



BUTLER SCHOOL DISTRICT 53

newsline

Summer 2020

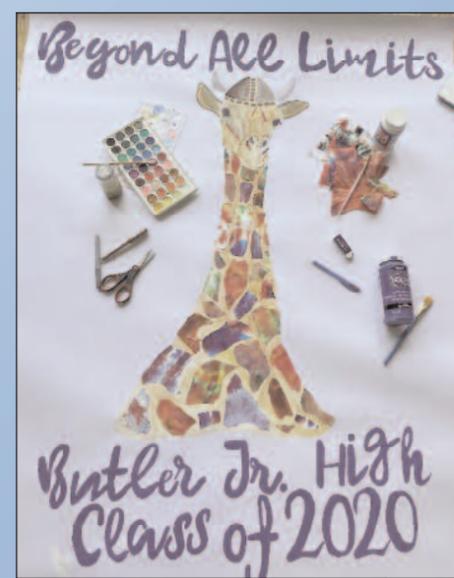
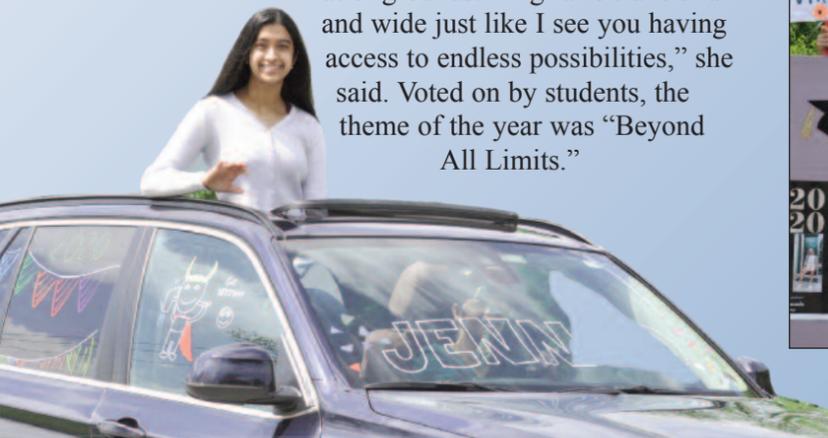
Celebrating our graduates "beyond all limits"

Congratulations Team Butler!

This spring the Butler Junior High 8th graders were celebrated in a virtual ceremony that featured much of the same format as past graduations – speeches by the principal, student leaders, superintendent and board president; announcements of award winners, words of wisdom from staff, and the Butler Junior High Band playing Pomp & Circumstance. The milestone also included a slideshow that featured photos, memories of students and words of parents.

"Graduation was all about Team Butler coming together," said Principal Andrea Prola.

In her speech to graduates, Prola told students that she was adopting a giraffe at Brookfield Zoo in honor of the Class of 2020. She selected the giraffe because each one is unique and has its individual strengths, like the students, and has the biggest heart of all land animals. She also noted a new tradition – to recognize graduates with a gift. This year, there will be a likeness of a giraffe on the Butler grounds. "A giraffe travels far and wide just like I see you having access to endless possibilities," she said. Voted on by students, the theme of the year was "Beyond All Limits."



At top left Brook Forest teachers, staff and community celebrated graduating kindergartners and 5th graders during a car parade organized by parents May 29.

At left, Butler Junior High Assistant Principal Melissa Zaniewski, Secretary Kathy Ferrell, Principal Andrea Prola and Superintendent Dr. Paul O'Malley celebrated graduates during the Oak Brook car parade May. 23.

Top photo is artwork created to commemorate the Class of 2020.

Check out District 53's YouTube channel to see the virtual graduation and other year-end events.

The challenges and successes of e-Learning



To help students process feelings during remote learning, 2nd graders were asked to create a heart map to show their fears, hopes and wonderings. Remote learning had its difficulties, but teachers worked hard to support students academically and emotionally.

