

BUTLER SCHOOL DISTRICT 53

newsline

Winter 2019

LEADERSHIP

Dr. Paul O'Malley selected as new school superintendent

The Butler School District 53 Board of Education named Dr. Paul O'Malley to the District's top administrative role as superintendent beginning July 1, 2019. He will succeed Dr. Heidi Wennstrom, who is retiring at the end of the school year.

The appointment was made at the Board's monthly meeting Feb. 11.

"Dr. O'Malley's understanding of our high-performing students and the expectations of our community to consistently raise the bar for all of our students was eye-opening and refreshing," said Board President Christopher Edmonds. "He has a transparent and data-driven approach to education, and we are confident Paul's leadership will provide District 53 with a growth path for the future focusing on the development of the whole child."

Dr. O'Malley said he looks forward to leading the District with a commitment to improving academic achievement using fiscally sound practices to ensure every student receives a world-class education.

"I am honored to have been chosen to lead and serve Butler School District 53 as the next superintendent," O'Malley said. "I will work collaboratively, with an emphasis on teamwork, transparency and a 'students first' mindset. It is my mission to continue moving our district from exemplary to epic through a gifted and academically talented pathway with high educational outcomes for all of our students."

The Board launched the search for a new superintendent in the fall of 2018 under the leadership of board members Dr. Sally Beatty and Mrs. Laura Biesel.



Dr. Paul O'Malley was named as the next superintendent of Butler School District 53. Board President Christopher Edmonds introduced Dr. O'Malley to parents and staff at a reception during the February Board of Education meeting.

The selection is the result of a national search conducted with the assistance of the search firm Ray & Associates, town hall meetings and a stakeholder survey that produced 38 qualified applicants from diverse geographic and professional backgrounds, said Edmonds. The board selected O'Malley after in-person interviews with the top three candidates in mid-January.

Edmonds said the Board was extraordinarily pleased with the outcome of the search process, thanked those who applied for the position and recognized Sally Beatty and Laura Biesel for their leadership in the search.

O'Malley is currently superintendent in Norridge School District 80. Before accepting that role in 2015, he served as associate superintendent of schools at Community Unit School District 308 in Oswego. Before joining District 308, O'Malley was an assistant superintendent for business services at Niles Township High School District 219 and held the same position in Glenbard Township School District 87 for two years. He also served as director of finance, operations and

human services for the Ridgeland School District. O'Malley began his education career teaching high school chemistry, natural science, and physics. He also played baseball for the Houston Astros organization.

O'Malley received his doctorate in educational leadership from National Louis University, Chicago, and his Type 75 superintendent endorsement from Loyola University, Chicago. O'Malley received his bachelor of science in chemistry education from DePaul University, Chicago, and a double master's in education leadership and special education from Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago.

Principal Amy Read honored as Golden Apple Finalist

Butler Junior High Principal Amy Read was selected as a 2019 finalist for the distinguished Golden Apple Awards for Excellence in Leadership. During a brief assembly Feb. 7, students and staff recognized Read and shared examples of her leadership.

Read is one of eight principals/heads of school selected as a 2019 Finalist and

the only school leader in DuPage County. The Golden Apple Award for Excellence in Leadership honors exemplary performance by a principal or head of school who has had a significant and sustained positive impact on the school, created a culture of inclusiveness and delivered dramatic student growth.

"This is a testament to all of

the exemplary teachers and staff at Butler Junior High who create exceptional opportunities for our students to not only learn, but to thrive," said Read.

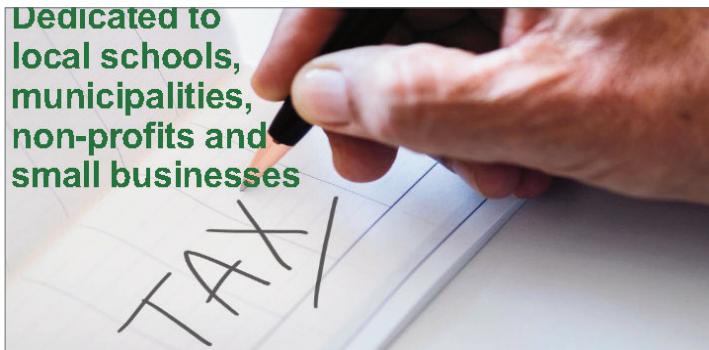
"The Golden Apple is a tremendous honor and recognizes the servant leadership of Ms. Read and her vision for a school where everyone collectively and continually grows, learns and excels," said Superintendent Dr. Heidi Wennstrom. In addition, Ms. Read creates a culture of trust and partnership with her staff, which empowers them to take risks, to grow as leaders and educators and to collaborate with one another on what is best for students, Wennstrom said.

