

DISTRICT BULLETIN



A World-Class Community of Learners



FRIDLEY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Restore the ROAR

Peer-to-peer peacemakers
mediation program implemented
at Fridley Middle School

see page 5

INSIDE:

+ TRIPLE "A" AWARD
RECIPIENTS ANNOUNCED,
SENIOR ADAM JOHNSON
NAMED 5AA REGION WINNER
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WINTER/
SPRING
2020



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student achievements

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The Fridley Public Schools District Bulletin is published three times a year and is mailed to every home in the Fridley School District. Past issues are available online at www.fridley.k12.mn.us

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FRIDLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

International Baccalaureate World Schools

DISTRICT BULLETIN

WINTER/SPRING 2020

SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Kim Hiel

SCHOOL BOARD

Mary Kay Delvo - Chair
Donna Prewedo - Vice Chair
Avonna Starck - Treasurer
Carol Thornton - Clerk
Abdisalam Adam - Director
Jake Karnopp - Director

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Fridley High School

Principal: Patty Hand
Assistant Principal: Kelly McConville

Fridley Area Learning Center

Principal: Dr. Jason Bodey

Fridley Middle School

Principal: Amy Cochran
Assistant Principal:
Christopharaaron Deanes

Hayes Elementary School

Principal: Gaeli Iverson

R. L. Stevenson Elementary School

Principal: Daryl Vossler

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Technology: 763-502-5032
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IB (DP): 763-502-5062
IB (MYP): 763-502-5036
IB (PYP) Hayes: 763-502-5228
IB (PYP) Stevenson: 763-502-5317
IB (PYP) Preschool: 763-502-5117



FRIDLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS RECOGNIZES LONGTIME Fridley School Board member Chris Riddle

Fridley Public Schools recognized longtime School Board member Chris Riddle at his final board meeting on December 17, 2019. A dedicated and passionate supporter of education, Riddle has served a consecutive 13 years on the board. He has served as chair, vice chair, clerk, treasurer, and director.

Riddle was first appointed to the board in August 2006 after running a write-in campaign for an open board seat. His interest sparked when he heard that only two candidates had filed for the three open seats in the 2005 election. As a Class of 1983 Fridley High School graduate, Riddle said he decided to run for the open seat because it was an excellent way for him to give back to the community and school district that he once attended. Riddle and his wife, Molly, who is also an FHS alumna, had decided to move back to Fridley in large part due to the high-quality education that their children would receive at the district's schools.

"We felt our children would be best served by the opportunities that this district provides," Riddle said.

A point of pride that Riddle has overseen during his tenure was the transition of Fridley Public Schools to an International Baccalaureate (IB) World Schools district. "I'm proud that we offer the full IB Continuum, which allows each and every Fridley student to participate in the IB curriculum. Fridley is a place that many parents and students want to be a part of. Our open-enrollment numbers prove that we have made Fridley an attractive district to families outside the district boundaries."

Riddle said the most rewarding part of his service has been having the opportunity to work with district administration and staff to ensure that the district is providing the best education, both academically and socially, to all students.

Riddle works as an Applications Engineer at EPG Companies in Rogers, Minn. He and Molly have three children, Ed, a 2016 Fridley graduate, and Marin and Helen, who are sophomores at Fridley High School. Riddle will continue his involvement with the Fridley community and district, as he serves on the Fridley Schools Foundation Board. He also continues to be involved in the Fridley Alumni Choir, which he has participated in for the past 25 years. Congratulations Chris, and we thank you for your many years of dedicated service to the students and families of Fridley Public Schools!



Superintendent Dr. Kim Hiel and former School Board member Chris Riddle

THREE BOARD MEMBERS sworn into Fridley School Board

Three elected officials were sworn onto the Fridley School Board at the January 21, 2020 meeting. Board members included incumbents Abdisalam Adam and Donna Prewedo, and newcomer Jake Karnopp. Fridley school board members serve four-year terms.



Fridley School Board Chair Mary Kay Delvo (far left) conducts the swearing in ceremony as board members (from left to right) Donna Prewedo, Abdisalam Adam, and Jake Karnopp take the Oath of Office.

FRIDLEY SCHOOL BOARD



(Back row, l-r) Jake Karnopp, Carol Thornton, Abdisalam Adam.
(Front row, l-r) Avonna Starck, Mary Kay Delvo, Donna Prewedo.

SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS:

Fridley School Board meetings are typically held on the third Tuesday of each month, with a schedule as follows: 5:30 PM Work Session; 7:00 PM Public Forum; 7:30 PM Business Meeting

All school board meetings are open to the public and held at the Fridley Community Center, 6085 7th Street NE, Fridley.

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Restore the Roar



The Fridley Middle School Peacemakers team. Top row, l to r: Patricia Anthony-Kugmeh, Estevan Castano, Dylan Loven, Zoe Diederich, Chloe Williams. Bottom row, l to r: Mercy Jargbahson, Kormasa Jallah, and Dream Robinson.

Fridley Middle School's new peer-to-peer peacemakers program is *building leaders*

The middle school years are a critical time for growth and development in young students. Along with advancing in their academics, students at Fridley Middle School have several opportunities to learn and develop leadership skills that will continue to serve them beyond their primary school years. Capitalizing on research-based strategies on the collective power of peer influence in young lives, the school's Assistant Principal Christopheraaron Deanes has developed a program that challenges students to think outside of the box - while teaching teaching them lifelong skills of analysis and critical thinking, mediation techniques, and the importance of contributing to the greater good.

Through the newly implemented peacemakers program, a trained group of 7th and 8th student leaders are helping their younger peers, 5th and 6th grade students, to work together to resolve everyday disputes - bringing arguments and disagreements to a mutually beneficial understanding.

For 8th grader Estevan Castano, who is one of the eight current members, there is a sense of pride when he contributes to positivity in the school.

"I'm really proud to be a peacemaker," said Castano. "We learn to better understand people socially and emotionally, and help sort out feelings, which can help you think about your own. It's given me a new perspective. Being part of this makes me feel accomplished and happy to be helping others in my school."

Estevan Castano
FMS 8th grade student

"We learn to better understand people socially and emotionally, and help sort out feelings, which can help you think about your own. Being a part of this makes me feel accomplished and happy to be helping others in my school."

"The focus on restorative practice isn't possible as an approach without student buy-in," said Deanes, who spearheaded the program this past fall. "The goal of the peacemakers program is to allow students to build social capital with peers. As leaders here at Fridley Middle School, they have the power to navigate the cul-

ture of our school with peers, accept ownership of leading their generation, and building empathy and equity."

That empathy piece, Deanes added, is essential. "Empathy is a key part of being a responsible, kind, caring student at school, or anywhere in the community. It allows people to not only understand how someone is feeling, but also letting others know that we care about and value them."

During students' WIN (What I Need) enrichment time, the group meets once a week to learn mediation skills and methods through a curriculum written by Deanes, who has extensive experience in restorative practices in educational settings. With guidance from Nancy Riestenberg, School Climate Specialist at the Minnesota Department of Education, Deanes designed programming tailored to fit the needs at Fridley Middle School.

"Our older students *want* to be leaders, we just need to encourage, empower and support them," said Deanes. "We want to give our students the understanding that they can do something better for their peers."

