

Superintendent's Student and Staff Accomplishments November 6, 2019

Paint the Plow: Pocono Mountain West High School's Paint the Plow entry won the District 5 high school Fan Favorite award based upon the results of online voting for each plow design submitted. West's plow depicts a sloth and the message "Don't Rush in Ice and Slush." The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) sponsors the safety outreach contests to promote winter driving safety and foster appreciation for high school art programs and student creativity. Pocono Mountain East High School students also painted a plow with a design that included the school's mascot, the Cardinal. During the winter weather season, the painted plow blades will be used to maintain state-owned roadways in Monroe County.

Pride of the Mountain Trophy: Congratulations to the East Cardinal Varsity Football team in winning the East/West game and keeping the Pride of the Mountain Trophy at East for a second year in a row. Also, thank you to the FM 96.7 Gary in the Morning show for broadcasting live from the East High School on October 24. Thank you to the Pocono Mountain Visitor's Bureau for sponsoring the live remote radio broadcast that highlighted our amazing art, music and athletic programs and students.

PCCD School Safety Grants: Pocono Mountain School District submitted applications for two school safety grants. The Meritorious grant is for \$45,000 and is granted to all schools that submit applications. We requested additional school safety and security funding related to cameras and other equipment needed to keep our schools secure. We also submitted an application for a Competitive Grant for more than \$400,000 to receive the funds needed to adopt the state recommended Trauma-Informed Schools plan and make much-needed additional behavioral and mental health services available to our students and staff.

We don't have a grant writer at Pocono Mountain, so we work as a team to write and submit grant applications. Most of the work we do on these grant applications has to be done in the evenings and over weekends. I'd like to thank Mr. Sawicki, Ms. DeLay, Dr. Gustafson and Ms. Frable for assisting me in writing and submitting the grant applications. We hope to receive both grants.

EHS Band at NYC Veterans Day Parade: The Pocono Mountain East High School band will participate in the New York City Veterans Day Parade on November 11. This is the 100th anniversary of the parade. Our East band will be one of the largest bands marching in the parade. In addition to our East Band parade participation, our schools have wonderful tributes planned for our veterans starting on Friday and running through November 13. A list of observances were provided to our Board members tonight and will be included in a press release to be sent out to media tomorrow to try to line up coverage of the events.

Press Conference: Last week I hosted a press conference to highlight the numerous outstanding art and music education programs we already offer to all students of all abilities in Pocono Mountain School District. I was joined by Senator Scavello, Representative Madden, PMEA President Tom Brogan, a West Band Parent and some of our very talented and dedicated art and music teachers. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation for their support. I held the press conference to correct media reports that seemed to indicate that charter schools offer better opportunities for students whose interests and talents are in the arts, music and performing arts.

It is very important for our school community to know that Pocono Mountain's curriculum for arts and music education is unmatched and has been recognized for its rigor and outstanding support of the arts and music education both nationally and throughout the state. There are no deficits of music and arts programs and opportunities for students in Pocono Mountain School District. Just the opposite is true. You don't need a specialized school to offer specialized and individualized arts and music programs for students.

We, as a school community, support and love our music and arts programs and activities. Our arts and music students already have real CHOICE, the choice to attend our schools and excel in music and the arts. They have the additional choice of having input into the electives available to them, which are based upon student interest surveys and adopted annually for the upcoming school year's program of studies. While we don't have a magnet school here dedicated to just the arts, we offer something much more important, a strong record of student success in the arts and music, and outstanding arts and music programs with top-notch educators available to all students with all abilities. We also offer our students access to amazing

STEAM opportunities, which combines the very best of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics.

I can say with confidence that our art and music parents are some of our most supportive parents in the District. We hope they will continue to show their support for our District programs and speak out publically about the amazing opportunities in the arts and music that we already offer all students of all abilities in Pocono Mountain School District.