Finalists will be notified in the spring with surprise visits at their schools.



At a short ceremony, students honored their principal Amy Read with the ways she has made an impact on the school. A positive culture, trust and growth are all hallmarks of her leadership. At left is Amy Read at the Feb. 23 Golden Apple celebration with Golden Apple officials.





Dedicated to local schools, municipalities, non-profits and small businesses

J.S. WHITE & ASSOCIATES, LLC
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS
www.jswhitecpas.com

Please contact Jim White at 630-916-8536 or info@jswhitecpas.com for more information about the accounting and financial services we can provide.



Lina Shah
Real Estate

PROUDLY SUPPORTS
BUTLER SCHOOL
DISTRICT 53

COLDWELL BANKER | GLOBAL LUXURY
1225 W 22nd Street Ste.130
OAK BROOK, IL 60523--3207

LINA SHAH - Realtor
(312)593-4818

Linashah5@gmail.com

©2019 Coldwell Banker Residential Real Estate LLC. All Rights Reserved. Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage fully supports the principles of the Fair Housing Act and the Equal Opportunity Act. Operated by a subsidiary of NRT LLC. Coldwell Banker, the Coldwell Banker logo, Coldwell Banker Global Luxury and the Coldwell Banker Global Luxury logo are service marks registered or pending registrations owned by Coldwell Banker Real Estate LLC. Real estate agents affiliated with Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage are independent contractor sales associates and are not employees of Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage.



Keeping community
in banking

888-897-2276
hbtbank.com

Heartland Bank and Trust Company
MEMBER FDIC



PROUD TO SUPPORT
BUTLER SD 53

Wold

wolddae.com
847.241.6100

PLANNERS
ARCHITECTS
ENGINEERS



VISTA NATIONAL
INSURANCE GROUP, INC.
Your Group Benefits with Vista!

Benefit Consultant for
Butler School District 53

Brian Walsh
tel 630-468-6500
www.vistanational.com

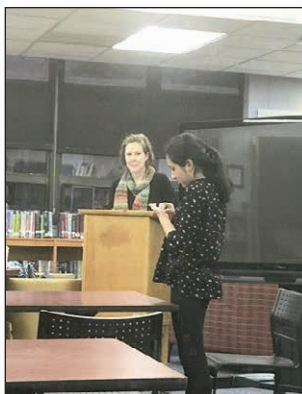
Good News

"Good hacking" and Hour of Code

Argonne cyber security analyst Alec Poczatek visited with Brook Forest and Butler Junior High students as part of the school Hour of Code activities. He talked about his education and background, the importance of coding and his role at Argonne as a "good hacker" in making the world safer with driverless cars.



Yes, "good hacking" is a thing, Argonne cyber security analyst told students. His visit was part of the national Hour of Code.



Saanvi Sethi spells the last word in the Butler Spelling Bee and is declared the winner.

Spelling bee

Sixteen students participated in the annual District 53 Spelling Bee and after 20 rounds, 8th grader Saanvi Sethi was declared the champion. She is set to advance to the DuPage County Bee and compete against dozens of other schools. Of the 16 participants in District 53, 14 were Butler Junior High students and two were from Brook Forest.

Polar vortex and coat drive

With the dire cold this winter, students wanted to make sure those less fortunate had a warm coat to wear. The Butler Junior High Service Board and Brook Forest Student Council in partnership with the PTO hosted a coat drive, collecting slightly worn or new coats for the national non-profit One Warm Coat.

Celebrating diversity

Butler Junior High School students celebrated their diversity and learned about other cultures during the school's International Day Feb. 1. It is the 20th year of the tradition.