During training sessions, students review mediation questions and how to ask



FMS Assistant Principal Christopheraaron Deanes leads a peacemakers training session during students' WIN enrichment time.

them, how to unbiasedly approach situations, and learn how to practice patience, empathy and kindness while facilitating a mediation.

Typically, disagreements at school stem from miscommunication, misunderstanding, or misperception - and can oftentimes benefit from peer-to-peer mediation. In the restorative peacemakers model, two trained peacemakers help two younger peers resolve their issue and come to a collective agreement, under the supervision of an adult advisor. The effects are two-fold: 5th and 6th grade students are able to talk and think through their conflicting issues, discuss the dispute and resolution with an older, but close-in-age peer who may relate to the situation, and take responsibility for their actions. All the while, the 7th and 8th grade peacemakers are benefiting - taking ownership of their school, building leadership skills, pride and confidence, and rising to their highest potential.

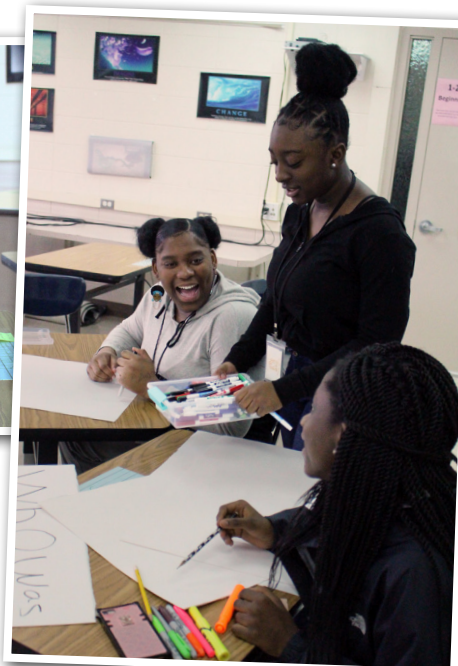
According to 7th grade student Dream Robinson, working on the peacemakers team has boosted her self-confidence, while contributing to the school as a whole.

"Honestly, it makes me feel so good to know that I'm helping solve problems for other people," said Robinson. "It makes me feel like a better person. I feel good knowing that I can solve issues, and it helps me solve my own sometimes."

Eighth grader Zoe Diederich echoed a similar sentiment. "It's empowering to have the opportunity to help students solve their issues and fix problems," said Diederich. "And I feel like I see the benefits around our school with the peacemaker team - There's just more kindness around the entire school."

"The goal of the peacemakers program is to allow students to build social capital with peers. As leaders here at Fridley Middle School, they have the power to navigate the culture of our school with peers, accept ownership of leading their generation, and building empathy and equity."

Christopheraaron Deanes
Fridley Middle School Assistant Principal



Additionally, peer mediation builds student conflict resolution skills through real-life practices. Mediation skills come alive with power and relevancy, as solving real conflicts encourage the transfer of skills to life outside of school.

"The program is new and we are excited to see it continue to grow," said Principal Amy Cochran. "Students who are participating are not only learning how to help others, but they're building skills within themselves that they apply to their own lives. It's an incredible opportunity for our students to take on that leadership role, feel the pride of being a peacemaker, and think differently."

I feel like I see the benefits around our school with the peacemaker team - There's just *more kindness* around the entire school."

Zoe Diederich
FMS 8th grade student

FRIDLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL Peacemakers

Students collectively worked on an IMPACT STATEMENT for the peacemakers group, created for the purpose of stating the program's intention and what they are doing to make a positive effect in their school community.

"The *Restorative Youth Leaders* are building *Restorative Practices* in our school by facilitating mediations with 5th and 6th grade students. We believe that we, as leaders here at Fridley Middle School, have the power to navigate the culture of our school with our peers and accept ownership of leading our generation in building empathy and equity."





STEVENSON STUDENT NAMED SEMI-FINALIST IN NASA ESSAY COMPETITION

Fourth grader Abhinav Rai's entry name and essay, "HUMANITY," represented the state of Minnesota in the nationwide contest to name NASA's next Mars rover.

A young space and engineering enthusiast, Stevenson 4th grader Abhinav Rai was named the Minnesota semi-finalist in NASA's Mars 2020 "Name the Rover" essay competition. Open to K-12 students across the United States, the competition received more than 28,000 entries. Abhinav's entry name and essay, titled "Humanity," was selected as a semi-finalist in the K-4 division.

As each Mars rover has a unique mission, Abhinav put many layers of thought into his competition essay. According to Abhinav, the meaning behind the name "Humanity" is a symbol of the cumulative human effort that has gone into all Mars exploration missions thus far.

"It's also a message of human love and friendliness to Mars," Abhinav added. "Human nature and culture has always been fascinated by objects in the sky and 'Humanity' symbolizes all of the human race's fascination with Mars."

It was also important to Abhinav to send a message of peace, in which he wrote in his essay:

"In today's world, this name gives a message of love, compassion, kindness and all things good about the human race."

The potential findings of this mission are exciting to Abhinav. "Hopefully, it will give us clues and set us up for future travel and human settlement on Mars," he said.

A student with early aspirations, Abhinav is determined to pursue engineering in the future. "I really hope to travel to Mars one day," he said. "And I hope to someday help create the spacecraft that we will be traveling on."

FHS SENIOR NAMED National Merit Scholarship Commended Student

Fridley High School senior and International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma candidate Yangchen Namgyal was named a Commended Student by the 2020 National Merit Scholarship Program. Commended Students are recognized for their exceptional academic promise demonstrated by their outstanding performance on the qualifying test used for program entry.

Namgyal earned this recognition based on the score she earned on her Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test in October 2018. Out of 1.6 million student entrants, only 34,000 students across the nation receive this recognition and Letter of Commendation from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.



FHS senior Yangchen Namgyal and Principal Patty Hand

FHS SENIOR SELECTED FOR Minnesota Jazz Band

Congratulations to Fridley High School senior Adam Johnson who was selected to be a member of the Minnesota Youth Jazz Band (MYJB)! Musicians who are selected into the ensembles are some of the best jazz students in the state.

Johnson is a senior tenor saxophone player, and was one of 44 such players who auditioned this year for the group. Only eight tenor sax players from the state were selected.



Fridley High School Guys & Dolls Production Awards:

- Overall Production, Outstanding
- Acting Performance, Outstanding
- Run Crew, Outstanding
- Overall Technical Team, Outstanding
- Light & Sound Crew, Outstanding

Outstanding Performance in a Leading Role:

- Cassidy Callahan as Sarah Brown
- Ruby Richard as Miss Adelaide
- Ryken Farr as Sky Masterson
- Daniel Toweh as Nathan Detroit

Honorable Mention in Supporting Role:

- Willem West Mohn as Nicely Nicely Johnson

Outstanding in Technical Leadership: Gavin Bardenpratt, Board Operator

Honorable Mention in Technical Leadership: Xiomara Welsh, State Manager

Evaluator Shout-Out: Mykell Engle

Spotlight Showcase Featured Dance Performance: Lulu Schirmacher, Mykell Engle

Spotlight Showcase Student Orchestra Performance: Anna Meisner, Sophia Kriz



Above: Ruby Richard (Miss Adelaide) earned a Spotlight Education Award for Outstanding Performance in a Leading Role.

Left: Daniel Toweh as Nathan Detroit is hoisted up by Tim Yocum (Benny Southstreet) and Willem West Mohn (Nicely Nicely Johnson) in the FHS fall musical production of *Guys & Dolls*.

