

RCS WELCOMES WOODSIDE BACK AS ROSEVILLE MIDDLE ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

Roseville Community Schools is proud to announce Dr. Austin Woodside, Ph.D. as the new assistant principal at Roseville Middle School. Woodside returns to Roseville, where he taught for several years, after spending the past year and a half as Dean of Students in a neighboring district.

Woodside earned a bachelor's degree from Central

Michigan University in Secondary Education with a Social Studies and History endorsement. He moved on to Eastern Michigan University, earning in a master's degree in educational leadership 2021, and then a Ph.D. educational leadership in in December of 2024. He taught social studies at Roseville High School from 2019-2023, including Civics, World History, and AP Human Geography. In addition to teaching, he coached JV football and served as the administrative intern for the district's summer school program.

Woodside said he wanted to return to Roseville because he believes the district has a culture of

collective accountability and responsibility to always put students first. "I have witnessed staff, regardless of position title, go above and beyond for the students. Roseville does an excellent job of hiring staff that approach their profession with integrity and extraordinary effort to give our students the best experiences they deserve. I have always admired the administration of this school district's ability to lead by example and show appreciation for every employee within the organization."

Woodside said he is committed to fostering a positive and inclusive school culture through collaboration with students, families, and colleagues. "In my previous role as a Dean of Students, I prioritized creating a supportive environment that balanced restorative accountability with a focus on academic growth." He said that his experience managing student

behavior emphasized the importance of firm and consistent expectations paired with empathy for individual needs. "I am dedicated to providing all students with access to challenging, high-quality academics and empowering staff to encourage student participation in rigorous courses we offer here at Roseville Middle School." Roseville Community Schools Superintendent Mark Blaszkowski said that between his teaching,

doctorate degree in educational leadership, and his time as a Dean of Students, Woodside has a great deal of educational experience. "He has had opportunities to work with students and families as they work through the sometime rocky road of middle school. Now he will have a more active role working with staff." Blaszkowski added that Woodside's previous experience in the district gives him the familiarity to jump right back into the system with institutional knowledge. "Dr. Woodside is an energetic leader

ready to take on his next step in learning and helping our students be the best



Dr. Woodside returns to Roseville as Roseville Middle School Assistant Principal

version of themselves."

Woodside takes over for Joe Jelsone, who moves to serve as an administrator in a district where his children attend school. Blaszkowski said that Jelsone will do great things at his new location. "I want to thank Mr. Jelsone for all his hard work and commitment to our students and wish him the best as he returns home to his roots."

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MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



In the month of January, we finished our first semester of the 2024-2025 school year. I started to reflect on our 100th graduating year of Roseville Community Schools which led me to think about my first year working in this district. I started in Center Line Public Schools in 1991 but was laid off shortly after due to a millage failure. I was getting married later that

summer, and things went from bad to worse when I lost my dad to Leukemia that June. In the fall of 1992, I was hired by Roseville as an adult educator. A few months later, I began teaching science for a couple of classes during the day at Roseville Middle School while teaching adult education at night. I look back now and I realize that things happen for a reason. If I hadn't been laid off from Center Line, I would not have been blessed to start my career here at RCS.

These fortunate events would not have happened without the support of many people. Adult Education Coordinator Pat Felix took a chance on a young kid to come in and teach adults. I think I learned more about teaching in those first years than the students learned about science. The stories and circumstances that these students had to overcome to finish aetting a diploma gave me a whole new perspective on how lucky I was. Addamae Akin, who was a friend of my in-laws and an administrator in the district, helped me get an interview for the middle school position.

She didn't stop there. She continued to mentor me, and more importantly, held me accountable to be the best version of myself. My mentor teachers, Sharon Hafelien, Debbie Evans, Tracy Vargo and Judy Ladd to name a few, provided invaluable guidance. Joe Bresciami and John Hill, who were my other administrators, were always supportive and encouraged me to continue my growth as an educator. They gave me administrative experiences and encouraged me to make the leap into administration.

Some of you may ask why this is important. In the past 33 years, out of the 100 years of Roseville Community Schools, some things have never changed for me. The staff here have always been supportive of their colleagues and students. Mitch Albom says in a poem called A Small Voice Said: "Life is with people. You need to be involved." You can have the fanciest classroom in the world, but without a good teacher, it will all be lost. Without people sharing their experiences to help others grow, you lose the maximum potential of your staff. I experienced this firsthand, and I'm not sure where I would be today without it. We will continue to support our staff with training and mentoring to help our students get the most from their time here in Roseville Community Schools.

