

## Local Schools



[TOP](#)

# PBHS Continues to Offer ACT for FREE Despite State Cut

FEBRUARY 12TH 2018 BY DEE LOFLIN

## PBHS Continues to Offer ACT for FREE Despite State Cut

Poplar Bluff, Missouri - The Poplar Bluff School District will offer the ACT exam to High School juniors one time free of charge in April.

The college admissions test, previously state-funded, was cut from the Missouri budget this school year. To eliminate the possible barrier preventing students from exploring college options, the R-I Board of Education voted unanimously in November to pick up the tab – at a discounted group rate.

“Our local board was gracious enough to allow us to do this,” said Scott Dill, superintendent. “It’s one of those threshold moments in a student’s academic career that may be a deciding factor in whether or not a student extends education to a post-secondary environment.”

Student ACT participation more than doubled since the fee was waived during 2014/15, according to information PBHS Principal Mike Owen reported to the school board. In a survey asking over 300 juniors whether they would be interested in taking the exam voluntarily, at no cost, half signed up.

Over 60 percent of PBHS students go on to college, according to the district report card recently released by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Of that percentage, about 20 percent of graduates go straight to four-year higher education

institutions.

The ACT is accepted at all universities in the United States, and is the predominant college placement test used in the Midwest, according to Tamara Day, PBHS counseling department head.

“With the opportunity to take it for free, a student who may be wouldn’t have taken it otherwise, could score better than they imagined, and realize: ‘I am college material. I have what it takes,’” Day stated.

The four-hour test will be offered free of charge on Tuesday, April 3, at PBHS with a make-up date of Tuesday, April 24. The test may be retaken up to six additional times at a cost of \$46 or \$62.50 including the writing component.

For more information, contact the counseling center at 573-785-6471.

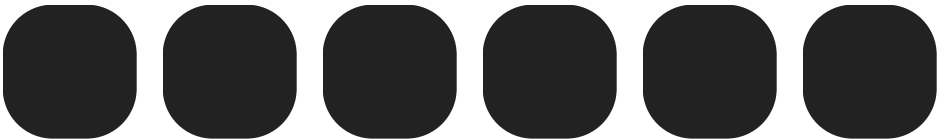
Pictured: Dr. Regina Williams, PBHS guidance counselor, hosts the first of a series of CAPS (college application party and scholarship) meetings on Tuesday, Jan. 30, in the cafeteria to assist senior advisory classes in applying to colleges or submitting scholarship applications.

Photo and article submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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[TOP](#)

## Santa's Workshop inspired by 'Toy Story'

DECEMBER 28TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

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### Santa's Workshop inspired by 'Toy Story'

Poplar Bluff, Missouri - Students of the Poplar Bluff Middle School STEM class have been designing new products out of broken toys in an activity instructors are calling Santa's Workshop.

The three-week project combines engineering and teamwork, and has a business marketing component, according to faculty. The concept was inspired by a scene in the computer-animated film, "Toy Story."

"You know the part with Sid's toys where you have the mutant toy builder?" asked Kimberly Davis, who teaches STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) with Cody Young. "We were brainstorming activities back in August, and I was just waiting until Christmas. I always loved that movie."

Last week students, grades five and six, were given the opportunity to select 2-4 used toys and then visit the supply station to assemble their creation with tools provided. The miscellaneous toys mostly came from parent donations.

This week the classes will create a commercial to sell their invention to a target audience at a chosen price range, and fourth graders will rank the best concepts. Winners will receive actual discount prizes from Disney World in Orlando, where Davis' mother Dena Burk happens to be employed.

Pictured: Isaiah Park (left) and Dyllon Lux turn a doll into an action figure/stuffed animal.

Photo and article submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director,  
Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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## The Mule Shack Teaches Valuable Life Skills

DECEMBER 21ST 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

### The Mule Shack Teaches Valuable Life Skills

The recently opened Mule Shack is serving multiple functions at Poplar Bluff Junior High—in addition to serving customers—including teaching students business math, organization and social interaction.