FHS PRODUCTION GUYS & DOLLS EARNS SPOTLIGHT EDUCATION AWARDS

Congratulations to the Fridley High School (FHS) cast, crew and pit orchestra of this fall's musical production, *Guys and Dolls*, which earned numerous Overall and Individual Hennepin Theatre Trust Spotlight Education awards!

The Outstanding Overall Production award allows Fridley to perform a medley from their production at the Spotlight Showcase in Minneapolis, held annually in the spring. Students who worked on the technical crew and student musicians are also eligible to participate throughout the showcase rehearsal week and the show itself.

"The Spotlight awards are the pinnacle of recognition for high school musical theater in the State of Minnesota. Achieving this level of recognition requires a tremendous amount of work and focus. The cast and crew of *Guys and Dolls* worked very hard to put this production together, and it is very rewarding to be recognized."

- Dan Wold, Fridley Public Schools Auditorium & Events Coordinator



Ryken Farr (Sky Masterson, left) and Cassidy Callahan (Sarah Brown) in the FHS fall musical production of *Guys & Dolls*. Both students earned Spotlight Education Awards for Outstanding Performance in a Leading Role.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS



FMS LEGO LEAGUE ROBOTICS STUDENTS earn awards at High Tech Kids tournament

The Fridley Middle School (FMS) LEGO League Robotics team had an exceptional performance on November 16, 2019 at the High Tech Kids LEGO League tournament, hosted at Dakota Hills Middle School in Eagan. Competing against 28 teams, the Fridley students earned the Inspiration Award and placed second overall in the Robot Game competition.

High Tech Kids - FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) LEGO League is a national program in which students in grades 4-8 research a real-world engineering challenge, develop a solution and compete with LEGO-based robots of their own design. The FMS LEGO League Robotics team, which consists of students in grades 5-7, works afterschool to design, research and program their robot in preparation for competitions.

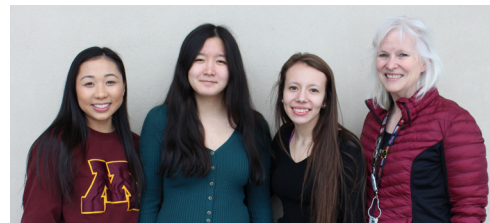
FHS One Act cast & crew compete at regionals



Congratulations to the Fridley High School One Act cast and crew, whose competitive production of *Radium Girls* was selected to advance to the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) 4AA regional tournament! A performance lasting no longer than 35 minutes, One Act plays are critiqued on physical characterizations, vocal characterizations, technical elements, educational value and overall effectiveness of ensemble. Students competed on January 30, 2020 and earned fourth place out of 11 teams. Congratulations to our One Act team!

FHS STUDENTS EARN Scholastic Art Awards

Congratulations to Fridley High School students Baobai Xiong, Yangchen Namgyal and Maia Vernier, who earned awards for their artwork in the Minnesota Scholastic Art Competition. More than 3,300 entries were received from across the state.



Our students earned the following:

- **Baobai Xiong** - Three Gold Key Awards, one Silver Key Award, Gold Key Portfolio Award recipient, and American Visions Nomination (Best of Show)
- **Yangchen Namgyal** - Gold Key Award recipient
- **Maia Vernier** - Honorable Mention Award recipient



Xiong received an American Visions Nomination for her photograph, *"In the shadows of school."*

The American Visions nominees are considered the "Best of Show," as there are only five art pieces selected from across all categories in the competition.



FHS STUDENTS EARN AWARDS, ELECTED POSITION AT YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT MODEL ASSEMBLY

The Fridley Youth In Government (YIG) delegation attended the Model Assembly from January 9-12, 2020. The program is a student-led, realistic and complex simulation of Minnesota state government for 8-12th grade students. Over 35 Fridley High School (FHS) and Fridley Middle School (FMS) students participated in this year's conference, held at the Minnesota State Capitol and Minneapolis Hilton.

At Model Assembly, students have the unique opportunity to serve as legislators, judges, attorneys, cabinet members, and media representatives. This engaging learning style allows students to develop civic responsibility, strengthen public speaking skills, listen to delegates with different experiences, debate issues and be involved in decision-making processes.



Ryken Farr, FHS sophomore

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDED:

- FHS sophomore **Ryken Farr** was selected as the most outstanding member of the YIG Tribune Newspaper; Farr was also part of a small group of YIG media specialists who had the opportunity to interview Governor Tim Walz
- FHS senior **Vincent Christianson** won the Model Assembly Servant Leader Award. Christianson was one of two students out of 1,600 selected for this award.
- FHS freshman **Nate Thorp** was elected to serve next year as Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals for next year's YIG Model Assembly



FHS senior Vincent Christianson was one of two recipients of the YIG Model Assembly Servant Leader Award (pictured left). The award represents a student leader who is found outside the bounds of elected office and embodies the spirit of selfless giving.

"To me personally, earning this award shows that I've taken this experience to heart. One of the biggest things that our advisors always say is **'You get out of YIG, what you put into YIG,'** and getting this award made me feel like I've put everything into YIG."

- **Vincent Christianson**

FHS senior who earned the Model Assembly Servant Leader Award

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

FHS student leaders present at BLACK HISTORY MONTH EVENT



Members of Fridley High School's (FHS) African American Student Union (AASU) represented the school district at the 5th annual Cities United Black History Month Event held February 7, 2020 at North Hennepin Community College. This year, the Fridley delegation was the sole student group chosen to conduct its own breakout session.

AASU leaders Bryant Howard, Colee Nolen, Meadow Gillispie, Eugenea Hawkins and Jet Thammavongsa presented "Connecting Cultures Through Diversity," in two separate sessions. The students talked about ways that Fridley's group is promoting cultural awareness and engaging with the student body to learn about each other's cultures. They also led a discussion on how to cultivate a youth leadership culture by posing the question 'If you could do anything without fear of failure, what would it be?'

Equity and Inclusion Specialist and AASU advisor Aloda Sims was proud of the amount of positive feedback the team received from its peers.

"One of the main goals for the group is to provide opportunities for our students to use their voices and grow as leaders. When things arise in their communities that they are passionate about, they are equipped with the tools to speak up, celebrate who they are, as well as collaborate."

- **Aloda Sims**

Equity and Inclusion Specialist
& AASU advisor





FMS STUDENTS PRESENT National History Day projects

Fridley Middle School (FMS) 8th grade students presented their National History Day competition projects on February 13, 2020. This year's theme was "Breaking Barriers in History." Up to a student's own interpretation, the 8th graders focused on an event or people who broke down barriers that were physical, political, technological, related to civil rights, or were a "first" in history. Following the school's exhibition, over 30 students were selected to advance to the regional History Day Competition on March 28 at the White Bear Lake High School South Campus.

The History Day project allows students to explore their own interests and creatively present research through an individually selected format of an exhibit, documentary, research paper, performance, or website. In addition, students practice critical communication and social skills by presenting their projects to their peers, parents, and volunteer judges.

□ FMS 8th grader **Ethan Andler** (pictured above) presents his History Day project, "The Marshall Plan" to judges at the school's Feb. 13 exhibition.

□ FMS 8th grader **Palak Bhakta** and her History Day project, "Borders and Compromise."



