



THE LEARNING CONNECTION

Frankfort School District 157-C

Spring 2019



A MESSAGE TO DISTRICT FAMILIES FROM YOUR SUPERINTENDENT

We are wrapping up another great school year at Frankfort School District 157-C, and I hope all of our families and community members have a great summer in store.

In this issue of *The Learning Connection*, we have plenty of good news to share about our students, staff and parent volunteers. We are grateful for the support of our community members who cheer on the success of our students and district. Thank you for your continued support this school year and as we head into the next.

For families who are new to our district and for those who are returning, please see the back cover of this newsletter for information about 2019-2020 school year registration and Meet and Greet events at all three of our schools. If you have questions or would like more information about upcoming events or opportunities to get more involved with our district, please call the District Office at (815) 469-5922.

Dr. Maura J. Zinni

RETIRING TEACHERS, STAFF REFLECT ON FAVORITE MOMENTS OF FSD 157-C CAREERS

Frankfort School District 157-C has a workforce of talented, committed, humble teachers and staff members who dedicate their lives to educating students. This year, eight members of the district team have chosen to retire, and they leave behind a legacy of students and colleagues who they impacted.

Lori Irving, paraprofessional at Grand Prairie Elementary, worked for the district for 14 years and was in the education field for 35 years. She taught kindergarten for 20 years prior to becoming a paraprofessional.

Irving said her fondest memories of Grand Prairie include working with the staff, students and parents, and her greatest accomplishments have been watching the students she's worked with grow. In retirement, she plans to spend more time in her condo in Hawaii until her husband retires and the couple moves there.

Paul White, custodian at Grand Prairie, worked for the district for 19 years. He said he will miss the kids the most, and he is proudest of all of the friendships he has been able to make over the years. In his retirement, he plans to enjoy fishing.

Becky Cleveland, physical education teacher at Grand Prairie, worked at the district for 18 years. In addition to PE, she has also taught first grade and served as a math and reading interventionist. She said her favorite memories are of the people she met who helped her grow as a teacher and as a person.

Cleveland said she is proud to have started the Support the Troops philanthropy initiative at the school in 2006, as it has a personal tie to her family. Her son Britt graduated from West Point in 2005 and was deployed to Iraq twice and once to Afghanistan. The first year of the initiative, the school sent 106 boxes of items to the troops, and the school has continued the efforts for the past 13 years, totaling more than 900 boxes.

"I have to thank the community and the parents for supporting such a great cause," Cleveland said.

She plans on traveling, visiting Alaska, going to every Major League Baseball stadium, riding her bike from Illinois to Naples, Florida, and visiting all of the

National Parks.

Mary Woltkamp, third-grade teacher at Chelsea, has worked for the district for 12 years and been in education for 14 years. Prior to teaching, she was a registered nurse and was a member of the Frankfort PTA, serving on committees, the executive board and working on referendums to build the new schools. She also served on the School Leadership Committee and the district's Insurance Committee.

She said her greatest accomplishments have come in small moments helping a student who is struggling to understand a concept and helping students enjoy reading. She will miss the smiling faces of students, meeting families and collaborating with staff at Chelsea. She plans to travel, visit her sons in Colorado and Florida, learn to play piano and knit, and enjoy life.

Sandy Pechtold, registrar/administrative assistant, has worked for the district for 25 years. She said the highlight of her career has been being part of the expansion of the district.

"I have worked with many wonderful people over the years and feel very fortunate that our paths have crossed," she said.

Pechtold said there were roughly 800 students in the district when she started, and there are now more than 2,500. In 1996, she helped the assistant superintendent at the time order the district's first 50 computers.

She said she is proud of attending college in the evenings and earning her bachelor's degree while working at the district. In retirement, she plans to explore new adventures and enjoy time with her six grandchildren.

Felicia Bysina, resource teacher in special education, has worked for the district for 19 years and has taught for 35 years. She spent two years at Hickory Creek, transferred to Grand Prairie for 13 years and spent the last four years at Chelsea.

"I have so enjoyed watching my young learners progress through our district and develop into wonderful young people who have achieved much, both

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JASON CROCKETT AIMS TO UPHOLD TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE AS NEW PRINCIPAL OF HICKORY CREEK MIDDLE SCHOOL

As Hickory Creek Middle School welcomes a new class of students in the 2019-2020 school year, it also welcomes a new principal.

