



A Message from Superintendent Les Fujitake

ANOTHER YEAR OF REFLECTIONS



Superintendent Les Fujitake addresses Realtors at a recent Bloomington Realtor forum hosted by the district in partnership with the City of Bloomington.

During the last weeks of school, teachers will often ask students to reflect on what they learned and how they've grown over the school year. These reflections are a way to celebrate our growth and achievements.

Reflection #1: Our students continue to make progress on the World's Best Workforce goals that make up our strategic plan. We continue to show steady progress and a narrowing of the achievement gap between our diverse student groups.

Reflection #2: Last month we recognized more than 1,000 volunteers who have enriched and expanded the learning opportunities for our students of all ages and abilities this year. Volunteers support our district, schools and Community Education programs as classroom assistants, homework and service learning tutors, breakfast and reading buddies, pen pals and mentors.

We are grateful to Minnesota Reading Corps and Edmentum, the faith communities participating in the UpWorks Enriching Schools Program, volunteers from 19 colleges and universities, and the unique Autism Mentorship Program that pairs autistic youth and adults in meaningful one-to-one mentoring relationships.

Reflection #3: The Friends of Bloomington Public Schools display in the Arlene Bush Board Room showcases the businesses, organizations, civic groups, faith communities, nonprofits and governmental agencies that provide one of the most important and enduring assets of our school system: partnerships. The more we work together, the better we can invest in the future of our students and community.

Reflection #4: Each year at this time we experience special moments in our students' lives—graduation

ceremonies. We see the students' eagerness to be graduates from Kennedy and Jefferson high schools and Metro South Adult Basic Education programs. Graduation represents the finale of a long educational journey—one that has made each of these students more prepared to enter the next phase of life. We are proud that our four-year graduation rate continues to improve over time, increasing 5.8 percentage points over the past four years and exceeding the statewide average of 83.2 percent.

Reflection #5: The student achievement and graduation data demonstrates the impact of our vision and strategy to ensure students graduate career and college ready. We are committed to making sure all learners are prepared to continue their educational journey without developmental or remedial coursework at the postsecondary level, or to enter a career track that provides a livable wage.

We are making progress toward this goal with our Pathways to Career and College vision and by working with every secondary student to create a Personal Growth Plan. Earlier this month, Kennedy and Jefferson organized National College Decision Day activities that featured seniors highlighting their career and college plans, which include attending two-year, four-year or technical colleges, starting apprenticeships, joining the military or entering the workforce.

Reflection #6: There's not enough space to share all the wonderful honors and awards our students and staff earned this year. We have shared many of these achievements as Points of Pride in each issue of School Pages, including this edition. We wish our students, staff and families a wonderful summer, and we look forward to your return in the fall.

District welcomes new leadership



Dr. Jenna Mitchler will become the new assistant superintendent for Bloomington Public Schools on July 1. She is replacing Dr. Eric Melbye who accepted an Associate Superintendent for

Middle Schools and Student Services position with the Anoka-Hennepin School District.

Dr. Mitchler is returning to the district following a year as director of curriculum, instruction, assessment and student support with the Burnsville-Eagan-Savage School District. She began her career with Bloomington as an English teacher and curriculum developer (2011-15), before becoming a curriculum and instruction specialist (2015-16), and then lead curriculum and instruction specialist (2016-18). She was previously an English teacher for the Marshfield (Wis.) school district and taught and provided professional development in Malawi, Africa, while serving for two years with the U.S. Peace Corps.

Dr. Mitchler is an innovative leader with proven experience in culturally relevant curriculum, instruction and assessment, educational equity and multi-tiered systems of support. She holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and earned her doctorate from the University of Minnesota.

We are pleased to announce the following principal personnel moves following the resignation of Valley View Elementary School Principal Cori Thompson, which created the opportunity to make a number of strategic leadership shifts:

- Principal Joan Maland will move from Indian Mounds Elementary School to Valley View Elementary School
- Principal Jeremy Kuhns will move from Olson Middle School to Indian Mounds
- Tim Ciavarri, assistant principal at Oak Grove Middle School, will become the new principal at Olson Middle School

Superintendent Les Fujitake and members of the Cabinet endorsed a school leadership plan that considered district needs at this time. The principals were asked to help address the district's needs by taking on new roles.

