

Schools in Action!



JCMS NJHS students and Columbia Bank to present a check to Jefferson County Food Bank.

JCMS students raise funds to help feed families in need

Last month, Jefferson County Middle School students hosted a Halloween dance and haunted house to support their local food bank. It was one of their most well-attended dances, raising \$575 dollars for the Jefferson County Food Bank.

"The food bank is a big part of our community," said JCMS 8th grader Connor Comingore. "It helps a lot of families."

The dance was organized by the middle school's National Junior Honor Society, a group of about 20 students with grade point averages of 3.5 or higher. According to 7th grade science teacher and NJHS advisor Steve Cox, it's the students who come up with fundraising ideas and plan them.

"The kids really run the entire thing," said Cox. "We also had support from our neighbors at Columbia Bank. They donated an extra \$125 for a total of \$625."

The haunted house included a lot of surprise scares, a fog machine, a scary clown and a crawling robot.

"The haunted house brought in way more people to the dance," said T.J. Stout, grade 8. "We heard a lot of screams," added 8th grader Brook Delamarter.

In addition to the fun and screams, Principal White said he was proud of the students for their leadership.

"JCMS is truly blessed to have such amazing students that continue to find ways to help their community," said White.



JCMS 8th grade WEB leaders attended a PeaceJam leadership conference in October.

JCMS students attend leadership conference in Springfield

JCMS counselor Peter Hower is always looking for ways to help middle school students develop leadership skills and a broader world view. He recently took a group of student leaders to a one day leadership conference in Springfield, Oregon, called PeaceJam Northwest.

The PeaceJam Foundation is an international organization whose mission is to create young leaders committed to positive change in themselves, their communities, and the world through the inspiration of Nobel Peace Laureates who pass on the spirit, skills, and wisdom they embody.

WEB leaders who attended the PeaceJam conference heard speakers, attended workshops and participated in discussions about how youth can tackle big issues like racism and climate change. The students listened to a talk by Ed Little Crow, a Dakota elder and long-time activist for Native American rights and civil rights in general.

T.J. Stout, grade 8, said he learned a lot about the treatment of Native Americans and what they had to go through in the past.

"They also taught us about climate change and different things that affect our society," said Stout.

Heavenly Sierra, grade 8, said she liked talking with adults about being a teen.

"We talked about the pain that some teens have and the war we face every day and how we can handle it," said Sierra. "Things like family issues, bullying, deep depression and going home to one parent or no parents at all."

One topic that 8th grader Amy Melgarejo found especially interesting was racism.

"I learned how people try to say that racism is gone, but it's still going on," said Melgarejo. "You can even see it in school by who we hang out with at lunch."

On the bus ride home, Hower and the students talked about how they can help make the culture at school more welcoming and inclusive.

"We want to make sure people don't feel left out," said Sierra.

Hower said the WEB leaders will be talking more about things they can do at school to put what they learned at the conference into action.



Students in the JCMS AVID program take part in "I Like My Neighbors" team building exercise.

Students on track for college at JCMS

What does it take to get a middle school student on track for college? It takes a special teacher like Deseray Duncan. Duncan, who teaches English Language Development at Jefferson County Middle School, also coordinates a program called AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination). AVID is an elective class for students who might be the first in their families to graduate from high school or attend college. Students with a grade point average between 2.5 and 3.5, who take the AVID class, learn specific skills that will help them prepare for success in high school, college, and careers.

"Our goal is to work with students who are traditionally underrepresented in higher education," said Duncan. "We work with them on organization, note-taking and reading strategies that will help them be successful now and in the future."

Duncan explained that AVID students learn the Cornell method of taking and organizing notes that is commonly used at the college level. They also spend time setting goals, reviewing progress and tracking their grade point averages to understand where they are improving and where they need extra support.

"The community building that takes place in the AVID classroom is really huge," said Duncan. "The students become an AVID family where they work as a team, help each other out and become role models. It's amazing to watch their growth and progress in the program during the year."



JCMS Web leaders, who help 6th graders feel comfortable in middle school, will have their hand prints on the school wall in June when they graduate.

JCMS: A place where everyone belongs

Eighth grade students at Jefferson County Middle School are learning leadership skills while mentoring younger classmates as part of a program called WEB (Where Everyone Belongs). The WEB leaders buddy up with 6th graders at the beginning of the school year to show them around, answer questions and also meet with new students transferring to JCMS throughout the year. They also work with their younger classmates to help them with organization and time management.

"They are mostly worried about finding their classes and using the lockers," said Brook Delamarter, grade 8. "It's kinda fun because a lot of our siblings are in the 6th grade so we get to help them feel comfortable."

Connor Comingore explained that he remembers how the WEB leaders helped him get used to middle school and how important that was for him.

"I'm the first-born in my family and I didn't have older siblings to show me around when I got here," said Comingore. "It really helped me so I'm glad to be able to help the 6th graders."

The WEB program is led by JCMS counselor Peter Hower, who also finds other activities to help students to grow academically, socially and emotionally.

"One of my goals is to give kids opportunities to expand their leadership skills," said Hower.

WEB leaders will also be meeting with 5th graders to help them get used to the idea of starting middle school in September 2018.



JCMS Principal Simon White spends time in the classroom with students at JCMS.



JCMS Cleanup Crew volunteer their time to help keep the cafeteria area looking good.

December

- 1 MHS Drama presents ELF 7-8:30 pm
- 2 MHS Drama presents ELF 7-8:30 pm
- 5 Buff Elementary Winter Lessons Recital 6-7:30 pm
- 7 JCMS Winter Concert 7-9 pm
- 8 Madras Elementary Winter Concert 1-2 pm
- 9 4th Annual Holiday Gala 7-9 pm
- 12 Buff Elementary Winter Concert 12:45-2:45
- 13 Madras Elementary Winter Lessons Recital 6-7:30 pm
- 19 JCMS NJHS Induction Ceremony 6-6:30 pm
- 14 MHS Band Winter Concert 7-9 pm
- 24 Living Hope Christian Center Xmas Eve Service 10 am - Noon

PAC Calendar

December 21, 2017
through January 2, 2018
No School
Winter Break

Calendar

November

- 20-24 No School - Thanksgiving Break
- 27 School Board Meeting/7 pm

December

- 11 School Board Meeting/7 pm