

BUTLER SCHOOL DISTRICT 53

newsline

Winter 2017

LANGUAGE ARTS

Brook Forest, Butler Junior High are 'Model Schools'

Butler Junior High and Brook Forest were honored recently as "Model Schools" for their implementation of the Reading and Writing Workshop model. The award was given by Schoolwide, an educational curriculum and consulting company. They are the only schools in Illinois named as Model Schools.

The Reading and Writing Workshop allows teachers to meet the more rigorous standards of the Common Core and provide students with the time and

support to grow fluent in literacy. The model also exposes students to a variety of genres and subgenres and to grow independently as strong readers and writers.

"The schools have demonstrated exemplary practices in shifting from a more traditional means of literacy instruction to the workshop model," said Schoolwide Consultant Pat Pollack.

As designated Model Schools, Brook Forest and Butler Jr. High will share best practices and literacy experiences with fellow educators. Already, Butler 53 has hosted over 10 school districts and over 100 teachers and administrators. The award was given at an assembly at Brook Forest, during which students thanked Pollack for providing them with the tools to enhance their reading and writing.

Superintendent Dr. Heidi Wennstrom said that teachers have embraced the training and the teaching, which is much more complex than previous literacy instruction.



Raya Sulaiman reads a thank you to Schoolwide consultant Pat Pollack (at right) during an assembly at Brook Forest to announce the "Model School" award. At left is a thank you written by a student.



Students display the banner announcing the Model School Award. They are joined by Principal Jason Bednar, Superintendent Dr. Heidi Wennstrom and Schoolwide consultant Pat Pollack.



Thank you!

PTO DONATIONS

Donations from the PTO in 2016-17

- Interactive multi-touch LCD screens
- BJH STEM lab media
- BJH library media
- Brook Forest gym lighting
- New microphones for student performances
- Brook Forest buddy benches
- Language Arts materials
- Flat screen display monitors

Note: These donations are in addition to field trips, assemblies and other assistance annually provided by the PTO

INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS

- Qin Family
- Shah Family

Tech donations and touch screens add value

In 3rd grade science, students are at lab tables in groups classifying 50 different animals. They use large interactive touch screens, like huge iPads, to share their work. The large screen allows the students to see the work of the other students and decide which group classified them correctly.

The large touch screen is a new tool for the classroom teacher. There are six of them at Brook Forest and five at Butler Junior High, all purchased and donated by the PTO and individual parents.

"It's another tool to utilize when we are in our lab setting," said Brook Forest science teacher Andrew Griffith.

In the Butler Junior High STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Math) class, students circle around the interactive touch screens to work on a project or study. It becomes a safer environment as there is less need for materials in the lab, plus students become active participants in their learning, said teacher Kim Krupicka.

Fourth grade teacher Adam Nicholson is also experimenting with the new device in his classroom. He created a colorful grid where students can race

with other students to find factors and multiples during math lessons by tapping on hundreds of squares.

He also uses the screens to display texts and asks students to manipulate them and annotate them to improve their grammar and writing.

Continued on page 2



Students collaborate while using interactive touch screens. The large interactive screens have been donated by parents and the PTO and offer more opportunities for engaged learning.

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Where are they now?



ROBERT CHUN

Butler grads

Robert Chun is a 2008 graduate of Butler Junior High, 2012 graduate of Hinsdale Central and 2016 graduate of Stanford University with a major in Economics. He currently works at Bridgespan, a not-for-profit organization that advises philanthropists, charities and other organizations looking to drive social impact. At Stanford, he was awarded the J.E. Wallace Sterling Award for his undergraduate leadership and volunteer activities, and the Walk the Talk Award given by the Haas Center for Public Service, which recognizes seniors who exemplify an extraordinary commitment to public service work while at Stanford. He also served as an intern with the White House Office of Management and Budget.



Butler graduate Robert Chun talks about his career, his time at Butler and Brook Forest and his stint as an intern in the White House. Here he is pictured in the White House.

journalists on Twitter. I also love hiking with friends. When it's not snowing in New England, I love to get away to New Hampshire or Vermont for a weekend.

Q: What famous people did you meet at the Senate?

A: In government, you mostly spend time at your desk! But I have a few fond memories of bumping into Bernie Sanders in the hallways or Orrin Hatch in the elevator.

Q: What is your favorite Brook Forest memory?

A: Exploremore Day was the single greatest day of the school year. It was like Christmas. I remember launching rockets and eating Home Run Inn pizza on the playground.

