

Mehlville Messenger

A Mehlville School District Publication

Summer Acceleration Program Expands to Five Days A Week

The Mehlville School District will once again host the Summer Acceleration program for elementary, middle and high school students who want to strengthen their academic skills or take classes that might not be available during the regular school year. The biggest change for the summer of 2017 program—it will run five days a week instead of four. Another important change is the addition of transportation for middle school students. The Summer Acceleration program begins on Monday, June 5, and concludes on Friday, June 30.

The Elementary School Summer Acceleration will be held at Blades Elementary and Trautwein Elementary. Classes run from 8am until 3pm, with Y-Club being offered before and after school. The Summer Acceleration program is open to students who are entering kindergarten all the way up to students who are entering the 5th grade for the 2017-2018 school year. **For 1st through 5th grade students**, breakfast and lunch will be served, and transportation will be provided from their home school to their assigned Summer Acceleration school. Students will enjoy enrichment activities as part of their school day and there will be special theme days throughout the summer. **For incoming kindergarten students**, they will be assigned to either a morning session from 8am until 11am or an afternoon session from Noon until 3pm. Parents must provide transportation. Breakfast items can be purchased in the morning but lunch will not be served for incoming kindergarten students. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

The Middle School Summer Acceleration program will be held at Bernard Middle School, with classes beginning at 8am and ending at Noon. Breakfast items will be available for purchase each morning. Students will have the opportunity to take remedial courses in math, science and communication arts. Enrichment classes will be offered to students who do not qualify for remedial work. Students can choose two enrichment courses that will each last two hours a

day, or they can choose just one enrichment class which will last four hours a day. A welcome addition for the middle school program is transportation for District residents. Buses will pick students up from their regular middle school and drop them off after school. The VICC program will offer transportation for students who live in the city of St. Louis. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

The High School Summer Acceleration program at Mehlville High gives students the opportunity to earn up to 1 full credit toward graduation requirements. The extension of the school week from four to five days and lengthening the total day make this possible. Students will have the option of attending a half day (7:30am-10:30am or 11am-2pm) or a full day (7:30am-2pm), resulting in the ability to take two classes this summer. The District will continue to offer lunch and in-district busing in the morning, mid-day (transition), and afternoon between Oakville High and Mehlville High. Courses must meet a minimum enrollment to be offered in a traditional format. If a course fails to meet this minimum, a virtual option will be available. Classes that reach maximum enrollment will have a waitlist. Click [HERE](#) for more information.



Students collaborate at last year's program.

Redistricting Efforts Aim to Reduce Overcrowding, Class Sizes

A year-long effort to examine current school boundaries and then create possible boundary adjustments is coming to a conclusion in the Mehlville School District. The goal of the redistricting efforts has been to better match student populations with the size of each school and to lower class sizes across the District.

The redistricting committee consisted of parents and teachers from every school, as well as administrators from the elementary, middle and high school level. A professional demographer was also hired to track the growth patterns of neighborhoods in the Mehlville and Oakville communities. Together they worked to adjust school boundaries to reduce overcrowding at schools like Oakville Elementary and to fill empty classrooms at Hagemann Elementary and Washington Middle.

Point/Trautwein Elementary Assistant Principal Dr. Whitney Maus and Bierbaum Elementary Assistant Principal Kelly Roberts have been in charge of the redistricting project. "We definitely understand why parents take such a personal

interest in this," explains Dr. Maus. "One of our top goals was to minimize the impact on families and to do our best to keep neighborhoods together."



Redistricting committee members view boundary map.

There is also an overriding academic reason for the redistricting efforts. "Class size is a critical factor when it comes to learning," added Kelly Roberts. "Reducing the number of students in a classroom lets teachers spend more individual time with students who might be struggling with a particular subject."

The Redistricting Committee came up with two scenarios for adjusting elementary school attendance boundaries and two scenarios for adjusting middle/high school attendance boundaries. The District hosted public informational meetings on February 27 and February 28 to answer questions from the community.

The redistricting committee will chose one final redistricting scenario for elementary schools and one final redistricting scenario for middle/high schools and presented it to the Board of Education on March 9. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

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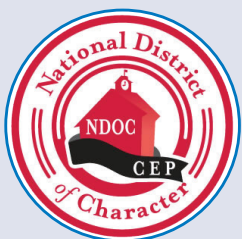
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The *Mehlville Messenger* is published by the Communications Department four times a year for Mehlville School District residents, businesses and families. Its purpose is to inform the public of District news, student achievements and community involvement activities. Please submit questions, letters and comments to:

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Mehlville School District



FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Colin Powell said “Excellence is not an exception, it is a prevailing attitude.” This simple, yet powerful, statement describes the multi-pronged approach the Mehlville School District is using to pursue excellence. The past year has proceeded at a pace not seen in many years as the district looks to improve academic achievement, update infrastructure and maintain fiscal responsibility as the second lowest cost per student in all of St. Louis City and County.

Examples include High School schedules changing in ways that will give students more options than ever before. Redistricting is in full swing to relieve overcrowding in some of our schools and lower some of our largest class sizes. As a result of the Prop R funding, there are 16 ELA interventionists in place and firmly focused on helping students to improve proficiency in the English Language Arts. Improvement efforts are underway in elementary school math with new methods, such as personalized learning, to improve student proficiency. This effort to improve math will continue through the next year with the important steps of curriculum review, selection and development.

This year’s most impactful commitment to long term excellence may just be the Choice School of Innovation. An elementary school that will use innovative methods such as Personalized Learning, Project Based Learning and different uses of space that forego the traditional desks in rows model. Despite the new sound of these methods, these are proven techniques and the couple of Kansas City area schools that have pioneered these methods boast top levels of student academic proficiency. Mehlville is home to the first Missouri school of this kind in the Eastern half of our state. The CSOI will be our district’s incubator for innovative teaching methods, developing instructional processes, tools and a real world example for our 10 other elementary schools. The positive influence of these methods will reach students throughout our district.

The past 12 months have seen a lot of work, changes and improvements. Staying in line with Colin Powell’s profound advice, we intend to keep it going and keep getting better.