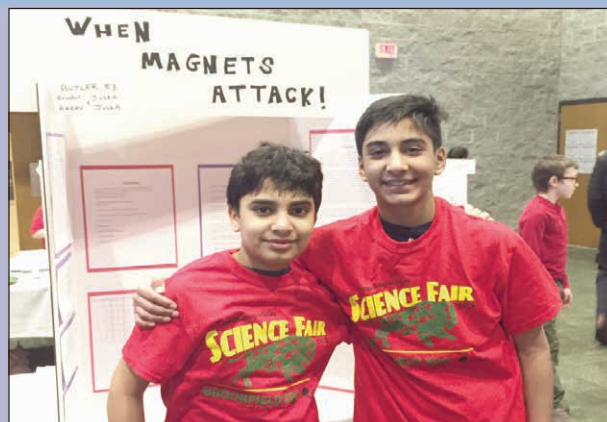
Students sampled foods from other countries; learned the game of Nim, a Chinese math game; played Shisima, a Kenyan game of strategy; and learned to write their names in Hindi. The day was organized by the Butler PTO and the classes were taught by Butler parents.

Following the mini sessions, students met in an all-school assembly and together learned from a Navajo family about the "regalia" of the tribe, how the garbs were made and the history of American Indians (top photo). Students also learned and participated in a traditional Indian dance of celebration. At right, parents pose with students (left to right) Hali Dib, Rida Maheen, Renee Qin and Ava Pena during the mini lesson on writing in Hindi.



Science Fair at the Zoo

Twenty-two District 53 students showcased their science projects at Brookfield Zoo on Feb. 21. The Science Fair is the 7th held in conjunction with the Chicago West Suburban Consortium of Academic Excellence (WSCAE) at the Chicago Zoological Society. The projects were judged by professional scientists and engineers from local corporations as well as Brookfield Zoo staff. At right, 6th graders Saanvi Mylavarapu and Sara Izhar won 2nd Place in the BP Future Scientist Award for 6th graders. Below, Aarav Julka, 7th grade, and Rohan Julka, 8th grade, display their project at the fair.



TECHNOLOGY

Lessons use innovative, engaging technology



Inspiring Instruction

Here are some innovative lessons on how teachers in the classroom are using technology to stimulate learning. Technology is used in a way that makes sense, excites and motivates students and allows them to expand their learning. Teachers interviewed say they use technology judiciously. It's not simply a swap for paper and pencil or a book.

Higher order thinking skills



Kindergartners work on their animal project, identifying fun facts from a video, filling out an organizer, creating a digital collage, then finally recording their story.

In Jen Brauer's kindergarten class, students are working on non-fiction stories and using PicEdu to research animals on their iPads. They begin by listening to a story about an animal and creating a digital collage. They record three facts about the animal they selected and then audiotape themselves on SeeSaw telling their parents what they learned.

The lesson had multiple goals: To increase student engagement by giving students a choice of what animal to research, to help students learn and recall facts and expose students to the search bar and keyboard.

"Technology offers my students opportunities to create in ways that paper and pencil cannot," said Brauer. For example, in this project students could have drawn a poster, but instead were able to use higher order thinking skills to create a digital one.



Second graders created their vision for the world, inspired by learning about Martin Luther King Jr.

Igniting engagement

In Nettie Griffin's 2nd grade class she shows a video that tells the story about civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. and children read "Let The Children March," a story about how even children can bring about change.

She asks students to envision a dream they have for the world, draw a picture on the iPad of their dream and write a caption. Students audiotape themselves explaining their dream for a better world using SeeSaw, which is then shared with parents.

"I definitely see more engagement with technology," said Griffin. "Children learn more deeply; they have to problem solve and use their inquiry mindset," she said. "I think it's critical to prepare them for a future that doesn't exist yet."

Piquing curiosity

Fourth grade students are reading a National Geographic story in Adam Nicholson's class about bananas and their potential demise from changes in the climate. Students each read the story on their iPads, clicking and pinching and scanning a QR code to explore more facts, photos and details. While reading the story, Nicholson asks them to identify key words in the article and predict the problem the story proposes and generate a solution. Students work as partners, discussing the story, zooming in on facts and completing graphic organizers that help organize their thoughts

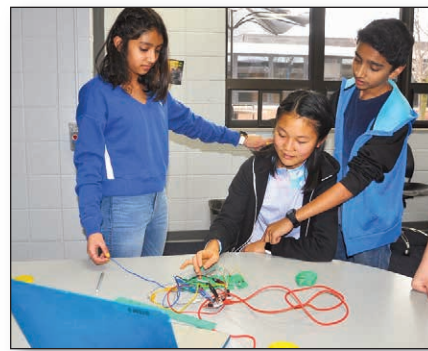
In this way, Nicholson ensures that



Fourth graders use technology to deepen their understanding of how to analyze a non-fiction text.

students are determining the deeper meaning of the text, learning stretch vocabulary and summarizing key concepts. Sometimes there's a tool that makes the learning more exciting and sometimes, it's best to use the old fashioned methods, Nicholson said. "Using the iPads instead of paper gives the students more ownership because they like being able to zoom in and access the information differently and show each other evidence," he said.