At Butler and Brook Forest, classrooms become "families," sharing stories, building trust and creating support, all of which are critical in helping students learn, grow and persist.

During e-learning, where much of students' day is independent work, providing that ongoing support can be challenging.

"With remote learning students aren't sitting in the classroom and getting that support all the time," said 2nd grade teacher Laura Jevitz. Teachers can't see where students struggle. They can't answer questions on the spot and it's difficult to work with small groups or one-on-one.

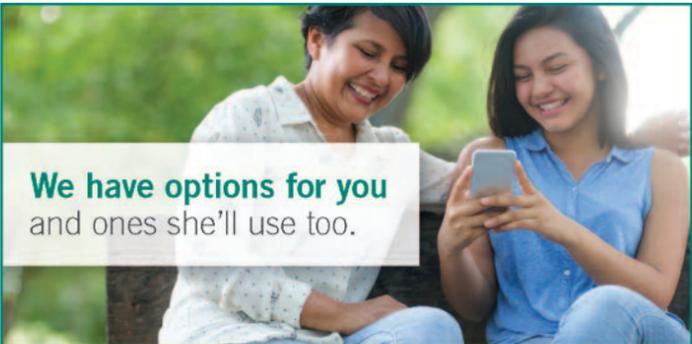
Still, teachers found ways to continue to support students and help them learn and grow. For example, in 2nd grade, after e-Learning started in March, students were given an assignment to create "heart maps" that show their feelings, fears and wonderings.

"When we started online learning, kids needed an outlet to show their feelings," said Nettie Griffin, 2nd grade teacher. "We talked about how we all have mixed emotions; we can be grateful but sad, relaxed but scared," said Jevitz. The heart maps were originally a project at the start of the year for students to tell more about their families, their interests and places they've travelled. The assignment was revived and revamped so teachers could gauge students' feelings.



Inspiring Instruction

In another example, Butler Junior High math teacher Michelle Milani adapted an in-class competition called Quad Challenge. She would post a math challenge online and different groups of students, or quads, would try to



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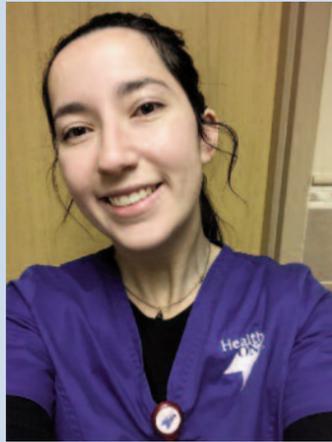
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ALUMNI

Where are they now?



Allison Shaker

Allison Shaker attended Brook Forest from K-5th grade and Butler for 6th and 7th grade. After moving away for 8th grade, she returned and attended Hinsdale Central, graduating a year early, after her junior year.

She attended College of DuPage for a year, then the University of Colorado, graduating in May 2019 with a nursing degree. Currently, Allison is a registered nurse on the neurological unit at Swedish Medical Center in Englewood, Colorado.

High School activities

At Hinsdale Central, I was on the swim team, club gymnastics, and involved with the guitar club, music camps, photography, charity runs, National Honors Society, Dean's List, Ski and Snowboard Club, Ecology Club, Habitat for Humanity, Suicide Awareness and Prevention Association.

Passion

I wanted to help people in under served communities and knew healthcare would be a universal and needed service regardless of social economics or location. In college, I went on a medical mission trip to Panama and fell in love with it. The people, the experience – it was so rewarding and I wanted to keep doing it. I have been a nurse for 7 months at Swedish Medical Center and am in love with it!

Favorite Brook Forest memory?

I loved all the shows! The band and choir concerts, the plays, the field trips! They were a great experience and unique to an elementary school.

Favorite BJH memory?

My favorite Butler memory was sock hops! They were so much fun, and I wish I appreciated them more then. All of my friends and I loved preparing for them, getting ready, and all the music and great experiences during the dances. They really are something you miss once you get out of school.

