

District 303 E-NEWS

 St Charles District 303  @StCharlesD303  @StCharlesD303

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Contact us!

November 3, 2023



Showing Gratitude for Transportation Staff

October 22 was Illinois Bus Driver Appreciation Day and students and staff alike showed appreciation to the wonderful individuals who ensure students get to and from school safely.

Davis and Richmond students celebrated Bus Driver Appreciation Day by giving each bus driver a wonderful "Student Delivery Specialist" travel mug filled with sweet treats and thoughtful notes. The Wasco Spirit Club worked with the Bus Buddies to draw and write notes and posters to give to the bus drivers thanking them for all they do, and gifted them Wasco spiritwear.



Recently, the *School Transportation News* publication received nominations for its [2023 Rising Stars](#) feature. Tracey Alsup, Commercial Driver's License Trainer and Bus Driver, was nominated as a [2023 Rising Superstar](#) by District 303 Safety Manager, April Miller.

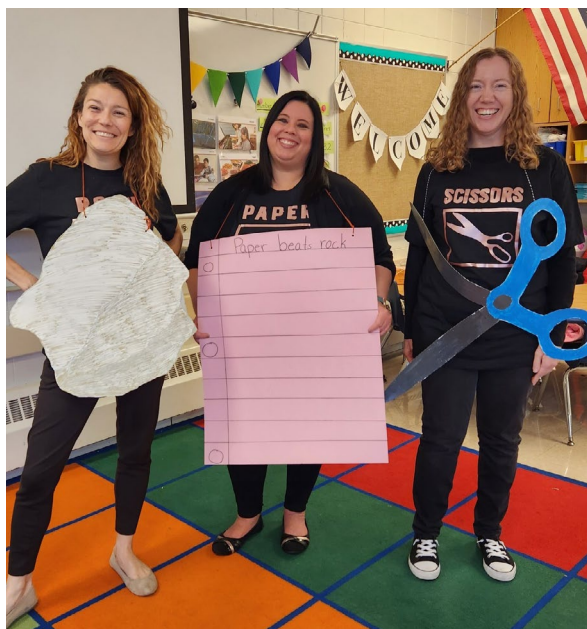


"Tracey is such a dedicated school bus driver and is always willing to help or take on extra," expressed Miller. Tracey is a long-time CDL trainer for District 303 with over 23 years of service. With a team player attitude and positive outlook, Tracey works closely with other transportation staff and provides them with training and tools to help them be successful. Her flexibility and willingness to work with others has allowed her to be successful in her roles and has made her an essential member of the driver training program.

For the past eight years, *School Transportation News* has requested nominations of student transporters who are displaying leadership or innovation in their local school bus operation, but who may have not received the public or industry-wide recognition that they deserve. This year, the magazine received over 50 nominations, with 10 of those individuals selected to be featured in their October issue.

Halloween

Celebrations in
District 303



D303 United Athletes Earn Top Places at Sectional Bowling Tournament

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On October 15, D303 United athletes competed in the Special Olympics Illinois Sectional Bowling Tournament and had some outstanding results.

Anderson Elementary student, Brogan Backer, earned a Gold Medal, qualifying him to compete at the Special Olympics Illinois State Tournament on December 2 in Peoria. Earning silver medals were Joshua Harman and Kailey Patterson from Thompson Middle School, and Anthony Wollak from Corron Elementary; and earning bronze was Grant Catizone from Thompson Middle School. Congratulations to all student-athletes!



Brogan Backer (Anderson Elementary), State Qualifier



Joshua Harman



Kailey Patterson



Anthony Wollak



Grant Catizone



Highlights from the Illinois Report Card

District 303 is pleased to announce high performance marks from each of our schools as part of the annual Report Card from ISBE. The Report Card, published by ISBE on October 30, provides a snapshot of academic achievement, student and teacher information, and financial data from the 2022-23 school year.

View District 303 highlights from the Report Card and access the complete report [here](#).

Author Shares Love of Coding



Children's book author Ruth Spiro visited Lincoln and read her newly released book, "How to Explain Coding to a Grown-Up." This coding book is the first in a series of four and seeks to empower others to share their knowledge and expertise with the world.

Spiro shared photos of her family, pets, books, and experiences as an author. She also talked about her writing process, from the countless hours conducting research, which has involved taking long walks and chewing different flavored gum, to the time spent editing and touring. As the author of 30 books, she's very familiar with the editing process and the need for revisions and changes to her work. She left students with the message that it's okay to make mistakes, learn from them, and grow, and that they too can become experts in anything if they learn and work hard.