On their iPads, students can also review "anchor charts" that their teacher created, which provide a graphic mini lesson on the steps and ways to analyze a text.



Students in STEM class create a program that allows a "piano" made of playdough to play music.

Stretching boundaries

In the 7th and 8th grade STEM class, students are creating a piano out of play dough that can play real notes. They recorded a sound they wanted, converted it into code, then hooked up a device called Makey Makey that connects the computer to the piano and allows players to pluck out notes.

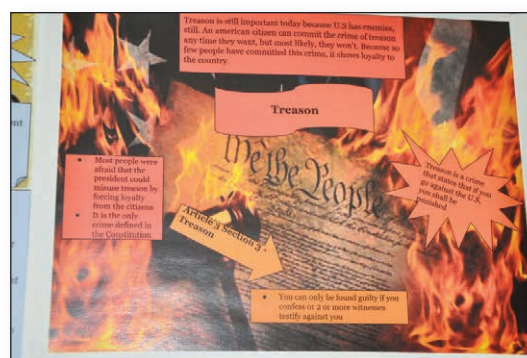
In another project, a student is combining her love of biology to growing plants in an eggshell and making an iMovie documenting the plant growth.

These are just a few of the tech-related STEM projects that students designed. "Within parameters, they choose their projects, then I let them explore, give them gentle guidance and encouragement and see if they can figure it out," said STEM teacher Kim Krupicka. This translates to students who are excited and motivated about learning and who stretch their boundaries to problem solve.

But not all projects in STEM class are tech related. In another project, a group of 7th and 8th grade girls are building a ferris wheel using K'nex. "This takes a good deal of problem solving, physics and collaboration," Krupicka said.

Creative displays

In Amanda Moore's 8th grade social studies class, students were given a section of the U.S. Constitution to research and summarize. When the research phase was complete, students created a Google Drawing to share the information using key details and an image. "The assignment allowed students to guide their own research, create their own connections and creatively display their findings in their own style," she said. In another activity, students researched the



Students research, analyze and summarize parts of the Constitution, then create graphics summarizing their understanding.

The many benefits of innovative technology

Using technology in creative ways in the classroom has many benefits. It helps develop digital learners and over time creates a digital portfolio of student work. It also encourages independent curiosity, which improves engagement and comprehension. At the same time, it can foster collaboration among students and allow teachers to differentiate the curriculum. It also allows teachers to quickly check in on which students are mastering the learning target. Finally, using tools like SeeSaw, parents can see what their children are learning every day, not just a final end product.

"Students connect with technology, leading to increased engagement," said Butler Junior High teacher Amanda Moore. "We live in a digital world, and technology has now become a life skill that students of all ages need to learn," said Brook Forest teacher Jennifer Brauer.

American economic system using articles and trustworthy videos to develop their own philosophies about how capitalism and free enterprise work. While the final project was on paper, Moore said, "the research was improved by simple internet searches because the students were able to determine their own path – something a book wouldn't necessarily allow."

Additionally, using technology in these assignments helps foster collaboration and independent curiosity, both of which improves comprehension.

Alternative Learning goal: "A joyful day of learning"



Students and staff experience a remote day of learning instead of snow day

While most students in the region had two days off in the bitter cold in January, Butler and Brook Forest students were working on school projects and activities in their homes with their parents.

Butler District 53 tried a groundbreaking alternative day learning experience where students and teachers worked remotely Jan. 30 and 31.

A change in the *Illinois School Code* allowed schools to count remote learning as an attendance day.

The activities were both online and offline and reflected all subject areas. Many teachers gave students a choice of activities to complete. For example:

- In 7th grade math, students could create and record a video about a two-step algebraic equation, using props like real or stuffed animals, then debate the answer with a fellow student

- In kindergarten language arts, students were asked to find a family picture and write a story about that day

- In 5th grade social studies, students could design a new O'Hare airport terminal.

■ In English Language Arts, 7th graders were asked to listen to the "How to be Happy" episode of *Freakonomics* and write a reflective piece on how each episode changed, challenged and confirmed their thinking.

"Teachers created unique projects and activities that involved communication, creativity, critical thinking and collaboration," said Brook Forest Principal Dr. Chad Prosen. Many activities could be done with siblings and parents.