> Sincerely, Mark Blaszkowski MC BQC



On February 10, nineteen Roseville High School seniors participated in the annual Student School Board at the Administration Building. The students shadowed board members and administrators, ran the Monday evening board meeting, and honored a teacher or staff member who has made a difference in their lives.



RHS STUDENTS TO EXPERIENCE DANGERS OF DISTRACTED/IMPAIRED DRIVING

Roseville High Schools students will experience of impaired and distracted driving behavior. firsthand the dangers of distracted and impaired driving when the Save A Life Tour visits the school on February 24, 2025. Save A Life Tour is a combination of fact-based lectures and interactive simulations which allow students to experience the potential consequences of poor driving decisions.

Roseville High School Principal Jason Bettin said that students who are enrolled in health class will participate in the event. "It is a natural fit with the curriculum for that class and the Save A Life Tour is something we hope to expand on and have yearly. Health class became a great option since all students must take health, usually in their freshmen and sophomore years, which is also when most students take drivers training."

The program specifically places emphasis on common student driving situations, including improper driver behavior, safety restraints, impaired driving, distracted driving, and motorcycle awareness. The Save A Life Tour utilizes a variety of methods for educating and demonstrating the effects and consequences that are direct results of poor choices and/ or decisions made by operators of a motor vehicle. A factbased lecture will also be provided by facilitators, including informative visual presentations showing actual footage and pictures of crashes, victim stories, and simulation for the effects

Students will learn about the driving dangers through several activities. A virtual reality impaired driving simulator will illustrate the dangers of impaired driving from a sober perspective by showing how alcohol and drugs can affect a driver's reaction time, motor skills, and judgment. A stationary distracted/texting and driving simulator, complete with a smartphone that the student will use to send and receive text messages, shows how distraction affects reaction time with a split-second delay that will cause participants to demonstrate tendencies similar to that of a distracted driver. Two monitors will also be on hand to display videos pertaining to destructive decisions regarding impaired driving and distracted driving as well showing the consequences of the poor choices that were made and how the families are affected.

Bettin said that the program directly ties into teaching students responsibility, healthy decisions, and safety. "We know teenagers can succumb to peer pressure, living in a world where they are very connected to their phones and devices. As they start to get to one of the most major responsibilities of their young lives, the ability to drive a car, we want to make sure they understand how important it is to be aware of the power of car and the serious harm that can be caused if they don't treat it that way."

Jacob and Melanie (Trudeau) Bilbrey's journey together secondary education. Jacob attended Michigan State before started inside the walls of Roseville High School, Jacob, a 2012 RHS graduate, attended Dort Elementary and Roseville Junior High, while Melanie, a 2011 graduate, attended Patton Elementary and Eastland Junior High. Both were very active while in school. Jacob was a member of inspired me to pursue teaching and fully supported me on

student assembly, the baseball and swim teams, as well as the Media Productions and Marketing classes. Melanie was also a member of the RHS Marketing class and played in the band at Eastland. "I loved being a part of band, performing at Homecoming and Memorial Day Parades, and going to the football games." Jacob recalls being a "pain" in Mrs. Baker's fifth grade class at Dort. "Now, she has stayed someone that I can go to for anything even all these years later." He added that he loves

maintaining contact with so many former teachers and coaches. "Mr. Genest, Mr. & Mrs. Gabriel, Mr. Mattison, Mr. Marzec, Mr. Verkeyn, Mrs. Baker, Mrs. Creech, and countless others have always been there for me whenever I've needed guidance." Melanie mentioned Mr. & Mrs. Gabriel, Mrs. Pantaleo, Mr. Blackmer, Mr. Verkeyn, and Mr. Stanton as the teachers who had an impact on her. After high school, Melanie attended Central Michigan, graduating with a bachelor's in

graduating with a bachelor's in marketing from Wayne State. After college, Melanie returned to Roseville, becoming a longterm sub at RMS and RHS before moving to teach at Jefferson Middle School. "My teachers at Roseville Community Schools

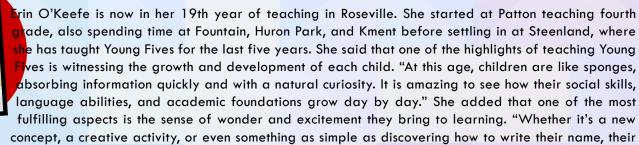
> that journey." Jacob took a job with Enterprise Rent-A-Car after college. "I recently accepted a promotion to oversee our operation at Grand Rapids International Airport and wouldn't trade my job for the world." The Bilbreys got married in 2021 and just completed their move to Grand Rapids for Jacob's new position. They have two dogs, Apollo and Shadow, and enjoy traveling, especially to Boston and Arizona. Jacob said that Roseville Community Schools has proven time and time again that they are a district that truly cares

about their students. "Every member of their staff that I've ever interacted with has always wanted the best for the students in their schools. We even had two of my former baseball coaches, Joe Genest and Kevin Gabriel, be our "flower dudes" during our wedding ceremony." Melanie echoed her husband's sentiments. "The staff truly cares about their students even after they have graduated. They are always there to cheer us on and show their support."