Samantha Stormer

School Board to Host Third Open Dialogue Session

The Mehlville School Board will host its third Open Dialogue Session of the 2016-2017 school year on Tuesday, March 7th, at Washington Middle School. The meeting will begin at 6:30pm and last about 90 minutes.

The Open Dialogue Sessions were created so board members would have a better opportunity to talk face to face with

community residents. There is a public comment period at every school board meeting, but the rules do not give board members a chance to respond to those comments.

The fourth and final Opening Dialogue Session of the 2016-2017 school year will be held on Tuesday, May 9th, at Oakville Middle School.

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

It’s hard to believe it’s nearly spring break time. The school year seems to go by more and more quickly. The work around high school schedules, school calendar, facilities, the choice elementary school, redistricting, and high school offerings has been both challenging and rewarding.

The choice school of St. John garnered much of the early attention. It seems to be the shiny new cool thing that gets the attention. Innovation is only a small part of our work though. The larger focus is on student engagement and continuous improvement. These are the critical strategies that feed an ability to innovate.

I am most excited about the new and expanding possibilities for our high school students. We’ve long offered a number of opportunities for students on a case-by-case basis, but we are now opening those options up to a larger population in a more systematic fashion. We are calling it My Path.

My Path is based around the idea that not every student is on the same path to graduation. They are going to get there, but how they get there can be different from one student to the next. Graduation requirements still apply, but can be met in many ways. I think of it as a design-your-own-high-school-experience concept. The standards will be the same, just how

we get to them can be different for each student.

By embedding what has been the Alt Academy into the high schools more students will have the ability to take online courses in high school. We have also been working with St. Louis Community College to offer dual enrollment classes on their Meramec Campus. Eligible juniors and seniors will be able to go there, instead of their high school, and potentially graduate high school with an Associate’s Degree. These basic program college credits will transfer to any public college or university in Missouri. We often hear that folks believe we waste taxpayer dollars. This program has the potential to save our parents thousands of dollars in college tuition.

I started this column with all the work that has gone on so far this year. That work would not have been possible without the time and effort of so many students, parents, and teachers volunteering their time to be a part of helping us. Their commitment to service is one of the things that makes this a great place to be.



Dr. Chris Gaines

Energy Savings Project Pays Huge Dividends

It's a phrase just about every parent has said (again and again) to their children: "Turn off the lights when you leave the room." Truth is - we never knew if it actually made a difference when the electricity bill arrived.

Mehlville School District Superintendent Dr. Chris Gaines launched a Turn Off The Lights campaign during the past year, and it's safe to assume that it was met with a bit of skepticism. Dr. Gaines also encouraged staff members to cut down on the number of lights needed in a room, particularly rooms with a large number of windows.

Did it actually make a difference? The District's utility bills for 2016 were \$162,000 lower than they were in 2015. Cheaper energy prices certainly helped, but turning off thousands of light bulbs and light fixtures when they weren't needed played a vital role in the savings.

"It's simple economics to me," explained Dr. Gaines. "We have a fixed number of dollars in the Mehlville School District. I am sure taxpayers want us to spend those dollars on educating their children instead of on electricity."

As part of the Electric Savings Incentive Project, efficiency goals have been set for every building in the District so utility costs can be further reduced. Ongoing roof and HVAC replacements should also have a major impact on energy costs in the District.

New Choice School Focuses on Enrollment, Facility Changes

The proposed Choice School Of Innovation (CSOI) became a reality on Wednesday, January 18th, when the Mehlville School District Board of Education voted to approve the project. The new elementary school will open in August of 2017 with classes ranging from Kindergarten to 4th grade. 5th grade classes will be added for the 2018-2019 school year.

"We really haven't had much time to celebrate," said Dr. Scott Clark, the current Forder Elementary principal who will lead the new school. "My team has spent the past year mapping out our plans. Now that the school has been approved it's time to turn those plans into reality. And we are able to do it with a very small budget."



Dr. Scott Clark

All the teachers have been chosen and most of the other staffing is complete. All the student applications have been received and in the coming weeks a lottery will determine who will attend the new school. The enrollment demographics at the new school will mirror the demographics of the overall district.

Converting the St. John school on Will Avenue that currently hosts the SCOPE program into an elementary school will keep the facilities department busy this summer. At the top of the to-do list is putting in a full kitchen, finding flexible furniture that allows teachers to adapt their classrooms to an innovative style of teaching, plus creating a space for a playground and choosing an official name for the new school.

"This is a very exciting time," said Dr. Clark. "School districts across the region are watching what we are doing. Getting students to collaborate and problem solve as part of their learning experience is exactly where education is moving, and the Mehlville School District is near the leading edge of this transformation." Click [HERE](#) for more information on the Choice School of Innovation.

School Board Approves Calendars; Snow Days Added

The Mehlville School Board voted on December 15th to approve school calendars for the next two years. In the past, the board approved calendars on a yearly basis, but the board and administration felt that issuing calendars for the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 school years would help families get an early start on planning vacations around holiday breaks and the exact days when the school years begin and end.

The calendars presented to the board for approval were created by a special calendar committee set up by Superintendent Dr. Chris Gaines. "The District has done calendars the same way for years," explained Dr. Gaines. "I thought it was time to consider several options and then let parents tell us which one works best for them."

Three calendar scenarios experimented with starting school in mid-August or after Labor Day, building snow days into the calendar, and standardizing professional development for teachers by scheduling it one day every week instead of having half days placed throughout the school year.

The calendars approved by the Board of Education have school starting in mid-August, they continue the half days to accommodate professional development, and they build in two snow days each year. If the snow days are not used those days will be removed from the calendar and school will end a day or two earlier. If more than two snow days are needed, they will be added to the school year.

Click [HERE](#) to view the 2017-2018 School Calendar.

Click [HERE](#) to view the 2018-2019 School Calendar.

Dr. Brian Lane to Become Brentwood Superintendent

Mehlville School District Deputy Superintendent Dr. Brian Lane has been picked to be the new superintendent of the Brentwood School District.

Dr. Lane began his education career as an English teacher with the St. Louis Public School District and the Webster Groves School District before taking an administration position with the University City School District. Dr. Lane's career spanned 15 years with the Mehlville School District, beginning at Oakville High and culminating with the second highest administrative position in the District.