Q: What is your favorite Butler Junior High memory?

A: I loved Ms. Haley's social studies class. I had her for 6th and 8th grade. That was when I fell in love with history and politics, and her class was a tremendous influence.

Q: What advice would you give to someone younger?

A: Find a book that you really love. And then read another book by the same author or on the same subject. And then read another. If you keep reading and exploring, pretty soon school begins to fade into the background, because you've begun to teach yourself. There's nothing cooler than that.

Q: What's next for you?

A: I'm not sure yet! It depends on the projects I'm assigned at Bridgespan. No matter what, I just want to be doing something where I'm learning. You don't stop teaching yourself after you're done with school; it's something that you do every day after you graduate.

Q: Tell me about your job.

A: It's a very exciting job that requires a great deal of creativity and problem solving. I am currently helping to advise a group of private investors who are launching an impact investing fund.

Q: What led you to this role?

A: During my senior year of college, I knew that I wanted to find a job that could teach me important skills and allow me to make a difference in the world. Bridgespan fit that description perfectly. The people at Bridgespan have a very strong sense of public service and they invest a ton of training for new employees like me.

Q: So, it looks like you're passionate.

A: I'm passionate about blending different perspectives to solve problems. The exciting thing about Bridgespan is that we combine the best thinking of the non-profit sector and the for-profit sector. We connect theory to practice, and vice versa. Some folks at Bridgespan come from engineering and science; others have MBAs or law degrees. The variety of experiences we have is really critical to our work.

Q: What do you do in your free time?

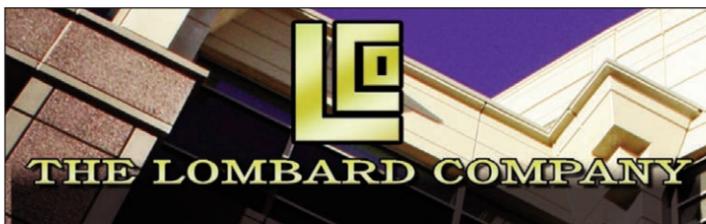
A: When I'm not working, I'm almost always reading. I subscribe to lots of different newspapers, podcasts and newsletters, and they drive a lot of my current thinking. I also spend a lot of time reading

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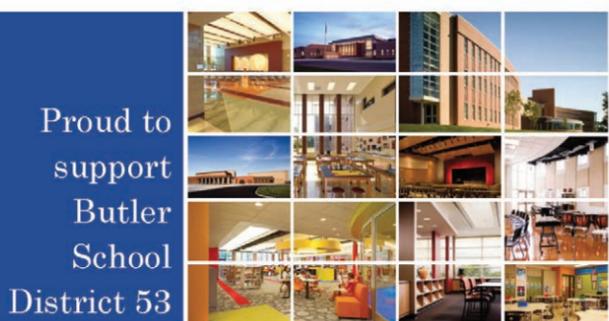


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Tech donations

Continued from page 1

"We're seeing some very creative uses in this early stage," said Technology Director Farheen Beg. Multiple students can use the devices, manipulate the screens and share them with the entire class. "It's truly exciting to see students showcase their collaboration and creativity."

She said that students are highly motivated and engaged when using the new screens. "They are able to zoom in and out of websites with the same ease as a smart phone." They can work collaboratively and problem solve.

"We are so appreciative of the donations," said

Superintendent Dr. Heidi Wennstrom. "Parents and the PTO have really enabled us to add value to our educational program."

She noted that the devices have been placed in areas like the library and science labs, where all students can use them.

The District's Tech Committee will survey teachers about their use and then make a decision about whether to expand them to other classrooms. "Our policy is to be fiscally conservative and utilize all of our current resources to their maximum levels," said Beg.

CHOICE-BASED ART

Nurturing imagination and creativity in art class



Inspiring Instruction

One student is gluing cardboard together to build a house on stilts. Another is painting a scene of a country road winding into the woods. Another is forming miniature cakes, cookies and donuts and the

stands they might sit on in a doll's bakery.

The 5th grade students, all working on different projects, are learning about space, shape and form.

This is art class at Brook Forest School and it looks a lot different than it did in prior years. The concept is known as choice-based art.

Before, students would all create teacher-directed projects, for example, 1st Grade's Van Gogh's sunflowers. The teacher would draw the stem, then the students would follow, and so forth until the project was completed. The students were learning techniques, concepts, and the

products were beautiful. But what Brook Forest art teacher Michael Divelbiss grew to understand is that the work didn't require much critical or creative thinking. "When you teach this way, all of the problem solving, critical thinking and imagination is removed," he said. Plus, students would compare their works with one another and declare they weren't good at art and become discouraged.

