



The District 49 Dispatch is printed quarterly by
School District 49 - 10850 E Woodmen Rd - Peyton CO 80831-8127.
Postmaster: Direct address changes/corrections to the printers address.

Visit The District's Digital Home at D49.org

Vol 4, No. 2

April 12, 2019

Construction at Inspiration View in Progress and On Schedule

By David Nancarrow
Director of Communications

Inspiration View Elementary School looks very much like the brand new school it will be when it opens for students at the start of the 2019-20 school year. A building now sits on the site where the D49 community gathered for a groundbreaking ceremony in May of 2018.

IVES Principal Kristy Rigdon invited a group to tour the worksite at the end of January. Wearing hard hats and fluorescent vests, guests including the D49 Chief Officers as well as Board of Education Vice President John Graham explored the rapidly developing campus.

"IVES is coming along great," remarked COO Pedro Almeida. "The unique design features will make the school both visually appealing and highly functional for our 21st Century students and teachers!"

According to project manager Wember Inc., crews from Nunn Construction are making steady progress.

"With each time I walk the building, I can more clearly see students in the classrooms and halls, hear the hum of learning and collaboration, and feel the positive and excited energy," Rigdon observed. "Our mission is to develop the passions and talents of all students and to harness the creativity in our elementary students."

Rigdon explained IVES will foster individual student promise and passions through arts integrated learning, allowing all students to develop as creative risk takers who collaborate, communicate and celebrate through diverse learning opportunities while discovering their love of learning as they evolve as authentic human beings.

"It touches my heart to be able to serve the community with this school and our unique offerings," said Rigdon.

IVES is the second of two new D49 schools made possible by voters who supported the 3B MLO in 2016. IVES will open for classes for all students Aug. 1.



D49 Chief Operations Officer Pedro Almeida (foreground) toured the IVES worksite with D49 staff Jan. 29. (District 49/David Nancarrow)



IVES Principal Kristy Rigdon (left) speaks to a group of D49 staff from the POWER Zone and Central Office touring IVES Jan. 29. (District 49/David Nancarrow)

IVES Progress Report

At the start of April, project management team Wember Inc. reported an updated list reflecting the status of major work taking place at the new school:

- Construction is in progress and on schedule
- Exterior metal panel installation is on-going
- Millwork cabinetry is being installed
- Flooring, ceilings, doors and wall tile installation is nearing completion
- Interior glass has been installed
- Gym Mural is complete
- Interior painting is nearing completion
- Project will be Punched at end of April
- Furniture has been ordered through OfficeScapes for May / June delivery

D49 Nutrition Services Department Serves Up Top Rated Customer Service

By David Nancarrow
Director of Communications

The day starts at 6:30 a.m. in the Bennett Ranch Elementary School cafeteria. The staff, supervised by Nutrition Services Manager Jennifer McGuffin, turn on first the lights, and then start getting breakfast ready for their first rush of the day.

"I have always wanted to teach and be involved with children somehow," McGuffin shared. "When they smile, I know I did something right."

Their early customers line up at one of three doorways into the kitchen ahead of the first bell. When the students go off to class, McGuffin and her team fluidly follow their process for preparing the next meal. The same scenario plays out daily at campuses across School District 49.

"At the heart of everything the nutrition services department does is our customers- the students," said Director Monica Deines-Henderson. "We understand they have a choice every day to either have their meals with us or not, and we want to make each meal a positive experience for them."

According to the Colorado Department of Education, District 49 not only delivers on its promise of student care, but exceeds state and federal standards at all levels of execution.

The results of a CDE audit conducted in February 2019 show D49 nutrition services performs nearly perfectly, turning up only a single minor deficiency as described by auditors.

"Given the scope of the review process, it is very common for us to identify findings," said McKenna Pullen, CDE nutrition programs senior consultant. "For a district the size of District 49 to only receive one finding is a good indication of how strong the leadership is."

There is a complex balance to maintain. A successful school nutrition program must meet not only the needs of their student customers, but federal and state applied standards to maintain consistent funding. Regular audits like the one completed in February can determine the level of support provided by both levels of government.

