



KENTWOOD SCHOOL NEWS

Kentwood Public Schools

www.kentwoodps.org

April 2018

Learning is a treasure that will follow its owner everywhere.

Kentwood Elementary Schools Receive National Rankings

Two Kentwood Elementary Schools Earn Top National Award

Two Kentwood Public Schools' elementary schools have received the prestigious, *Capturing Kids' Hearts* National Showcase Schools Award.

Endeavor Elementary and Challenger Elementary have received a Capturing Kids' Hearts National Showcase Schools award for the 2017-2018 school year.

These awards were presented by the Flippen Group, out of Texas, who Kentwood Public Schools began partnering with 12 years ago to bring *Capturing Kids' Hearts* to its schools.



Capturing Kids' Hearts educates teachers and staff on how to help students build positive relationships with both peers and adults on campus.

"Our goal has always been to ensure that our campuses are emotionally and physically safe places for students," said Superintendent Michael Zoerhoff. "When strong relationships are built students, staff, and parents come alive with a love for learning."

This award demonstrates how Kentwood Public Schools are making a difference in the lives of students!

Schools across the country, who partner with *Capturing Kids' Hearts*, were considered for these awards based on three criteria:

1) nomination based on observation, 2) level of implementation of *Capturing Kids' Hearts* processes by all staff as measured by online surveys, and 3) data demonstrating that *Capturing Kids' Hearts* has made a significant improvement in attendance, discipline, climate/culture, or academics.



A team from the Flippen Group visited each nominated school to gather additional information and interview students, teachers, administrators, and parents.

Kentwood Ranks in the Michigan Top 100!!

Six KPS elementary schools have been ranked in the top 100 elementary and middle schools in the state of Michigan for 2017. The state of Michigan has over 2,261 elementary and middle schools.

This recognition comes from the Mackinac Center for Public Policy who puts out the top 100 lists each year.

Southwood, Glenwood, and Meadowlawn were included in the top 100 list of Highest Ranked Schools.

The scores are calculated from the free and reduced lunch counts, MStep, and are then given a formula based on a context and performance (CAP) reports score. This category measured the sustained performance of each school over an extended period. Each schools' CAP Scores were averaged over eight years to generate a final score.

Glenwood, Southwood, Discovery, Townline, and Brookwood were included in the top 100 list of schools with Sustained High Performance.

"The state of Michigan has over 2,261 elementary and middle schools," said Michael Pickard, Executive Director of Elementary Education. "For six schools from Kentwood to be ranked in the top 100 is an incredible achievement!"



"We are so proud of our elementary students, staff, and parents," said Superintendent Michael Zoerhoff. "KPS is successful and strong because of the dedicated staff who bring a passion for learning to the students and parents of our community."

Excellence and Equity in Education

5820 Eastern Avenue SE, Kentwood, MI 49508

Phone: 616 455-4400 Fax: 616 455-4476

Elementary Events



This event was a huge success. Held on February 10, at the EK Fieldhouse with many

elementary students, teachers, administrators, and families. They gathered to celebrate healthy hearts. Also attending was "Freddy the Falcon" and "Griff." The Kentwood community raised \$24,115 to donate to the American Heart Association.

Service Project at Townline



On February 1, Townline 5th graders participated in a service project with Kids' Food Basket. Students used teamwork to put together items for sack suppers. The suppers provide food for kids in West Michigan. It was a profound and humbling experience for the students.

President's Day Parade at Brookwood

The ASD students decorated carts and wagons as they paraded around the school with their general education peers/buddies to commemorate President's Day.

At the conclusion of the parade, the students with autism presented reports on past presidents to staff, students and families.



Brookwood's 2nd Annual Chili Cook-Off

Nine staff members entered their Chili dishes into a highly competitive cook-off. After gruesome deliberation, three chilies prevailed.

A special "thank you" to the host of judges, including Superintendent Michael Zoerhoff.



The winner!!