GET TO KNOW OUR TEACHERS

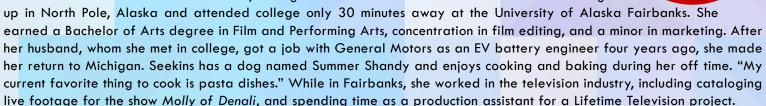
ERIN O'KEEFE - STEENLAND ELEMENTARY



joy and pride in these small successes are contagious." Her favorite activity to do with her students is the "Friend of the Day," which highlights a student each day. "As a class, we write that students name and then draw a picture of that student. I love watching my students draw their friends, using details about what they are wearing or what they really look like. Once all the students are finished with their individual drawings, I compile them all into a book for the "Friend of the Day" to take home with them." She attended Oakland University, earning a bachelor's degree with a major in English before moving on to Saginaw Valley where she earned master's degree in elementary education. O'Keefe and her fiancé have three girls between them - Daughter Riley, 12, daughter Delaney, 9, and "bonus" daughter Frankie, 10. She enjoys reading and listening to music, "anything from classic rock to new pop." She also likes getting outside and taking her dog, a two-year-old boxer named Mac, for a walk. O'Keefe also had an interesting job in her late teens/early twenties. "I worked for the Roseville Police Department as an undercover decoy. It was such a fun and unique experience I will never forget."

MAHALA SEEKINS - ROSEVILLE/EASTLAND MIDDLE SCHOOL

Mahala Seekins is now in her third year of teaching, currently teaching visual arts at both Eastland Middle School and Roseville Middle School. "My favorite thing about my job is being able to create every day. I enjoy passing along the knowledge of art and the significance of creativity." Seekins said that she learns something new in every unit as well. "My favorite project is the paper mâché unit really enjoy watching my students' 2D mask designs come to life in a 3D form. I also enjoy watching them be resourceful with supplies and see what they can create with the materials they are given." Seekins was born and raised in Fremont, Michigan but moved to Alaska when she was nine. She grew



KIMBERLY RAKESTRAW - ROSEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

Kimberly Rakestraw is now in her fourth year teaching in Roseville. She spent the past three years at Roseville Middle School, but made the move over to Roseville High School this year, where she currently teaches Algebra II. Now in here 18th year in education, she spent eight years teaching at Loyola High School in Detroit, as well as several years as a Title I teacher at St. Cecilia and St. Bartholomew. She said one of the favorite things about her job is building relationships with her students. "I am always trying to get my students to like math more. I like to have them research math formulas to see how they have used them in class and I enjoy when they do projects where they apply the concepts learned to real life situations." Rakestraw attended University of Detroit Mercy for her undergraduate degree in

business administration with a concentration in finance. She then moved on to Marygrove College for her graduate degree, earning a master's in elementary education with an endorsement in 6-12 mathematics. Rakestraw has one "four-legged child," a 14-year-old Yorkshire Terrier named Diesel. In her spare time, she said she enjoys going to the movies, sharing a meal with family and friends, shopping, and the occasional round of bingo. She also enjoys traveling. "I loved California and I have a desire to go to Arizona and some of the New England states." A fun fact about Rakestraw is that, when she was nine years old, she won a pie eating contest at the Michigan State Fair without eating any of the filling! "All of it was on my face, they judged it based on how much was left in the pie crust."











OUR TALENTED ELEMENTARY ART STUDENTS CREATED BANNER DESIGNS THAT WERE DISPLAYED ON UTICA ROAD DURING THE HOLIDAYS











PANTHER ACCOLADES



Back row: Daniel Sikora, Dreshawn Noble, Maurice Stallworth, Daniel Duhaylonsod Front row: Elise Birr, Nathavia Cherisca, Aniya Morgan In November, eight RHS seniors earned academic honors from the College Board National Recognition Program! The academic honors recognize first-generation students, in addition to rural and small town, Black, Indigenous, and Hispanic/or Latino students.