See Nutrition page 2



D49 Nutrition Services team member Rebecca Horton tests food temperatures at BRES April 1. (District 49/Aaron Villegas)

JROTC Cadets Soar to Earn Flight Academy Scholarships



C/MSgt Emma Passig and family members at the March 27 Fantastic 49 celebration that honored her achievement of earning a Flight Academy Scholarship. (District 49/David Nancarrow)

By Amy Matissek
Internal Communications Manager

It's an offer that is almost too good to believe. Earn a private pilot's license during one summer with all expenses paid. Two AFJROTC cadets from Falcon High School will see the opportunity become a dream come true. C/Capt Ryan Sims, eleventh-grader, and C/MSgt Emma Passig, twelfth-grader, were two of 150 cadets worldwide selected for all-expense paid Flight Academy Scholarships for this summer.

"As a former Air Force fighter pilot and commercial airline pilot, I know what a tremendous opportunity this is for Cadets Passig and Sims," shared Col. James Turner (retired), chair of the JROTC program at FHS. "The future promises to be bright for young people who choose a career as a pilot."

Currently, the Air Force is experiencing a shortage of about 5,000 pilots, and the all-expense paid training is just one creative way to get young people interested in aviation. The U.S. Air Force developed the program to give students a taste of what it's like to be a pilot, without any commitment to serve in the military.

"I've always loved flying," commented Passig. "I'm so glad I get the opportunity to pursue it as a pilot now."

Cadets selected from the 180,000 applicants around the globe had to score high on an Air Force officer qualifying test and pass a rigorous flight physical.

The scholarships, valued at approximately \$20,000 each, pay for transportation, room and board, academics, and flight hours at partnering civilian universities. Sims will attend Kansas State University to receive his pilot's license. Passig will complete her training at Delaware State University. The condensed and intensive training will take approximately eight weeks.

"I'm immensely proud to be pursuing a lifetime interest, and I hope that it may serve to be a valuable part in helping me accomplish my future goals," remarked Sims.

Falcon High School couldn't be prouder to have multiple cadets participating in this opportunity. "There are approximately 890 Air Force JROTC units worldwide, so for Falcon's unit to receive two of these scholarships is truly remarkable," added Turner.



Board of Education President Marie La-Vere Wright congratulates Ryan Sims, FHS JROTC cadet, at the March 27 Fantastic 49 celebration for his selection to attend pilot training this summer with an all-expense paid scholarship. (District 49/David Nancarrow)



BRES Nutrition Services Team Member Emily Cockrell serves lunch April 1. (District 49/Aaron Villegas)

Nutrition From page 1

Deines-Henderson explained the audit process required an extra three-and-a-half weeks of labor in preparation spanning two months in early 2019 on top of the face-to-face time spent with auditors conducting the on-site review.

"Between the off-site and on-site portions of the audit, it took 150 hours added to the normal workload," Deines-Henderson said. She went on to explain the hard work paid off. The Department followed the District mission of learn, work and lead to make significant strides based on results returned from the last audit in 2016.

"A review of this nature solidifies D49 as being a top performing district in the

area of school nutrition with CDE," she said. "They recommend other districts who might have questions in the region to reach out to us for support or mentoring."

In the meantime the daily focus is on the students.

"This job is very rewarding when I know that even if these kids go home to no food, I know they at least had one good meal," McGuffin explained.

A typical afternoon for McGuffin, along with her team at BRES, is spent getting ready for the clock to hit 6:30 the following morning and the return of the customers who mean so much to the staff who serve them.

"They have the opportunity every day to make the students of D49's day better with a smile, kind word, and nutritious food," said Deines-Henderson.

VRHS Wrestler Pins her Name to History

By David Nancarrow
Director of Communications

For a moment during the match, Bella Mitchell felt her advantage begin to slip.

"I actually got a little scared at one point, because she had turned really far and my hips came off the mat," the VRHS wrestler recalled. "I was scared that she was going to flip me over."

The moment was fleeting. Mitchell, a junior at VRHS, matched up against Avery Harter, from Thunder Ridge High School in this, the final tournament of the girls' season. Not only was a win within Mitchell's grasp, but also a title from the first-ever girls' wrestling state championship with backing from the Colorado High School Activities Association (CHSAA).