Jason Crockett has devoted his entire career to educating students and helping them discover their love for learning, and he is bringing this dedication to Hickory Creek next school year.

Crockett was hired to become Hickory Creek's principal effective July 1, 2019, after Will Seidemann announced his plan to resign at the end of the 2018-2019 school year.

Seidemann accepted a position in Chicago Heights. He served as Hickory Creek's principal from 2015-2019, and under his tenure, the school was named a 2018 National Blue Ribbon School.

Crockett joins Hickory Creek after serving as the assistant principal of Bryan Middle School in Elmhurst for the last four years. There, he was on the school's Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Committee, and he worked closely with the school's Parent Teacher Association, Student Services, Special Education Department, teacher assistants, school-related professionals, and teachers.

Additionally, he served as the school's athletic director, helped organize assemblies and more. Prior to working in Elmhurst, Crockett taught eighth-grade social studies at F. E. Peacock Middle School in Itasca for 10 years and served as a team leader at the school for six of those years. He also coached cross country and volleyball, was on the district's PBIS Committee, served as a union representative, and helped raise funds for the Itasca School District 10 Foundation with the PTA.

Of his experiences so far, Crockett said he is proudest of being able to blend social-emotional learning into instruction and make that part of the culture at Bryan Middle School.

"We've done that for the past two-plus years, and that is something I'm very proud of," he said. "Social-emotional learning is a big component of being able to support kids, and I've enjoyed seeing how that has grown at Bryan."

Superintendent Dr. Maura Zinni said she is confident Crockett will successfully lead Hickory Creek and continue to uphold its tradition of excellence.

Crockett was one of 39 applicants for the principal position, and he was selected as the top candidate. The application process involved face-to-face interviews for 13 of the 39 candidates, and more thorough interviews for four finalists. These candidates participated in interviews with district stakeholders including administrators, principals, teachers and parents. They also each provided writing samples and gave presentations during the interview process.

"This was a thorough, rigorous process, and we feel we identified the top candidate to lead Hickory Creek," Zinni said.

Crockett's recent focus on a blend of academics, behavioral support, and social-emotional learning are what drew him to applying for the principal position at Hickory Creek. He said he always envisioned himself as a principal, and the high expectations and high levels of achievement that students obtain at Hickory Creek interested him.

"Seeing all that they have been working on with the technology roll-out the last few years and now focusing on his next layer of

social-emotional learning is something that is dear to my heart," Crockett said.

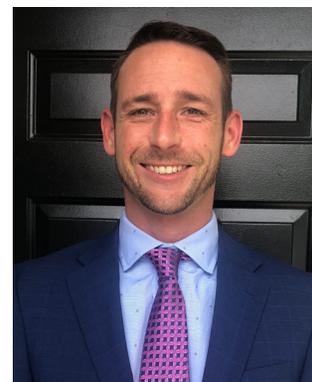
He said he looks forward to getting to know all of the students, staff and parents at the school.

"My number one objective is to listen and learn," he said. "You can learn a lot from history, and being a history teacher, I want to hear where they've been and obviously learn about where we're at now and how we can move that forward in a direction to support all students."

Crockett has a bachelor's degree in history from Western Illinois University, a master's degree in curriculum and instruction from Concordia University and a master's degree in school leadership, also from Concordia. He is originally from Woodridge.

In his free time, Crockett enjoys spending time with his wife, family and friends; bowling; playing softball; golfing; taking road trips; and going to country music concerts.

District families and community members will have an opportunity to meet Crockett over the summer. Details of a Meet and Greet are being finalized and will be publicly announced on the district website in the future. Additionally, Hickory Creek families can meet Crockett at the school's Meet and Greet from 10-11:30 a.m. August 20 at the school.



Jason Crockett

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academically and socially, over their tenure at 157-C," she said. "Many of my students have stayed in touch with me well into their college years. To me, that is my greatest achievement – a job well done."

Bysina added that the creation of the 157-C Special Olympics team, which turned into the Frankfort Cheetahs Club, was a milestone for her.