The results are as follows:
1st place-Kristi Koning, cook
2nd place-Anna Sisco, grade 3 teacher
3rd place-Lorenzo Bradshaw, principal

Discovery's ARCH Program Attends the GR Drive Game



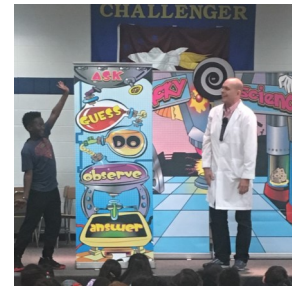
Fifth grade students in Discovery's ARCH Program attended the GR Drive game. "Thanks" to Cade Wilson, ARCH Director, for making this opportunity possible. Students got to be in the high-five tunnel, got some Drive hats, ate some good food, and got to meet some players after the game. Several students got to go on the court for a timeout challenge.



Cyber Safety at Discovery

On February 14, all fifth grade students participated in the annual Cyber Safety Event. The venue was in the EKHS Fine Arts Auditorium where senior teen leaders led informational skits and break-out sessions about Cyber Safety and concluded with spirit competitions.

Hands-On STEAM Activities



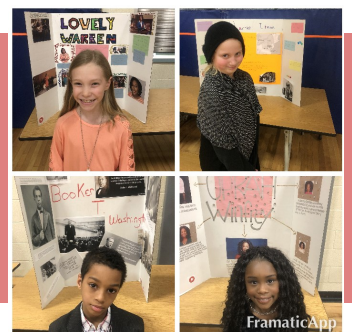
Challenger hosted a Family

S.T.E.A.M. Night. The evening began with an interactive Wacky Science Show that had all the students and parents engaged. Time was spent discussing the Science Next Gen Standards and the eight processes that the standards are centered around.



Members of the Kentwood Red Storm Robotics team gave the students the opportunity to drive the robots and check out the creations. The night concluded with hands-on S.T.E.A.M. activities in the classrooms.

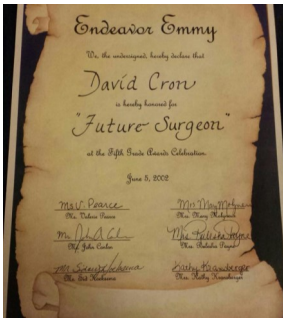
We had visitors from the past and present hanging out at Brookwood. Third grade students hosted the 5th annual African American Wax Museum. This is always a special occasion for the students, staff, and families at Brookwood. Thank you third graders, Mr. Garay, and Mrs. Sisco for enlightening us about many great African Americans that have made significant contributions to our society and world.



Skot Welch Named to Governor Snyder's Michigan Film Office Advisory Council

Skot is a community leader, a Kentwood parent, and a huge supporter of Kentwood Schools. He is most excited to serve on the council so he can tell the great story of our Kentwood Public Schools' students and staff.

Congratulations Skot!!



EK Grad is a Surgeon!!

Dr. David Cron wrote on his Facebook page:

"I'm officially going to be a surgeon! I am proud to have matched into a general surgery residency and excited for this next chapter. In the meantime, I'd like to commend

Endeavor Elementary School for their spot-on prediction with this 5th grade award I received back in 2002."

Pinewood "Thanks" the Education Foundation

Mrs. Batdorff, Mrs. Nowak, and Mrs. Lasure were awarded a grant to purchase engaging literature for a classroom library.



Mrs. Terhaar and Mr. McDaid wrote a grant for equipment to help test the water quality of a local creek.

Students in these classrooms presented to the guests and answered questions about the grants and the projects associated with them.

Crestwood Presented Tech at the Gala



Students from Mrs. Yarnott's technology class had the opportunity to share their 3-D printing projects at the Red and Black Gala. The KPS Education Foundation awarded her class a grant to purchase a 3-D printer for her classroom.

Three students from her class showcased their 3-D printed inventions and explained how the printer worked. The students showed how to create the items on the 3-D printing website called TinkerCad.

Students also showcased the iPad Pro and iPad Air that was awarded to the band program during the 2016-17 school year. Mr. Townsend and a few 8th grade band members, showcased some of the software available through the devices and how they are used on a daily basis. Classroom productivity and comprehension of musical concepts has increased since their installment.