"I have enjoyed every year here in Mehlville," said Dr. Lane. "With the growing emphasis on student based learning and increasing support from the community I see nothing but great and exciting things ahead for this District."

Dr. Lane begins his duties in Brentwood on July 1.



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District Voters to Elect Three School Board Members



Jean Pretto

Full Name.....Emma Jean Pretto
Address..... 114 West Pottle Avenue
 St. Louis, MO 63129
Telephone..... 314-973-7980
Spouse..... Giosue (Joe) Pretto
Children..... Angela and Tamara;
 Both attended school
 in the Mehlville District
District Resident.... 66 years

Occupation..... Private Piano Teacher. Also work
 as Tour Guide/Gift Shop
Employer..... Anheuser Busch
Education..... Bachelors Degree Music Education,
 Master's Degree Education Supervision
 and Administration
Civic Organizations... Down Syndrome Assoc. of Greater St.
 Louis. Active volunteering with the
 VA at Jefferson Barracks
Public Office Held..... Mehlville School District Board of
 Education



Samantha Stormer

Full Name.....Samantha Stormer
Address.....7924 Silver Pine Drive
 St. Louis, MO 63129
Telephone..... 314-686-3854
Spouse..... Sean Stormer
Children..... 1 boy and 3 girls; one
 attends Oakville High, 2
 attend Rogers Elementary,
 the baby attends Goddard
 School
District Resident....8 years

Occupation..... Transportation Specialist
Employer..... UniGroup
Education..... Associates Degree
Public Office(s) Held.. Mehlville Board of Education
 2014-current
 Elected Board President in 2016

Make a Difference as an OASIS Tutor!



OASIS is a national non-profit organization whose mission includes engaging adult volunteers to work one-on-one with kids in the OASIS

Intergenerational Tutoring program. Make a profound difference in a child's life when you meet each week during the school year with a young child who struggles with reading. No teaching experience is necessary, training is provided. The Mehlville School District is looking for volunteers for the 2017-2018 school year.

To learn more, call Sarah Fahrner, Mehlville OASIS Coordinator, at 314-467-7832 or sign up at <http://www.oasisnet.org/St-Louis-MO/Tutoring>.

Candidate Forum

The Call Newspapers will host a Mehlville School Board Candidate Forum on Wednesday, March 22nd, from 8pm until 9pm. The forum will be held at Andre's South Banquet Center on Telegraph Road.

Oakville High Hosts Special Olympics

It was a celebration of friendship and teamwork on Thursday, February 16th, as Oakville High hosted its annual Special Olympics basketball tournament. OHS students became buddies with the Special Olympic athletes and helped them participate in basketball games and other activities.

The Special Olympics athletes came from across the area, ranging from elementary school to high school in age. The morning began in typical Olympic fashion with opening ceremonies highlighted by the lighting of the Olympic flame.

"This is always the best day of the year," explained Assistant Principal Brian Brennan. "There is an incredible energy in the building as we make sure that every one of our special guests is smiling and having a great time. The goal is to focus on what these young athletes can do, not what they can't do." Click [HERE](#) to view photos.



OHS buddies Liz Hall and Si Copeland give the games a thumbs up.

Election Day is Tuesday, April 4th. Three seats on the Mehlville School Board are on the ballot. The candidates are, as they will appear on the ballot, Jean Pretto, Samantha Stormer, Peggy Hassler and Michelle Pommer. Pretto and Stormer are incumbents. Board member Venki Palamand is not running for reelection.



**Peggy
Hassler**

Full Name.....Peggy Hassler
Address.....5411 Milburn Road
St. Louis, MO 63129

Telephone..... 314-302-0937

Spouse..... William J. Hassler

Children..... Lucas, Jacob & Madison;
Luke and Jake graduated
from Oakville High, Madison
is a sophomore at Oakville
High

District Resident...20 years

Occupation..... Operations Admin. Mgr./Paralegal

Employer..... Keefe & Griffiths, P.C.

Education..... BA/Business Administration
Graduated Summa Cum Laude
Lindenwood University

Public Office(s) Held.. Blades Elem. PTO, Bernard Middle PTO,
Oakville High hockey club secretary,
Co-Chair Mehlville-Oakville United
Committee, Mehlville District High
School Scheduling Committee, Kids'
Chance of Missouri Board of Directors



**Michelle
Pommer**

Full Name.....Michelle Pommer
Address.....3019 Crystal Lake Drive
Saint Louis, MO 63129

Telephone..... 314-846-7243
314-477-7243

Spouse..... John Pommer

Children..... Nicole (Tim) Brown, Alexis,
Paige, Andrew & Zachary.
Paige attends OHS, Andrew
and Zachary attend OMS.

District Resident..... 18 years

Occupation..... Homemaker

Employer..... None

Education..... St. Louis Community College-Meramec-
Associates of Business Administration;
University of Missouri Saint Louis-Studied
Business Administration

Public Office(s) Held.. Boy Scouts QAS Troop 662

Trautwein Elementary Teacher Makes Dance Special for Student

The Father-Daughter dance at Trautwein Elementary has been a huge hit since it began three years ago and it creates wonderful, lasting memories for those who come and enjoy an evening on the dance floor. But this year's dance on January 27th was bittersweet for the Nance family. Richard Nance, husband and father, passed away less than a year ago, leaving 9 year old Kaylee without an escort.

"It's a double edged sword. Do I even bring it up?," Kaylee's mother Stacey told a KSDK reporter who came to the dance. "Do I ask her if she wants to go?"

A third grade classmate invited Kaylee to come to the dance with her. But that's where Trautwein teacher Tim Bianco stepped in. "I just thought that if Kaylee wanted to go with someone or have her own chaperone, I'd love to go with her."

Bianco picked a red tie to match the color of Kaylee's dress and even bought her flowers. "I just want her to feel loved and cared about." Kaylee spent the first part of the evening dancing with her teacher and then joined her friends to laugh and enjoy their time together at the masquerade-themed celebration.

Stacey Nance has been overwhelmed by the show of support. "I am so grateful that she has such a wonderful family here at Trautwein," said Nance. "We wouldn't have gotten through what we have gotten through without them."