Check out the Community Backpack

Learn about local events, community organizations, and activities throughout the school year.

[CLICK HERE](#)

Bell Graham Reporters Interview Veterans

For several years, Bell-Graham Elementary has partnered with the St. Charles Veterans center to learn more about the veterans through interviews. With the assistance of Vietnam War veteran Rich Zawislak, LRC Director, Peter Vander Bleek, and fifth-grade student reporters visited the center and interviewed three U.S. Army Veterans for this year's video presentation for the school's upcoming Veterans Day ceremony.



Students met with Dee Simmons (Vietnam Vet, Curren Honor Flight Chicago Ambassador); Dennis Wambangco (Veteran of the War in Afghanistan, and district parent); and Jake Wyatt (Vietnam Veteran, Retired Colonel). The students asked about their motivations for serving and their experiences, and learned about the emotional difficulties the veterans faced in leaving their families behind, while carrying the burden of the uncertainty of war. They all expressed that no matter when or where they served, they had to make big adjustments to resume their civilian life.

They also shared that the best way to honor veterans can be as simple as thanking them for their service, or following their lead into a life of service to one another.. Serving others can mean being involved in the community, showing gratitude, and even getting involved in veterans' causes and organizations, like the St. Charles Veterans Center and Honor Flight Chicago.

Following a long tradition, Bell-Graham 5th graders will lead the school's November 10 ceremony honoring veterans. It will include an acknowledgement of all the guest veterans, a slideshow presentation, poems and songs presented by the students, and coffee with the veterans and their families. Fifth graders along with the Cub Scout Pack and Girl Scout Troop, The B-G PTO, and teachers all work together to accomplish the feat of honoring veterans in the best way possible. The Veteran Interview Presentation video will be shown in class after the ceremony.



Vibrant Hispanic Heritage Month Celebration at Fox Ridge



To conclude Hispanic Heritage Month, Fox Ridge students in the Bilingual classroom embraced their culture and celebrated by dressing in colorful and traditional attire. The vibrant and culturally rich celebration showcased the diversity and beauty of Hispanic cultures.

"It was a heartwarming sight to see our students coming together to celebrate our heritage and express our pride in our roots," said Veronica Black-Dreyer, Early Childhood Bilingual Blended Teacher at Fox Ridge School.

Throughout the day, students engaged in discussions about various Hispanic traditions and customs from different countries, gaining a deeper appreciation for the rich tapestry of cultures within the Hispanic world. Laughter, learning, and camaraderie filled the air as students and staff celebrated in the spirit of inclusivity and diversity.

"It was a day filled with fun, education, and the joy of honoring our heritage," Black-Dreyer added.



Early Release Dates & Times for the 2023-2024 School Year



All Grade Levels (Pre-K-12).

Early Release Days

August 30

September 27

October 25

November 29

January 24

February 21

March 20

April 24

High School Early.

Release Days

Every Wednesday

AM Early Childhood: 9:00 - 11:05 a.m.

PM Early Childhood: 12:05 p.m. - 2:10 p.m.

AM Kindergarten: 8:00 - 10:30 a.m.

PM Kindergarten: 11:40 a.m. - 2:10 p.m.

Transition: 7:45 a.m. - 1:10 p.m.

Elementary School: 8:00 a.m. - 2:10 p.m.

Middle School: 8:40 a.m. - 2:52 p.m.

High School: 7:20 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

District 303 high school students from Compass Academy, St. Charles East and North toured local manufacturing facilities on October 25 as part of Manufacturing Month. District 303 is one of multiple area school districts that has teamed with the St. Charles Industrial Committee to introduce students to a variety of manufacturing careers while connecting them with local companies, their products and economic impact to the region.



Students had the opportunity to tour AJR, Tek-Pak, Hoffer Plastics, Lakeview Precision Machining. At Tek Pak, Compass and North students learned about the variety of plastic materials manufactured for packaging. Pat Conley, Senior Manufacturing Engineer with over 30 years of industry experience, guided students through the facility, provided valuable information about the industry, and discussed the company's efforts related to environmental sustainability. He also answered student questions about the educational background and skills needed in the field.



"This is a very team-oriented business. You have to collaborate with individuals to find the best way to get to the end product," explained Conley.

Students were intrigued by the manpower still required for certain machines, including the operation of a complex robotic arm, and how important the sterilization process is in packaging.

The Manufacturing Month Panel discussion, moderated by Dr. Todd Stirn, was held at Compass Academy on October 26. It featured speakers from various manufacturing stakeholders who discussed career and educational opportunities for students interested in careers in the engineering, manufacturing, and industrial space.