Kentwood Board of Education Meeting Schedule

The meetings of the BOE will be held at 6:30 p.m. in the locations listed below due to construction at the Administration Office:

Monday, May 21 - Bowen Elementary
4483 Kalamazoo Ave SE

Monday, June 25 - EK Freshman Campus
6170 Valley Lane SE
(Budget Hearing, 6:15 p.m.)

- All meetings will be held in the school's Collaboration Center.

Note: Official minutes of the BOE meetings are available no later than five business days following Board approval. These documents are available during business hours at the Administration Offices - 5820 Eastern Avenue SE, 616-455-4400.

If you see **Zach** or **Cameron**, please congratulate them!

We had TWO students from Mr. Hudson's orchestra program named in the results of the Skip Gates Concerto Competition, held by the Grand Rapids Youth Symphony Orchestra.

Cameron Gouin (violin) - sophomore placed 2nd in the competition

Zachary Earle (cello) - sophomore named honorable mention!

The Wizard Of Oz Play

The cast of The Wizard of Oz dazzled a packed house over the weekend of the production. Students from Endeavor and Pinewood were treated to a private viewing of the production on the afternoon of February 1 and left feeling as though they had attended a show on Broadway.



Thanks to Mrs. Balkon, Mrs. G, and the dynamic cast of Pinewood students.

Rotary Students of the Month

Arlette Uwarugira - My aspiration is to pursue a career in the medical field. I am dedicated to serving the community by advocating for patients and those in need. Participating in church activities and being a middle school leader gave me the opportunity to enhance my leadership skills. I learned to overcome my fears and to take action when necessary. My ability to communicate and empathize with different people makes me stand out as a leader. I believe every leader should strive to be the best version of themselves no matter the circumstance.

I am an immigrant from Africa, and I came to the United States in 2015. I am grateful for my family and everyone who has supported me along the way.



Isiah Sims - In the future, I aspire to be a Physical Therapist. I want to do this as a profession because when I was 15, I tore 4 of the 5 major ligaments in my right knee playing soccer. I went through nine months of physical therapy, so I got very familiar with what my therapists would do every day as a job and it seemed like something I could do for a living.

Besides being involved with the EK soccer program for the past four years, I also volunteer at my church. My favorite thing to do there is the middle school retreat where high schoolers help lead the middle schoolers and help them connect and get closer to God and to one another.

I believe that leading at church and my involvement with the soccer team has helped grow my skills as a leader. I'm not afraid to take the lead when it comes to making big decisions, but also I am not opposed to taking a step back and listening to what others around me have to say. I will continue to do the best that I can and will continue to try to be a better me each and everyday.

Doctor of Hip-Hop in Growth Mindset and Grit!

Valleywood Middle School hosted Dr. Blake Brandes for a hip-hop lesson in growth mindset and grit. He is a nationally recognized speaker and Ted Talk contributor.

Dr. Brandes presented the work of Carol Dweck and Angela Duckworth in a fun, accessible manner that empowered the middle school future Falcons. The presentation included age-appropriate and engaging growth mindset and grit lessons infused with beatboxing, comedic story-telling, and family-friendly freestyle rapping.



Switch Partnership and FIRST Robotics Competition

Switch Ltd, the folks who own the "Pyramid" on 60th Street, has again agreed to be the key sponsor of the FIRST Robotics competition! They are donating \$10,000 to cover a significant portion of the expenses for the event. They will also have one of their senior executives open the event by welcoming people and sharing a little about Switch. This is the second year they have sponsored the event and hopefully they will continue to do so in the future.

The FIRST Robotics competition took place on March 30 and 31 in the EKHS Fieldhouse. Thousands of area students and parents attended each of the events. The competition field they setup and the displays from all of the teams were impressive!

African American Male Achievement Conference

Many KPS secondary students attended the African American Male Achievement Conference at GRCC. There were nearly 1,000 African American male students, community leaders, clergy, and fathers in attendance.



Kentwood Public Schools students and staff made their presence known by actively engaging, participating, and leading discussions in workshops and seminars.