Andler and Bhakta are two of ten students who were selected to advance to the state competition in the "individual exhibit" category.

In their own words:

Stevenson 1st grade class publishes story book



Stevenson Elementary School 1st graders have officially become published authors, celebrating the completion of their collaborative fictional book, "First Graders at Night." The project stemmed from Stevenson teacher Jessica Row posing a challenging but exciting task to her class – writing a complete storybook from cover to cover.

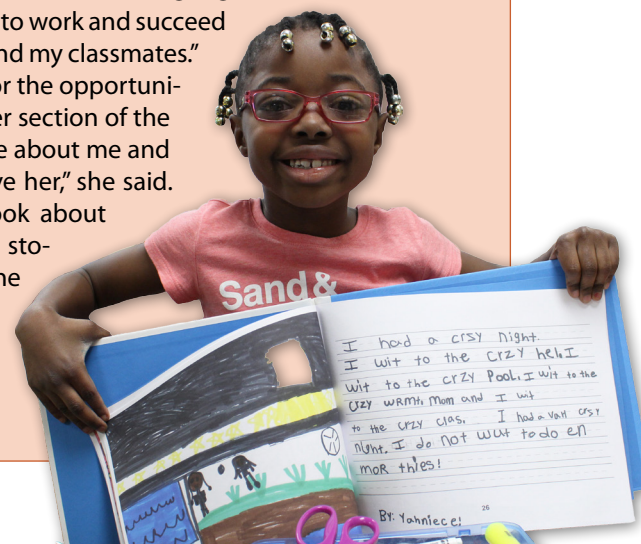
Row was ecstatic to see her students' creativity flow, as their writing became a cohesive story. Each piece of the project held an intentional purpose. The class began by reading and reflecting on story book examples, then collectively choosing a topic to center the book around. Students collaborated while creating the book, piecing together planning sheets, editing the story and transferring them into book pages.

"This project was definitely a turning point in our school year," said Row. "I saw teamwork, cooperation, support and most importantly, they all gained confidence in their writing. Seeing 22 confident 1st grade writers is a phenomenal sight!"

The project fit well into the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP) framework, as Stevenson Elementary is an authorized IB World School. "IB was completely intertwined in this project," said Row. "It incorporated learning profiles, such as being a risk-taker, communicator and thinkers. It also fits into our 'How We Express Ourselves' unit. I definitely want to plan on making this project an annual lesson."

1st grader Yahniece Taylor on writing "First Graders At Night"

"It was fun and great, because we like working together. When we work together, we all succeed. I like to work and succeed with my friends, my teacher and my classmates." added that she was excited for the opportunity to feature her mother in her section of the story. "I really wanted to write about me and my mom, because I really love her," she said. "And I've never written a book about her. I really wanted to share a story about my mom, because she was going to be so surprised. That's why I wrote that, because I really love her."



FRIDLEY HIGH SCHOOL seniors named Triple "A" Award recipients

Senior Adam Johnson was selected as **Triple "A" Region 5AA winner** to compete among final 8 statewide Triple "A" candidates

Congratulations to Fridley High School (FHS) 2020 Minnesota State High School League Triple "A" (Academics, Arts, and Athletics) Award winners seniors Jada Probasco and Adam Johnson! The award is given to one male and one female high school senior who is a standout, exemplary student in academics, fine arts, and sports.

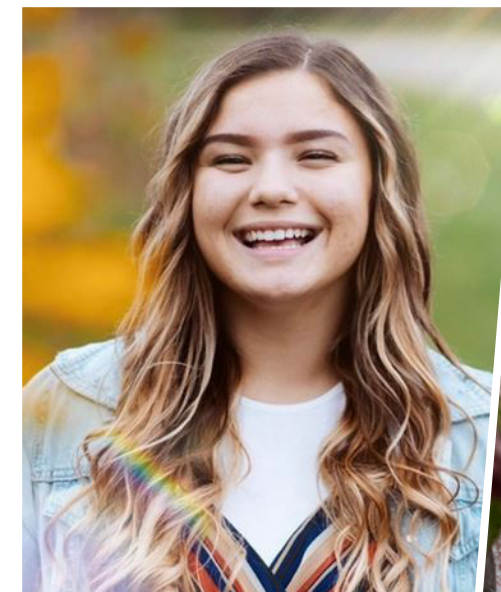
In addition, Johnson was selected as the Triple "A" Region 5AA representative. He was selected to represent the entire region among other student male candidates from Maple Grove, Anoka, Centennial, Columbia Heights, Osseo, Blaine, Irondale, Mounds View, Rogers, Champlin Park, Mounds View, Park Center, St. Michael-Albertville, Coon Rapids, Spring Lake Park and Totino-Grace high schools. Johnson will now advance to the statewide competition, where he is a candidate among eight Minnesota high school Triple "A" Award recipients who are vying for the state title and scholarship opportunities. The winner will be announced during an on-court recognition at the state boys' basketball tournament on Saturday, March 21, 2020.

Jada Probasco

A highly-involved, standout student, Jada Probasco has excelled throughout her high school career. Proud to claim FHS as a second home, Probasco shares strong bonds with many teachers, staff members and fellow classmates. From helping with school work to personal matters, she said Fridley has shown her an immense amount of support and guidance.

Academically, she enjoys challenging herself and has taken advantage of multiple International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme (DP) higher level classes.

Since her participation in Early Bird Choir at Stevenson Elementary, Probasco has found a love for singing. She took part in



Jada Probasco & Adam Johnson are the 2020 Fridley High School Triple "A" Award winners



FHS choir during her freshman and sophomore years, and has further developed this interest through her involvement in choir groups at Redeemer Lutheran Church and Emmanuel Christian Center in Fridley. She recently auditioned for and earned a \$20,000 music scholarship at Bethel, which is awarded to high-potential students who are passionate about musical performance.

Athletically, Probasco said she's always played sports for "the love of the game." While in high school, she has focused on varsity volleyball and softball, consistently living up to leadership responsibilities.

This fall, Probasco plans to attend Bethel University where she will begin her studies in social work.

Adam Johnson

A senior with an impressive array of activity involvement, Adam Johnson has seized multiple opportunities throughout his high school career. This includes pursuing the full International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme (DP), a rigorous college-preparatory course of study offered at Fridley High School, an IB World School.

"Being a full DP student is probably one of the hardest things that I've ever done," Johnson said. "But it's definitely worth it. The workload is fast-paced; it has a more difficult curriculum; and there are lots of additional requirements like the Extended Essay, community service hours and IA's (Internal Assessments). It forces you to manage your time wisely. Without a doubt, this path is preparing me for college."

A talented musician, Johnson has been playing saxophone since he was introduced to the instrument in 4th grade at Stevenson Elementary. Currently, Johnson plays in concert band, jazz band, and jazz combos, a student-led jazz group. Additionally, he is a member of Minnesota Youth Jazz Band (MYJB), an organization that consists of some of the top jazz students in the state.

A three-sport athlete, Johnson is a member of the varsity football, wrestling, and track & field teams. "My experience in sports at Fridley has been great," said Johnson. "You can tell that all the coaches care about you.

They care about developing all their players and doing everything they can to make sure we are performing at our best."

Johnson has received acceptance letters from University of St. Thomas,

Iowa State University, University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, and North Dakota State University, but has ultimately decided to major in civil engineering at St. Thomas, and minor in music. He said he chose civil engineering because he is passionate about the environment aspect, and hopes to mitigate the impacts of climate change through his future career.