Trautwein Principal Dr. Shannon Henderson couldn't stop smiling as she watched Kaylee have such a special evening. "Our teachers don't stop teaching when the bell rings in the afternoon," said Dr. Henderson. "Tim Bianco is an incredibly kind person and dedicated to the well-being of his students in and out of school. Making a difference is what all teachers do on a daily basis." Click [HERE](#) to view photos from the dance.



Tim Bianco dances with Kaylee.

Beasley Elementary PTO Donates Classroom Computers

Students at Beasley Elementary are enjoying a boost in technology at their school thanks to the hard work and generosity of Beasley's PTO, which has given 44 Chromebook computers to the school.

"Our parent organization says it is dedicated to enhancing the learning experience here at Beasley, and this latest gift backs that up," said Principal Andrea Deane. "Having more access to computers is essential even at the elementary school level. I can't thank our PTO enough for investing in our students."

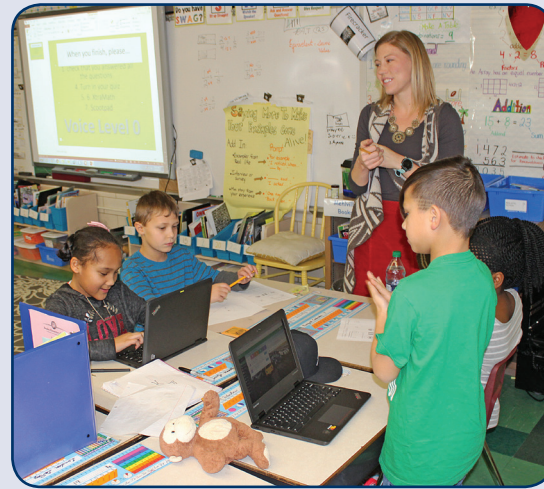
Thanks to the donated computers, each of the third grade classrooms now has 14 laptops for students to use for their lessons. The Chromebooks help the students when it comes to researching subjects for class, writing papers and learning how to maximize the benefits of computers. "The kids are very familiar with Google Classroom," explained teacher Jenna Krueger. "Even as eight year olds the students are great about correcting their capitalization and punctuation as well as checking the comments I make online about their work."

The Chromebooks also benefit students when it's time for math lessons. The computers let kids work independently and at their own level. "This allows us

a lot of flexibility with math groups," said Krueger. "The Chromebooks let me divide the students into three groups. While I am working with one group, the other two groups can practice their math skills until I get to them. The computers also lets high achieving students work ahead, which keeps them from getting bored."



Beasley Elementary students work together using their new computers.



The computers are also having an important impact for fifth grade students. "The Chromebooks are great because of the integration with Google," according to teacher Amanda Barton. "When we used Microsoft Word the kids had to worry about using flash drives and transferring their work from home to school. Now they can access their Google drive from home, and when they come to school they pull it up and it's right there. This is all possible thanks to our generous PTO."

Beasley students may not comprehend the long term benefits of their new computers, but they all agree on one thing. "It helps me learn by making it fun," said third grader Ayanna. Classmate Jada added, "It's easier because I can save my work and go back to it later. With paper you have to erase everything and start over."

Blues Make Hockey Equipment Donation to Bierbaum Elementary

Students at Bierbaum Elementary are quickly becoming hockey fans thanks to a generous equipment donation by the St. Louis Blues. The Blues gave the school four hockey goals, four sets of goalie pads, 36 hockey sticks and a box of balls so the kids can play 'street hockey' during their physical education classes. The Blues also sent members of their youth outreach program to Bierbaum Elementary.

"We come and teach basic hockey skills and have a great time with these kids," said Blues employee Jamel McCaine. "We try to develop their passion for hockey and teach them the basics. It's a great way to get the heart pumping and the blood flowing."

Bierbaum PE teacher Chad Lemley says he is thrilled to have the donated hockey equipment. "I like to offer different activities in our physical education classes, so hockey is a great addition to what we normally do," explains Lemley. "I think this is awesome. A lot of my students are new to the game of hockey so it's a brand new experience. Hockey skills are a great way to improve balance and coordination, as well as a way to encourage teamwork."



Bierbaum Elementary students face off in gym class.

This outreach program is called the Street Blues Initiative, and it is offered to elementary and middle schools in the community. Physical Education teachers also receive special training about hockey as part of the Street Blues Initiative.

Blades and Oakville Elementary Add Rock Climbing Walls

Students at two Mehlville District schools face a new challenge during their physical education classes, thanks to the addition of rock climbing walls at Blades Elementary and Oakville Elementary.



Above, Blades Elementary principal Dr. Jeremy Booker and, at right, Oakville Elementary teachers from left Anna Minx, Jenny Boeckmann and Jill Huelsmann make their way up and across their rock wall.

Parent organizations at each school paid for the walls so there was no expense to District taxpayers. While there is an obvious 'fun factor' to the rock climbing walls, physical education teachers at both schools say the walls will help students improve their balance, increase their dexterity, and it will give them a sense of accomplishment as they master the challenge of navigating across the wall.