She said she is planning for her youngest daughter's wedding in July, traveling, spending time with her grandson, and seeing where her next endeavor will be.

Carolyn Martin, reading support specialist at Grand Prairie, has worked for the district for 17 years. She has spent 30 years in education, including as a substitute teacher

and classroom teacher.

"My favorite accomplishment really is the many little accomplishments that occur each and every day when I see my students suddenly realize they are becoming better readers and writers," she said. "Helping a young student gain confidence in themselves is really rewarding for me."

She said she will miss seeing her students and colleagues most. In retirement, she plans to travel with her husband, Jim, spend time with her children, Sarah and Michael, and improve her golf game.

Elaine Roupas, paraprofessional for special education, worked at the district for 12 years before retiring in December to spend time with her husband. She taught from 1973-1980 and was a stay-at-home mom

for 26 years before becoming a paraprofessional.

She said she is proudest of being able to make a difference in students' lives.

"One student I had the privilege of being with for five years," she said. "I got to know him very well. It was a team effort to help him become independent, which he was by the time he left fifth grade. He no longer needed one-on-one support."

Roupas said she misses everything about working at the district, including the daily camaraderie between colleagues and the smiling faces of the students.

"I would like to thank the district for the wonderful memories," she said. "It was a great way to end my teaching career to be part of 157-C in that capacity."

HICKORY CREEK STUDENTS ACHIEVE SUCCESS AT STATE COMPETITIONS

Throughout the school year, Hickory Creek Middle School students achieved great success in sports, music and academics at the state level.

Zach LaMonto was named state champion in wrestling with an overall record of 36-2 in the 145-pound division.

The Hickory Creek Middle School cheer team brought home a state championship in the Large Team Routine Cheerleading Division for the fourth consecutive year.



Katie Stewart, state champion in discus throw, stands beside her coach, Mitch Stein.

Katie Stewart was named state champion in discus throw with a distance of 124 feet, 9 inches, which is a school record for Hickory Creek

and just 3 feet shy of a state record. This is her second state discus championship.

In music, band students Maddie Clark, Keegan Clark, Selden Nevinger, Gabe Panner and Madison Rogers; and orchestra students Elyse DeFrank, Katharine Dendrinis, Madelyn Meseck, Shay Parchem, Lizzie Roh, Caitlin Scott and Sam Singer were appointed to state ensembles through the Illinois Music Education Association's auditions.

Hickory Creek's Varsity Chorus, Advanced Choir and Show Choir qualified for the Illinois Grade School Music Association's State Chorus Festival.

The school's Drama Club received eight Judge's Choice Awards from the Illinois Elementary School Association's state contest.

Throughout the year, many more student athletes, musicians and extracurricular club members made it to state competitions and placed among the top students in Illinois.

Congratulations to all Hickory Creek state champions and runners up from the 2018-2019 school year!

HICKORY CREEK'S PRODUCTION OF 'BEAUTY AND THE BEAST' DELIGHTS CROWDS OF HUNDREDS

More than 130 students at Hickory Creek Middle School presented four lively, colorful productions of "Beauty and the Beast" May 17-19 to packed houses at the school.

The show, which was Hickory Creek's 23rd Spring Musical, was presented by the Hickory Creek Middle School Choral Department and directed by Leslie Walton, and assistant directors Cynthia Heath and Rebecca Schumacher.

Students involved in the musical were expected to learn their music and lines, and behind the scenes, students directed, worked on the stage crew, helped with hair and makeup, worked on costumes, and helped coordinate productions on the weekend of the show.

"Students gain a sense of

responsibility and accountability," said Cori Chojnacki, president of the Chorus Boosters. "Everyone wants the show to be a good one, and knows that they each need to do their part to ensure that success."

"I am so proud of the fact that all students are included in this musical production," Superintendent Dr. Maura Zinni said. "Mrs. Walton works wonders with all the students, and the end result is always a very special showcase of our extremely talented students."

The Chorus Boosters are an integral part of the musical production. At the beginning of the school year, the group of parent volunteers purchases the rights to the musical, and generous parent volunteers lead 15 committees solely for the musical.