Read the full story at www.fridley.k12.mn.us in the Fridley Public Schools News Archive!

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ALC STUDENTS EXPLORE
Trade Industry Careers



Fridley Moore Lake Area Learning Center (ALC) students learned about a variety of highly-skilled trade industry careers at Construct Tomorrow, a student-centered event hosted at the Blaine Sports Center on January 16, 2020. Those who attended the field trip were interested in learning more about construction and industrial careers, as well as the experience and pathway necessary to be successful in the trade industry. The Construct Tomorrow program provides students with information about paid-apprenticeship career training and opportunities in the construction industry, helping to establish connections for students and create pathways into trade industry careers.

Representatives from multiple specialties were available to speak with students about their careers, including roofers, pipefitters, heavy machinery, carpenters, and electricians. Some stations also provided hands-on or virtual tasks for students to experience, where they were able to wire circuits, trowel cement, set tile, and more.



FHS IB Diploma candidates recognized at Silver Platter Celebration

Fridley High School, an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School, hosted its ninth annual Silver Platter Breakfast Celebration on December 19, 2019. During the event, seniors who are enrolled in the full IB Diploma Programme (DP) presented their Extended Essays, a culminating research project for those pursuing the diploma. The Extended Essay is a 4,000-word, in-depth study of a focused topic intended to promote high-level research and writing skills, intellectual discovery and creativity. The process encourages students to develop college-level independent research skills.

This year, the celebration recognized 13 seniors who submitted their essays. To earn an IB Diploma, students must complete DP core classes, assessments and exams during their junior and/or senior years of high school.

In addition to the presentation of the Extended Essays, two Class of 2019 graduates, Hailee Schalwig and Audrey Zeleny, returned to receive their IB Diplomas. Schalwig is currently attending Florida Southern College in Lakeland, Fla. and Zeleny attends Concordia College in Moorhead, Minn.

FHS music students participate in Tri-Metro Fine Arts Festival

Congratulations to the 18 Fridley High School (FHS) students who were selected to participate in the Tri-Metro Conference Fine Arts Festival on January 27, 2020, hosted at FHS. This fine arts festival is held to honor high achieving student artists. Students participating in the festival joined fellow top musicians from Tri-Metro schools at a day-long clinic with high caliber music conductors. The event culminated with an evening concert in the district auditorium.



FRIDLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS
participate in Inventors Fair

Fridley Middle School 6th graders had the opportunity to demonstrate their creativity and innovative ideas at the annual Inventors Fair on January 16, 2020. The event is an opportunity for students to practice their presentation skills to peers, family and community members, as well as show off their creativity, ingenuity and problem solving skills.

The Inventors Fair project fits into the inquiry-led approach, which is at the center of an International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum framework. By working through this interdisciplinary and self-directed design process, students are able to further develop their critical thinking skills and understanding of themselves as learners.

Conrad Eldridge Jr.
and his invention, the Bolt-o-matic 2000



Fridley High School Link Crew
hosts 8th grade welcome session and tour



Fridley Middle School 8th grade students were excited to explore Fridley High School on February 6, 2020 through a mentorship opportunity hosted by the high school's Link Crew Leaders.

The Link Crew is a mentorship program made up of juniors and seniors who facilitate group activities and discussions for 9th grade students throughout the entire school year. They also host Orientation Day for incoming freshmen in the fall. As a tight-knit school community, Link Crew Leaders are mentors and friends to underclassmen. They help ease the middle-school-to-high-school transition by connecting students to clubs, organizations, and sports; introducing them to staff members and elective opportunities; offering words of advice; and being a familiar friend that students can connect with during their first year in high school.

Fridley Middle School students
embrace Unified WIN class

At Fridley Middle School (FMS), students are participating in an opportunity to foster an inclusive and positive environment for all. During the 2018-19 school year, FMS became a Unified Champion School, an initiative created by the Special Olympics. The program promotes social inclusion through intentionally-planned and implemented activities, such as unified classes, school-wide engagement opportunities, and youth leadership opportunities.



Many middle school students are embracing this initiative by participating in Unified WIN class. WIN, which stands for "What I Need," is a dedicated, self-directed enrichment time for 7th and 8th grade students who make a weekly choice of activity they wish to participate in. The Unified class features a 1:1 ratio of students with and without a disability.

"Unified WIN creates an environment where everyone is an equal, rather than a mentorship opportunity. We have our students pick their own weekly activities so they have ownership of what they are doing,"

- FMS Special Education teacher Jessica Mularie

According to Mularie, the main purpose of this is to encourage community and relationship building. During the class, students play a variety of games, participate in guided conversations, and enjoy activities that allow them to build meaningful friendships with one another.



"I love how this class brings everyone together. We do a lot of cooking, coloring, and other activities to get our brains working - and we do all of it together as a community. It's a great opportunity to work with others, embrace our differences, and build a positive mindset."

Brooklyn Dahms
FMS 8th Grade

"The best part about Unified WIN is getting to work with everyone, and being with so many different people in one place. I choose to be part of this because I get to spend time with my brother and meet all his friends, and I get to see what a typical day looks like for him. It means a lot to me and being in this class is very special."



Sam Gemlo
FMS 8th Grade

HAYES ELEMENTARY STUDENTS Score High with Perennial Math



Sixteen Hayes Elementary 4th graders are challenging themselves and taking full advantage of the opportunity to advance their math skills through Perennial Math, a virtual math tournament program. Students compete with their peers at an international-level, answering high-ability math questions that progressively increase in difficulty. Each test has six questions and takes 30 minutes to complete. Each month, students who earn a perfect score earn a spot on the “Wall of Fame.”

“This program is targeted to students who exceed 4th grade math,” said Hayes teacher Tina Utley. “Our students get very excited when they work as a team during our practice competitions, and work together to challenge one another to think about math in a variety of ways.”

FHS, ALC student leaders give feedback at 2019 Student Conference



Nearly 30 Fridley High School (FHS) and Fridley Moore Lake Area Learning Center (ALC) students contributed their voices to the 2019 Student Conference on October 21, 2019. Over 2,000 students from 50 school districts across the state came together at the Minneapolis Convention Center to discuss various topics, including equity, health and wellness, school climate, and more. Fridley students were facilitators of two break-out sessions which centered around mental health and school safety.

HAPPENING AROUND THE DISTRICT



Stevenson students learn about robotics & engineering at U of M

Stevenson 4th graders programmed, controlled and interacted with robots at the University of Minnesota College of Science and Engineering - introducing them to computer science fields. The field trip also served as an opportunity for students to begin visualizing themselves on a college campus.



FHS students explore career pathways at inaugural Career Fair

Fridley High School students were able to explore a variety of career paths and learn about viable options at the inaugural Career Fair held at the high school. Each grade-level of students had the opportunity to browse career possibilities, talk to industry professionals, and learn more about internships, apprenticeships and educational requirements for future careers.

Preschoolers visit Fridley Civic Campus

Fridley Preschool 4-year-old students toured the Fridley Civic Campus, had the opportunity to meet Mayor Scott Lund and explore the council chambers. The preschool classes also toured the many civic departments. Through an International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP) theme, the field trip fit into the central idea of “Who We Are,” leading to a discussion on the variety of job and career choices that students will have in the future.



