmitt #24, Rylie Moore #34, Lillian Kennedy #22, Alyzah Scaggs #23
Standing (L to R): Coach Adams, Ciara McDonald #15, Addison Smith #45, Coach Hogan

Photo courtesy:
Wagner Portrait Studio



Cheer



Front row (L to R): Kaelyn Dorlac (captain) Ella Harris (captain)
Middle row (L to R): Baylee Corssen, Elizabeth Harris, Ava Lozano, Haylie Langston, Katie Buehler
Back row (L to R): Daphne Pellerin, Cheyanne Ehlers, Clara Lincoln, Abigail Smith, Corin Brummer, Audrey Brucato, Abela Winnett

Photo courtesy:
Wagner Portrait Studio



Archery



Front row (L to R): Sofia Griffin, Kritstina Gastreich, Kylie Clinton, McKenzie Miller, Ava Green, Robin Broussard, Lily Andersen, Cohen Hale, Riley Vogel, EllieAunna Thompson, Yurika Matsuoka
Row 2 (L to R): Avalyn Hampton, Kaydin Laws, Emma Stevens, Evelyn Sevick, Kaylie Grunow, Grace Vogel, Lillian Smith, AnnaMarie Sardo, Kennedy Hale, Kylie Tucker
Row 3 (L to R): Nattanicha Doungkaew, Makenna Prather, Alex Rhodes, Kenzie Zoph, Ava Lee, Olivia Lucas, Lilly Besore, Natalie Yates, Megyn Grunow
Row 4 (L to R): Anthony Frigerio, Ty Bushek, Trevor Bayless, Brendan Murphy, Braiden Blecha, Matthew Malusky, Sawyer Partney, Brian Rhodes
Back row (L to R): Davin Brown, Aiden Barnes, Chase Colatruglio, Ethan Charboneau, Owen Daugherty, Caiden Morelan



Photo courtesy:
Mr. Rhine's Photography

Boys Wrestling



Front row (L to R): Garrett Burgan, Ryan Dabbs, Tristen Deimund, Logan Lang, Collin Niere, Dylan Johnson, Nehemiah Ford
2nd row (L to R): Bobby Buehre, Trey Strong, Michael McCabe, Lane Esch, Hunter Burgan, Blake Naumann
3rd Row (L to R): Dawson Tucker, Carter Wallace, Josh Deimund, Carson Grass, Connor Rush, Landen Hummer, Jonathon Spink
Back Row (L to R): Coach Steve Holt, Connor Besore, Ryan Peter, Lucas Mercurio, Jarod Payne, Jesse McKeever, Coach Jarad Sheppard

Photo courtesy:
Wagner Portrait Studio

Girls Wrestling



Front row (L to R): Isabella Horn, Mya Hairston, Addison Cupp
Middle row (L to R): Carly Horn, Kelsey Stevenson, Dani Gullet, Trinity Butler
Back row (L to R): Coach Steve Holt, Karli Mayfield, Grace Dust, Coach Jarad Sheppard

Photo courtesy:
Wagner Portrait Studio



Boys Soccer Earns Sportsmanship Award



The 2023 boys soccer team
Front Row (L to R): Dylan Pridemore, Kaiden Beffa, Vincent Meppiel, Cylis Blood, Kyle Crawford, Cole Vogel, Hsien Chu, Chase Allen
Middle Row (L to R): Wyatt Johnson, Preston Rakers, Ben Richards, Scott Carter, Matthew Martin, Jacob Ryan, Logan Bohn, Austin Burnett, Owyn Daugherty
Back Row (L to R): Coach Schnabel, Toby Tilley, Landon Cage, Mason Zinn, Owen Williams, Grant Kamer, Steven Rogoz, Keegan Bayer, Kole Alexander, Coach Burgert

For the 2nd year in a row, the boys soccer team has received the “Team Ethics and Sportsmanship Award” from the United Soccer Coaches Association. The association says the award “recognizes teams that exhibit fair play, sporting behavior and adherence to the laws of the game, as reflected by the number of yellow caution cards or red ejection cards they are shown by referees throughout the season.” It is determined by taking the total number of yellow and red cards the team received and dividing it by the number of games played. The boys soccer team received a bronze award for receiving cards in 31%-50% of its matches. Festus was just one of 72 boys and girls teams to receive the award in the fall.

