



FRIDLEY HOMECOMING 2017

Fridley Public Schools celebrated its Homecoming Week on September 25-29, 2017.

Students showed off their school spirit all week by dressing according to daily themes. Tiger pride 'black & gold' Friday was easily the most popular. Students also enjoyed a 'fun lunch' on Thursday, where they could participate in various activities around the school during their lunch period.

FHS students concluded their school week with a pep fest,

filled with activities and a coronation. The seniors, once again, proved to be the most spirited, earning the 'spirit stick' for the second time this school year.

Other activities throughout the week included a powderpuff football game, student bonfire, and a pre-football game carnival.

The FHS varsity football team took home a win on Friday night, defeating St. Paul Central 14-6.



FHS HOMECOMING COURT



HC FOOTBALL GAME - FHS VS. ST. PAUL CENTRAL

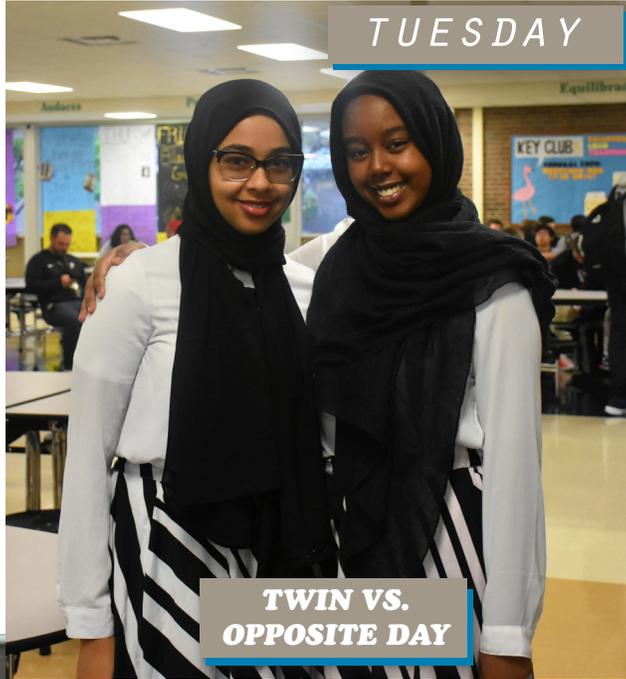


HAPPY HOMECOMING, TIGERS!



MONDAY

DRESS UP VS. DRESS DOWN DAY



TUESDAY

TWIN VS. OPPOSITE DAY



WEDNESDAY

WHERE ARE YOU FROM VS. WHERE ARE YOU GOING



THURSDAY

CLASS T-SHIRT DAY



FRIDAY

BLACK & GOLD TIGER PRIDE

STUDENT BONFIRE



POWDERPUFF FOOTBALL GAME



FPS Students GEAR UP for success



students had the opportunity to speak with representatives from various colleges and universities during their lunch hour

GEAR UP -- a program that prepares students to enter and succeed in postsecondary education

Through a partnership with **Hennepin Technical College**, the GEAR UP grant has been funding support services to the **Class of 2018** since 2012.



Walker is also strongly encouraging students to submit their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) early, an application process that opens on October 1. Additionally, the last week of October is Free Application Week, where many college and universities offer fee waivers. Walker said Fridley staff will be doing a lot with seniors to assist in submitting applications throughout the week.

In honor of National Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) Week, the Fridley Public Schools GEAR UP program hosted local college and university booths, as well as many fun-filled games and activities, from September 18-22.

“This week, we just want to get the ‘college-going’ culture up and going for the year,” Rebecca Walker, interim GEAR UP director said. “We’ve had various colleges everyday during lunch to come in and talk with students, give them information, and get them thinking and excited about college.”

In addition, students were able to sign up for their Federal Student Aid (FSA) ID which is used to log into U.S. Department of Education websites and is necessary when applying for financial aid. Students also shared their goals and dreams for the future on a ‘dream wall’ and participated in other activities, including a spinning wheel where students spun to answer questions regarding an aspect of college or GEAR UP.