ALC students volunteer at FMSC, garner global perspectives

A group of 25 students from the Fridley Moore Lake Area Learning Center's World Hunger class made a global difference when they volunteered at Feed My Starving Children in Coon Rapids.

The group packed 142 boxes of nutritious meals to be shipped to famished children in Haiti. The ALC features four three-week classes in its English program: World Hunger, US Hunger, Local Hunger, and Hunger and Science. The classes include field trips to visit humanitarian organizations where students can learn more about nonprofit organizations, tour the facilities, and learn about the various efforts that provide sustainable solutions.

FRIDLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL PRESENTS BLACK HISTORY MONTH SHOWCASE

Each February, Black History Month serves as an opportunity for all to recognize and celebrate the achievements of African Americans. Fridley Public Schools honors the legacy of African American pioneers through a multitude of events throughout the month. On February 25, 2020, Fridley Middle School (FMS) hosted a first-time, student-centered Black History Month showcase for 7th and 8th grade students in the Fridley district auditorium.

The event was organized in collaboration with FMS Get Ready college pathways program coordinator Nura Hussein and equity and inclusion specialist Aloda Sims. “Together, we wanted to create a space and opportunity for students to feel valued and celebrated through their culture and heritage,” said Hussein. “We wanted this to be a celebration and something big for students to be a part of.”

“It was an excellent opportunity to provide a student-centered learning experience,” said Sims. “As an International Baccalaureate World School, we strive to diversify our students’ learning experiences and focus on global contexts. We want our students to be equipped with a well-rounded and diverse knowledge base that can prepare them and build them up for the future.”

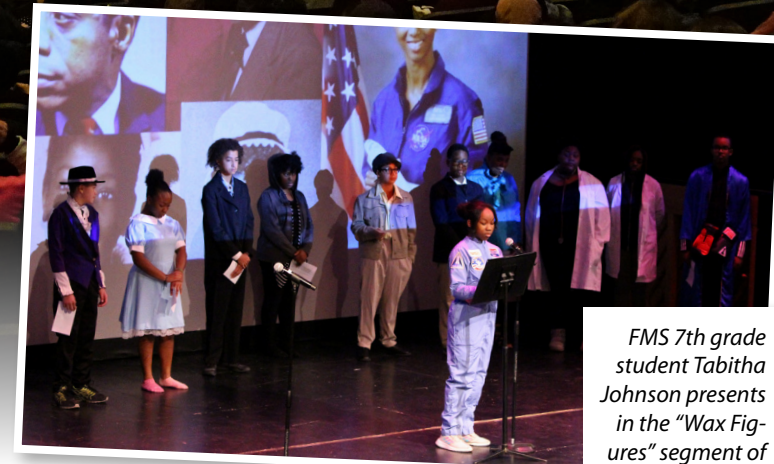
Students represent African American “Wax Figures” in history

The central feature of the showcase was an African American “Wax Figures” presentation, in which 11 students represented prominent historical figures, with the purpose of motivating and inspiring students to continue their legacies of greatness. African American leaders included Maya Angelou, W. E. B. Du Bois, Ta-nehisi Coates, musical genius Prince, and boxer and philanthropist Muhammed Ali. Students portrayed each historical figure, reciting their significant achievements and contributions to society.

To 7th grade student Tabitha Johnson, representing the role of Mae C. Jemison was an honor. Jemison, who is an engineer, physician and former NASA astronaut, was the first African American woman to travel to space. “I was so happy to represent a woman who has achieved so much,” said Johnson. “She is an amazing role model and I hope to get the chance to meet her someday.”

Students empowered by Omega Psi Phi Fraternity role models

To encourage higher education aspirations, Jareck Horton and Thomas Collins, two representatives from the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc. led an empowering discussion. Omega Psi Phi is a historic African American fraternity. Sharing personal narratives, their educational journeys, and powerful advice, they engaged students as they spoke to them about overcoming obstacles, and knowing the value of higher education.



FMS 7th grade student Tabitha Johnson presents in the “Wax Figures” segment of the Black History Month showcase.



Left photo: Jareck Horton and Thomas Collins, two representatives from the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, were keynote speakers at the showcase.
Right photo: Fridley High School students performed a blend of African cultural dances.



FMS 8th grade student **Nathan Gonzalez** represented James Baldwin, a novelist and playwright who broke literary ground with the exploration of racial and social issues in many of his works.

“I was definitely proud to represent him. James Baldwin is a huge part of African American culture. It was awesome to have this whole assembly to celebrate the culture and history of African Americans, and to highlight the fight and strength that these prominent figures had.”

- Nathan Gonzalez, FMS 8th grade



FRIDLEY PRESCHOOL LEARNS FROM Springbrook Nature Center



Springbrook Nature Center brought lessons to life when they visited Fridley Preschool on November 14, 2019. The 4-year-old students learned about predators and prey, played games involving squirrel and beaver winter survival, and even met two Western fox snakes named Batman and Pasta. Students also had the opportunity to feel the texture of various animal pelts.

The Springbrook visit fits into the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP) theme “Sharing the Planet,” as students learned about the central ideas of animals and humans’ relation to them. Students were able to make real-world connections regarding human interaction and responsibility towards animals and plants, and how animals are organized in habitats.



Fridley Schools Foundation hosts Black & Gold Gala

The Fridley Schools Foundation hosted its third annual Black & Gold Gala on January 30, 2020 at Jax Café in Minneapolis. For over 20 years, the Foundation has been enriching educational opportunities for Fridley Public School students and supporting their higher academic aspirations as they build their individual roads to success. More than 150 community and staff members attended the fundraising event, participating in silent and live auctions and donating to support the mission of the foundation.

As the Foundation’s largest fundraising event of the year, the gala plays an essential role in raising money to support educator grants and student scholarships for graduating seniors. This year, over \$30,000 was raised to enhance opportunities for district students.

Bob Barnette honored with Golden Apple Award

This year, retired Fridley Public Schools employee and Fridley City Council member Bob Barnette was recognized at the gala with the Golden Apple Award. The award is given to a member of the school district community who has made a significant impact for the Foundation.

Barnette served as a teacher and counselor in the district from 1958 until his retirement in 1996. Notably, Barnette is credited for creating the district’s scholarship program, FridFans. The formation of the Fridley Schools Foundation became a vehicle to administer the funds raised. Barnette served as the chair of the Foundation, and has been a board member since its inception in 1999. He continues to serve the district, assisting the Activities and Athletics department with many athletic events.

FRIDLEY ELEMENTARY STUDENTS ENJOY Shop with a Cop with FPD

The annual Shop with a Cop holiday tradition continues to put smiles on the faces of Hayes and Stevenson Elementary students. On December 4, 2019, over 20 members of the Fridley Police Departments (FPD) partnered with 16 elementary students to complete their Christmas shopping at the Fridley Walmart store.