NTL

PREPARING FUTURE-READY STUDENTS

Next Technologies for Learning (NTL) guides how we leverage technology to support students on their pathways to college and career readiness.

2013-2018

With funding from the community-approved 2013 technology referendum, the district fully implemented a one-to-one device plan for all students third grade and above. Students in pre-K through second grade benefit from classroom tablets. Personal devices enable teachers to better customize learning and teaching to individual student needs.

School spaces have been redesigned to reflect how students collaborate and learn today. Online courses created and taught by our teachers allow high school students more choice and flexibility in how and where they learn, at a pace that best suits them. Personalized data empowers students and families by collecting in one place information indicating whether students are on the path toward their goals.

2018 and beyond

NTL's next phase builds on the positive impacts of the last five years. BPS Online



will continue to expand in response to student and teacher interest, with students registering for online courses at nearly double the rate as the current school

year. Teachers continue to focus on developing strategies for student centered learning, including using technology to enable different learning experiences. Teachers work collaboratively to provide engaging learning experiences for students' unique needs, interests, skills and future plans.

We are preparing students to thrive in a rapidly changing world. While it is hard to predict the jobs of tomorrow, we know critical and design thinking and problem-solving skills are in demand for the 21st century workplace. Our curriculum has threads of these concepts in

subjects throughout K-12 schools using maker spaces, design thinking process and problem solving within the community.

We are also expanding the computer science instruction available to students. An AP computer science course will be offered for high school students this fall, along with the development of a computer science pathway that will begin in elementary school and provide an immersive curriculum through middle and high school.

Another growth area is using data to help make informed decisions at all levels of our school system. Our data projects all have the goal of empowering students, families and staff with information to make informed decisions. For example, we report the academic progress of our students in meaningful ways so staff and families know a student's strengths and areas needing support.

NTL demonstrates our investment in technology in the classroom and throughout the student and family experience to best prepare future-ready students.

District plans 'right sizing' of '19-20 budget

District officials are preparing for budget reductions and deficit spending over the next two years as part of a right sizing the budget process to bring spending in line with revenues.

The school board will consider next month a 2019-20 budget which includes \$2 million in budget cuts and funding shifts and a \$1.2 million spend-down of the district fund balance. The budget reductions will result in a net loss of approximately 19 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions, including administrative positions that were left unfilled this year.

An additional \$5.3 million in budget cuts and deficit spending are planned for 2020-21, according to Rod Zivkovich, executive director of finance and support services. He cautioned that this figure depends on student enrollment this fall, results of the current legislative session, salary negotiations and the final 2018-19 audit.

The reductions in 2020-21 are expected to have an impact on both programming and classrooms, including additional layoffs, said Zivkovich.

The timing of the budget adjustments may raise questions in light of the voter approved referendum in 2017 and increases in state funding. However, Zivkovich said the district has "been forthcoming during and since the referendum campaign that state funding has not kept pace with inflation."

The community's support of the referendum was critical to maintaining the funding levels, but it was only treading water, said Zivkovich. "We cannot sustain our expenses at the level we have with the revenue we receive from the state and referendum," he added.

Thank you for 957 years of service

Bloomington Public Schools’ Celebration of Service will honor 50 employees with a combined 957 years of teaching and supporting students. The annual reception recognizes employees with 10 or more years of employment at the time of their retirement or departure from the district.

We congratulate and thank our longest serving employees on their hard work and dedication to Bloomington Public Schools and wish them the best in their future endeavors.



Elizabeth Barnett

34 years of service
Speech Language Pathologist

Barnett has worked at a host of district schools over her 34 years: Pond and Southwood centers, Oak Grove, Indian Mounds and Westwood elementary schools, Hillcrest Community School, Olson Middle School and the former Olson Junior

High School. She served on the district’s Assistive Technology Committee, Special Education Community Advisory Council (SECAC) and the Bloomington Federation of Teachers (BFT) executive council.

