



September 2022



The BRIGHT SIDE



In Memoriam

Eastern High School lost two of its educational greats over the summer. It is with great sadness that the district acknowledges the passing of Eleanor (Ellie) Doersam and Tyler Blakslee both of whom had an immeasurable impact on the Lansing School District and those families that call Lansing home.



Eleanor Doersam

October 3, 1929 - August 22, 2022

Eleanor Doersam had a 39 year association with the district and served as the first female principal in the district at Eastern High School in 1983. A founding member of both the Eastern High School Athletic Hall of Fame, and the Eastern High Foundation, Doersam's legacy has both depth and breadth. "She encouraged and inspired both with fire and a touch of a feather," said current Eastern Principal Marcelle Carruthers who also remembered that Doersam "had expectations for every Quaker to know that greatness lives in all of them and to walk in that greatness." Her presence in the district will be missed but her legacy will forever live in the generations of Quakers she has touched.

To read her obituary or leave a tribute, click [here](#).



Tyler Blakslee

July 24, 1977 - July 23, 2022

Tyler Blakslee was a phenomenal educator at Eastern High School where he was well loved by both students and staff from 2005 to 2020. During his tenure with the district he educated hundreds of students as an English Language Arts teacher, and was recognized as "Teacher of the Year" in his time. He also taught Diploma Programme level Film Studies and was the Quiz Bowl advisor. If that wasn't enough, Blakslee also founded and advised the Teenage Werewolves Horror Film Fiend Club, an Eastern school club whose numbers rose into the thousands when it moved online. His sense of humor, style, and energy impacted all who had the pleasure of knowing him. He will be truly missed.

To read his obituary or leave a tribute, click [here](#).

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New Principal and Administrator Appointments



Danielle Bowden Principal, Mt. Hope STEAM

I am looking forward to impacting young lives during their educational journey. I desire to connect with the Lansing community and be a service to all I encounter. I look forward to working and growing with my Mount Hope STEAM family (staff, community, parents and students). I am excited and ready to create a safe, socially healthy and academically inclined learning environment for all staff and students.

I BELIEVE IN MOUNT HOPE STEAM!

Julie Colleen Ferguson
Principal, Averill New Tech

I have been in the field of education for many years as a teacher, school leader, and curriculum developer/manager. I have had the opportunity to work in urban, multicultural, and bilingual environments. I gained my MPA with a concentration on Educational Leadership from the University of Michigan.

I believe every child has unlimited potential and is capable of greatness. I look forward to working with fellow educators in Lansing Public Schools to support our students as they achieve their greatness.

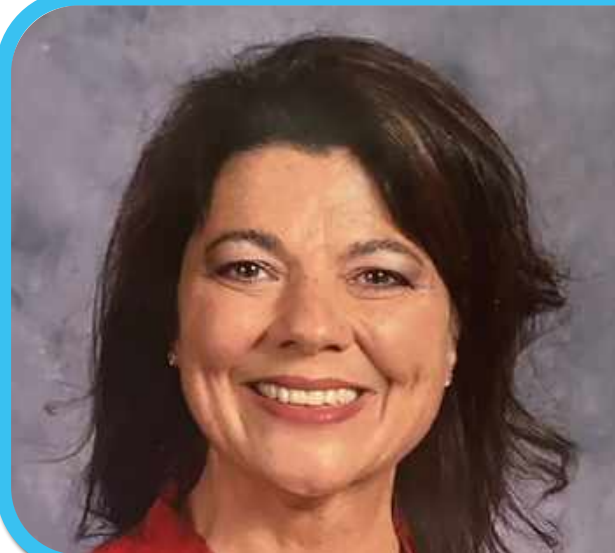


Heather Guerra

Assistant Director for Instruction | PreK-3

This school year will be my 23rd year in education. I am passionate about education and believe that all students can learn and achieve at high levels. I have experience as a K-8 teacher, an instructional coach, assistant principal, and building principal. I am looking forward to utilizing my learning from each experience to focus on the success of our students.

Personally, my husband and I have been married for 25 years and have 3 wonderful children. Nick is 25, Lily is 22, and Luke is 19. Our family enjoys spending time outdoors together.



Jill Kolar
Principal, Post Oak Academy

This being my 29th year in the Lansing School District, I am looking most forward to being part of an AMAZING group of educational leaders! Lansing School District has shown itself to be innovative and committed to the continuous betterment of our students, our faculty, and our community. I am very honored to be a part of that and hope to continue its legacy.



Sharon Hampton-Madyun, Ed.S.
Principal, Attwood New Tech

It is with great excitement and enthusiasm that I join the Lansing School District.

I am most looking forward to working with the talented and experienced staff at Attwood. The students are going to have an incredible year of learning and growth.



