

RIDER REPORT



SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK

Over the last few weeks, I have been reflecting on the many different levels of support and encouragement I personally have received during this difficult year while navigating the pandemic. As we get ready to celebrate Valentine's Day it also seems fitting that we share some love for the outstanding support and teamwork we have witnessed throughout this school year. Whether it's the cross-curriculum partnerships between teachers and classes, or the inter-departmental cooperation we've seen grow to accommodate unexpected needs, we are certainly feeling the love this month.



Mrs. Guntlow

Recognizing the substantial challenges in this unique learning environment, the administrative team has been working hand in hand with the school counselors, psychologists, and teaching staff to provide as much support as possible for students and families. From school nurse partnerships, which have helped ensure our physical well-being while taking on a front-line position in the battle against this pandemic, to our Food Service and Transportation Department collaboration, which have worked together to help keep our students nourished at home, we are truly experiencing a monumental amount of Rider pride.

This Valentine's Day, in the heart of these troubling times, I hope you can find a moment to reflect on and feel the support that surrounds you from the school community. Time and time again we see that through adversity and camaraderie we find extraordinary strength and support. Happy Valentine's Day!

Supportive systems

Throughout this school year the ICCS community has worked together in unprecedented ways to support each other and our families.

Recognizing and addressing the impact of the pandemic on mental health as well as on our students' academic achievement has been one of the priorities for the administrative team and the staff.

In response to the unique challenges of this year, the district has increased communication with families, added a new social worker and brought back homework help and extended day at the high school and middle school to support students whether they are attending in person or virtually.

Our [Guidance Resource page](#) has become an essential repository of important information designed to support teachers, staff, and families with academic and social/emotional resources. This resource page offers tips for parents on navigating Google classroom and tips and videos for students on organizational techniques for navigating between in-person and remote learning days.

In addition, it connects parents to school resources available to them including virtual counseling sessions with school psychologists and engaging project ideas and activities that can be completed virtually with friends and family.

Student Representative on the Board of Education Erin Curry says she's grateful for the continuation of in-person classes, especially in areas such as music and chorus, and that it's only possible through creativity, flexibility and teamwork.



The new guidance office.

Eric Tismark Boham, another student representative, spoke eloquently of the new connections forged by this unprecedented year. "We all wish the year could be normal, but we understand that staying safe is the priority right now. My classmates and I have worked to make some fun memories through online games and silly things so we can have a good laugh when we aren't together. And teachers have really made themselves available to us by hosting after-hours learning sessions and by being accessible through email even if we miss these sessions."

Other organizational supports available to students include the Connections Program, where staff members work together to identify students who may benefit from one-on-one attention..

"It's a program that happens kind of organically," said Assistant Superintendent Lucas Christensen.

"Staff members volunteer to adopt a student who may be struggling. They have regular check-ins and become an adult ally.

In Praise of Our ICCS Nursing Staff

The COVID-19 pandemic has emphasized the essential role school nurses play in the health and safety of our school community, so it seems only fitting that we take a moment to celebrate the work our nursing team has done to keep schools safe for learning.



"We were happy to do it," says Michelle Warner, an R.N. at the High School and nurse coordinator for the district, who along with Primary School Nurse Faith Kubo and Middle School Nurse Sara Altomer assisted in creating and implementing the protocols that ensured the schools could open this fall.

"I truly believe school is the safest place, and these kids have been amazing. They are wearing their masks, following social

At right, Michelle Warner receives a Covid vaccine at CGCC.



distancing, washing hands, doing everything we ask them to do. They want to be here."

"We were on pins and needles when we first opened. Of course, we still have our regular medical work such as students who needed daily meds or assessments. We have bumps and bruises and physicals and all the old school nursing things we are used to. "And now with the vaccine, I truly see light at the end of this tunnel," said Mrs. Warner.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

We are thankful for the partnership of Ichabod Crane Food Services and Transportation departments which have been making and delivering an average of 1,100 meals per week to our remote learning students. Since the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, we have provided more than 58,000 meals to our remote and in-person learning students.

Any Ichabod Crane families interested in meals for remote students can fill out a [Request for Student Meal Delivery Form](#).

For more information, you can also email Food Services Director, [Todd DiGrigoli](#).

SCHOOL SPIRIT

Congratulations to Valatie native and newest ICHS graduate Harold Williams, 97.



The WWII veteran from the 62nd Armored Division was awarded his diploma through the state's Operation Recognition program. To learn more about Mr. Williams, click [HERE](#).

Full S.T.E.A.M. Ahead

Middle school, Music and Band teacher Alessandra Shellard has teamed up with Art Teacher Mary Kupusinsky to bring their respective disciplines together through technology.

“On the first day of school Mary and I started talking about [Chrome Music Lab](#) as a way to help kids explore artwork and music together. It started with questions about how we get kids to start separating what music means from how it feels.”



Mary Kupusinsky uses Chrome Music Lab with students.

They paired the artwork of abstract art pioneer Vasilyevich Kandinsky with its abstract counterpart in music.

“We don't often think about hearing artwork but it's a great way to introduce students to things that are new to them, like atonal music, which doesn't have a major center and can be a difficult concept to understand.” Using technology as a bridge has been exciting for students, too.

“It's been really wonderful to integrate this technology with student learning,” said Ms. Shellard who hopes to be able to share the results with the district both in-person and online.

When it is fully operational, the high school's S.T.E.A.M Wing will provide a maker-space type hub connecting teachers and students across disciplines.

The renovation will enhance and promote collaboration between all departments in addition to improving our automotive, woods, and metals program. This space will also include CNC fabrication room and innovation labs.



A student works with the 3-D printer.

Although social distancing and space constraints have posed a challenge for the collaboration that we have seen in the past, our teachers have found creative ways to continue working together and extending STEAM learning. For example, recently our Science, Technology, and Art departments pooled their money to create mobile 3-D printing stations that teachers are using to create tangible objects to augment learning as well as to provide opportunity for students to practice using CAD skills that have been developed in their technology classes.

Mr. Allard, a social studies teacher and Ms. Drummond, a science teacher both have used the 3-D printer to print artifacts and models for students to see and reference in class.

We are pleased to see that the mobile 3-D printing stations are increasing our opportunity for collaboration between staff, students, and disciplines. To help with this area of collaboration, Mr. Allard and Mr. Moon (technology teacher) are working together to develop a professional development workshop for staff to learn how to model using the 3-D printers.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

FEBRUARY

February 2, Board of Education meeting, 7 p.m. Virtual.

February 4, Parent webinar with Dr. Jennifer Bashant at 6:30 p.m. Topic: Reduce Your Anxiety and Learn How to Become More Resilient. [Preregistration required.](#)

February 15-19, Mid-Winter recess.

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www.ichabodcrane.org

February 8-19, Kindergarten Open Registration at the Primary School from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

February 24, Parent webinar with Dr. Jennifer Bashant at 6:30 p.m. Topic: Reduce Steps You Can Take to Boost Your Mood & Improve Your Sleep. [Preregistration required.](#)