STEM Visit to GVSU School of Computing

Crestwood 7th and 8th graders enjoyed a fabulous day of learning at GVSU with the staff from the School of Computing and Information Systems. Students were engaged in their sessions regarding Photoshop and Scratch programming.

The Technology Showcase offered an opportunity for students to be introduced to various high-tech devices like a Virtual Reality headset, the Ozobot, used to teach basic programming, and the Sphero, an app-enabled ball controlled by an iPad.



Second Group Of Staff Grads

Congratulations to Holly Lewakowski from Endeavor, Kiersten Hudson from Explorer, Kerianne Leja from Brookwood, and Lesley Brown from Pinewood who recently completed their ESL endorsement through the KPS/ Aquinas cohort.

Kentwood Public Schools is partnering with Aquinas College to build EL instructional capacity throughout the district. This partnership has increased the number of staff who are highly qualified in teaching our English Learners. Thank you to all the staff as they continue to pursue excellence in educating our students.

Defibrillator at Meadowlawn

Meadowlawn is thankful to now have a new Automated External Defibrillator (AED) in the building. Resource Room teacher Randy Draayer secured the device for Meadowlawn by working with the Wes Leonard Heart Team.

Mr. Draayer, along with 4th grade teacher, Tim Caminiti, recently attended the annual "Never Forgotten" basketball game, which honors the



memory of Wes Leonard, to receive the AED.

Meadowlawn is appreciative for being selected to receive the AED as it helps to put safety first for the students, staff, and all visitors.

EK Supports Kids Food Basket with Dodgeball Games

EKFC's Jasmine Ramahi, along with countless other staff members, organized the first annual EKHS Dodgeball Tournament to support Dance Marathon. Together, students raised about \$600 that was funneled to the Spring Dance Marathon.

Dance Marathon is an activity where students learn about the importance of giving back through service and fundraising that they can donate to a local charity. This year, Dance Marathon has partnered with Kids Food Basket. The amount raised will be donated to Kids Food Basket at Dance Marathon on April 21.



Getting Involved: The Importance of Senior Advocacy

By Regina Salmi, Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan

In 1970, Maggie Kuhn was forced to retire from her job on the day she turned 65. At this time, the mandatory retirement law allowed her employer to make her retire. Maggie felt this was unfair, so she began talking to friends who experienced forced retirement and together they began writing letters, making phone calls, and visiting legislators.

The law enforcing retirement at age 65 wasn't abolished by Congress until 1986, but it was thanks to Kuhn and her friends bringing awareness to the issue that we are no longer forced out of jobs because of our age. Maggie's group, dubbed the Gray Panthers, were also at the forefront of nursing home reforms, fighting ageism, and preserving social security until her death in 1995. That same year, she was also inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame.

Maybe we cannot all be Maggie Kuhn, but what we can learn from her legacy is that our age doesn't have to stop us from having a voice and making a difference in our communities. In fact, Kuhn might argue, no one is going to care more about issues that affect us than we are. Upon her forced retirement, she said, "With this new freedom we have, let's see what we can do to change the world." Like Maggie, we all have the opportunity to become advocates, especially those of us who find we have more time on our hands after we choose to retire.

What do we mean by advocacy? The word *advocate* comes from the Latin *ad-* meaning "toward" and *vox* meaning "voice". When we engage in advocacy, we are lending our voices to a particular issue. The traditional forms of advocacy are to send letters or make phone calls to legislators. AAAWM's Advocacy Coordinator and Planner, Lacey Charboneau explains, these methods have "stood the test of time" and "neither needs to take much time or prolonged effort. The best advocacy letters are no longer than one page, include succinct and straightforward facts and end with a call to action of some kind." In addition to these formal methods of advocacy, email and social media engagement are also becoming effective forms of engaging with decision makers. Charboneau emphasizes though that, "No matter what the issue, or who the audience, there is no more effective way to get your point across than showing up and speaking up in person."