Seth Carl, "Beast", (left) and Madi Rogers, "Belle", perform May 17 during the opening night of "Beauty and the Beast" at Hickory Creek Middle School.

FSD 157-C EDUCATION FOUNDATION PREPARES TO GRANT RECORD-BREAKING \$170,000 TO TEACHERS THIS YEAR

The Frankfort School District 157-C Education Foundation is preparing to grant a record-breaking \$170,000 to teachers at all three district schools thanks to the support of the foundation's dedicated parent volunteers and supportive community members.

This amount outdoes the Foundation's previous record of \$130,000 granted in a year.

So far, the Foundation has received 28 grant requests from teachers focusing primarily on technology, music and physical education.

Requests include a technology room, art award wall, new recess equipment, culturally diverse books, musical instruments, mindfulness strategy program equipment, physical education equipment, and flexible seating

and learning furniture at Grand Prairie; virtual reality goggles, flexible seating and learning furniture, an author assembly and accompanying literature, Lunch Bunch books, pedal desks and musical instruments at Chelsea; and projectors for gyms, books, flexible seating and learning furniture, musical software, a SMART Board and physical education equipment at Hickory Creek.

Foundation members discuss and vote on each grant request, and grants will be fulfilled over the summer.

Foundation President Allison Marketti said it feels incredible to be able to fulfill teacher-written grants.

"We have had a record-breaking year and will be able to grant so much more than we

ever have," she said. "These grants make such a huge difference in our schools for our children and our teachers. They help students learn in new and exciting ways and truly expand their horizons."

Marketti said she would like to thank all of the members of the Education Foundation who volunteer hours of their time and ask for nothing in return.

"Their commitment, hard work and positive attitudes are what delivered the record-breaking results we achieved this year," Marketti said. "I am so proud of what we accomplished this year!"

For more information about the Education Foundation, including how to donate to or join the Foundation, visit www.ef157c.org.



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Inside This Issue...

- ◆ Retiring teachers, staff reflect on years of service at District 157-C
- ◆ Jason Crockett named Hickory Creek Middle School principal
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- ◆ Education Foundation prepares to grant record-breaking funds to district

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of District 157-C is to prepare all students to be confident, life-long learners and productive citizens by challenging them to reach their fullest potential and by providing a quality educational environment in partnership with family and community.

DATES TO REMEMBER

- June 5**
Hickory Creek Middle School
Eighth Grade Graduation, 7 PM at
Lincoln-Way East
- June 7**
Last Day of School &
School Improvement Day - Early
Dismissal
- June 19**
Board of Education Meeting, 7 PM
- August 20**
Meet and Greet
Grand Prairie — 8:30-10 AM
Hickory Creek — 10-11:30 AM
Chelsea — 11:30 AM-1 PM
- August 21**
First Day of School
Board of Education Meeting, 7 PM

**REGISTER NOW FOR THE 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR
AND MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR MEET AND GREETs!**

Though summer is just beginning, there is no better time than now to complete registration for the 2019-2020 school year.

Families who are new to the Frankfort School District 157-C community are asked to call the District Office at 815-469-5922 to schedule an appointment for new student registration. Families should bring the student's legal birth certificate and three proofs of residency, one primary and two secondary, to the registration. Primary proofs of residency include a most recent real estate tax bill, signed lease or closing statement. Secondary proofs of residency include a driver's license, utility bill, public aid card, voter registration card, home insurance certificate, auto registration or telephone bill. At this appointment, families will receive a snapcode to complete new student registration online.

Returning students' families should have received information about online registration through the mail in April. Any questions about online registration may be directed to the District Office at 815-469-5922.

Online registration, registration forms and more registration information is available on the district website at www.fsd157c.org under the Parents & Students tab — Registration Info.

On August 20, all students and families are welcome to attend Meet and Greet events to explore the layout of school buildings; meet building principals, teachers and staff members; and ask questions about the new school year. These events are particularly helpful for students who are new to the district or who are heading to a new school for the first time.

The Meet and Greet for Grand Prairie students (grades K-2) will be held from 8:30 a.m.-10:00 a.m.; for Chelsea students (grades 3-5) from 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.; and for Hickory Creek students (grades 6-8) from 10:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. on August 20. We hope to see you there!