The two had faced off a week earlier during regionals and the rematch Feb. 9 at the state tournament in Thornton, did not last long. Mitchell went right to work.

"I tried to position myself back to a comfortable position for me," she explained. Just before the two-minute mark, the match was over. With a pin at 1:54 Bella Mitchell made history, emerging as a girls' wrestling state champion from School District 49.

"It's amazing because I love helping this program grow," Mitchell said. "I love that my team was there to help me grow because I wouldn't of gotten it without my team."

The journey began for Mitchell in sixth grade when she started wrestling, which at the time meant she joined the boys' team. She realized the unique challenges she faced as a competitor in middle school when an opposing team refused to wrestle girls.

"That was hard because I was like 'I'm doing the same things they are doing and do the same conditioning so I don't understand why I'm being discriminated against,'" Mitchell recalled.

Since 2008 VRHS has had at least one girl on the wrestling team according to head coach Eric Everard. Everard learned a year ago CHSAA planned to pilot a girls' wrestling program for the 2018-2019 season. VRHS helped establish a firm foundation for the program in its initial year when the school hosted a girls' tournament last fall.

"That set the ball rolling for setting a higher expectation of not 'let's just let girls wrestle, not let them just be part of the team,' let's have a girls program," Everard said.

There is no lack of interest at VRHS. Besides Mitchell there are nine girls on the team. Seven represented the school at regionals and four qualified for state.

"I think we stepped off on the right foot and if we can take this momentum and step off of the next foot the next season we could double our team size by 2021 when it is sanctioned by CHSAA," Everard said, and added, "Maybe even have more girls on the team than boys."

Mitchell, while not altogether comfortable in the spotlight, can't deny the excitement of the conclusion of the pilot season for girls' wrestling in Colorado.

"I do I think people are finally realizing the girls can wrestle too," Mitchell said. "All of these girls that are coming out are realizing they can do it as well, and them seeing other girls do it I think is an inspiration to them."



VRHS junior, Bella Mitchell, defeated her opponent in the championship match of the 18-19 pilot season of Girls' Wrestling in Colorado. Getting a pin at 1:54 into the match, Bella Mitchell made history, emerging as a girls' wrestling state champion from School District 49. (District 49/David Nancarrow)

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Welcome Spring '19! D49 Enjoys Spring Break



Michael LaCroix, ninth-grader at Falcon High School visited Santorini Greece for 10 days with his parent for Spring Break.



Freya and Louana Prunty enjoying breakfast at the park during Spring Break.



Susan McCormack, teacher at Ridgeview Elementary, with her daughter, Shelby Highfill, while in Honduras for a mission trip during their Spring Break.



Henry Stewart, seventh-grader at Skyview Middle School, with Ramona Stewart, fifth-grader, Cora Stewart, third-grader, and Zane Stewart, first-grader, from Springs Ranch Elementary School celebrating World Down Syndrome Day during their D49 Spring Break.



Woodmen Hills family, Jay Jay, James, Jonathan and Heather Duarte enjoying Disneyland, CA.



Alexander Barrientos, junior, and brother, Sean Barrientos, freshman at Vista Ridge High School helped with Hurricane Michael recovery in the Florida panhandle during their Spring Break.

BLPA Students Bridge Culture, Foreign Language Skills

By Amy Matisek
Internal Communications Manager

Students in Jen Maze’s German class at Banning Lewis Preparatory Academy broadened their typical routine when some special guests arrived in February. Twelve students and two teachers from Kirchberg, Germany traveled to Colorado Springs to spend two weeks hosted by BLPA students and families.

Made possible by the German American Partnership Program, visits like these transform hearts and minds by facilitating student exchanges between schools in the U.S. and Germany. It allows students to live and learn in another country, while improving language skills and fostering an intercultural understanding.

The program fulfills an interest Maze started developing as a high school student. “I spent an exchange year near Heidelberg and Mannheim, which is how I developed fluency in the German language,” shared Maze. “I knew if I ever had a chance to teach German, I would want my students to participate.”