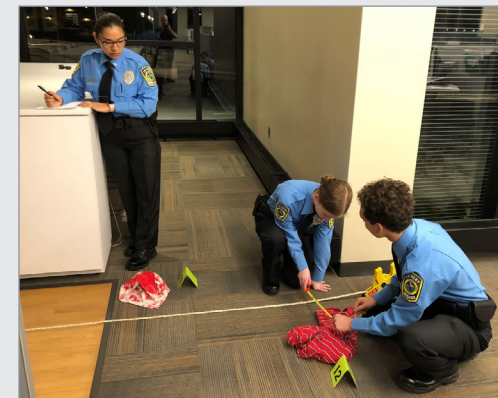
Students were partnered with a patrol, civilian officer, or Police Explorer - a young adult or student who is working hands-on with officers to explore a career in law enforcement. With the help of the officers, students thoughtfully selected gifts for their family members with gift cards donated by the store. After the shopping was complete, the officers, Police Explorers, and volunteers from Hayes and Stevenson helped to wrap presents and label gifts.



Foundation President Renee VanGorp and Bob Barnette the 2020 Golden Apple Award recipient.

Police partnership provides work experience for FHS students

The Fridley Police Explorers program introduces students to the field of law enforcement



Through a partnership with the City of Fridley, several Fridley High School (FHS) students are receiving a hands-on education while exploring and learning more about a service field that could potentially shape their future careers. The Police Explorers program, run by the Fridley Police Department, introduces students and young adults to the field of law enforcement. Explorers are taught a variety of skills and methods through training with active police officers. The program instills core values including honor, duty, sacrifice and valor, and teaches principles of morality and leadership. Many students who participate in the program are interested in becoming law enforcement officers, Emergency Medical Technicians or other service-related professionals.

For junior Kimberly Escobar Cabanzo, her experience in the program has been second-to-none. Now in her third year as an Explorer, Cabanzo said she greatly values the program and opportunity to receive hands-on training that directly affects her future career. She plans to first attend St. Cloud University and earn her bachelor’s degree in criminal justice, then apply to become a reserve officer.

“Being a Police Explorer is amazing,” said Escobar Cabanzo. “Everything is hands-on and you really bond with the police officers.”

She added the program has helped her become a better person. “My advisors have really pushed me to become a leader and become better all around, both socially and academically.”

Through the program, Police Explorers learn hands-on skills including hostage rescue negotiations, bomb scene search, burglary response, domestic crisis, crime prevention, search and arrest, and DWI investigations.



COACH ANTHONY BRANITSKI NAMED GIRLS TENNIS COACH OF THE YEAR

Congratulations to longtime Fridley High School Coach Anthony Branitski who was named Section 4AA Girls Tennis Coach of the Year!

“It’s definitely an honor to be recognized as Coach of the Year,” said Branitski, who also earned the Section 5A Boys Tennis Coach of the Year award in 2017. “It’s validating to know that my peers see tennis is more than just the wins and the losses. It’s about character development, learning a lifelong sport, and treating everyone how they would want to be treated. I always try to add those pieces into my teaching and coaching and it’s great to be recognized.”

Branitski has been coaching both boys and girls tennis teams at FHS since 2006. An avid tennis player in high school and college, Branitski said it is a joy to have the opportunity to connect with students on another level while playing a sport that he loves.

“The relationship-building aspect is my favorite part about coaching,” Branitski said. “I’m all about creating a family-like atmosphere on my team. We are there to encourage each other and build each other up.”

To Branitski and his team, one of the most memorable aspects of this past season has been recognizing and rallying around one of his former players, 2017 graduate Luke Coelho, who is bat-

ting leukemia. Branitski and his team have been wearing “Luke Strong” bracelets to keep him in their thoughts.

“As a team, we talk about resilience and gratefulness, and we want to show Luke our support as much as we can,” said Branitski. “A highlight of this season would definitely include having my team meet Luke. He came to three practices this year and played with us. Those were some special moments, and supporting him was a big part and focal point of our past season.”

“He’s been an **amazing coach** and he’s taught me to **never give up on myself**. He is so dedicated and puts everything he has into the team.

He makes sure everyone is included and has fun. He **cares about every single one of us** and it’s **such a good family-like feeling** to be a part of this team.”

Natalie Anderson
FHS senior who Branitski has coached since 5th grade





Fridley Football Head Coach Justin Reese at the annual “Fridley Tackles Cancer” football game on Sept. 20, 2019



FRIDLEY FOOTBALL HEAD COACH JUSTIN REESE NAMED MSHSL COACH OF THE YEAR

Saying that the Fridley Varsity Football team had a standout season would be an understatement. In the history of Fridley football, the team has never earned an 8-0 record and taken the conference title. This past season, that changed. With unmatched grit, confidence and perseverance, a strategy of student leadership and strong relationships was cultivated.

“This year, we focused on building leaders,” said Head Football Coach Justin Reese. “We had a core group of seniors who led the pack. Even if you’re not the best player on the field, it’s about being a vocal leader, organizing team bonding, trusting each other. Coming into the season, I knew we had something special. We had a team full of guys who believed in each other.”

This youth leadership culture is something that Reese has been building in the football program since he took over as head coach in 2014. In addition, through the Fridley Activities and Athletics department, students learn through a research-based sports student leadership program, “Become Worth Following.”

Following the success of this football season, Reese earned the title of Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL) 4AAAA Varsity Football Coach of the Year. The recognition is given to coaches who have achieved success during the football season and have made a significant difference in the game through coaching strategies and teamwork. According to Reese, this win is shared among his players and fellow coaching staff.

“I think it says a lot about where I started from and where I am now, and I’m proud of that,” Reese said. “But what’s most important is that I’m always looking and planning ahead - so how do I build off of this, and elevate others with me?”

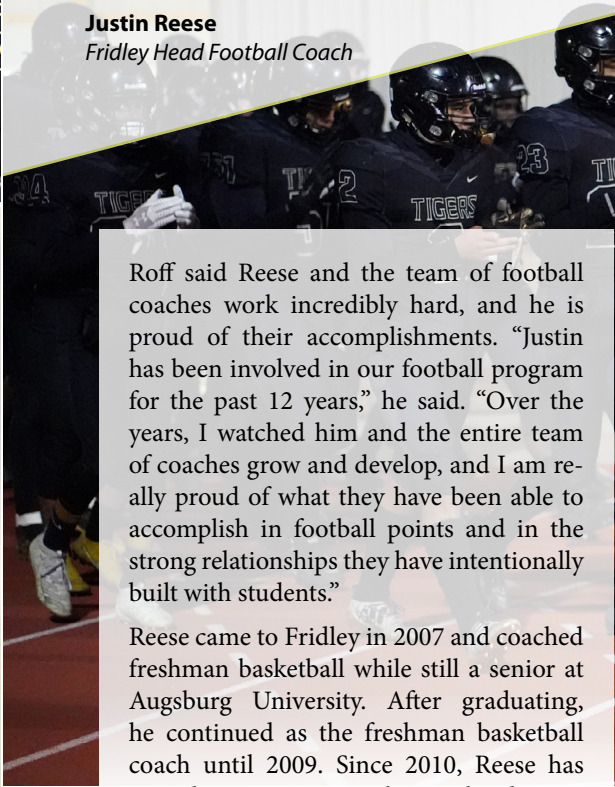
Reese was a stellar athlete in high school. He was a member of a nationally-ranked basketball team, and participated in track and football. He attended Augsburg College where he was a two-year starter for the football team.

A forward-thinker, Reese is focusing on the collaborative culture at Fridley High School. His vision also includes building upon community involvement. “A Fridley ‘Friday Night Football’ vibe,” says Reese. “It’s starting to grow - I think we can make that happen. Wins and losses are great - but it’s about those everlasting experiences that mean everything to our players, our staff and our community.”