Favorite projects?

I really enjoyed the science labs at both schools. They were so fun, and I think that's what made me interested in pursuing science in college. I also really like the books we read: Shakespeare, *The Giver* and *Fahrenheit 451*. They had advanced concepts, and it's very cool that we were able to learn about those topics so young!

Butler legacy

Butler had a structure much like high school, with different periods and moving to different parts of the school for classes. It was like high school. Butler gave us the trust and autonomy to get to class on our own and introduced me to the concept of "This is your responsibility. If you don't do what you need to do, it will only affect yourself."

Saved mementos from Butler?

I saved my art projects! Looking at them now, they were actually really cool. I also saved my best friend's and my notebook. We would write notes to each other about our day and what was going on in our lives and would pass the notebook back and forth to each other. It was a great way to reflect on junior high. I love reading it now and remembering everything.

Shout outs?

Ms. Griffin (Kindergarten), Mrs. Jevitz (2nd grade), Mr. D. (BF art), Mr. Griffith (BF science), Mr. Sobak (Butler music), Mr. Marinier (Butler and HCHS social studies), were all memorable, amazing instructors. I still remember certain lessons they taught me, whether they were in the classroom or real life lessons.

Summer construction

Construction continues this summer at both schools in order to meet state life, health and safety guidelines as well as for preventative maintenance.

Interior doors and frames at Butler Junior High, which are original to the building, have been removed. They will be replaced with new doors installed with keyless door access readers. This will allow more secure entry to the classrooms and increased safety and security in the school. A similar project will be initiated at Brook Forest next summer.

In addition, at Butler Junior High, a new chiller will be installed to provide air conditioning for the two-story wing and multi purpose room. The original school building will be cooled with individual condensing units, and as a result, all window air conditioners will be removed.

At Brook Forest, all interior basement doors and frames will be replaced.

In addition, preventative maintenance work will continue at both buildings, as is the practice each summer. In addition, staff also conducted deep cleaning and preventative measures to prepare for staff members to retrieve their belongings and for staff to collect and box students' belongings.

The challenges and successes of e-Learning

Continued from page 1

beat the other groups in solving the problem. When Milani switched back and forth in the classroom's online space, called Google classroom, to monitor the groups, she found that she learned how students were thinking, what connections they were making and how they worked together.

Butler Junior High teacher Robbie Phillip said that he provided the same rigorous content as students had in school. He also offered a selection of enrichment activities and found time to connect with students on a personal level during class Zoom sessions. "Students are being brave and moving forward with their studies despite the pandemic," he said.

The challenges of getting e-Learning up and running were many. It was difficult for parents and educators alike to balance work and parenting. Curriculum needed to be redesigned for digital work, not every student had their own laptop or iPad, teachers needed to be trained in video conferencing and other tech and a lot of time was spent troubleshooting technology.

Additionally, teachers were spending more time

providing extra support for students. They were creating videos of themselves teaching a lesson, giving extra practice opportunities, finding online resources for help, creating one-on-one conferences and emailing and talking with parents. For many teachers, it meant 10-12-hour days.

Early on, say Butler educators, it was important to build structure and consistency. A daily calendar was established so families knew when children would be meeting digitally with their teacher and classes. A time to start and end the e-Learning day was set and office hours with teachers were created.

Each Monday was allotted for teachers to revamp curriculum and assignments for remote learning. Teachers also devised ways for students to work together. "Lots of our projects and assignments involved videos, online discussions, and shared documents," said 4th grade teacher Adam Nicholson. That meant students could also "see" each other in spaces other than class meetings.

Aiding the process was the incredible support of parents. "Teaching and learning are very complex processes and our parents did an amazing job," said Brook Forest Principal Dr. Chad Prosen. "Their

involvement truly indicates a partnership in learning," echoed Butler Junior High Principal Andrea Prola.