GEAR UP is a federal grant initiative that partners with schools to offer support services to middle and high schools. The program is meant to prepare students to enter and succeed in postsecondary education.

The grant serves one grade level of students beginning in 7th grade and follows the cohort through high school graduation and their first year of college. Fridley Public Schools has provided services to students since 2012 through a partnership with Hennepin Technical College and will celebrate its graduating class at the end of this school year in 2018.

The grant program provides students with critical early college awareness and support activities like tutoring, mentoring, academic preparation, financial education and college scholarships which can help improve access to higher education for low-income, minority and disadvantaged first-generation students and their families.

Coming up in October is College Knowledge Month, a statewide effort that aims to prepare and support every graduating high school senior to apply for college.

Walker said the month will be busy with many GEAR UP programs, including a presentation from the Student Success Agency. The initiative is a virtual mentoring organization which will pair up 50 Fridley students with current college students or young professionals to offer them support and mentor them along their journey of applying to, getting into and going to college.

“We really want to help our students so they don’t have to worry so much about that financial obligation of applying to, and going to college,” Walker said. She added that there will be workshops available during parent-teacher conferences, where bank partners will be presenting on financial literacy and how postsecondary options are attainable for all students.

The class of 2018 has had numerous GEAR UP opportunities throughout their middle school and high school career and many are ready to take the next step in their educational journey.

“So now that our students are finally seniors, they are not only ready to enter college, but they are ready to succeed because they have the necessary skills in place and have been practicing them for so long,” Walker said.





FHS to FMS mentorship bridges gap for students

Although they are close in proximity, there are many differences between Fridley High School (FHS) and Fridley Middle School (FMS), which can cause a sort of disconnect for incoming freshmen.

According to Anthony Branitski, physical education teacher at FHS, there is a need for a sense of unity and ease of transition when middle school 8th graders take the leap into the high school.

Branitski has been working at FMS for the past 12 years and recently transferred to FHS for the 2017-18 school year. In an effort to bridge the gap for students, Branitski and FMS P.E. teacher Jason Kupcho are beginning the school year by giving his 9th graders an opportunity to mentor 8th and 5th graders at the middle school.

“I love giving kids mentorship

roles,” Branitski said. “They step up to the occasion every time.”

The 9th grade P.E. students are currently in a newly created class called “Better You” which focuses on self-care and social, emotional and mental health. The students created a four-day written plan to offer the middle schoolers information about the high school and words of advice.

“We started with ideas about academic success, including things that worked for them and other things that they learned the hard way,” Branitski said. “We also talked about the importance of friend choices and social media.”

The students also played games and had the opportunity to make connections and build friendships with the younger students. The last piece that the high schoolers shared with the middle school students was their



FHS freshmen had the opportunity to mentor FMS students and offer words of advice and information from a students’ perspective

top 10 reasons of why they are enjoying the high school.

“We really want our middle schoolers to feel excited about coming up to the high school,” Branitski said. “I think this was a great chance to have a buddy system where they can hear about all the exciting things that are happening here.”

He said he was very impressed by his high schoolers for step-

ping up and taking advantage of this leadership opportunity.

“They’ve really turned that corner of maturity,” he said. “They probably wouldn’t admit this, but I feel like it was a very empowering experience. We definitely want to keep looking for ways to bridge the middle school and the high school together.”



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-Anthony Branitski
FHS P.E. teacher





THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS



WE WANT OUR STUDENTS TO KNOW THAT IT'S OKAY TO TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH."



This informational presentation is the first of many mental health-related efforts that will be taking place throughout the school year.

"At the end of last year, we did a survey with our students on what they wanted staff to know," said Knutson. "A big thing we kept hearing was 'we need more information on mental health.'"

NAMI HIGH SCHOOL PRESENTATION ENCOURAGES MENTAL HEALTH CONVERSATIONS

In an ongoing effort to support student mental health awareness, Fridley High School partnered with the National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) to provide presentations on mental health to all students on September 19, 2017.