Dance Competition Results



The Tigerettes show off their trophies from the state competition.
Front row (L to R): Emma Meadows, Kyla Hatfield, Emma Vivrett, Chloe Rowland, Coach Biehle, Coach Hampton, Lainey Coplin, Katelyn Bishop, and Alex Penberthy
Back row: MaKenna Penberthy, Cambria Jeude, Caitlyn Gerstenschlager, Juliana Basch, Emme Coplin
Not pictured: Olivia Raebl

The Festus High School Tigerettes Dance team has brought home a lot of hardware during the 2024 competition season. On February 24, the team finished fifth in the state in Division 3. They also received trophies for finishing 2nd place in Hip Hop and Lyrical. Earlier in the year the Tigerettes placed 2nd in Lyrical and 3rd in Hip Hop at the Wentzville Holt Regional Dance Competition on January 6.. Then on January 13, the team finished 2nd in both categories at the Mehlville Invitational. The following week they brought home a 2nd place trophy in Hip Hop and a 4th place trophy in Lyrical from the Fort Zumwalt North Dance Invitational. They will be in Orlando, FL on March 7 - 11 for the national competition.

Lainey Coplin, Alex Penberthy, Cambria Jeude, Emma Vivrett and Olivia Raebl received an academic award for having a GPA of 3.7 to 3.9.



In accordance with the state and federal regulations implementing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), this is to inform you of our intent to destroy personally identifiable information related to special education services maintained in Festus R-VI School District's school special education records.

If you wish to maintain this information for your personal records, you need to notify us upon receipt of this notice; otherwise, the information will be destroyed on April 22, 2024.

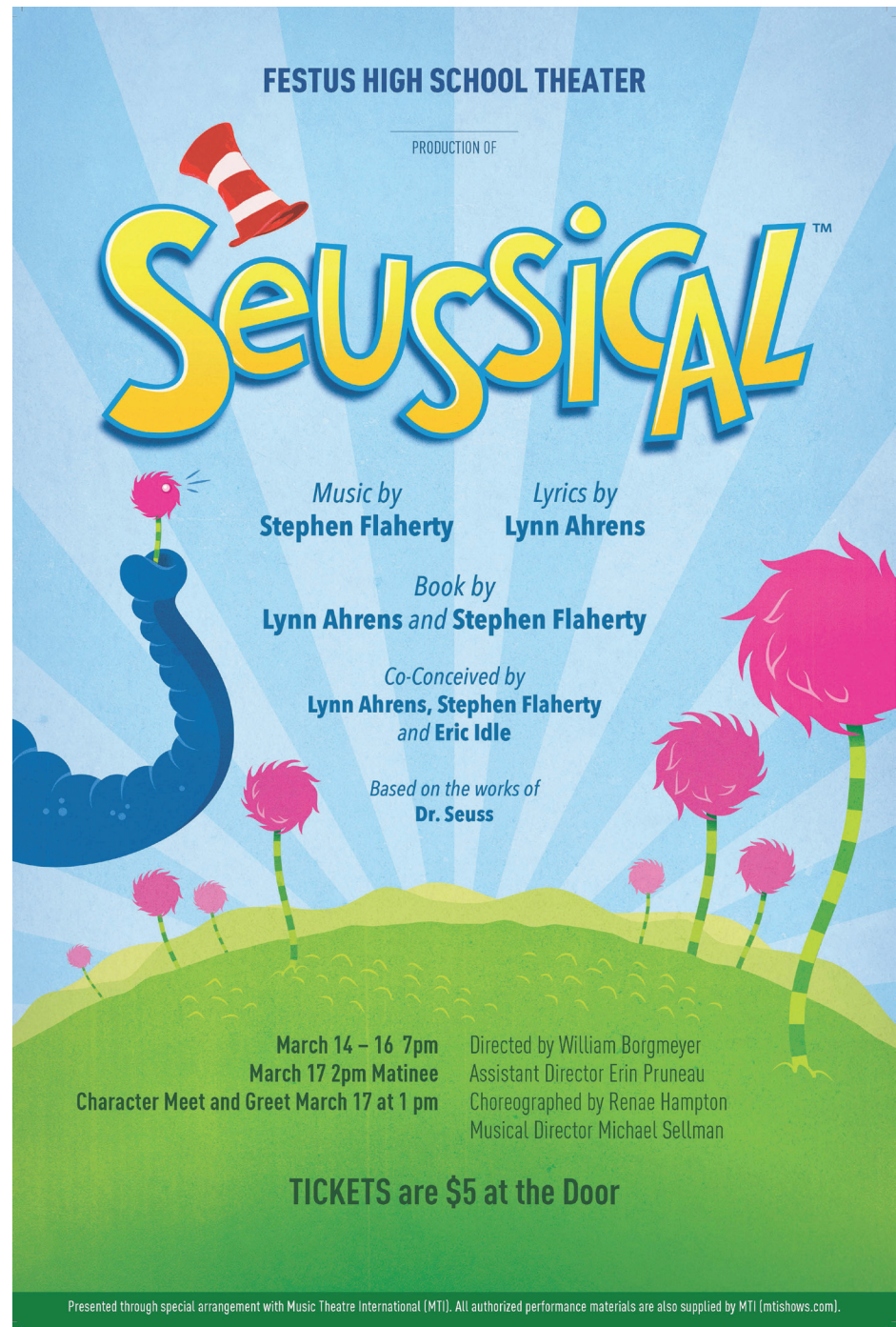
Please be advised that the records may be needed by the student or the parent(s) for social security benefits or other purposes. Records to be destroyed are as follows:

- Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)
- Evaluation Reports
- Test Protocols (Available for inspection only; no copy will be provided)
- Notifications of Meetings
- Notices of Action
- Review of Existing Data Summaries
- All other personally identifiable information within the Special Education file*

The reason for destruction of the above listed items is because they are no longer needed to provide educational services as it has been more than three (3) years since this individual has received special education services at Festus R-VI School District.

*The district may maintain a permanent record, without time limitation, of a student's name, address and phone number, his/her grades, attendance record, classes attended, grade level completed, and year completed.

The school is required to maintain records for a minimum of three (3) years from the date the child no longer received special education and related services. You may contact the records office at Festus R-VI School District at 636-937-8044 or the address above for more information.



Festus School District

1515 Mid-Meadow Lane • Festus, MO 63028 • Administrative Offices (636) 937-4920

Dr. Nicki Ruess, *Superintendent* • Mr. Jonathan Earnhart, *Asst. Superintendent*

BOARD OF EDUCATION

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The Festus R-VI Board of Education meetings are the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Roy D. Burnside Administrative Building, 1515 Mid-Meadow Lane. Visitors are welcome!

<p>Senior High 501 Westwind Drive 937-5410 Main</p> <p>Karl Shinniger, Principal Joel Roth, Asst. Principal Jason Therrell, Asst. Principal/ Athletics/Activities Counseling Office: 937-5944 Angie Macy, Counselor Jennifer Kline, Counselor Amanda Esparza, Counselor Alan Woodland, Counselor Maggie Ellis, RN, Health Room</p>	<p>Middle School 1717 West Main Street 937-5417 Main 937-5417 (nurse)</p> <p>Jacob Munoz, Principal Matthew Boyer Asst. Principal Angie Earnhart, Psy. Examiner Counseling Office: 937-2035 Wendy Mickley, Counselor Joseph Fehlker, Counselor Jessy Beard, RN, Heath Room</p>	<p>Intermediate School 1501 Mid-Meadow Lane 937-4750 Main 937-4799 (nurse)</p> <p>Spencer Kearns, Principal Deana Brown, Asst. Principal Counseling Office: 937-4750 Shannon Helms, Counselor Steve Williams, Counselor Tiffany Yates, RN, Heath Room</p>	<p>Elementary School 1500 Mid-Meadow Lane 937-4063 Main 937-5917 (nurse)</p> <p>Darin Siefert, Principal Saundra Benack, Asst. Principal Counseling Office: 937-2991 Angie Eisenbies, Counselor Kamara Johnson, Counselor Tricia Nahlik, Counselor Danielle Singleton, RN, Heath Room</p>	<p>Early Childhood Center 821 American Legion Dr. 636-465-0395 Main</p> <p>Dr. Samantha Mouser, Director Amy Horrell, Nurse</p>
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FOOD SERVICE - Brooklyn Ragsdale - 937-7747

TRANSPORTATION - Angela Thomas - 937-5716

STUDENT SERVICES - Cara Pellerin - 937-8044

COMMUNICATIONS - Kevin Pope - 636-638-2004

STAFF & STUDENT WELLNESS - Amy Horrell - 636-465-0395