In addition, senior Duhaylonsod performed with the 2025 All-State High School Jazz Band on January 25 at the Michigan Music Conference in Grand Rapids. He was selected as one of only four trumpet players to perform in this group. This is his third time being selected to perform with an All-State Group at the conference.

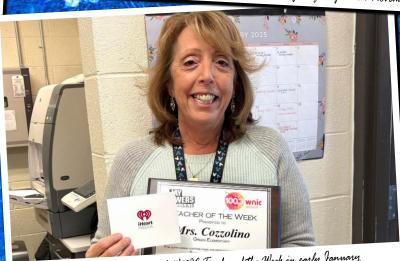
A LOOK INSIDE OUR SCHOOLS...



the RHS Girls Basketball team volunteered for Forgotten Harvest in early January



Exploring Careers class from EMS visited the Coleman A. Young airport in November



Mrs. Cozzolino was named WNNC Teacher of the Week in early January









Fountain fifth graders partnered with first graders to build ginger bread houses



Kaiser students enjoyed a skating party for meeting the school's Walk-A-Thon goal







Great Start Readiness Program students had fun making Halloween crafts in October

LOOKING BACK: ROSEVILLE'S ROCK STARS

On the evening of February 9, 1964, the Beatles were seen for the first time by American audiences when they appeared on the Ed Sullivan Show. That appearance, seen by 73 million viewers, not only launched Beatlemania into American culture, but it also launched teenagers from coast to coast to start their own bands. That was no exception for 1966 Roseville High School graduate, Tom Wearing. "I was driving down Frazho the first time I heard "I Want to Hold Your Hand," and it knocked me out. Something about those three voices, that blend – it was just historic."

Wearing, who was already a drummer in the RHS band, connected with two other musically inclined friends, fellow RHS student Mark Karpinski, and Burton Junior High ninth grader Vic Wittkowski. Soon, they had devised a plan to start their first band – The Tidal Waves. "We started out as more of a surf rock band, but then we got some mics and started adding vocals."

Over the next two years, the band would hone their craft in the Wearing family garage. The group bolstered their lineup with two more members – Wearing's younger

brother, Jon, and bass player Bob Slap, both still at Burton Junior High. "We would play initially for \$5-\$10 a gig - a lot of dances, hall parties, and house parties, but we eventually worked our way up to bigger shows." They also won a Battle of the Bands competition on the Roseville High School stage against other popular Roseville bands, The Epidemic and Pepper and the Shakers. "It was an amazing time for music."

The Tidal Waves worked
up covers of the Kinks, the Rolling Stones, the
Beatles, and other hits of the era, but it was a
song by a lesser-known group that would lead
to the band's first single. "I can still remember
being in Vic's bedroom on Wilfred when we heard
"Farmer John." The song was originally written and
recorded by American R&B duo Don and Dewey in 1959,
but it was the version by California band the Premiers that
reached the top twenty in the summer of 1964, catching the
band's ear on the radio.

The band, now all students at Roseville High School, were soon auditioning the song for local record producer John Chekaway. He signed the group to his Detroit-based record label, SVR Records. At United Sound Studios in Detroit in January of 1966, the group cut their version of "Farmer John", backed with an original song by Wittkowski and Tom Wearing, "She Left Me All Alone." Wearing said that the recording session had an additional Roseville connection. "When we recorded the songs, I borrowed the full drum set from Roseville High School to take into the studio."

Despite a modest initial pressing of 1,000 copies of the single, the song quickly became a regional hit. The song

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In the summer of 1966, Dennis Mills replaced Slap on bass and penned the group's second single "I Don't Need Love", featuring a lush string arrangement performed by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. The single was another regional hit, reaching #19 on WKNR. With a pair of hits under their belts, the opportunities increased. "We were on the show "Swingin' Time" out of Windsor quite a few times, along with other local bands like the Rationals, and the Underdogs from Grosse Pointe." The gigs got bigger too. They opened for major national acts like the Dave Clark Five at Ford Auditorium and Herman's Hermits and the Animals at Masonic Temple in downtown Detroit. Lineup changes would further hit the band in late 1966 though, with Karpinski and Wittkowski leaving, replaced by Bill Long and Will Jackson.

The group's third and arguably catchiest single, "Actions (Speaker Louder Than Words)", would be their final release. Hanna-Barbera Records, who was transitioning out of the music business, gave the new single little promotion. In early 1967, the Tidal Waves disbanded after issues regarding the group's royalties from their record sales. Any hopes of continuing also received a setback when Tom Wearing was drafted the following year. "My

mom got a call from the draft board, so I ended up going into the Naval reserves in 1968. It totally interrupted the musical momentum I had going."