District Bus Drivers Make Holiday Donation to BackStoppers



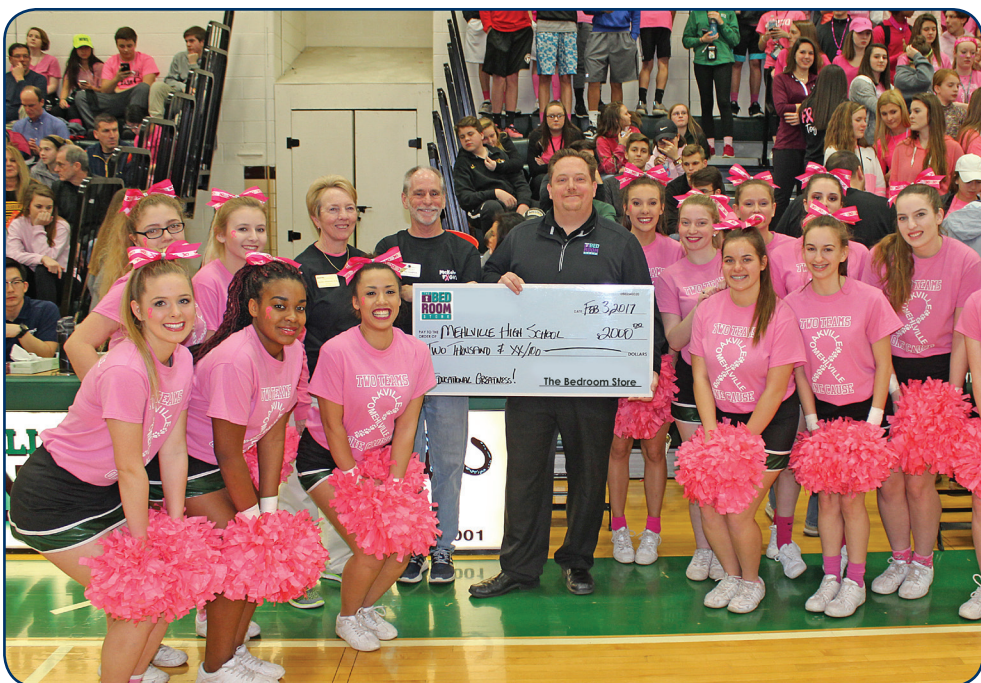
Pictured (left to right) bus drivers Maxine Dillow, Pam Aguinaldo, Annette Kobermann, Sharon Mabrey, Dawn Klemp.

More District support for BackStoppers! The Mehlville School District Transportation Department raised \$1,000 through personal donations and a gift basket raffle at their annual holiday party, where singer and Mehlville High grad Jessica Tipton donated her time and talents.

Employees made gift basket items, purchased gift basket items and solicited gift basket items from area businesses. They ended up with nearly 30 gift baskets! A special thanks to corporate donors Gianino's, Joey B's, Fit Body Boot Camp, Oak Heart Designs, Firehouse Grill, Glazed and Confused, Infinity Tan and Spa, Shirtabulous, Tequila Mexican Restaurant, Subway and the Kassebaum family, White Castle, Trueman's Place in Fenton and State Beauty Supply.

Local Business Supports MHS

Mehlville High School would like to thank The Bedroom Store for making a \$2,000 donation to the school. A check presentation was held at the beginning of the Mehlville High-Oakville High boys varsity basketball game on Friday, February 3rd.



Bernard Middle Students Arm Soldiers with Baseball Gloves

Soldiers stationed in Afghanistan are getting a helping hand, or glove, from the students at Bernard Middle School. A Bernard student has a relative stationed in that country and was told that soldiers use plastic plumbing pipes and wadded up duct tape to play baseball because they don't have the real equipment.

Bernard students started collecting baseball gloves, balls and bats so the soldiers could enjoy what little recreation time they have. "I heard about the situation and decided that just wasn't right," said Physical Education teacher Daniel Ray. "Within a week we had 30 gloves, 4 bats, 40 baseballs, 20 softballs and even some ping pong balls because they enjoy playing that sport, too."

Sending all that equipment isn't cheap. Students had a Hat Day in an effort to raise money for postage, and they collected \$150. If the shipping costs are more than that, the Bernard Middle PTO and student council say they will cover any additional cost.

The baseball equipment will end up at the Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan. Bernard Middle School Assistant Principal Lauren Cumming said, "It's great to see our students come together and support the men and women who defend our freedom. It's definitely not surprising, but it's great to see!"



Donation Settles Overdue Lunch Accounts at Mehlville High

The memory of a man who spent his life helping low income families lives on through a generous donation to Mehlville High School. Steve Glenn worked for Legal Services of Eastern Missouri for 35 years, and just days before his retirement Glenn died in an accident.

Steve Glenn's friends have honored his spirit and dedication for the past six years by making an annual donation to benefit low income people who are in need. In early January, the Steven Glenn Winter Warm-Up organization gave a \$1,000 gift to Mehlville High in order to pay off the outstanding lunch debts of students at the school.

"This was a wonderful and welcome surprise for our students," said Principal Dr. Denise Swanger. "For some of them our lunch program is the one guaranteed meal they get on a daily basis. This very generous gift eases some of the financial pressures these families face at home."

District Students Decorate Veterans Graves

Graves at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery received some special attention on Saturday, November 12, when students from Mehlville High, Washington Middle and Buerkle Middle made floral grave blankets and put them on plots throughout the cemetery.

Mehlville High Deana McKelvie was among the teachers who helped coordinate the special project. "Our students understand the importance that our military men and women play in protecting our nation," said McKelvie. "Spending time at Jefferson Barracks during the Veterans Day weekend is a chance to pay our respects and honor the memories of those who served America."



Grave blankets are made from evergreen branches and ribbons that are meant to add color to cemetery plots during the winter months. Historians have been unable to determine when the practice of creating grave blankets began.

A woman who took her two young children to Jefferson Barracks and saw the grave blankets sent a note saying, "They thought it was so neat to see that someone they did not even know came out and honored our family member. What a great example the students were in showing how a community cares."

Eighth graders Kyleigh Choate and Angelina O'Brien from Buerkle Middle School place evergreen blankets on grave.

St. Vincent De Paul Spreads Cheer

The holiday season was very special for some struggling families in the Mehlville School District, thanks to the Queen of All Saints St. Vincent De Paul Holiday Project.

When it began three years ago the Project served 20 families in the Mehlville School District. This year, thanks to generous support from the Society of St. Vincent De Paul, 40 families were helped. Former Mehlville Assistant Superintendent Cindy Lynch heads up the Project, and school counselors got the names of students, their siblings and their parents who are facing serious financial problems. The gifts were wrapped and delivered to each of the 40 families.

A heartfelt thanks to everyone who made the Christmas season so much brighter for these families.



Oakville Middle School counselors Allissa Thomas and Emily Lehr and assistant principal Patrick Bellinger pack up gifts for delivery.