Millennials may have surpassed Baby Boomers as the largest eligible voting block in the United States in 2018, but Boomers remain a powerful group when it comes to legislative matters. As seniors, it is important we recognize the ability we have to create change. "Older adults are the keepers of vast amounts of experience and knowledge" Charboneau observes, "They have seen and experienced history – both the positive and negative. Older adults should be empowered to share their opinions and thoughts with those in power so we can learn from our past as we move forward." According to the AARP, the recent passing of the "Tax Cut and Jobs Act" activated an automatic \$25 billion cut to Medicare. As a result of advocacy efforts on the part of seniors, the House and Senate "waived the required cuts as part of a temporary spending bill to prevent a government shutdown."

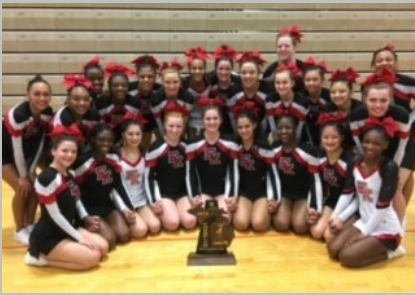
So, how does one get involved in advocacy? Charboneau advises the first step, "Decide what issue is most important to you." As you research about that issue, you may find there is already an advocacy group working on the issue and you can join. Maybe your issue is a local one and, like Maggie, you talk with other people affected by this concern and form your own group. Maybe there are people in your church or senior center who would be interested in forming an advocacy group. AAAWM has an advocacy group called *Advocates for Senior Issues*. If you are in or near Kent county, please join us. New members are always welcome. For more information, visit their website: www.advocatesforseniorissues.org. You can also contact them at (616) 456-5664 or info@advocatesforseniorissues.org with questions.

Points Of Pride

Girls Varsity Basketball - completed the regular season with a record of 20-0 and won the OK Red Conference Championship



Competitive Cheer - Conference champions, District champions and Regional champions, and could be State champions.



Regional Spelling Bee Winner

Congratulations to our very own Niharikaa (Nikki) Dhage for winning the Regional Spelling Bee! Nikki competed in the Greater Grand Rapids Spelling Bee on March 27 at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum. This is the **third year in a row** that Nikki has won the Regional Bee.

Congratulations and best of luck at the next level.



We are also extremely proud of 7th grader Danny Pellerito, who finished in the final four of the competition. There was a total of 14 spellers competing from seven different schools. Job well done you two!

Pool Sessions Teach Survival Skills to Fifth-Graders

By Erin Albanese - SNN

Fifth-grader Jaden Nguyen floats on his back, a water safety skill.



During three sessions at the Aquatic Center pool, offered to all fifth-graders from the district's ten elementary schools, students learn the basics of water safety and to feel more confident in the pool.

"Life skills are taught in health and physical education and water safety is something all students need to know," Aquatic Director Joey Sutherlin said. "It's lifelong learning. We live in Michigan. We are ten minutes from natural water in any direction," Sutherlin said, adding that the district has continued to invest in the pool, while some districts have ended their programs. Grand Rapids Public Schools, for instance, once offered water safety, but it fell victim to budget cuts.

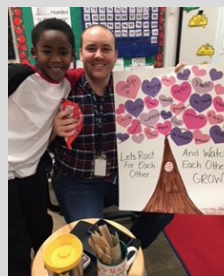
"If the program saves even just one life it is worth it," Sutherlin said. "We have to make sure we are not just educating our kids in math, science, and English, but that we are teaching them survival skills as well."



Coach Jock Ambrose talks about water safety to Challenger Elementary School fifth-graders.

Random Acts of Kindness at Challenger

Students participated in Random Acts of Kindness Week and took the time to do something nice for another class. One simple act can go far and it is important that children understand the power of being kind.



Discovery Celebrated the Kick Off to March is Reading Month

Library clerk Erica Barbour read Dr. Seuss books, in commemoration of his birthday, to K-2 students and they each got a cupcake!



The Cat in the Hat, along with Thing One (Alexandria Barbour) and Thing Two (Landon Storm) delivered cupcakes to the lower elementary classrooms and everyone sang Happy Birthday to Dr. Seuss. The kids were very excited to see The Cat in the Hat and to give high-fives to Thing One and Thing Two.