Adam Hartley
Executive Director for Alternative Education

Married to my wife for 29 years with three children and a grandchild on the way. Started my career in Flint as an elementary teacher and was a building principal in Flushing Schools and Birmingham Public Schools. Was assistant superintendent for Instruction in Swartz Creek for four years before being the superintendent for Fenton Area Public Schools the past six years. I am excited to join a team of dynamic leaders to help create a culture of learning within Lansing!



Nicole Millsap
Director of Career and Technical Education (CTE)

As the newly appointed Director of CTE, I am most looking forward to working in an environment that helps students see their "why." When you walk into a CTE classroom, you are met with hands-on learning. Instruction is guided by real-world problems and applications. Connections to local mentors and business are made. Students are not only expanding their technical skills but they are also developing soft skills that will aid them in whatever industry they choose. This is the type of learning that excites me, and I look forward to supporting the students and staff at the Hill Center this upcoming year and beyond.



Angie Morris
Principal, Riddle Elementary

I am a proud graduate of the Lansing School District and Michigan State University. During my tenure in the district I have had the privilege of serving in many capacities. I am looking forward to an outstanding year and growing with the Riddle community as I guide them on this amazing educational journey!

Go Rhinos!!



Nicole Namy, Ed.D.
Director of Special Populations

I began my career teaching and coordinating federal programs focused on youth programming and family literacy in the Metro-Detroit area. I later transitioned to work in international education at Michigan State University. While at MSU, I pursued my doctorate in Education Leadership. I am passionate about understanding how to develop meaningful and equitable learning that supports education in the 21st century as influenced by my own immigration and integration into US education systems. I was born and raised in Lebanon and started my academic journey in the Lansing School District at Lewton Elementary.

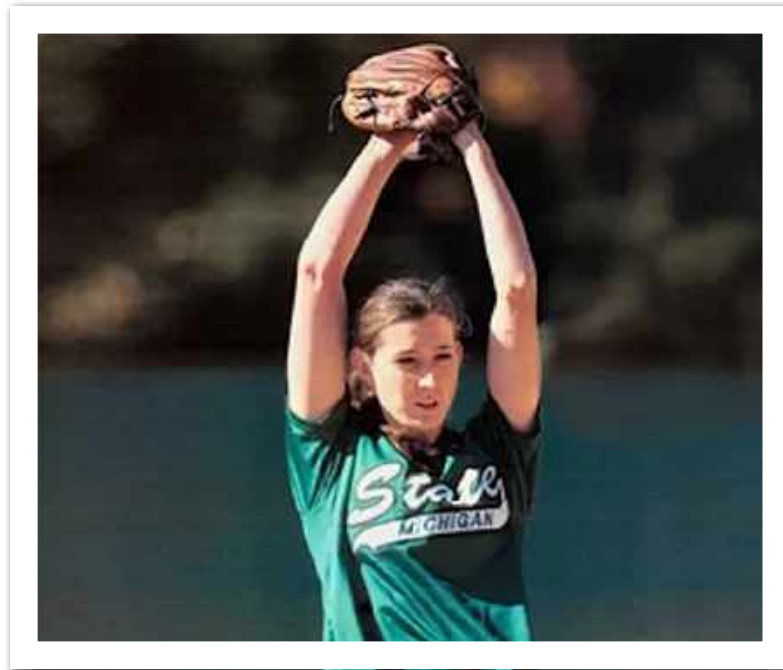


Yvonne Thomas
Director of Instruction

My husband and I will celebrate 23 years of marriage this month. We have three children, Nautica (28), Sydnie (20) and Josiah (16). We have three grandchildren, Amianah, Elijah and Jeremiah. We enjoy camping, reading books and watching movies. Occasionally, you might find us jumping on the trampoline. I absolutely love a bonfire.

I'm looking forward to working alongside each team to enhance the learning of the students in this district.





Everett Grad Inducted Into Greater Lansing Sports Hall of Fame

Everett High School graduate and softball all-star, Rachel Turney Justice, was inducted into the Greater Lansing Sports Hall of Fame in recognition for her exemplary pitching career in the early 2000's. She was among seven individuals and three teams, including the 2000 and 2001 Everett girls' basketball teams, to be inducted during the July 2022 ceremony.

"It still hasn't fully processed," said Turney Justice. "It was such an overwhelming night, and it was really amazing to see all my old coaches and teachers."

Turney Justice played basketball and volleyball during high school, but she is most known for her achievements on the softball field. She was an All-State pitcher during her junior and senior years at Everett and still holds Everett's record for wins, strikeouts, and career earned run average. "Rachel was motivated with everything she did," said Ben Billings, teacher and coach at Everett High School. "She had a great attitude, all of her teachers loved her and she was an incredibly hard worker."