Hagemann Elem. Teacher Shares Medical Milestone with Students

Dealing with cancer is a very personal battle, but Hagemann Elementary kindergarten teacher Kristi Boccardi did not hide her situation from her students. After several months of chemotherapy, Boccardi had a celebration with her students immediately after finishing her final round of treatment on the morning of January 19th. The teacher rang a special bell while her young students gave her a round of applause. Additional medical treatment is necessary, but Kristi Boccardi knows she has an amazing amount of love and support at Hagemann Elementary.

Hagemann Elementary nurse Amy Heidotten, left, joins Kristi Boccardi ring the bell in celebration.



Shoebox Project Links South County, North City

Members of Melville High's National Honor Society made their annual trek to Clay Elementary School in north St. Louis on Tuesday, December 6th, to continue a wonderful holiday tradition. The Shoebox Project provides gifts to nearly 200 students at Clay as a way to bring two distant and very different communities together.



MHS students Dominic Meyer, Rachel Meister, Briana Ward.

"We started this in the beginning of November by reaching out to all the schools in the Mehlville District," said Mehlville High teacher Stephen Klobe. "We asked students to donate school supplies, personal care items, toys and other inexpensive items. There was so much response that we actually ran out of gift boxes and then had to scramble to get more."

All the donated items were separated into age and gender appropriate piles, put in shoeboxes and then wrapped by the Mehlville High students. Many of them say the Shoebox trip is their favorite day of the year. "It's fun to see the kids get their

presents and cheer them on," explained Jake, a Mehlville High senior. "Some of the kids get really excited over a pencil or a cool ball, and I think it's really nice to see the kids do that," added Michelle, another Mehlville High senior.

The annual generosity has built a lasting relationship between Clay Elementary and the Mehlville School District. "It's much more than just receiving volunteer hours. It's more than just putting boxes together for kids," said Clay Elementary Family Specialist Rodney Reavling. "In the world we live in, collaboration between people of different backgrounds, different faiths and different belief systems is a wonderful thing to come together."

The Shoebox Project began more than a decade ago. "I think this kind of endeavor makes our world smaller," said MHS teacher and National Honor Society sponsor Deana McKelvie. "To go outside and bring cheer to people you've never met is really special." Click [HERE](#) to view photos from the day.



MHS student Logan Merz and her two new friends.



High Schools Offer Independent Learning Options

There has been a lot of exciting talk about the new elementary Choice School Of Innovation, but there are also exciting new opportunities for students at Mehlville High and Oakville High that give them some control over their final year of high school.


MyPath is an independent study option for high school seniors that lets them design their classes with the help of teachers and counselors. The goal is to let students focus on careers they might want to pursue. If a student wanted to own and operate a landscaping company, for instance, they could create a course with the help of their advising teacher. The course might require the student to prepare a business plan, create a budget and make a 12 month marketing plan for that business. If approved, the student would get high school credit for that course.

The St. Louis CAPS program is another example of giving high school seniors some real world experience. Students interested in engineering, business, medicine or technology can team up with local companies to learn how they function. Amber Porter is a senior at Oakville High and participating in STL CAPS at St. Anthony Medical Center. "I want to go into trauma nursing," Porter said. "We get to see open heart surgeries. We saw a neurosurgery. I got accepted at the University of Missouri-Kansas City and participation in STL CAPS probably helped me get in."

Students and parents can learn more about these and other high school programs by contacting the counseling office at Mehlville High or Oakville High.

Graduation 2017
Sunday, June 4
St. Charles Family Arena

Oakville High: 2pm
Mehlville High: 6pm



Blades Elementary Puts Buddy Bench on Playground

There's a brand new bench in the middle of the Blades Elementary playground, but it's not there for kids who need a rest. It was put there for kids who need a friend.

"Here at Blades, we do everything possible to make students feel included," explained Principal Dr. Jeremy Booker. "Our new Buddy Bench is a meeting place for kids who might be feeling left out and for kids who want to reach out and invite them to play."

The Buddy Bench concept is also taking place at Rogers Elementary. Principals at both schools say it's been a very successful way to bring students together and further demonstrates the District's continuing commitment to character education.

Blades Elementary Assistant Principal Dr. Laurie Tretter-Larkin and Principal Dr. Jeremy Booker gather with Girl Scouts Troop 811 to promote the new Buddy Bench.



Music Lesson to Incorporate Science, Technology Elements

During a time when many school districts are considering cuts to their music and art programs, the Mehlville School District is teaming up with the St. Louis Science Center, The Sheldon Concert Hall & Gallery and Boeing to integrate STEM skills (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) into the study of music.

The collaborative program is called The SOLID Music Project, which is an acronym for the Science Of Learning Instrument Design. This project will help students first understand the science of sound and then let them create their own instruments. "There is a reason a tuba looks the way it does," explains Tim Mulhall from the St. Louis Science Center. "It's not just because that's the way it produces the best sound. It's also the way it makes it look visually interesting."



Above, Rogers Elementary Art Teacher Kate Wottowa and Blades Music Teacher Kriste Ludwig, and below, Beasley Elementary Music Teacher Ben McClusky and Art Teacher Doug Timme craft instruments.



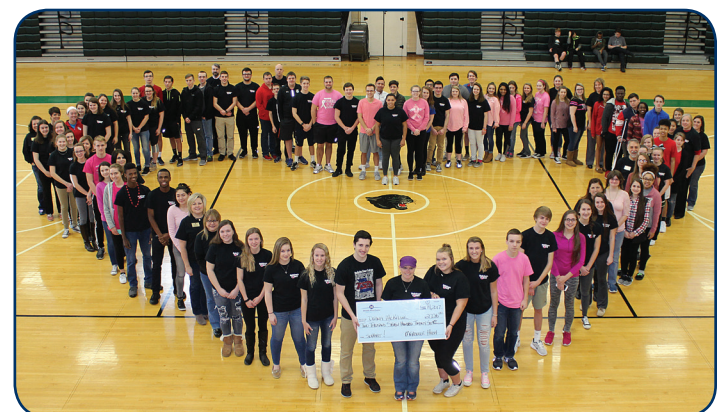
Music and art teachers from across the District attended a professional development class in January, learning how to turn ordinary household items into musical instruments. "We are showing there is a real life application in the fine arts for other career areas," said Dr. Laurie Tretter-Larkin, the District's Director of Fine Arts. "That creative design process has always been there in the arts. Music and art students will now be able to explore and understand the physics of sound and music—what causes sound to change pitch and why different materials create different musical sounds."