Throughout the process, families and students were asked to give feedback. As a result, more virtual conferencing with teachers was added, curriculum tweaked and small groups formed.

Teachers acknowledged that their top priority was to support students' emotional social health. "If there are gaps in learning, we're not worried; we will address that," said 2nd grade teacher Renee Tomita. Yet, teachers are seeing growth in unexpected ways.

"I'm seeing my students advocate for themselves more and become more resourceful, resilient, and self-reliant. They're taking more ownership of their learning," said Milani.

"We actually saw more resilience," said Tomita. "We saw students become more mature and work more independently than they have in the past," she said.

"We actually saw more resilience; we saw students become more mature and work more independently."

Students are the No. 1 reason these retiring educators loved their role

Jon Frink

33-year educator, 31 years at Butler Junior High

A science teacher known for his lively experiments, Frink has also served as club sponsor of the Science Fair, Science Olympiad and has coached soccer and track.

Peter Sompolski

33-year educator, 31 years at Brook Forest

A 4th grade teacher, Sompolski also served as a 5th grade teacher during his 31 years. He has led the math club, helped with the 4th and 5th grade musicals and hosted the Geo Bee. What he is perhaps most known for is the voice of Brook Forest, by leading the "Behavior Is Right" incentive program each Friday, calling down students to the office and leading the PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention System) celebrations.

Colleen Tarantino

35-year educator, 29 years at Brook Forest

A 4th grade teacher, Tarantino has taught grades 3-5 and was a special education teacher in grades K-5. She has been active on many District, school and Oak Brook Education Association committees and helped with many musicals.

Q: What gets you up in the morning?



Colleen Tarantino is pictured on the first day of her last year of teaching at Brook Forest.

JF: After all these years, I really enjoy seeing former students go on to be successful in all aspects of their lives, both personal and professional.

PS: It isn't just a cliché, I truly adore the children. As a morning

supervisor I get the privilege of greeting students as they exit the buses, and love getting to know each



Jon Frink is pictured teaching in his science classroom at Butler Junior High.

and every one. The hundreds of students I have taught throughout my years are all a part of me. And, the final bonus of my working at Brook Forest came 30 years ago when I was lucky enough to meet my soulmate Mrs. Sompolski.

CT: The best part is the students. I love watching them grow. It has been a pleasure to witness how they view the world and how their minds work. Children are kind and compassionate and soak up knowledge like a sponge.

Q: What change in education was most beneficial for students?

JF: The greatest change is how technology has changed the development and delivery of instruction.

PS: Changing our instructional model to the literacy workshop model has significantly increased students' engagement. Teaching a mini lesson that can be applied to students' self-selected books, is a gift to the children. This choice allows children to have buy-in to the subject matter and as a result buy-in to their reading, writing and questioning. When that transpires real reading and learning occurs at the highest levels.

CT: Choice-based learning has had the greatest impact on students learning. This allows learning to start from a point of passion and interest so students are engaged at a higher level.

Q: As you reflect on your career, what stands out?

JF: There have been a lot of great moments. A few years ago a former student who was heading off to college stopped by to say how something we had done in 6th grade science had inspired her interest in studying neuroscience.

PS: Teaching in the same school, in a beautiful little village, has been a great privilege. My favorite memories are when I connect with a former student and learn about the path he/she has taken. Past students have surprised me and popped in at Brook Forest just to say hello and have reached out through social media. I've also had my mind blown when I see former students as parents who have their own children at Brook Forest!

CT: When you can connect with a student you can understand who they are as a person. It is also so heart warming when you see a student connect to learning and they share that enthusiasm with you. It is also powerful when you see a student go out of their comfort zone and are met with success.



Peter Sompolski poses with students and a visiting sloth at the Brook Forest Reading Fair in February.

"Teachers like these who represent more than 100 years, are the reason why this District is the way that it is. They are truly amazing and will be missed."

- Ellen Wozny, OBFA president

Year-end student awards

A number of awards were presented during end-of-year events. Here is a listing of the awards and honorees.