"Our goal was to create a joyful day of learning for students and faculty and create structured learning time for families," said Superintendent Dr. Heidi Wennstrom. She asked families and staff to send photos of themselves and children working on the activities, which she posted on Twitter.

Similarly, it was a day of learning for teachers. Some took online courses, planned curriculum via Google hangouts with colleagues, analyzed student data, created learning goals and designed assessments.

The District surveyed parents, students and teachers about the experience. Of 74 parents who responded to



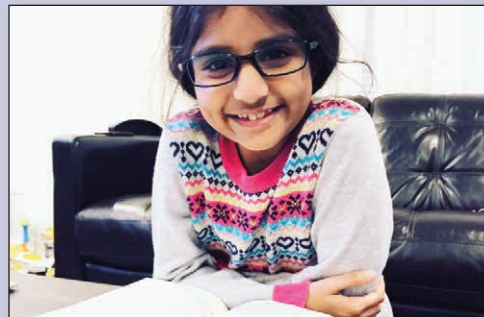
Parent Resham Mendi was interviewed by ABC News Chicago on a story about the Alternative Learning Days in Butler School District 53. "I gained insight about what my students do at school," she said.

the survey, 80 percent reported that the experience was very positive and that student assignments were at the appropriate level of rigor.

"There is power in providing opportunities for voice and choice in the learning process for both adults and students," said Wennstrom.



Friends and siblings learned from each other during experiments and activities on the Alternative Learning Days. Now, more schools in the state are ready to declare e-learning days.



Activities were designed for both online and offline and gave students lots of choices.



The Alternative Learning Day included plenty of assignments on fitness and exercise.

BJH teachers ensure smooth transition to high school

A big push in junior high is to ensure students are ready for high school. Part of that process is meeting with Hinsdale Central teachers and administrators to discuss curriculum, student placement and performance in what is called "articulation." Winter is a key time for 8th grade teachers to hold their articulation meetings.

"Articulation gives us a true sense of working as a larger collaborative team,"

said math teacher Jill Vonnahme. "We have productive conversations that benefit both students and teachers," she said.

Articulation ensures a smooth transition for Butler students heading to high school. Meetings are held yearly where teachers from both District 53 and Hinsdale Central discuss placement procedures, educational philosophy, best practices in the subject and any new curriculum or teaching practices. They also review student needs for placement beyond test scores. "This process helps ensure that we are meeting the needs of our students and that they are placed at

the appropriate instructional level," said Principal Amy Read.

If there are any gaps or overlaps in the curriculum, each department meets to discuss how to adjust the curriculum to meet the course standards at the high school. This year, the meetings included all of the Hinsdale Central feeder schools together. "It was a wonderful opportunity to discuss our strengths, areas for growth, and receive feedback from each other on ways to improve student learning," said English Language Arts teacher Melissa Zaniewski.

This year, the Hinsdale Central

World Languages Chair also observed and taught a lesson to the 8th grade Spanish class on track for Honors 3 class. This helped students who were recommended for Honors 3 to feel more comfortable in taking that class in high school, said Spanish teacher Andrea Korhonen.

One bonus to the articulation meetings: "We also get the chance to check in on some of our Butler grads and see all the amazing contributions they are making at Central," said Zaniewski.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

Christopher Edmonds, President
 Dr. Sally Beatty, Vice-President
 Ahmad Sulaiman, Secretary
 Laura Bieselin
 Keith Carlson
 James Chow
 Dr. Sanjay Rao

Dr. Heidi Wennstrom,
 Superintendent

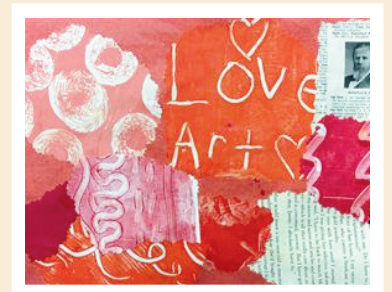
www.Butler53.com



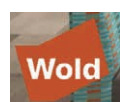
Art Board

Butler District 53 students display their artwork on artsonia.com

Pictured here (from l to r) are kindergarten choice based family portrait, 2nd grade choice based art and 1st grade collage.



Butler School District 53
 2801 York Rd.
 Oak Brook, IL 60523



SPONSORS

Presort Standard
 U.S. Postage
PAID
 Permit No. 26
 Oak Brook, IL

Postal Customer