As part of the music partnership, all schools in the District will have the opportunity to invite experts from the Science Center and the Sheldon to help teach the classes that merge music, art and technology. "If we are preparing kids to work in the real world, they have to have a literature context, a culture context, a fine arts context," explains STEM Education Consultant Dr. Ray Wicks. "If you get students and teachers thinking about STEM as a problem solving process, it can be applied to anything."

Because of financial and educational support from Boeing, the Sheldon and the St. Louis Science Center, the SOLID Music Project does not cost the Mehlville School District any money.

Students Show Heart For Sick Teacher

Mehlville High staff and students showed their 'heart' on Valentine's Day to support teacher Deana McKelvie. The group wore special shirts and raised more than \$2,700 to help with her mounting medical bills. Stay strong, Deana!



DISTINCTIONS

Three District Students Named National Merit Finalists

Two Oakville High students and one Mehlville High student have been selected as National Merit Scholarship finalists for 2017. Seniors **Carolyn Ream** and **Vincent Duong** from OHS and **Anna Herman** from MHS are among the 15,000 finalists nationwide. The process began with an estimated 1.5 million students applying to the National Merit Scholarship program.

The estimated 8,000 scholarship winners are chosen from the Finalist group based on their abilities, skills, and accomplishments. Each student will be evaluated on their academic record, information about the school's curricula and grading system, two sets of test scores, a high school official's written recommendation, information about the student's activities and leadership, and the Finalist's own essay. The scholarship winners will be announced this spring.



From left,
National Merit
Scholarship
Finalists
Carolyn Ream,
Vincent Duong,
Anna Herman.

Federal Reserve Honors Oakville High Teacher

Oakville High teacher **Rodney Gerdes** has been named as the 2017 Educator of the Year by the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis Educator Advisory Board. This is the first time the local Federal Reserve Bank has given this award.

"We chose Rodney as the initial recipient because he embodies the professional characteristics and talents we seek in a board member," explained the Fed's Mary Suiter. "I know from personal experience with his students, that Rodney opened their eyes to economics and finance as career opportunities they may never have considered before. And, of course, he also provides them with an understanding of the economy in which they live - something many adults lack."



Oakville High principal Jan Kellerman praised Gerdes' dedication to the education profession and to his students. "Rodney is truly a creative and forward thinking leader in our building. He is an excellent role model for his students as well as our staff, and he is a major reason why we have so many Advanced Placement courses in the social studies department."

State Librarians Honor Alicia Landers

Mehlville School District Director of Curriculum Technology **Alicia Landers** has been chosen as the winner of the Missouri Association of School Librarians (MASL) Service Award. This annual honor goes to a school administrator who has made significant contributions toward furthering the role of the school library media center.

School librarians in the District credit Alicia with keeping a keen focus on how decisions and actions in the libraries impact teaching and learning. She has been a champion in expanding school libraries far beyond the stereotypical image of sterile environments and making them exciting places for students to learn and to collaborate.



Forder Elementary Receives High Honor for Teacher Teamwork

Forder Elementary is one of only 16 schools in Missouri to be honored as a Professional Learning Communities Exemplary School. Forder Principal Dr. Scott Clark, along with teachers Cindy Bright and Cari Roper, received the honor at a special leadership conference on January 31st.



Bright, Roper, Dr. Clark

This award recognizes schools that develop a high degree of teamwork among their teachers and then use that teamwork to improve student performance. Forder and other schools that receive this honor become a valuable resource for other schools and districts that want to bring more collaboration and success to their buildings.

Mehlville High Teacher Receives London Theatre Scholarship

Mehlville High Theatre Arts Director **Alex Moore** will be heading to England this summer after receiving a scholarship to study at Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London. The scholarship was presented by The English Speaking Union, a charitable group dedicated to providing educational and cultural opportunities to students and educators.



The Union selects one English or Theatre teacher for the scholarship each year, and all expenses are covered while in London. Moore will participate in the 'Teaching Shakespeare Through Performance' program at the Globe Theatre, which was originally created by William Shakespeare's playing company in 1599.

South County Kiwanis Terrific Kids Awards

November - Blades Elementary:
Front row from left: **Alina Dudakovic, 2nd;**
Anisa Dzananovic, 4th; **Lauren Reynolds, 3rd;**
Brett Johnson, 5th. Back row: **Kiwanis members Linda Bowen, Pauline Roth, Roy Wunsch and Principal Dr. Jeremy Booker.**



December - Forder Elementary:
Front row from left: **Omar Elbealy, 3rd;**
David Buck, 5th; **Libby Bommarito, 2nd;**
Din Hasanovic, 4th. Back row: **Kiwanis members Linda Bowen and Carla Rowell and Principal Dr. Scott Clark.**



January - Hagemann Elementary:
From left: **Principal Dr. Scott Andrews,**
Lily Auclair, 3rd; **Jack Caldwell, 4th;** **Salah Hussein, 2nd;**
Xavier Johnson, 5th; **Kiwanis member Carla Rowell.**



February - Oakville Elementary:
Front row from left: **David Edwards, 5th;**
Brennan Stegall, 3rd; **Kyra Dreppard, 3rd;**
Payton Colona, 1st. Back row: **Principal Dr. Chad Dickemper, Kiwanis members Carla Rowell and Linda Bowen.**

COMMUNITY ENRICHMENT 2017 SPRING CLASSES



Community Enrichment

Proud Member of the Mehlville School District

Enrollment for Community Enrichment Spring classes is going on now. Here is a look at the available classes beginning at the end of March. Detailed information, including class location, day and time of all classes, along with the enrollment form, can be found online at www.mehlilleschooldistrict.com (**Community/Community Enrichment**) or by calling 314-467-5280.