A speaker from NAMI Minnesota provided students with information on mental health awareness, when and where to get help as well as resources on mental illness. NAMI is the nation's

largest grassroots mental health organization that works with hundreds of local affiliates, state organizations and volunteers to raise awareness and provide support and education about mental health.

"We want our students to know that it's okay to talk about mental health," said Kelsey Knutson, a social worker at Fridley High School and organizer of the event. "We want to open up that conversation."

During teacher workshop week in August, Fridley Public Schools also hosted a NAMI training session for all staff to learn about the warning signs of mental illness and suicide risk and what to do in crisis situations.

Spanish Club contributes to earthquake relief

100% of proceeds go toward earthquake relief in Mexico

The Fridley High School Spanish Club recently held a fundraiser in an effort to raise money for victims of the September 19, 2017 earthquake in Mexico. To coincide with other homecoming activities, the club organized and sold tiger (high school mascot) tattoos during Homecoming Week.

organize this fundraiser since there are a number of students in Fridley High School who are from Mexico, and/or have family members that currently live in Mexico.

"We wanted to help and show them that we care about what happened," Latzka shared.

Spanish Club Advisors Emily Latzka and Elizabeth Winkelman said the club chose to

The effort also helped to raise awareness of the disaster and the need for aid.

The amount of support that the Spanish Club received from Fridley students was tremendous.



Spanish Club members and officers selling tiger tattoos in the FHS cafeteria during Homecoming Week.

"We sold out within 2 days," Latzka said. "Many students and staff were super generous and threw in extra money as a donation."

the Homecoming car smash. The proceeds will be donated through Project Paz where 100 percent of the money will be used directly for relief through their partnership with the El Paso Community Foundation and other partners in Mexico.

Nearly \$300 will be donated to the cause, combined with student council money from





FRIDLEY SCHOOLS FOUNDATION WALK-A-THON 2017



WE GOT OUR PAWS MOVING!

A sea of yellow marched around Commons Park in honor of the very first Fridley Schools Foundation Walk-a-thon on September 20, 2017. The Foundation launched the inaugural event to raise money to be used for student scholarships and innovation teacher grants in Fridley Public Schools classrooms.

President of the Fridley Schools Foundation Renee VanGorp said the event exceeded expectations.

“This was something brand new that we were trying,” VanGorp said. “And when the day came, there was perfect weather. It was so fun to see everyone in their black and gold t-shirts with such high energy. I would say it was a huge success for our inaugural event.”

The event raised nearly \$2,000 to put toward needs at Fridley

Public Schools. Additionally, the Fridley Lions Club and Nelson’s Cheese and Deli gave generous donations toward the cause.

The Fridley Schools Foundation is pushing to create more community events this year to raise additional funds for innovation grants.

“One of the reasons that we’re doing more fundraising this year is to raise money so our schools can apply for innovation grants to offer unique opportunities in the classrooms,” VanGorp shared.

If a teacher has a vision for their classroom, they are able to apply for grants to make their dream a reality through Fridley Schools Foundation donations. These classroom needs can include funding for a field trip, school supplies, technology devices or soft-



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-Renee VanGorp
FSF President



ware and more. These grants are meant to ensure equitable opportunities for all Fridley students, as well as promote the unlimited possibilities in FPS classrooms.

VanGorp said she is thankful to the entire Fridley community for stepping up to support the schools.

“I’m so thankful to everyone who participated,” VanGorp said. “There were a lot of peo-

ple behind the scenes, donating and helping with the event. We also had so much support from within the school with the faculty and staff. It was just such a great day for a walk.”

Coming in January is the Fridley Schools Foundation’s first Black & Gold gala. The event will feature a silent auction, dinner, and a live auction. Save the date now for January 25, 2018. Stay tuned for more details!



WALK-A-THON 2017



Over **\$2,000** was raised to be put toward **student scholarships** and **teacher innovation grants**





Bring on the pie!



