



Inside Track

A Model District Where Students Want To Be
Home of the Railroaders!



Seven publications' students visited the Lansing Center to attend the annual Michigan Interscholastic Press Association (MIPA) fall conference. The students attended various workshop sessions related to yearbook development, including writing, photography, editing, theme development, and more. They were able to return to the rest of the class and share the ideas and information to help us make an even better 2016 yearbook.



Our Lego Robotics team sponsored a clothing drive for a homeless shelter in Flint. The students had to come up with a community service activity as part of their upcoming competition. The students decided on the clothing drive completely on their own. They then had to decide how to advertise and collect clothes. The students picked a shelter that doesn't charge people in need. The goal for the drive was a 100 pieces of clothing. On the last day of the drive, bags upon bags entered the middle school. They are in the process of counting how many pieces of clothing they gathered. Thank you to the community for supporting our middle school team! We are proud of the Lego Robotics team for all their hard work and wish them the best of luck in their competition!

Huntington Bank Visits Middle School

Durand Middle School welcomed Huntington Bank into the 5th and 6th grade classrooms on November 17th. Huntington Bank came to present Teach Children to Save. Teach Children to Save (TCTS) is a national program—sponsored by the ABA Community Engagement Foundation—that organizes banker volunteers to help young people develop a savings habit early in life. It was developed by the American Bankers Association, several members of Congress participate in this program nationally, and the goal is all tied to the idea of learning to save at whatever point you are at in your life at that moment. Save for family, save for college, save to purchase things in the future, be proud of saving.



The marching band performed at the MCBA State Championships on Saturday, November 7. Qualifying for State Finals puts them in the top 12 of all bands in their classification (or Flight as it's called in marching band). The band finished in 10th place with their highest score of the season of 83.825. Many alumni said it was the best they had seen the band perform all season, and several others said it was the best performance from Durand they have seen in several years. The students spent hundreds of hours rehearsing and perfecting in preparation for this moment, and they should be commended for their hard work and dedication.

The band and choir will have their holiday concert on Wednesday, December 9 at 6:30 p.m. in the high school gym. We hope to see you there!

On Friday, November 13th from 4:00pm-6:00pm we had our first ever after-school "Movie Night". For \$5.00 students watched a movie in the gym, had pizza and a drink for dinner, and munched on popcorn during the movie. 181 students enjoyed the after school activity! A huge thank you to Mrs. Mitchell, the PTAC, parent volunteers, and Robert Kerr staff for a wonderful event. The next "Movie Night" is already being planned.



Once again the Burns Grange generously donated a new dictionary to all 3rd grade students at Robert Kerr. This has become an annual event, one which brings great joy to the third grade students as they receive their very own dictionary! Thank you Burns Grange for your continued support of Robert Kerr.

Student of the Month

The following students were chosen by staff members as Railroaders of the Month for November. Congratulations to 8th grader Maddison McMillin, 9th grader Jacob Sprague, 10th grader Grayson Fulbright, 11th grader Georgia Renouf, and 12th grader Gaven Ackerman. Congratulations!



The students at Bertha Neal Elementary participated in "Mustache Day" by bringing in non-perishable food items for our annual food drive. They will be collecting donations through November 30. All donations will be distributed locally.

Superintendent News

There is a little skip in our step and a bit of buzz surrounding the school community as Durand Area Schools, thanks to your very generous support, was able to pass our 6.4 million dollar no-mill bond request on November 3rd! On behalf of all of our students and staff, I would like to humbly say thank you for the positive turn out at the polls and with the number of supporting "yes" voters who made passage possible. For those who were hesitant to cast a "yes" vote, please be assured that we will very carefully and prudently apply the funds to our need areas of safety and security, technology, and energy efficiency.

As time moves forward and progress on the bond projects are taking place, the district will keep updated timelines and photos of work being completed on our website and Facebook page. We want the community to see how each of our bond projects and purchases impacts our schools, teachers, and students. Naturally, the questions now being asked are when we will begin to see the first tangible fruits from the sale of the initial bonds. After having met with our construction manager and architect, we have a general outline in place for what amounts to two phases of completing our projects

and purchases. A more specific outline will be presented at the December 14 board meetings with timelines included.

The first phase will consist of items that can be completed most immediately and prior to the 2016/17 school year. The main areas of completion will be a massive upgrade in technology for each of the buildings, specifically in the purchasing of computers for labs, classrooms, and office areas along with notebook devices depending on school needs. Additional technology money will be applied to updated camera systems for each building to add to supervision and school security. The other areas of emphasis in the next several months will be addressing some handrail safety issues at the football stadium, resolving the drainage areas surrounding the track, as well as re-paving of the access road. A need recently identified that we would like to address is to add some lighting along the access road for increased safety and visibility. This may be able to be added if bids come in favorably, but it was not a part of the bond proposal.

The second phase of our bond work will be done in the areas of new construction, mechanical and electrical upgrades, windows, roofing projects, and air conditioners replaced at the middle school. These bids for work would go out next year at this time in

order to achieve the best possible bids for projects. The reason to pursue a patient approach to these larger projects is that where we are in the current calendar, we wouldn't be in a good position to go through the bid process this spring and be able to get competitive bids in comparison to waiting until early fall. Our costs of project completion will be lower if we package our projects together where they can be completed in one time frame. This also allows us to be more thorough, rather than being rushed to put together our plans.

This is a very exciting time to be a part of the Railroader community. Personally, I've been utilizing this forum to pass along bond information so that everyone was fully informed of the district's needs. I'm now looking forward to not only reporting progress, but also sharing some of the other exciting curricular and instructional news that is happening in our buildings. Until then, on behalf of our entire school community, a big thank-you to all of the Durand community for supporting your schools.

Sincerely,
Craig McCrumb
Superintendent, Durand Area Schools