She was selected for a SECAC Special Caring Award, and is proud of her efforts to obtain grants to meet the assistive technology needs of students served by speech pathologists.

“I’m so blessed to have ended my school career at Indian Mounds, where there are talented, dedicated staff in every position,” said Barnett. “I’m thankful to work with a vibrant, diverse community of students and to meet and learn from so many families and colleagues.”



Geraldine Schneider

30 years of service
Classroom Support Paraprofessional

Schneider worked at several early childhood family education (ECFE) locations during her 30 years with the district. She started at a former ECFE center where Valley View Middle School is now located and then moved to Pond Center and later Southwood.

She considers it a privilege to have cared for and taught young children. “The students have always been my favorite part of my job,” said Schneider. “Seeing them grow and mature is so heartwarming; knowing you made a difference in a young child’s life is such an awesome feeling!”

We thank the following dedicated professionals and wish them success in their future endeavors.

Benjamin Bonnett	grade 3 teacher	10 years
Megan Swartout	ASD teacher	10 years
Karen Qualey	digital learning coordinator	10 years
Ruth Aldrich	ESL instructor	11 years
John Carston	bus driver	11 years
Karen Powers	music teacher	11 years
Brenda Young	health services associate	11 years
Melissa Burns	school secretary	12 years
Sarah Lindemann	administrative clerk	12 years
Maria May	grade 6 teacher	12 years
Eddy Vuong	facility assistant	12 years
Nichole Osterholt	social studies teacher	13 years
Fredrick Ratemo	program management aide paraprofessional	13years
Karen Remer	program management aide paraprofessional	13 years
Lindsay Endersbe	activities leader	14 years
Benjamin Magras	school improvement and leadership development specialist	14 years
Susan Nelson	administrative clerk	14 years
Barbara Swanson	instructional assistant paraprofessional	14 years
Sheila Duffy	secretary	15 years
Matthew Hanson	high school activities director	15 years
Cori Thompson	principal	15 years
Nora Vincent	media center clerk	15 years
Victoria Arroyo	transportation specialist	17 years
Joan Davis	first baker	17 years
Debby Gallup-Bergem	transportation specialist	17 years
Donna Johnson	health services associate	17 years
Doug Langefels	manager, facility use/activities	17 years
Kay Schommer	food service helper	17 years
John Loftus	bus driver	18 years
Boni Caine	FACS teacher	19 years
Clayton Ellis	dean of students	19 years
Ruth Beckman	registration clerk	20 years
Leonard Donaldson	bus driver	20 years
Cathy Eiss	grade 4 teacher	21 years
Patricia Field	SLD teacher	21 years
Andreas Wheeler	base custodian	21 years
Patricia Bohling	tech support paraprofessional	22 years
Mark Caine	industrial technology teacher	24 years
Stephanie Wise	administrative secretary	24 years
Shelley Theisen	social worker	25 years
Susan Remme	laundry worker	27 years
Jane Willman	elementary school secretary	27 years
Sherrie Torgersen	food prep assistant	28 years
Keith Olson	lead carpenter	29 years
Jeri Schneider	classroom support paraprofessional	30 years
Lori Johnson	grade 2 teacher	31 years
Cheryl Moreno	program management aide paraprofessional	33 years
Elizabeth Barnett	speech language pathologist	34 years
Mary Dupont	program management aide paraprofessional	41 years
Judy Harrison	lead secretary	44 years



District-wide Food Drive tops 62,000 pounds

Schools, departments and business and civic partners collected nearly 14,000 pounds of food and \$9,800 in cash donations during the 11th Annual District-wide Food Drive in late April.

The collection of 62,753 pounds when the cash donations to pounds conversion is applied helped to push total collections to nearly 539,000 pounds since the food drive was started in 2009. For each dollar donated, up to five pounds of food can be purchased. All of the food and cash is donated to Volunteers Enlisted to Assist People (VEAP), a non-profit agency serving low-income families and individuals in Bloomington, Edina, Richfield and South Minneapolis.