The City of Fridley Senior Program hosted its annual Fall Kick Off Pie Social at the Fridley Community Center on September 21, 2017 to celebrate the beginning of the senior program fall season. On the pie-serving team was FPS Superintendent Peggy Flathmann, FPS Community Education Director Toni Craft and Senior Program Coordinator Connie Thompson.





SEPTEMBER EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

LINDSEY CRAWFORD

School Age Care Program Manager

Fridley Public Schools September Employee of the Month is Lindsey Crawford, School Age Care Program Manager for the Tiger Club at the Fridley Community Center.

Lindsey has quite the history with Tiger Club. As a child, she attended the program along with her two sisters. When she was a college student at University of Wisconsin-Stout, she spent a summer volunteering with the Tiger Club to fulfill some field work. Once she graduated in 2012, Lindsey was hired onto the Tiger Club team. She has been promoted multiple times since then. Effective July 1, 2017, Lindsey was promoted to her current position as the Program Manager for School Age Care.

Tiger Club Coordinator Kristi Sabby said Lindsey is very organized and terrific with details. Sabby describes her as a 'thinker,' who asks a lot of questions, and in return, offers comprehensive accounts of events.

Sabby added that Lindsey is incredibly compassionate. "She cares deeply about the kids and strives to create the richest environments and experiences for the children while they are at Tiger Club," Sabby shared. "She connects easily and naturally with parents. She is respected by and works collaboratively with her team, her peers, building staff, supervisors and administrators."

Lindsey recently completed her Master's Degree in Social Work through a collaborative program between St. Catherine's and St. Thomas University.

"Lindsey is an asset to Community Education and Fridley Schools and is very deserving of the Employee of the Month award," Sabby said.

Lindsey enjoys trying new things, outings and traveling with her boyfriend Brandon, her family and friends. She likes to play games, read books, watch Netflix and loves any and all Robin Williams movies.

Congratulations, Lindsey!



Tiger Club Coordinator Kristi Sabby and School Age Care Program Manager Lindsey Crawford



The Tiger Club team surprised Lindsey during the before school morning program on September 28.





GET TO KNOW . . .



The Fridley Area Learning Center has a new principal. Dr. Jason Bodey took over the building from Amy Cochran, who in turn replaced Matthew Boucher as the principal of Fridley Middle School. Boucher resigned from FMS to become the principal of Spring Lake Park High School at the end of the 2016-2017 school year.

Bodey started his career in education as a middle school science teacher in the Robbinsdale school district. There he learned a lot about teaching, as well as acquiring experience teaching in an International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Programme (MYP).

He served for two years as a middle school dean in Bloomington Public Schools, a middle school assistant principal for six years in the Minnetonka school district, and principal of an elementary school at Hopkins Public Schools for two years. Prior to com-

ing to Fridley, he served for one year as the principal of an all-kindergarten school in the St. Michael-Albertsville school district.

In his new role, Bodey oversees the ALC, the district's pre-school program, and Targeted Services – a program that provides additional academic support for students. When asked why he was interested in becoming the principal of Fridley ALC, Bodey explained that he had experience working with young and older students, and the ALC job appealed to him as he could use those experiences in one place.

“Our goal is to work with students and families so that the students can get back on track to graduation.”

“A lot of my experience blended really well with this position,” said Bodey. He added that he also knew people who had come to work in Fridley and had great things to say about the school district. At the ALC, Bodey said he has found a great team of dedicated teachers who care greatly for their students, and are passionate about



Jason Bodey
ALC PRINCIPAL

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*“The **ALC** is an alternative way and place to learn that meets and supports the unique needs of students.”*



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teaching and learning.

Bodey is excited about the options available to meet diverse student needs. He also wants to dispel the misconceptions that some may have about an area learning center.

Often, Bodey said, people think of the ALC as a place where the failing students, or those with problems go. “The ALC is an alternative way and place to learn that meets and supports the unique needs of students,” Bodey said. Depending on their educational needs, students can spend a year or two there, or a semester, or move back to the high school once they have met their credit requirements.

He added that the school is a little less traditional than a typical high school, yet still accomplishes the goal of guiding and supporting students’

through to graduation and successful postsecondary life.