CLASSES FOR CHILDREN

Abra-Kid-Abra (Grades 1-5) In this class students will develop presentation skills and confidence in front of a group and build creativity and thinking skills, all while having fun. \$75

Art Time (Grades 1-6) Students will create a variety of paintings and drawings with an experienced art teacher. Classes are held at Oakville High School. A supply list will be sent before the first day of class. \$30

Bricks 4 Kidz (Grades K-5) New projects - build machines, buildings, vehicles and other structures out of motorized LEGO bricks. Models of varying degrees of difficulty are offered to accommodate the age range of the class. \$95

Little Medical School (Grades K-5) Using interactive demonstrations, crafts and games, learn how the body and organs work, how to use medical instruments, administer first aid and even tie knots like a real surgeon. \$95

Little Veterinarian (Grades K-5) Using interactive demonstrations, crafts and games, kids learn how to take care of a pet and use instruments that real veterinarians use. \$95

Mad Science (Grades K-5) Enter the world of chemistry! Make gooey slime, discover what makes reactions go, learn to use the tools that chemists use. Watch bubbling potions pop their tops! Turn cool colors with temperature and pH changes and see what makes things glow in the dark. Polymers and catalysts are just two of the fascinating concepts our young Mad Scientists explore in this thrilling trip through the world of the chemistry lab! \$88

Spanish for Kids (Grades K-5) Children will learn practical vocabulary, correct pronunciation and basic sentence structure necessary to understand and use the Spanish language. No prior Spanish experience required. \$30

Tennis (Grades 3-12) This recreational program gives students an opportunity to learn the game and have fun in the process. \$60

CLASSES FOR ADULTS

Dance Blast (Ages 18 & up) Experience a variety of dance styles in easy to follow routines. Hip-hop, Zumba, many Latin styles (salsa, cha cha, etc.), Belly, Indian, and more! \$35

Yoga (Ages 18 & up) We will build and strengthen the mind-body connection using the fundamentals of movement, breath, and mindfulness for an improved sense of well-being. All abilities welcome. \$75

Zumba (Ages 18 & up) Burn calories and activate muscle groups by incorporating Latin rhythms that can be modified for all physical types. No dance experience needed. \$40

DRIVER'S EDUCATION

There are two sessions of driver's education remaining this Spring for students ages 15 and up. Classes will run Monday through Thursday from 3:30 to 6 p.m. Students will be required to drive before class and on Fridays and weekends.

Session 3: March 27 to April 13

Session 4: April 24 to May 11

The fee for Driver's Education is \$200 for district residents and \$225 for nonresidents.

SWIM INFORMATION

Coached Lap Swim (All ages with tryout) A coach/monitor will be present at each session with a prepared workout on the board. The workouts can be adjusted up or down depending on age and ability. \$125

Saturday Morning Learn to Swim/Advanced Swim (Ages 3 & up) Session 2 of Spring Learn to Swim lessons will begin on March 11. Classes run for 50 minutes every Saturday. **Advanced Swim** is held at 8 a.m. and 1 p.m. **Learn to Swim** lessons are held at 8, 9, 10, 11 a.m. and 12 and 1 p.m. Fee for residents is \$40/7 weeks (nonresidents pay \$50/7 weeks).

Swimnastics (Ages 18 & up) The Spring session of Swimnastics will begin the week of April 17. New sessions begin every eight weeks. Classes run Mondays and Wednesdays from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. The fee for this class is as follows: \$40 for 8 classes; \$50 for 16 classes (60plus fee is: \$25 for 8 classes; \$35 for 16 classes). There is a \$5 nonresident fee.

Recreational Swim hours are Monday through Friday 6 to 7 a.m. (lap swim only); Sunday through Friday 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Tuesday and Friday 7 to 9 p.m.; Saturday 2 to 4:30 p.m. Fee: \$3 for students and 60plus members, \$4 for adults, \$6 per family. Year long memberships are available - please see the pool supervisor or call 314-467-5280.

HOW TO REGISTER

- In person in the Administration Building (located on the Mehlville High School Campus).
- By mailing the enrollment form and payment to Community Enrichment, 3120 Lemay Ferry Road, St. Louis, MO 63125.
- Through the school: simply send the enrollment form and payment to school with your child and the office will forward it to the Community Enrichment Office.
- **NEW THIS YEAR:** You may now register online at www.mehlilleschooldistrict.com and proceed to the **Community/Community Enrichment/Online Registration** tab.

Summer enrollment begins April 3. Visit mehlilleschooldistrict.com (Community/Community Enrichment) for complete class information. Classes to be offered this summer include: Abra-Kid-Abra, Babysitting, Camp MehlOak, Cheer/Pom, Chess, Coached Lap Swim, Driver's Education, Little Medical School, Storytelling, Summer Fun Days, Swim Lessons, Swimnastics and Tennis.


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IMPORTANT DATES

Find District event information at www.mehvilleschooldistrict.com

March 7	Open Dialogue with Board of Education, 6:30 p.m. Washington Middle
March 9	Board of Education Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
March 10	No School - Professional Development/Workday
March 13	Middle School Evening Conferences
March 14	High School Evening Conferences
March 15-16	Elementary School Conferences
March 17	No School - Conference Comp Day
March 20-24	No School - Spring Break
March 30	Half Day (Professional Development)
April 4	Election Day
April 4	No School - 1/2 Professional Development, 1/2 Teacher Workday
April 6 & 7	MHS Theatre Workshop Class presents <i>The 39 Steps</i> , 7 p.m., Aud.
April 13	Board Reorganization Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
April 18	Half Day (Professional Development)
April 26	Board of Education Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
May 9	Open Dialogue with Board of Education, 6:30 p.m., Oakville Middle
May 11	SCOPE Graduation, 5 p.m.
May 18	Board of Education Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
May 23-24*	Finals 6-12/Half Day/Teacher Workday
May 24*	Last Day of School
May 29	Memorial Day
June 4	Oakville High School Graduation, 2 p.m., Family Arena
June 4	Mehville High School Graduation, 6 p.m., Family Arena
June 5-30	Summer Acceleration Program
June 8	Board of Education Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
June 29	Board of Education Meeting, 6:30 p.m.

* Subject to change depending on any additional snow days.

A Mehville School District Publication

Mehville Messenger



Emma and Madelyn enjoy the Father-Daughter
 Dance at Trautwein Elementary.
 Visit Page 5 to see how a teacher made
 the night extra special for one student.



MARCH 2017

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