John Vock Award

Presented for sportsmanship, leadership and academic achievement

Jenna Edmonds
David Cox

Carson Peele Award

Presented to members of the varsity basketball team who exemplify qualities of camaraderie, athleticism, competitor, leader, team player and worked to improve each practice and game

Isabella Jerich
Cristiana Sandoval
Omar Kaakaji

Julie Heinke Award

Commitment, determination, leadership, sportsmanship and concern for others

Carolina Brennan
Daniel Majzoub

OBEA Citizenship Award (8th grade)

Academics, service, school spirit, leadership, courtesy, sportsmanship

Hali Dib
Arjun Shah

OBEA Citizenship Awards (5th grade)

Positive, respectful attitude; dedication to schoolwork and extra-curriculars

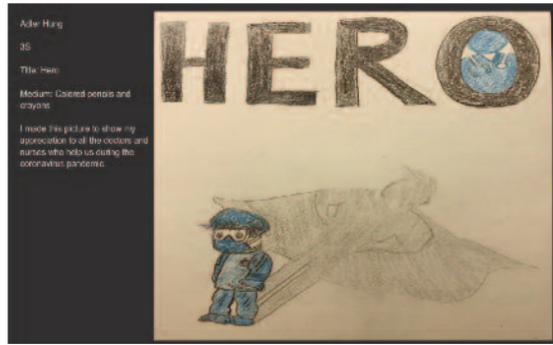
Lauren Bilshausen
Quentin Cuenca



Citizenship Awards from the Oak Brook Education Association were given to 5th graders (from left to right) Quentin Cuenca and Lauren Bilshausen and 8th graders Hali Dib and Arjun Shah.

A note to our readers

This is the last issue written and edited by Dr. Sandra Martin, who serves as business manager and editor of this newsletter, and Faith Behr, communications consultant. It has been a pleasure gathering and reporting the news of this wonderful school district. Thank you for reading!



For the virtual Art Show, 3rd grader Adler Hung drew a picture of a medical worker to honor first responders during the coronavirus pandemic.

Good News

Butler family creates and donates PPE



Butler 7th grader Maggie Krause shows off head units for personal protective equipment she helped make in her home.

When the Krause family was home due to COVID-19, they wanted to do something to help first responders.

T.J., a Butler parent and technology, engineering teacher at Maine South High School, used the schools' two 3D printers and the family's personal 3D printer and

created head units for the masks. They purchased the plastic shields and back strap and assembled the parts to complete the units.

Seventh grader Maggie, who attends Butler Junior High, helped with the preparations, production line and inspections.

"It felt good; I felt like I was helping out," she said. Though she hadn't yet used 3D printers in her STEM class at Butler, the problem solving focus in class was put to use. In all, the family (and Maine South) donated 200 completed face shields and 30 head units to Advocate Lutheran General Hospital.

Schools donate supplies and printer

Both schools donated unused supplies to Hinsdale Hospital. Science teacher Andrew Griffith gathered safety goggles, gloves, aprons and cleaning supplies that were on hand, but not used since school was not in session. "We wanted to help the medical people who are on the front lines," said Griffith. In addition, Butler Junior High loaned its 3D printer for the Hinsdale Library to make face shields for health care workers.

Virtual Art Show

Being confined to home due to COVID-19 didn't stop students from exhibiting their works in the Brook Forest Art Show. Students were asked to create a piece of art with whatever materials they had from home and then upload them to create a slideshow. They also included an artist statement. See one example at left. "Switching to choice-based art set the stage for this independent and creative exploration," said Brook Forest art teacher Mike Divelbiss.

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Art Board

Here we feature a sampling of recent student artwork. These works are by Butler Junior High students. The theme was to depict happy messages to convey positivity during remote learning.

Artists are (from l to r) Toral Bhatt, Asha Sarai and Rayjan Prakash's digital street art mural.



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