“Our students receive personalized attention in a smaller setting,” he said, “and our goal is to work with students and families so that the students can get back on track to graduation.”

The ALC program also relocated this school year to a different building where students are learning in new classrooms. In its new location, the ALC is surrounded by several local businesses that ALC staff have begun developing partnerships to support their students with internships, part time employment for older students, and volunteer opportunities.

“We are on a bus line, and are also within a walking distance to several local businesses,” said Bodey. “We want to create opportunities for our

students to get real life work experience, and to give back to their community by volunteering.”

Bodey said that moving forward, his mission is to continue to look at innovative ways that support the diverse needs of their students, create partnerships that enhances student learning, and engage and work with families to ensure that students remain on track to graduate.

Bodey graduated from St. Cloud State University with a bachelor’s degree and received his master’s degree and principal licensure from St. Mary’s University. He earned his doctorate degree in school administration and leadership from St. Mary’s University in 2016. He and his wife Elyse and their five year old son Vance live in Hanover.

“We want to **create opportunities** for our students to get real life work experience, and to **give back to their community** by volunteering.”





GET TO KNOW • • •

JASON BICHLER

DIRECTOR OF BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

Jason Bichler has been working as the Director of Buildings and Grounds at Fridley Public Schools since April 2017.

Bichler previously worked in the St. Michael-Albertville School District where he held numerous positions. He had been working as the Building and Grounds Coordinator prior to coming to Fridley Public Schools. In his current position, Bichler oversees about 20 employees in his department.

He said he enjoys the challenge of the position and that every day is completely different than the other.

“It can be somewhat overwhelming once in awhile, but it definitely isn’t boring,” Bichler shared. “I need something like that to keep me on my toes. I really enjoy that aspect of the job.”

He credits his previous director Terry Zerwas at St. Michael-Albertville School District for teaching him valuable lessons while on the job.

“He was an awesome guy,” Bichler said. “I worked with him for a little over 10 years and he really taught me a lot. It was great to learn from somebody like that. I’m going to owe him for a long time.”

Bichler has a Business Management degree from St. Cloud State University with an emphasis in Human Resources.

Bichler is married to Darcy and has three daughters, Kyah, 23, Justyss, 13 and Trynitty, 10. His younger daughters are avid sports players, which takes up a lot of his time.

“My life pretty much revolves around kids sporting activities,” he said. “Justyss and Trynitty are both very big into softball.”

Between other activities including travel basketball and



musical practices, Bichler enjoys spending time with his daughters by watching sports games or traveling.

He said some of his favorite places to go are Disney World with his family, as well as Black Hills, SD on a guys trip nearly every summer.

MARIA ANDERSON

• • • NEW STAFF



Maria Anderson is the Nutrition Coordinator at Fridley Public Schools. In her position, she works on developing menus, standardizing and tasting recipes, promoting Farm 2 School initiatives and helping in the kitchens as needed.

Maria graduated from the College of St. Benedict for her undergrad degree and from St. Louis University, St. Louis, MO, for her graduate degree in pediatric nutrition. She is also a Registered and Licensed Dietitian. Prior to coming to Fridley Public Schools, Maria was teaching at the College of St. Benedict in the Nutrition Department for two years. She said she saw her current position as an opportunity to transition into school nutrition.

“I feel strongly that students and food and nutrition is just as important to education as a textbook. With hungry bellies and poorly fueled minds, learning just can’t be done,” Maria said.

On the weekends, Maria can be found running around outside with her dopey dog, Moose.

KRIS CARLSTON



Kris Carlston is the HR Coordinator at Fridley Public Schools. She gravitated toward her current position at Fridley Public Schools because she saw it as an opportunity to work for a smaller school district while covering a wider range of human resources responsibilities. She previously worked as an Employee Services Representative for 10 years at Anoka Hennepin District 11.

Kris has a Bachelor’s of Science Degree in Social Work from St. Cloud State University. She enjoys spending time with her family, going on motorcycle rides and trying new restaurants with her husband.