Fridley Public Schools’ activities director Dan Roff said that under Reese’s leadership, the football program has evolved from a team that had not qualified for state competition, to a team with a true shot at championship. “Our football team has gone to state four years in a row, and we have not done that before,” said Roff. “We keep getting better and this season, we had another first - an 8-0 record that we have never had before.”

Coming into the season, I knew we had something special. We had a team full of guys who *believed in each other.* ”

Justin Reese
Fridley Head Football Coach



Roff said Reese and the team of football coaches work incredibly hard, and he is proud of their accomplishments. “Justin has been involved in our football program for the past 12 years,” he said. “Over the years, I watched him and the entire team of coaches grow and develop, and I am really proud of what they have been able to accomplish in football points and in the strong relationships they have intentionally built with students.”

Reese came to Fridley in 2007 and coached freshman basketball while still a senior at Augsburg University. After graduating, he continued as the freshman basketball coach until 2009. Since 2010, Reese has served in numerous roles in the district, including district diversity coordinator, paraprofessional, and behavior specialist at Fridley High School. His coaching career has included varsity assistant boys’ basketball coach, varsity running back, wide receiver, and defense coordinator coach for the Fridley Tigers Football program. Reese is a graduate of Augsburg University where he earned a bachelor’s degree in physical education and received a master’s degree in sports management from the University of Minnesota - Twin Cities.

“Over the years, I’ve watched [Justin] and the entire team of coaches grow and develop, and I am really proud of what they have been able to accomplish in football points and in the **strong relationships they have intentionally built with students.**”

Dan Roff
Fridley Activities and Athletics Director



Fridley Football Head Coach Justin Reese and his team take the field at the state quarterfinal game on Nov. 8, 2019



COACH MAC HONORED FOR MBCA HALL OF FAME INDUCTION

Congratulations to Fridley High School teacher and longtime boys varsity basketball Coach Jim MacDonald, who was inducted into the Minnesota Basketball Coaches Association (MBCA) Hall of Fame. On February 21, 2020, Fridley students, teachers, coaches, administrators, alumni and community gathered to celebrate this significant accomplishment prior to the Fridley boys varsity basketball game.

This prestigious honor is given to only a handful of coaches each year. Honorees are individuals who have made significant lifetime contributions to coaching basketball. MacDonald has been head coach of the Fridley boys basketball team since 1988, coaching more than 30 basketball teams. He has also served as head and assistant coach to the Fridley boys and girls track and field teams, totaling over 15 years, and Fridley football team assistant coach for four years.





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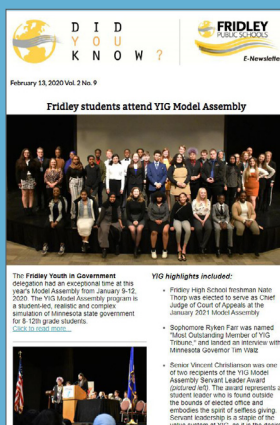
FRIDLEY
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E-Newsletter

DID YOU KNOW?

Our district e-newsletter is sent to all staff and Fridley parents twice a month.

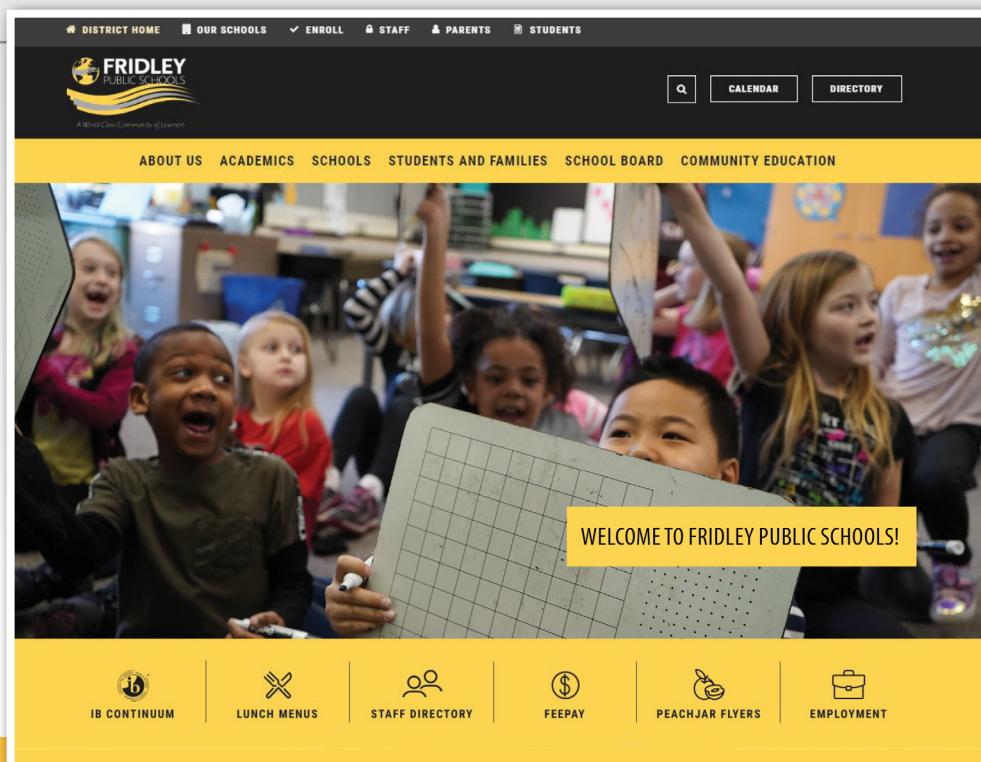
Community members can sign up - please visit our website and find the tab under **STUDENTS AND FAMILIES**



COMING SOON

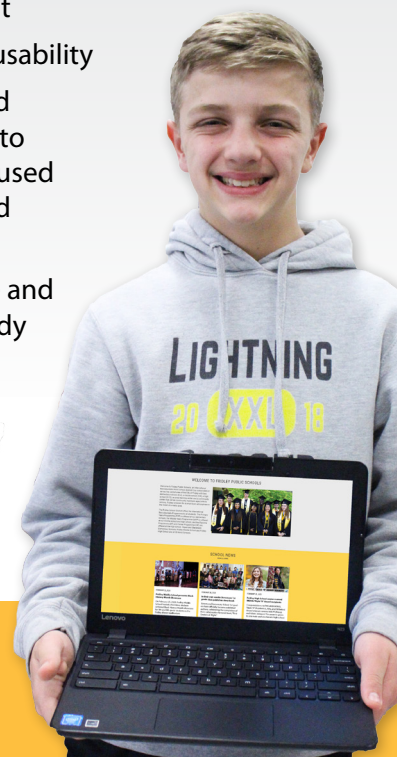
DISTRICT TO LAUNCH NEW WEBSITE

In an effort to improve usability and accessibility, Fridley Public Schools is launching a new district website by the end of March 2020. The re-launch includes a new and improved district site, along with individual school websites. The new site streamlines navigation and includes revitalized information and resources for the community to learn about the happenings at Fridley Public Schools. While the vast majority of content has migrated into the new site, the district expects to continue to add, update and revise its website through this transitional time period.



FEATURES INCLUDE

- Reorganized structure and content
- Enhanced usability
- Streamlined navigation to frequently used content and quick links
- Responsive and mobile-ready design to screen size of any device
- ADA compliant



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