The PTSA Council, School Board and its Youth Advisory Council coordinate the annual food drive.



IN THE KNOW



Summer Community Education Programs

Bloomington Community Education offers a wide variety of early childhood family education, preschool, youth and adult classes over the summer. Visit bloomington.ce.eleyo.com to browse offerings and register for a class!

Valley View Middle School Renovation

Valley View Middle School will undergo a two-year comprehensive school maintenance and renovation project beginning at the close of this school year. The work will continue year-round until completed by fall 2020 and require the installation of a portable structure that will house eight classrooms. The portable classrooms structure will be attached to the building and include all of the existing school safety elements.

Renovations and improvements will be focused on mechanical systems, improved energy management systems and facility upgrades, including the addition of flexible learning spaces and the renovation of the cafetorium.

Other summer projects include new security cameras in each of the elementary schools and early learning centers and ADA compliant playground equipment at Hillcrest, Oak Grove, Olson and Ridgeview elementary schools.

The work is funded annually by the alternative facilities levy approved by the school board.



Chip In for Schools Golf Classic

Registration is now open for the 2019 Chip In for Schools Golf Classic, Wednesday, July 24, at Dwan Golf Course. Tournament proceeds help Bloomington students through the Education Foundation of Bloomington's Children's Food for Thought program, Student Success Stipends, classroom innovation grants and more. Sponsorship information and player registration are available online at efbm.org.

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Editor: Rick J. Kaufman, APR
Executive Director of Community
Relations
952.681.6403

Writers: Andrea George, Kate Martin
Photos: Andrea George

Bloomington School Board

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POINTS OF PRIDE

- **130 Jefferson and Kennedy high school seniors** were recipients of this year's Senior Achievement Awards. Students were honored in the categories of academic excellence, artistic excellence, curricular excellence, leadership and volunteerism during a program at the Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport Hilton. See the full list of award recipients at bit.ly/senior-achievement-19.
- **BEC-TV** has been nominated by the Upper Midwest chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences for three Student Production Awards. Students from Jefferson and Kennedy high schools and the district's three middle schools helped produce the programs nominated.



- Kennedy High School student **Sam Lopez Ruiz** earned a National Medal in the 2019 Scholastic Art and Writing Awards for his painting, "Art Crap," above. Only the top 1 percent of all submissions earn National Medals.
- **Dinna Wade-Ardley**, director of the Office of Educational Equity, was honored with the Community Advocate for Change Award during the Saint Mary's University *Missing Voices: Equity in Education Summit*. The collective impact summit brings together educators, students, families and community members to engage in solution-oriented dialogue and actionable steps toward educational equity.
- Kennedy High School language arts teacher **Kathryn Haddad** has been selected for a Jerome

- Hill Artist Fellowship. She is one of 60 selected from a pool of more than 1,100 artist applicants based in Minnesota and New York City. Haddad was selected in the category of theater, performance and spoken word and hopes to continue to tell Arab and Arab American stories through theater.
- Oak Grove Middle School counselor **Sandra Mortensen** was named 2019 Middle School Counselor of the Year and Minnesota School Counselor of the Year. She will join award winners from all 50 states at the National School Counselor of the Year Celebration in January in Washington, DC, where she is eligible to receive the national award.
- Hillcrest Community School teacher **Cory Wade** was named one of nine finalists from across the state for Education Minnesota's 2019 Minnesota Teacher of the Year.
- Olson Middle School teacher **Josie Hooker** was named KS95 Teacher of the Week.



- Kennedy High School senior **Diana Vazquez Raymundo** received one of the five awards earned at The Third Congressional District Art Competition hosted by Congressman Dean Phillips for her graphite drawing, "Taken Over by Society," above.
- **Bloomington Public Schools Health Services** is the recipient of this year's Health and Wellness Award from the Bloomington Advisory Board of Health.