Banning Lewis Preparatory Academy is the only high school in District 49 that offers German as part of their menu of foreign language courses.

Kai Conzemius, one of the teachers from Germany, noted that teaching styles in America are different than at

home. “It’s more modern here with all the technology ... this school is well-equipped.” As an example, Maze uses online applications in her classroom to facilitate language learning. Another topic of contrast was class schedules. “Kids here have an advantage as they can choose classes. German students don’t do that until eleventh grade,” he stated.

Despite differences at their schools a world apart, similarities were abundant, too. “Families here are the same as in Germany,” commented Martina Meissner, the second teacher who accompanied the exchange students. “It doesn’t matter that we live 14 hours away. Everyone has been very welcoming.”

Many students voiced the new, lasting friendships are the best part of the exchange program. “I’ve grown an amazing friendship with Sinah,” remarked Jaysa Even, a ninth-grader at BLPA who hosted a student for the two-week visit. “While I learned so much, it is my relationship with her that is most important.”

In the spring of 2020, Jaysa and others will get their chance to see their new friends again. This is a reciprocal exchange, so the German exchange students will host BLPA students next year. During the visit, BLPA students will experience 300 hours of language immersion, in addition to daily life in a German town and school.



Jaysa Even, ninth-grader, on left and her new friend from Germany, Sinah Barden, work together on a “Holidays Around the World” presentation during German class at BLPA Feb. 28. (District 49/Amy Matisek)



Martina Meissner, visiting teacher from Germany, mentors students while they create their “Holidays Around the World” presentations Feb. 28 at BLPA. (District 49/Amy Matisek)

S2S Teams Meet and Greet at Purple Ball

By David Nancarrow
Director of Communications



More than 400 attendees including elementary, middle and high school students with their parents in tow met at the S2S Purple Ball Jan. 26. (District 49/David Nancarrow)

With dozens of tables draped in purple linens adorned tastefully with a spray of gold confetti, the Sand Creek High School commons area looked much more like a banquet hall Jan. 26. In groups of two, sometimes three or more, guests slowly found their seats for the evening at the first-ever Purple Ball.

A crowd of more than 400 attendees including elementary, middle and high school students with their parents in tow gathered for the evening to recognize the work taking place with Student 2 Student (S2S) programs around Colorado Springs.

“I think I’ve moved schools, I’ve lost count, but it’s like five or six times,” said Bailey Shaw, a senior at Falcon High School. “When I moved here, I was a seventh grader. I had no idea where to go in school. I didn’t have any friends.”

The Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) supports the S2S program which gives students a chance to team up to welcome military-connected students into their surroundings when those students start at a new school. Like Bailey’s, military families average six to nine moves during a child’s educational career.

“We became good friends during freshman year, and I was a leader in S2S,” said Kegan Hoang, a senior at FHS who encouraged Bailey to join S2S. “S2S helps new students get used to their new school, make friends and get comfortable with their new atmosphere.”

S2S programs from School District 49, 20, 12, 3, 8 and 2 were invited to the Purple Ball which doubled as a networking event for military-connected families in the Pikes Peak Region. Students like Bailey and Kegan talked with their younger counterparts who are involved in eS2S at local elementary schools.

“I probably expect a collaboration of all the schools in the city,” explained Bailey. “I think being able to talk to people in our district gives us an idea about what ES2S does in schools not just in our district but everywhere.”

A grant from the Wounded Warrior Project helped bring to life the Purple Ball which included dinner, dancing, formal pictures and other activities. The culinary arts program at D49’s Patriot High School prepared the meal and a local DJ helped turn the SCHS gym into a ballroom.

“It’s a great way to bring awareness to the program,” observed Paul Graham who accompanied his fifth-grade daughter, Cadence, to the ball. From a non-military family’s perspective Graham explained S2S encourages the importance of reaching out to all students, especially those who may have to move away one day.

“We’ve been affected by some of those close friends who have had to move,” he said. “But we teach them the saying ‘It’s better to have loved and lost,’ so we want to foster those friendships.”