Turney Justice continued her softball career during her freshman year at Lansing Community College (LCC) where she rounded out the year with a 35-0

record. The next year she transferred to Michigan State University (MSU) where she had the best team ERA for two seasons and ended her softball career with 296 total strikeouts. She also won the team MVP award and numerous Big Ten Pitcher awards while playing for MSU.

"When I was in high school, I played because it was fun and I had wonderful experiences, but I had a lot of great coaches who gave me confidence that a softball career in college was also possible," said Turney Justice.

Turney Justice graduated from MSU with a degree in chemistry and worked in the pharmaceutical industry. She later went back to her alma mater and earned a master's and doctorate degree in nursing. She currently has an administrative role with Sparrow Health System.

Turney Justice's advice for those who hope to become accomplished athletes is to "do your best, work hard, and be kind to people along the way."

Congratulations, Rachel, for receiving this honor in the Lansing Hall of Fame.



Everett Girls Basketball Teams Recognized

Two Everett girls' basketball teams were inducted into the Greater Lansing Sports Hall of Fame for taking home back-to-back state titles in 2000 and 2001. Both Everett girls basketball teams, along with the 2000 Lansing Community College (LCC) Softball team, and seven individuals received special honors and recognition at the ceremony which happened in July.

"This is terrific for the Everett women and the Lansing School District," said Christopher Henderson, Lansing School District Athletic Director. "It's a great tribute to the positive power of athletics."

After a strong five-year run that included three state championship games, and two state championship wins, the girls' basketball teams were widely recognized as the best in the state. Lansing residents look back on this series of wins as a special time where the entire region had its eyes on the Everett girls' basketball team.

Congratulations to both teams of Everett alumnae for this exceptional honor!





Dwight Rich Student Competes in National NBA Math Hoops Tournament

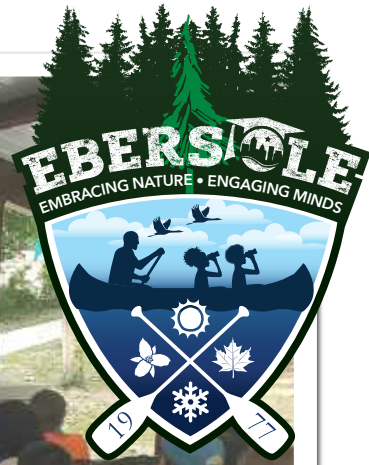
NBA Math Hoops is a game that integrates math and basketball so students can have fun while practicing fundamental math skills. Nhat Tran, a 5th grade student at Dwight Rich, qualified to play in this summer's NBA Math Hoops National Tournament in Philadelphia.

Students begin the game by drafting a team using real player statistics. They take turns solving math problems to determine which player has the best chance of making a shot. There is also a digital version of the game where students can unlock players as they advance.

"To be selected, a student must show GREAT sportsmanship, play at least 25 games, complete the 10 curriculum pieces and have a teacher recommendation," said Robyn Seelye, Tran's 4th grade teacher who attended the tournament with him and his father.

Tran was also able to explore the city, tour the practice facility of the Philadelphia 76ers and meet the creator of the game, Tim Scheit. At the end of the weekend, students competed for the title of Champion. Congratulations to Nhat Tran for being selected to compete!

For more information or to sign up for training camp, click [here](#).



READ Grant Hosts Author Visit at Ebersole Center

Over the summer, the READ Grant (Read, Explore, and Discover) hosted Michigan author Kelly J. Baptist for an evening program at the Ebersole Environmental Education Center's "Color Me Wild" Camp. About 50 4-6th grade students participated in the program in Ebersole's brand-new outdoor pavilion. This was one of several READ grant events and book distributions held for summer students in the district.

Baptist told the students that she began writing stories "as soon as she could write" – including persuasive notes to her parents – but was first published in 2015. She won that year's "We Need Diverse Books" short story contest, published in the anthology "Flying Lessons and Other Stories." The main character in her story became the center of her first full-length middle grade novel, "Isaiah Dunn is My Hero."

She has since published a picture book and two more novels, the newest of which, "Isaiah Dunn Saves the Day," is set for release this month. Kelly held the student's attention as she shared stories about the writing life, engaged with questions, and read a section of "Isaiah Dunn is My Hero" at the campfire. Students were excited to receive a signed copy of her book. The READ Grant plans to bring her back this month for an author event at several 4- 6th grade schools over several days.

Baptist resides in southwest Michigan and is employed as a Social Emotional Learning Interventionist for Benton Harbor Public Schools. Thank you Kelly, for your commitment to young writers, both in and out of your district!

Stay tuned for information about this month's visit.



Thank You, West Orthodontics!

Willow Elementary School would like to thank West Orthodontics, located in Dewitt, for the generous donation of school supplies and other goodies to help get the school year off to a great start.



Ingham Student Art Exhibit

See it live through April 2023 at the Lansing Art Gallery & Education Center



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