2018 MPS GRADUATES … WE CAN’T WAIT TO SEE ‘THE PLACES YOU’LL GO’ … BEST WISHES!

On Thursday, May 24, we celebrated 630+ Midland Public Schools’ graduates for our first ever commencement at the beautiful Dow Diamond. If you attended, please share your thoughts about the DHS and/or MHS May 24 graduation by completing this brief survey: https://goo.gl/forms/gTY3dY7lxIkTCVX2

MPS is a great communications tool for you to connect with me. Every message comes to my desktop. Either I or a member of our staff will do all we can to reply to your message the next work day. Click here to connect with me: https://etc.midlandps.org/connect/form.php.
We have been publishing this Communique for five years already. It has been our honor to share great news about our students, staff and district with you. The following article is a little different. This article will shed some light on an MPS process that has been a “hot” topic for some of our stakeholders of late.

Midland Public Schools’ Curriculum Reconsideration Process

There are district procedures in place to offer citizens the ability to ask for reconsideration of an adopted instructional material. Several citizens formally requested that the text, “The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian” by Sherman Alexie be reconsidered in March, 2018.

The district reconsideration process served as a point of contention amongst a wide variety of stakeholders both within the district and throughout the community. Opinions both for and against the text were voluminous. Viewpoints were carefully considered by district administration when rendering a disposition. The primary objectives of the new procedures were to preserve the opportunity for the text to be utilized while enhancing parent notification and educational experiences for those choosing not to read the text.

The reconsideration process concluded with the following primary points:

⇒ #1: The text remains a part of the MPS-approved curriculum.
⇒ #2: Parents will be notified of the text at least two weeks prior to classroom usage with an informational document. Parents will be provided the opportunity to opt-in to reading the text.
⇒ #3: The text will be utilized as a part of a thematic unit. A choice of texts will be presented to students to read as a part of a unit of study related to state standards. These texts will be treated equally and neither students that choose to read the Alexie novel, nor students that read other texts will be assigned to an alternate location. Text-related discussions will occur in a ‘book-club’ format (groups of students created based on their choice of novel) in the classroom.

Feedback has once again been strong (on both sides of the issue) as the new policies and procedures have been publicized. Concerns have been received that the new procedures present challenges in carrying out effective instruction. In an effort to support implementation, several actions are currently on-going:

Curriculum office personnel are currently collaborating with Teacher Leaders to select applicable texts to enhance the ‘thematic unit’ approach. The aim of this action is to provide additional novel options that provide exposure to literature rich in diverse and cultural themes regardless of book choice.

A meeting with Teacher Leaders has been held to gather feedback on how to best address concerns and provide supports. That meeting has resulted in two outcomes:

⇒ #1: A ‘Frequently Asked Questions’ style document will be created to clarify procedural expectations and address various pedagogical scenarios that may exist.
⇒ #2: A follow-up meeting has been scheduled for all secondary ELA staff to review questions, pedagogical options and to discuss further potential supports.

Midland Public Schools remains committed to supporting students, parents and staff in providing a world-class education.
One of the goals of the Personalized Academics Through High School (PATHS) program is to connect students to the Career and Technical Education programs that allow students to develop specialized skills in their area of interest.

On May 16, thanks to a collaboration between Midland Public Schools, The Midland Educational Service Agency and the Midland Area Community Foundation, PATHS students toured four skilled trades classrooms to learn what they were about and determine if they would want to take the courses next year! PATHS students visited the Agriscience program in Coleman, the County-wide Culinary Arts Program at Windover, the Auto Tech program at Dow High and the MPS Building Trades site. The PATHS students were impressed and surprised by the many options available to them and for some it sparked a new interest that they can pursue to see if one of these may be a career option for them!
Saturday, May 19, was a rainy, busy morning in Midland. Midland Public Schools’ students and staff were well represented at Midland Blooms and the Dow Run/Walk. Great job everyone!

Spotlight on Alumni

Kelly DeRees, Dow High Class of 2015

As a member of the Charger band, Kelly was principal French horn and a Michigan Youth Arts Festival nominated soloist. She is currently a Material Science major at Ohio State University. Kelly just finished a semester internship at the NASA Neutral Buoyancy Lab in Houston. Part of the International Space Station trains mock-up is in the background of this photo. Can you tell what t-shirt Kelly is wearing in this photo? You guessed it, her Charger Marching Band shirt!