Paul Graham accompanied his fifth-grade daughter, Cadence, an RMCA fifth-grader, to the S2S Purple Ball at SCHS Saturday, Jan. 26. (District 49/David Nancarrow)

Officer Visit in the Books at Woodmen Hills Elementary School

By Amy Matissek
Internal Communications Manager

Students at WHES hosted special visitors from the community at the school Jan. 11. Sergeant William Webster and Deputy Courtney Norman from the El Paso County Sheriff's Office were onsite to read to young learners as part of the Badges and Books program.

Badges and Books began in collaboration with local schools as a reading education and community interaction program. It brings uniformed law enforcement officers into classrooms to build trusting relationships with youth. It is the only program of its kind in Southern Colorado, and last year El Paso County officers read to 7,000 students in the area.

"The goal is for children to get used to seeing police officers in uniform and know that they are the good guys," commented Deputy Courtney Norman.

Many books were shared throughout the day,

and along with storytime, students were invited to ask Deputy Norman and Sergeant Webster questions about their job in law enforcement. The officers also demonstrated their gear and talked about safety tips.

"My real job is to help people," shared Norman. "The tool I use most when dealing with people is my words," she added. Norman reminded students that when dealing with situations that are frustrating or difficult, it is important to talk things out.

Sergeant Webster talked to students about safety and asked them to share important rules to follow.

"Wear your seat belt," "Watch for cars," and "Don't talk to strangers," were among the student responses.

In the end, learners enjoyed more than just a good book. The deputies presented each kindergarten with a stuffed animal as a gift. Older students received badge stickers and brightly colored pencils as reminders of the special event.



Young learners listen attentively at the Badges and Books event at Woodmen Hills Elementary School that brought police officers to school to read Jan. 11. (District 49/Amy Matissek)



Sergeant William Webster with the El Paso County Sheriff's Office shares a story with young scholars at Woodmen Hills Elementary School Jan. 11 during the Badges and Books event. (District 49/Amy Matissek)