After the split, several of the group members continued to pursue their rock and roll dreams.

Jon Wearing joined another popular Detroit band,

Frijid Pink, serving as songwriter and lead singer for their 1972 "Earth Omen" album. Bob Slap spent time in Detroit and Los Angeles playing with bands The Mighty Quick and The Secrets, also carving out a career as a solo artist, engineer, and producer. Other band members left their musical dreams behind. Wittkowski was a successful Detroit area dentist, recently retiring. Karpinski became an engineer, but tragically passed away in a motorcycle accident.

As for Tom Wearing, he straddled the line between both worlds. He spent over thirty years as a newspaper editor, as well as continuing to drum for popular local cover band, People's Choice. He also believes the last chapter for the Tidal Waves may not have been written yet. "I play better now than I ever did in my life, and I would love to reunite the band in some form. We've been talking about doing it for a year." You can find music from The Tidal Waves on You Tube.



On January 15, Green Elementary teacher Mr. Kawiecki was chosen by the Detroit Lions "Touch Down for Teachers" program as one of only ten teachers from across the state to receive a \$1000 scholarship for his classroom. Roary and GameAbove representatives also handed out Lions mini-banners and sunglasses to fifth graders.





On National Signing Day in December, RHS seniors Desmond Straughton and Eric Slater signed their letters of intent to play football at the D1 collegiate level this fall. Straughton will be heading to the University of Illinois and Slater will be playing for Howard University.



In December, the RHS Hospitality Management program competed against seven other high schools in the county at the Macomb Schools and Government Credit Union Business Appreciation Lunch Dessert Competition. The Panthers took first place with their "Better than Sanders Bumpy Cake" dessert, earning a monetary donation for their program.



In early January, the RHS Unified Basketball team visited Grosse Pointe North for their first game of the season. Unified Sports are offered to any student with an Individual Education Program (IEP) and an intellectual disability, plus general education students who wish to serve as partners. Students from both schools had a blast and the Panthers walked away with a victory.



The 2024 Roseville Community Schools holiday card was designed by Annabeth Chene, eighth grade student at Roseville Middle School, under the direction of teacher Ms. Sodra McGorty. Chene was recognized at a board meeting in December. She also received fifty blank cards for friends and family and a small cash prize.

On January 28, 400+ families attended our first-ever "Gift of Reading" event, held at Steenland Elementary School! This event, organized by our district's early literacy specialists, was aimed at enhancing student reading skills while having fun. Thanks to a district literacy grant, each kindergarten through fifth grade student that pre-registered and attended the event received a \$20 book voucher, allowing them to shop from a wide variety of Scholastic books. Each family was also able to take home literacy games, a writing journal, bookmark, pencil, and a folder full of quick and easy activities.





ROSEVILLE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION

Winter Goller

SATURDAY MARCH 8, 2025

6:00 P.M. - MIDNIGHT DINNER AT 7:00 P.M.

VINTAGE HOUSE
31816 UTICA RD, FRASER

DINNER
DJ/DANCING
BASKET RAFFLE
PRIZES

BASKET TICKETS WILL ALSO BE SOLD VIRTUALLY

> \$55 PER PERSON

TABLES OF 8 RESERVED BY FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 28
TICKET SALES WILL CLOSE ON MARCH 6. NO TICKETS SOLD AT THE DOOR

LIMITED TO 300 TICKETS, RESERVE YOUR SPOT EARLY!

FOR MORE INFORMATION: ttomala@roseville.k12.mi.us or (586) 445-5675





The Roseville Community Schools Scholarship Foundation began with a dream and a goal when it was established by the Roseville Kiwanis Club in 1963. The dream was to touch the lives of Roseville's young people; the goal was to raise funds to aid them in their continued educational quests.

In 1984, the Roseville Board of Education joined the the ongoing project. Today, citizen volunteers, educators, business representatives, and local leaders assist in the process of raising funds and allocating scholarships to deserving recipients. This year, we awarded 63 \$1200 scholarships to recipients.

In April 2022, the Foundation officially became a 501c3 organization. This allows additional opportunities to receive donations from individuals and companies wishing to donate to a charitable organization. If you own, work for, or know of a company looking for a charitable organization to donate to, we would greatly appreciate you sharing the Roseville Community Schools Scholarship Foundation name with them.

RCSSF Tax ID No: 87-1665026



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Food Service	(586) 445-5685
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School Improvements and Grants	(586) 445-5688
Nicole Provo, Director	
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Joe Genest, Facilitator	