Annual Latino Youth Conference

Sixty 8th grade students, from all three middle schools, participated in the 19th Annual Latino Youth Conference at GRCC. The goal of this conference was to give students a day of educationally oriented activities that will inspire them to realize the importance of education as a vehicle for a successful future.



The Kentwood students had the opportunity to participate in sessions in which they learned about the top careers of the future, overcoming obstacles, educational opportunities at KCTC, and continuing education post high school.



Crossroads Alternative High School



KDL Poetry

Crossroads welcomed Diatribe, a group of slam-poets, to the building to conduct poetry workshops and perform to the student body. Students greatly benefited from this opportunity to write, express themselves creatively, and hone in on their craft. Thanks to the Kent District Library of Kentwood for supporting this event.



2018 KPSEF Red & Black Gala



Crossroads' Leadership students participated in the Grant Recipient Showcase at the 5th Annual Red and Black Gala on February 8. The literacy project was highlighted. Thank you Kentwood Education Foundation for supporting the literacy initiative.

Crossroads Participated in Kentwood's Multicultural Celebration



The theme is "The Color of Change." Crossroads WMCAT video students put together a really neat video production. In the video, they interviewed members of the community about diversity.

Tiger PRIDE



Thank You Teacher Resource Store!!

Crossroads' teachers had the opportunity to shop for free school supplies for the classrooms and students. This opportunity was made possible by the Teacher Resource Store. The Teacher Resource Store helps reduce the financial strain for both students and teachers in Kent County. Crossroads is thankful for this wonderful partnership.

2017-2018 Crossroads Basketball Team



"Your value does NOT decrease based on someone else's inability to see your worth." - Unknown

2018-19 School of Choice Policies and Regulations

Applications accepted April 8 - May 11, 4:00 p.m.

For your convenience, KPS applications will be on-line, April 8 - May 11 at www.kentwoodps.org or at Kentwood Public Schools Administration Office, 5820 Eastern Avenue SE, or call 616-455-4400.

- One application per student, per year may be submitted.
- If more applications are received in a district than openings available, there will be a random lottery drawing for applications received prior to the deadline.
- Siblings of students previously accepted under the Program will be assigned to open spots before a random draw begins. Students who reside in the same household will be considered "siblings" for this purpose only.
- Accepted students must agree to comply with Choice Districts policies.
- Transportation is NOT provided for Choice students. Parents must provide their own transportation to and from school.
- After acceptance, you will be allowed continuous enrollment in the district until graduation or you withdraw from the district at which time you may return to your resident district. If you withdraw and still live outside the district and would like to re-enroll, you must reapply through Schools of Choice.
- Waiting lists will be created at Choice district after the lottery/random draw and parents will be notified if spaces become available.
- Special Education students, for whom a written cooperative agreement regarding costs cannot be obtained with their district of residence, will be refused Schools of Choice.

- Enrollment may be denied to students who have been suspended, expelled, or convicted of a felony.
- Parents will be notified by May 21 if student is accepted.
- Families on waiting list will be notified about openings and will need to confirm decision to attend by May 31 - June 29, 2018.

Parent Notice Regarding Within District Transfers

To better serve our families in an efficient manner, district procedures have changed for parents who are requesting a change in their child's school placement for the upcoming 2018-2019 school year. Please be advised of the following process to ensure your request is given consideration:

1. Parents should pick up and return Within District Transfer (WDT) forms at your student(s) home building.
2. Parents who submit their WDT forms by **May 1, 2018**, will be notified in June before the office staff leaves for the summer.
3. If a WDT is submitted **AFTER** May 1, 2018, then parents will be notified whether their application was approved or disapproved **AFTER** registration is held in August 2018.
4. Parents may continue to submit WDT request forms during the summer months at the Kentwood Public Schools Administration building on 5820 Eastern Avenue SE, Kentwood, Michigan.
5. Parents with questions or concerns may contact the Student Services Office 455-4400, ext. 79927 for further assistance.