Manufacturing Month provides an opportunity to highlight the industry's many contributions to the state and local community. The Industrial Committee develops and strengthens the relationships between the industrial businesses, educational community, government and the entire business community as a means to attract and retain industrial business to St. Charles. Annually, the Committee's key initiatives include Manufacturing Month tours in October and the facilitation of the Peter Schwartz Memorial Scholarship.





DISTRICT 303 IS HIRING BUS DRIVERS AND ASSISTANTS!



- > **Starting pay:**
Drivers: \$22.86 | Assistants \$18.75
- > **All drivers are guaranteed 6 hours per day and are eligible for insurance and pension**
- > **Obtain your CDL – District 303 will train qualified candidates who want to obtain their Commercial Driver's License**

Apply Online:
district.d303.org/employment

Call: 331-228-5180

Visit our Transportation Office:
901 S. Peck Rd., St. Charles, IL

Planning Well Underway for 4th Annual D303 March Book Madness

The 16 books have been chosen for the 2024 March Book Madness contest by the District 303 elementary LRC Directors in collaboration with the St. Charles Public Library and Townhouse Books of St. Charles. With students and staff alike, this event is a highlight of spring in our elementary schools.

Through spirited debate and discernment, 16 titles were chosen on October 27 from more than 70 suggestions from district teachers and librarians, St. Charles Public Library staff, and Townhouse Books staff. While these titles are now known by the committee, students and staff will have to wonder until the titles are revealed in late February.



Back Row, L to R: Kristin Kaye (Munhall), Melissa Bradley (Davis), Chris Skoglund (Corron), Melissa Mejewski (Anderson), Kate Boyle (SCPL), Kelly Stulgate (SCPL). Front Row, L to R: George Nassis (Lincoln and Fox Ridge), Peter Vander Bleek (Bell-Graham), Keri Furlong (Wasco), Sarah Marcheschi (Townhouse Books), Brittany Brandenburg (Richmond), Renee Ignoffo (Ferson Creek), Lindy Lorenz (Norton Creek), Eilis Corcoran (SCPL). Not pictured: Shannon Drew (Wild Rose).



random
acts
matter



COMMUNITY COAT DRIVE

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4th
10:00 AM – 1:00 PM

ST. CHARLES NORTH HIGH SCHOOL GRAVEL LOT
(Located on the north side of Red Gate Road)

We Need Your Help Keeping Our Neighbors Warm This Winter!

Collecting Gently used & Clean or NEW:

- Winter Coats
- Hats
- Gloves
- Scarves
- Backpacks

Women's: Small, Medium, Large

Men's: Large, XL, XXL

Children's: All Sizes

Benefitting: Juvenile Justice Center, Tri-City Health Partnership, CAAN, LightHouse Recovery,
KC Veterans Assistance, KC Jail Corrections, Tri-City Family Services, Homeless Shelters, Salvation Army

No Act of Kindness is Too Small

McKinney-Vento Children— Who are they?

McKinney-Vento eligible children are those who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime abode. In general, children or youth living in motels, transitional housing, shelters, the street, cars, abandoned buildings, and other inadequate accommodations may be considered eligible for McKinney-Vento services. This includes, but is not limited to, the following groups:

Doubled-up Children	living with another family due to lack of a permanent residence
Children in Shelters	including transitional living programs
Children Living in Motels	due to lack of alternative adequate living situation
Migratory Children	if accommodations are not fit for habitation
Runaways*	children who have left home and live in a shelter or inadequate accommodations, even if parents are willing to provide a home
Lockouts*	children whose parents or guardians will not permit them to live at home

- *These two categories are Unaccompanied Homeless Youth (UHY), child not in the physical custody of their parent or court-ordered guardian and lack a fixed, regular and adequate abode.*

McKinney-Vento Children— What are their rights?

The Education for Homeless Children and Youth program, as part of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act ensures eligible children have the right to:	
Choice of School	McKinney-Vento Eligible children may attend their school of origin (school last attended or school attended when child lost permanent housing) or attend the school that serves their temporary living situation. Their Caregiver makes the choice.
Immediate Enrollment	even if medical or other records, birth certificates, transcripts, cannot be produced at time of enrollment
Transportation	if requested, transportation must be provided
Preschool	priority consideration to preschool programs for eligible youngsters
Free Lunch & Fee Waivers	categorically eligible for free lunch
Access to remote learning	including meals, devices and WIFI access
Supplemental tutoring	if needed

If you think you might qualify for McKinney-Vento services please contact your school social worker or the district McKinney-Vento Liaison, Dr. Cindy Ruesch at 331-228-6738, cindy.ruesch@d303.org.