Congratulations to Dow High’s Genesia Thompson for winning this year’s Congressional Art Competition for the Fourth District! Genesia painted "October" in honor of her late grandmother and her birth flower, the marigold. There will be an awards ceremony at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, DC in June for the winners who represent each congressional district in the country. The winning works are displayed for one year at the U.S. Capitol. Congratulations, Genesia!

You are Invited to Community Open Houses as we thank MPS taxpayers and celebrate the amazing scope of work accomplished with MPS bond funds.

Community Open Houses: 5:30-7:00 pm
Monday, June 4    Central Park Elementary
Monday, June 4    Central Auditorium
Wednesday, June 6    Plymouth Elementary
Thursday, June 7    Woodcrest Elementary

If you have questions, please call our office at 923-5026.

Bond Tax Rate

In February of 2015, our MPS taxpayers graciously passed a 2.95 mills bond that has been working hard with school renovations and additions, safety/security, technology, infrastructure, transportation and much more. You will notice on your tax bill this summer that the MPS bond isn’t 2.95 mills, but rather 2.72 mills. The effective millage rate has adjusted each year based on the growth of the taxable values and initial savings on bond selling costs. Thank you, MPS voters, for your support!

Robotics Community Outreach

The Jefferson Middle School Robotics FTC Team 10309, the TechnoHuskies, was at the Midland Farmer’s Market doing robot demonstrations this past weekend. Stop by and see them on Saturday mornings this summer at the Midland Farmer’s Market.

The Dow High Robotics Team 2619, The Charge, recently cleaned-up trash along our “Adopt-a-Street” section of Patrick Road in Midland. Kudos, “Charge” members, for helping to keep our community looking great!

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Have you had a chance to nominate a great MPS support staff person for the 2018 Distinguished Service Award Yet? PLEASE NOMINATE TODAY. The nomination window closes June 15. Here is a link to information: https://new.midlandps.org/wp-content/uploads/DSA-Flyer-Nomination-Form-2018.pdf
Congratulations to **Grant Wiese**! Grant was nominated by Mrs. Royalty and has been selected as the Northwood University Junior Business Student of the Year. This honor comes with a $5,000 renewable scholarship (up to $20,000 total over eight semesters) to Northwood University and a scholarship to the business LAB Camp that takes place on the NU campus this summer. Additionally, **Andre Buckley** was awarded the LAB Camp Scholarship due to his passion for business. Congratulations, Grant and Andre!

**Siebert Elementary** eyes were on the skies as students in 3rd-5th grades and their families participated in the first ever Flight Night. Barstow Airport happily opened their doors to a unique partnership between the Midland Aviation Education Association (MAEA), the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA), Siebert’s Administrative Mentee, Helena McDonald, and Jefferson Student, Ava Nelson as SVSU’s Chief Science Officer. As a result of their collaborative efforts, over 100 guests participated in STEM activities like creating flashlight constellation books, crafting solar system bracelets, getting inside an airplane to learn about its parts, and following directional terms/headings. Participants were invited to relax and grab a snack as they watched a continuous pattern of various planes taking off and landing, all choreographed for the big event.

It was an amazing opportunity where our kids went home able to speak about a night centered around space, aviation, aeronautics, and memories of planes and their remarkable flights. We also hope families were able to share in a sense of community and appreciation for the fine art of flight. We hope to continue to work with Barstow airport and look forward to the possibility of future events.

Another great D.A.R.E. Day was held last week at Dow Diamond. This great annual event celebrates making good choices, staying healthy and staying in school. Thank you to the Midland Police Department for their D.A.R.E. partnership with Midland Public Schools.

The annual Grade 4 & 5 Elementary Track Meet is June 4 at 4:15 at Community Stadium. Come and support our young athletes.

Please keep the Shining Star nominations coming in. We hope you will take a moment to let us know why you think an MPS team member is a Shining Star. Here is a link to the nomination form: [https://new.midlandps.org/shining-star-nomination-form/](https://new.midlandps.org/shining-star-nomination-form/)

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**MPS COMMUNITY FLYER BOARD — AMAZING** spring and summer clinics, camps and fun events are coming in daily. Check them out! [https://new.midlandps.org/pages/community/community-flyers-2/](https://new.midlandps.org/pages/community/community-flyers-2/)