Now, in a Choice-Based Art program, students see themselves as artists. Each week, they study art concepts from an idea book. On this day, students were studying shape and form and the techniques to create the appearance of shape on a flat surface. Using those lessons, students then have six choices on what to create, such as painting a scene with a one-point perspective or building a three-dimensional object. One caveat is the product must be meaningful to them, such as how the sunflowers were meaningful to Van Gogh.

When they completed their creation, students are invited to share the story of the project with their classmates. Divelbiss asks them, "What would you do differently? What was the hardest part? Why do you do this?" One student declared that she always wanted to own a bakery. Another said he wanted to test his building skills.

Not only are students learning the skills of creating art, but they are much more enthused. And they're learning to use their imaginations and problem-solve, two highly coveted skills needed in today's workplace. "They are now real artists, responsible for their own ideas and interests through the making of art," said Divelbiss.



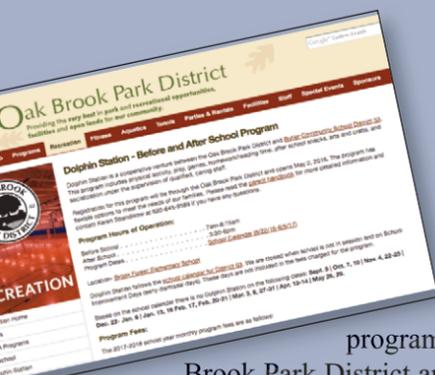
Sarah Maghrabi presents her art project to a group of fellow student artists. The presentation is part of the new curriculum that encourages self-expression and more choices, all of which are designed to encourage problem solving and creativity. Below, Anjika Kumar displays her perspective drawing as part a new art curriculum at Brook Forest, called choice-based art.



Teddy Patrinos works on his building project during art class at Brook Forest School.



Partnership creates before and after school care



It's only been open since September but already the Dolphin Station, the before and after-school

program run by the Oak

Brook Park District and held at Brook Forest School, has had good reviews.

It serves as many as eight children in the morning and as large as 18 students in the afternoon. In total, there are 32 enrollees in the

morning Monday-Friday and 66 in the afternoon.

The program was started this year to provide seamless child care and to give parents piece of mind knowing that the care is within their child's school. The program is supported only by user fees.

"The program promotes active engagement and completion of academic work. It's a real benefit that we can have this within our own school building," said Brook Forest Principal Jason Bednar.

Activities are structured and include crafts and games and also time for homework, snack, outside

play and free time.

"The children are very supportive of one another," said Karen Spandikow, assistant director of recreation at the Oak Brook Park District. "I've seen big kids help little kids."

She said the program has room to grow. "As a park district, we are very excited to be able to partner with the school and provide this program," she said. It currently serves children K-5. More information can be found at <http://www.obparks.org/dolphinstation/index.asp>

Retiring board members offer reflections

Four of seven long-time Board of Education members will be retiring in April. We asked them what they were most proud of with this Board. We thank them for their volunteer service, unselfish commitment and untold hours of work. Together, they tally 32 years of experience on the Board. A fifth board member, Ahmad Sulaiman, was recently appointed to the Board. His term is completed in April and he is seeking re-election. In addition, Board Members Lou Paskalides and Liz Chun will continue to serve on the Board until April 2019 when their terms expire.

Alan Hanzlik, President

First elected: April 2009

"The Board has been strong in establishing effective leadership and governance of the Board and admin-

stration. It has also developed quality assurance systems and has been steadfast in hiring among the best and brightest to teach and administer in our District."

Dr. Hitesh Patel, Vice President

First elected: April 2009

"The District has established a sustainable funding model with effective purchasing and investment protocols that allow the district to develop high quality instructional programs."

Dr. Alan Kumar, Secretary

First elected: April 2009

"The Board has continued to advance a robust



Alan Hanzlik



Dr. Hitesh Patel



Dr. Alan Kumar



Todd Rusteberg

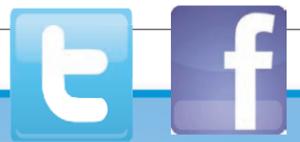
curriculum and program as well as a strong, but practical compensation system."