For more information you can access the contact information for your local Regional McKinney-Vento liaison at <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Subgrant-Liaison-Contact-List.pdf>

Niños McKinney-Vento – ¿Quiénes son?

Los niños elegibles para el McKinney-Vento son aquellos que carecen de un domicilio nocturno fijo, regular y adecuado. En general, niños o jóvenes que viven en moteles, en hogares de transición, en refugios, en las calles, en los carros, en edificios abandonados, y cualesquiera de otras acomodaciones inadecuadas pueden ser considerados elegibles para los servicios de McKinney-Vento. Esto incluye, pero no se limita a, los siguientes grupos:

Niños duplicados o agrupados	<i>viviendo con otra familia debido a la falta de una residencia permanente</i>
Niños en refugios	<i>incluyendo los programas de transición de vivienda</i>
Niños viviendo en moteles	<i>debido a la falta de una situación de vida adecuada alternativa</i>
Niños migrantes	<i>si los alojamientos no son aptos para ser habitados</i>
Fugitivos/Que han abandonado su hogar*	<i>niños que han abandonado su hogar y viven en un refugio o alojamientos inadecuados, incluso si los padres están dispuestos a proporcionarles un hogar</i>
Bloqueos/Cierres*	<i>los niños cuyos padres o guardianes no les permiten vivir en casa</i>

- *Estas dos categorías son jóvenes sin hogar no acompañados (UHY por sus siglas en inglés), niño(a) que no está en la custodia física de su padre o guardián ordenado por la corte y carecen de un domicilio nocturno fijo, regular y adecuado.*

Niños McKinney-Vento – ¿Cuáles son sus derechos?

<i>El programa de educación para niños y jóvenes sin hogar, como parte de la Ley de Asistencia a los Desamparados de McKinney-Vento asegura que los niños elegibles tienen derecho a:</i>	
Su elección de escuela	<i>Los niños elegibles para el McKinney-Vento pueden asistir a su escuela de origen (a la última escuela que asistieron o la escuela a la que asistieron cuando el niño(a) perdió su hogar permanente) o asistir a la escuela que sirve a su situación de vida temporal. Su cuidador toma la decisión.</i>
Inscripción inmediata	<i>incluso si los records médicos u otros records, actas de nacimiento, expedientes, no pueden ser producidos en el momento de la inscripción</i>
Transporte	<i>si se solicita, se debe de proporcionar transporte</i>
Preescolar	<i>consideración prioritaria a los programas preescolares para los jóvenes elegibles</i>
Exención de cuotas y almuerzo gratuito	<i>categoricamente elegible para el almuerzo gratis</i>
Acceso al aprendizaje a distancia	<i>incluyendo alimentos, dispositivos, y acceso a internet</i>
Tutoría suplementaria	<i>si lo necesita</i>

Si crees que calificas para los servicios de McKinney-Vento, por favor, contacta al trabajador(a) social de tu escuela o a la persona de contacto del Distrito para el programa McKinney-Vento, la Dra. Cindy Ruesch al 331-228-6738, cindy.ruesch@d303.org.

Para más información, acceda a la información de contacto de su enlace regional local de McKinney-Vento en <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Subgrant-Liaison-Contact-List.pdf>

Upcoming School Board Meetings

November 6
Special Business Services Meeting - 5:30 p.m.

November 13
School Board Meeting - 6:00 p.m.

November 27
Business Services Committee Meeting - 5:00 p.m.
Learning & Teaching Committee Meeting - 5:30 p.m.

December 11
School Board Meeting - 6:00 p.m.

December 18
Learning & Teaching Committee Meeting - 5:30 p.m.

December 21
Business Services Committee Meeting - 5:30 p.m.

2023-2024 School Calendar Highlights

November 8
High School Early Release Day

November 15
-High School Early Release Day
-DPTO Meeting (9:30 a.m.)

November 20-24
Thanksgiving Break (No Students)
- Offices Closed on Nov. 23 and 24

November 28
Boundaries: Community Session - 6:00 p.m.

November 29
Boundaries: Community Session - 6:00 p.m.
All Grade Level (PreK-12) Early Release Day
Parent Education - Early College Credit Information
Night - 6:30 p.m.

PARENT EDUCATION SERIES PRESENTS

Early College Credit Information Night

Presented by District 303 Staff

Wednesday, Nov. 29, 2023
6:30pm-7:30pm
St. Charles North High
School Auditorium

Visit district.d303.org/parent-education for more information.

