

# MANSFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER



Volume 1 / Fall 2016

Kelly Lyman / Superintendent of Schools

*It is the mission of the Mansfield Board of Education, in partnership with the Mansfield community, to ensure that all children acquire the knowledge, skills, and attributes essential for personal excellence in learning, life, and work within our global community.*

## PREPARING CHILDREN FOR THEIR FUTURE

- Mansfield Public Schools is on Facebook! Like us to get announcements and other information about events throughout our schools. Join the Mansfield Food Services Facebook page for quick access to lunch menus, news from the cafeterias, and more.
- It's 4:00pm. Do you know where your child is? Whatever the time, use the Safe Stop bus app to find the real time location of your child's bus. To sign up, simply follow the directions at <http://www.mansfieldct.gov/districtnews/?FeedID=3024>.
- Voters of Mansfield approved bond funds to renovate the Mansfield Middle School gymnasium and locker rooms. The architect selection process is underway with the hope of beginning construction after school dismisses in June.

Few can argue that the world is rapidly changing. Technology has helped to flatten the globe. Collaboration across continents has become the norm in business, medicine, and many other fields. Technology makes it possible to communicate with others through a multitude of mediums, and information is literally at our fingertips - or in our pockets - 24/7. These changes have also changed the world of work. Consider these statistics about the future:

- 65% of today's grade-school children will end up in jobs that haven't been invented yet.
- The current length of a job for a millennial is an average of 2.6 years.
- Millennials will have 15-20 jobs over the course of their working lives.
- By 2020, 40% to 50% of all income-producing work will be short-term contracts, freelance work and so-called SuperTemps.

Despite these changes, many of the practices still in use in our education system were developed to meet the needs of citizens in the early 1900s. Schools in the twenty-first century must focus on the skills needed to continuously learn and adapt the dispositions to live in a global community, and the educational practices that mimic the collaboration and problem solving our children will experience in their world.

In Mansfield we are addressing this need to update our practices in numerous ways. The Board of Education Five Year Plan clearly establishes the expectation that children will acquire not just the traditional 3 Rs of reading, writing, and arithmetic, but will also build skills in such areas as critical and creative thinking, communication, and collaboration, all skills recognized to be a necessity in the twenty-first century.

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Photo: In September, 20 students from Mansfield Middle School traveled to Sarstedt Germany for the annual three week exchange program. Students lived with host families, attended school, and went on many trips throughout the area. Next fall it will be Mansfield's turn to host students from Germany.



Continued...PREPARING CHILDREN FOR THE FUTURE

We are changing instructional practices beginning with literacy to ensure students are at the center of the learning in reading and writing. This means students have more choice in what they read and write, teachers use many formal and informal assessment practices to understand student skill development and focus instruction to support individual growth.

Teachers and administrators are exploring practices that give students more opportunity to collaborate with others, apply what they are learning in authentic ways, and participate in projects that cut across academic disciplines. At Mansfield Middle School all students will have an experience with project-based learning this year while many of our fourth graders are participating in a national pilot which aims to build effective project-based learning at the elementary level.

Administrators, teachers and para-educators have engaged in several professional learning experiences designed both to provide information about why and how schooling should change and provoke thinking about the future of schools. From these experiences, teachers are identifying small, first steps they can take in their classrooms to promote student-centered learning that builds the skills necessary for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Finally, a group of administrators, teachers, para-educators, and parents have been working to define twenty-first century learning expectations for the Mansfield graduate. This work is in draft form and will be shared with various stakeholders for feedback before finalized. This vision of our graduate will further focus our instructional work.

### IMPORTANT DATES 2016

December 6	Vinton School Grades 3 & 4 Winter Concert
December 7	MMS Winter Band Concert
December 8	Mansfield Board of Education Meeting
December 14	MMS Winter Choral Concert
December 23	Early Dismissal

### IMPORTANT DATES 2017

January 3	School re-opens
January 19	Mansfield Board of Education Meeting
January 26	Mansfield Board of Education 2017-18 Budget Workshop
February 2	Mansfield Board of Education 2017-18 Budget Workshop
February 2	Southeast School Grades 3 & 4 Winter Concert
February 9	Mansfield Board of Education Meeting

## SCHOOL FACILITY STUDY COMING

We will soon embark upon a study to define the future of our school facilities. This work will begin with a community engagement process designed to help us define our educational hopes and dreams and assess the ability of achieving these in our current facilities. Working with planning consultants, the work will include gathering a great deal of information about the work of the district, the current and projected future enrollment in our schools, the desires of our community, and the state of our facilities. This work will only be complete if we hear from all members of the Mansfield community. Please watch for announcements of community gatherings, surveys, and other feedback opportunities.

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Teacher of the Year Diane Hutton

## TEACHER OF THE YEAR AND PARA-EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR RECOGNIZED

The Board of Education recently recognized Mansfield Public Schools' Teacher of the Year Diane Hutton and Para-educator of the Year Tami Motyl.

Senora Hutton is a World Language teacher at Southeast School. There she brings the excitement of learning a second language to children while also supporting our new English Language Learners throughout the school. She has been described as the “glue that holds Southeast together” and Southeast’s own energizer bunny.

Diane is a key member of the running club, mileage club, and Kids Marathon events. After teaching a lesson about monarch butterflies, she happily agreed to help a group of third graders begin the Save the Monarchs Club. That club has been in existence for several years and most recently sold milkweed plants that have been planted throughout Mansfield. Senora Hutton continues to push herself to greater heights every day and exemplifies those qualities that define a teacher of the year.



Para-educator of the Year Tami Motyl

Tami Motyl has been described as a role model for all paraprofessionals and a partner in creating a learning environment that is positive, fun and flexible. She is someone who anticipates the needs of children and takes a proactive approach to meet the academic, social and emotional needs of our youngest children. She has done this with a smile and enthusiasm for nearly two decades. Tami is a valued member of the Mansfield Public Schools.

**Congratulations to two outstanding Mansfield educators!**

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