Todd Rusteberg, Member

First elected: April 2009

"The Board has overseen advancements in curriculum that increase opportunities for social and emotional learning and well-rounded students. It has also established policies that enable durable, effective governance."

Good News



During International Day, Butler Junior High students Ana Tripkovic and Tabatha Loera decorate Indian Diyas, or clay pots.

Students celebrate cultures

Butler Junior High students celebrated International Day in January, a favorite 15+ year tradition in which they learn about other cultures. Parent volunteers taught students how to decorate Indian Diyas (clay pots); create Mandalas (patterns on paper) and learn the Chinese art of Tai Chi. "There is so much talent and culture in our students and school families and we're taking a moment to celebrate that," said Principal Amy Read. Students were also treated to performances by other students, including Indian dance and fashion show, Karate and Kungfu demonstrations, Taolu and Daushu demonstrations.

Four receive top writing awards

Four Butler Junior High students were honored with top awards in the Midwest Region on the



The four winners of the Scholastic Writing Awards (l to r) Adi Badlani, Jasmine Tan, Carolina Rico and Ajay Jejurikar, were honored at the February District 53 Board of Education.

Scholastic Art & Writing Awards.

- **Jasmine Tan**, 8th grade, won a Gold Key (top 5-7%) in the Flash Fiction category.
- **Carolina Rico**, 8th grade, won a Silver Key (top 7-10%) in the Personal Essay category.
- **Adi Badlani**, 8th grade, won a Silver Key (top 7-10%) in the Journalism category.
- **Ajay Jejurikar**, 8th grade, won an Honorable Mention (top 10-15%) in both the Poetry and Personal Essay categories.

Butler Junior High Language Arts teacher and sponsor Joanna Lago said she was thrilled with the student's recognition and for taking a risk with their writing. "Butler continues to nurture articulate, authentic writers and we're pleased that they've earned top recognition in the Midwest."

Scholastic Art & Writing Awards is the country's longest-running and most prestigious recognition program for creative teens in grades 7-12. Last year, 320,000 works of visual art and writing were submitted for the Scholastic Awards and 2,500 works earned National Medals. National Medalists and their educators will be celebrated at a ceremony this summer at Carnegie Hall in New York City.

Band dual performance

The Butler Junior High Concert Band joined their Hinsdale Central High School counterparts in a combined performance at Hinsdale Central in mid-February. Combining the bands is a new tradition that helps enrich students' learning experience and performance, said Butler Band Director Jordan Yi.

"The students learn from each other through the rehearsal and performance process," Yi said. The process of learning difficult material, blending the bands and using non-verbal communication to lead the band is quite challenging, he said.

The Butler Junior High Concert Band performed *Aria* by J.S. Bach, arranged by Terry Nowak; and *Antecedium* by Ed Huckeby. The Hinsdale Central Wind Symphony and the BJH Concert Band combined to perform *Our Kingsland Spring* by Samuel Hazo.

Check it out

We are expanding our social media reach. You can now find us on Facebook and Twitter. Search for Butler School District 53 on Facebook. Our Twitter handles are @D53BrookForest and @D53ButlerJHS

Pen pals across the globe

Lisa Owen's 5th grade students are realizing that their pen pals in Thailand are more like them than different. The students write and receive letters and trinkets from their Thai counterparts in 8th grade. The benefits are many – learning about their culture, making a connection across the globe and practicing letter writing. An added bonus is that the Thai teacher is a former student of Owen's. "This project was one of the favorite things I have done with my students because of the joy it brought them and curiosity it sparked," said Taylor Roesch, who has been teaching in Thailand after graduating from University of Dayton in May. Pen pals might be considered a thing of the past. But the pen pal letters produce much greater excitement and that makes learning fun and interesting, said Owen.



On two different ends of the globe, Lisa Owen's 5th grade class above, and her former student's class in Thailand, open up their pen pal letters. The exchange has brought a lot of excitement to both sets of students.



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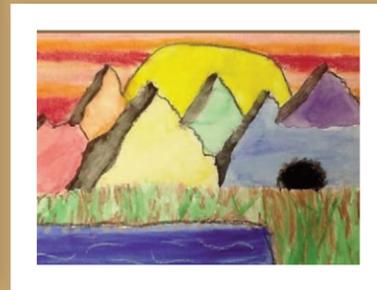
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Art Board

Butler District 53 students display their artwork on artsonia.com. Pictured here (from l to r) are 4th grade zentangle using color contrast, 4th grade landscape painting using the color wheel, 5th grade one-point perspective drawing.



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