

Superintendent's Student & Staff Accomplishments July 19, 2023

Change to PMSD School Nutrition Program: I am pleased to report that our Business Office received approval for Pocono Mountain School District to change its School Nutrition Program, which includes the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program, to the Community Eligibility Provision program starting with the 2023-24 school year. This means all students in Kindergarten through Grade 12 who attend Pocono Mountain School District schools are eligible to receive a free breakfast and free lunch when attending school on school days. Parents will not have to complete the free meals applications for the upcoming school year and for as long as the district is approved for CEP.

The School Board gave its approval at the Board meeting on May 17th for the Business Office to seek approval from the PA Department of Education for Pocono Mountain to switch its School Meals program to the CEP program, allowing all students to receive free breakfast and lunch when in school on school days, beginning with the start of the new school year on Monday, August 28th.

Clear Run Elementary Center Update: For several years, Clear Run Elementary Center and Pocono Services for Families and Children have had a strong partnership. This summer, their alliance grew a little stronger.

On the evening of April 19th, the school board gave their blessing for CREC to host a six-week Summer Readiness program to students currently attending The Mountain Center PreK class who were registered for kindergarten. A total of 31 students signed up for the program - 2 students who will attend TEC, 5 students who will attend SEC, and 24 students who will attend CREC in the fall. In just four weeks with these youngsters, the teachers report amazing progress.

Tobyhanna Elementary Center Update: Tobyhanna Elementary Center conducted their annual graduation walk for past TEC students who were part of this year's high school graduating class. The emotional walk around the building is truly a highlight of the year for TEC's teachers as well as inspirational for our current students.

TEC also bid a fond farewell to another sixth-grade class in their annual Moving Forward Ceremony. The ceremony was followed by a parade of decorated cars that drove across the front parking lot as the rest of the student body waved goodbye.

PMSD Band Camp: I wanted to thank the music teachers, students and parents who supported our district Band Camp that took place over the last few weeks. We had 132 students participate in the Band Camp, an increase from the 80 participants we had last summer. We had students participate in the Camp and mini concert who had never played an instrument prior to the camp, along with our more experienced student musicians. This is just one of the examples of the excellent music education programs we offer students. Pocono Mountain School District has been recognized for 7 consecutive years for its excellence in music education by the National Association of Music Merchants.

Swiftwater Elementary Center Summer School: Summer School at Swiftwater Elementary Center has been an exciting time for the SEC students. Themed weeks, hands-on lessons, and STEAM lessons have all been incorporated into the daily summer school curriculum. Kindergarten students at SEC have had the opportunity to learn about plants and gardening. They were even able to plant flowers. In first, second, and third grades, students learned and completed activities in the fourth week of summer school about the “Dog Days of Summer.” Each class has read books, completed writing assignments, and incorporated math fact fluency into these themed weeks. Students leave each day looking forward to returning for another day of summer school. Thank you for allowing us to provide this amazing opportunity.

PM West High School Update: The College Board recently released the AP Test scores for this year's exams, and we are pleased to announce that West High School officially graduated its first two Advanced Placement Capstone Diplomas to April Masters and Angie Espinoza. Additionally, all other candidates achieved a passing score on their paper; therefore, the first group to finish the AP Capstone program at West High School earned a 100% pass rate. Senior Austin Fein will graduate this year with his Capstone diplomas as well, and graduates Julia Aguliar, Renee Irvin, and Gerald Brunstetter all earned the Capstone Certificate. Additionally, every AP Seminar student passed their exams and also earned a 100% pass rate as well, besting the state and global averages in every category on their

performance tasks. Congratulations to Ms. Debelak and her students on their hard work and accomplishments.

Chemo Hats: Mrs. Sury's Creative Sewing classes at West High School sewed and donated over 300 chemo hats during the second semester. The fleece was donated by students, staff, parents, and community organizations, and the hats were donated to local hospitals and organizations in loving memory of Stacey Perryman.

National FBLA Competition: Congratulations to West High School senior, Kaya Meler, who competed at the National FBLA competition held in Savannah, Georgia June 27th-30th.

Upward Bound: Congratulations to West High School junior and Upward Bound member Iyanna Samad who attended the 34th Annual National Student Leadership Congress held in June at American University in Washington D.C.

Safety Training: Over the past two days nearly 90 district employees and emergency responders participated in a very important family reunification process training presented by the I Love U Guys Foundation. We brought in a trainer from the I Love U Guys Foundation to the West High School to train members of our district and school safety teams, including cabinet, administrators, security guards, transportation liaisons, administrative assistants, and members of First Student, the sheriff's department, and emergency management, probation officers, and local and state police. For those who may not understand what we family reunification means, this is the process we follow to reunite students with their parents in the event of an emergency where we most likely would be evacuating students to another district location or off campus location. The training was excellent, and today we practiced setting up a family reunification process and running that process through several realistic hands-on training exercises.