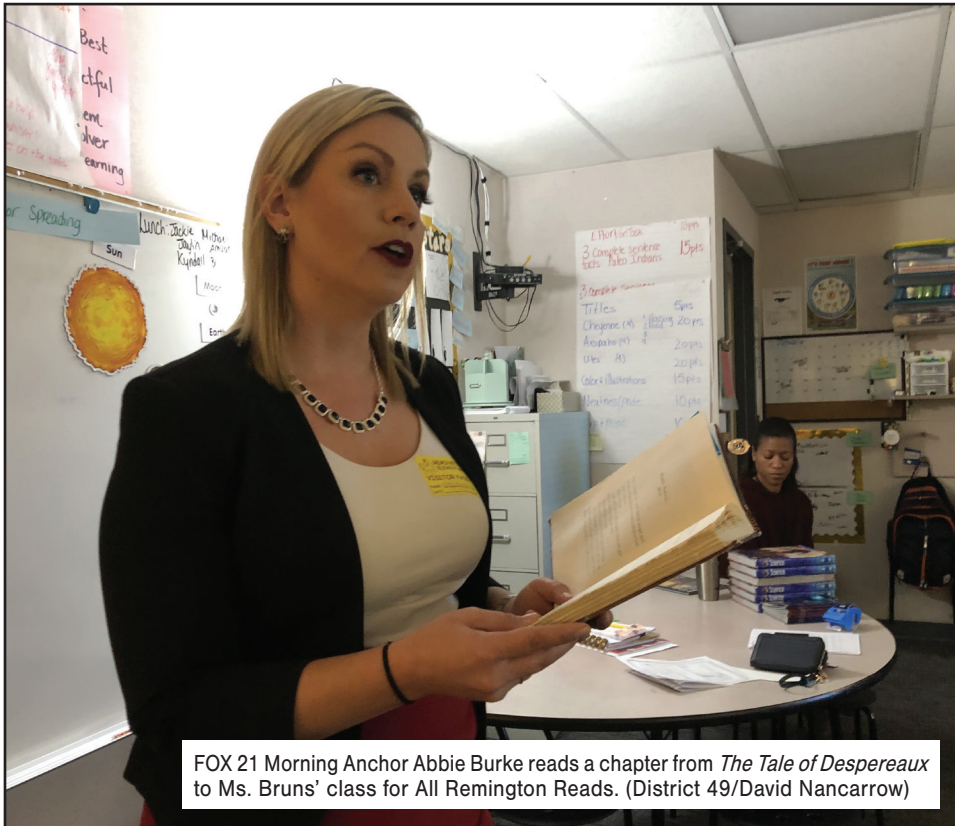
D49 Gets Ice Time at USAFA



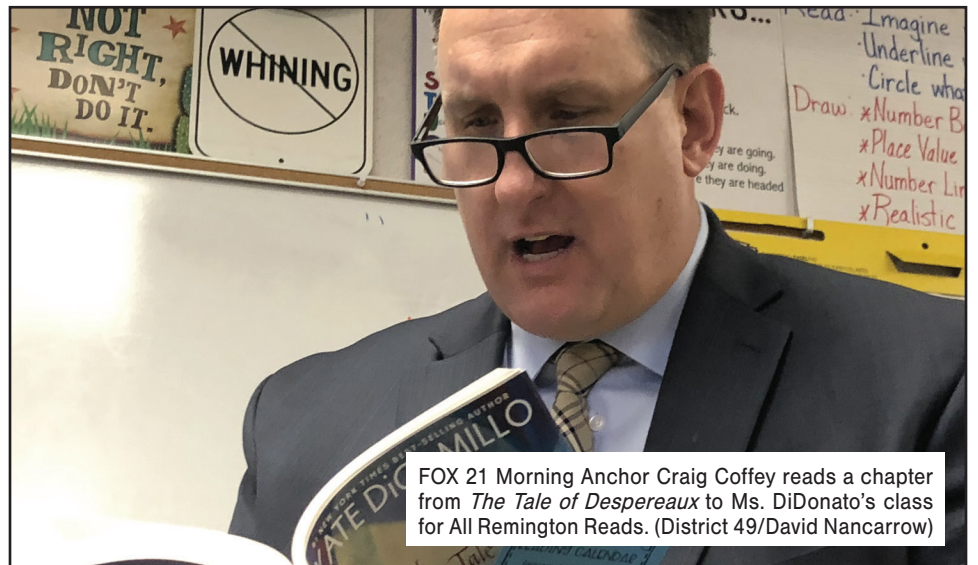
The United States Air Force Academy welcomed D49's Director of Culture and Services, retired USAF Major Dr. Louis Fletcher (Center), to participate in the honorary "puck-drop" at the USAFA game against Holy Cross on March 1. "It was an honor to represent the district on senior night for USAFA hockey," Fletcher said. USAFA hockey dropped a heart-breaker in overtime 2-1. (PHOTO CREDIT: USAFA/Art Korolov).

FOX 21 Anchors Visit for All Remington Reads

Some very familiar faces from FOX21 News visited Remington Elementary School for All Remington Reads in January. RES selected *The Tale of Despereaux* by Kate DiCamillo. The KRXM FOX21 Morning team, including anchors Craig Coffey and Abbie Burke, and Chief Meteorologist Matt Meister shared a few chapters as RES students followed along. All Remington Reads encourages all RES students and their families to engage with reading at school and at home!



FOX 21 Morning Anchor Abbie Burke reads a chapter from *The Tale of Despereaux* to Ms. Bruns' class for All Remington Reads. (District 49/David Nancarrow)



FOX 21 Morning Anchor Craig Coffey reads a chapter from *The Tale of Despereaux* to Ms. DiDonato's class for All Remington Reads. (District 49/David Nancarrow)



FOX 21 Chief Meteorologist Matt Meister reads *The Tale of Despereaux* to Ms. McCoy's class for All Remington Reads. (District 49/David Nancarrow)



Please Join Us for our Open House Events!

- April 17, 2019 @ 6:30pm
- May 15, 2019 @ 6:30pm

Location: Imagine Classical Academy, 6464 Peterson Rd.
This is a great opportunity to learn more about Grand Peak Academy and meet our Board of Directors as well as GPA staff.

Like us on Facebook for more information on our Open House events, visit us at www.grandpeakacademy.org, or call (719)495-7360.



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