“Every piece of the store is a teachable moment,” said Courtney Rutledge, the instructor over the life skills class, which runs the operation under teacher supervision.

After several months of planning, a ribbon cutting for the new store was held on Oct. 13. The Mule Shack sells snacks, school spirit items and other supplies during lunch every Friday next to the cafeteria. Proceeds go toward enhancing the life skills classroom, which is currently in the market for a stove to show students some basics on how to cook.

Over the summer, the district renovated the classroom, installing plumbing, sinks, countertops and cabinets so students—grades 7-8—can obtain practical knowledge that will help them manage the demands of everyday life beyond the school day. Students cleaned and painted the room, previously used as a storage space for gym equipment, and back in the day a place where students could get malts, according to Principal Candace Warren.

Before and after lunch, students gather at the service window to make their purchases. Seventh grader Nickolas Gallamore says he is saving up to one day buy a foam finger designed for sporting events. He had been anticipating opening day for quite some time.

“Finally, here’s the day,” Nickolas recalled thinking. He gave his early review of the store. “They have all the stuff people like... music, plus the name is catchy,” he exclaimed. “It’s sure to have success.”

The name of the store was chosen by incoming Junior High students at the end of last school year. The Parent Teacher Organization helped supply the initial inventory, along with donations from businesses. The plan is for the shop to eventually become self-sustaining once it achieves profitability.

Asked what his favorite part of working at the Mule Shack is, cashier Labron Thomas of the seventh grade replied: “What I like about the store is getting to know people, and [seeing] how they’re doing.”

Pictured: Life skills students man the Mule Shack under the direction of faculty during lunchtime.

Article and photo submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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## Graduation Center Students Become Work-Ready Certified

DECEMBER 21ST 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

### Graduation Center Students Become Work-Ready Certified

Over a dozen students graduated and two scholarships were awarded during the Gateway 2 Jobs commencement on Wednesday, Oct. 25, at Poplar Bluff High School.

Founded by the Poplar Bluff Chamber of Commerce, the program gives students at the Graduation Center an opportunity to learn insider tips from local industry professionals about gaining employment. Business leaders visited the class throughout the month to share about topics such as resume writing and job interviewing.

“We are blessed in this community to have folks who could be sitting in the office making more money but take the time out of their day because they care about these kids getting a job in the workforce,” said Steve Halter, chamber president.

The program began seven years ago as the brainchild of Halter and businesswoman Sharon Kissinger of Kissinger & Kirkman Investment Centre, who felt there was a need for a work-readiness program, and have a soft spot for students working on credit recovery due to various life circumstances.

In addition to participating in a series of lectures in order to earn certificates of completion, students had to complete volunteer work in the community, maintain a GPA above passing and have no discipline referrals.

“Finish what you start, take some risks, have a plan but be willing to adjust, dream big and put steps in place to achieve those goals,” advised regional director Jomo Castro of AT&T Missouri, which was one of several business sponsors. The contacts that students made throughout the course of the program will continue to be resources for them in the community, Castro noted.

Kissinger, along with the Three Rivers Endowment Trust, awarded students Michaela Swift and Jerry Faughn with \$500 scholarships respectively to the community college based on essays submitted. Mayor Ed DeGaris was present for the ceremony to personally congratulate the graduates.

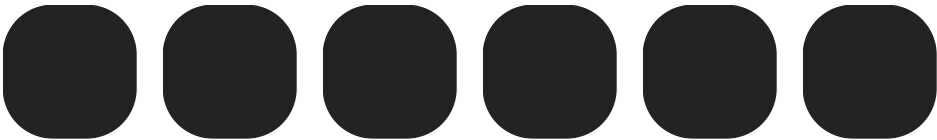
Pictured are students display their certificates with program supporters. Graduates were (in alphabetical order) Richard Anderson, Brian Battles, Kyle Blanchard, Jordan Brown, Dakota Carlton, Jerry Faughn, Krista Johnson, Corey Lashley, Laquarious Marshall, Floyd Ray, Michael Simpson and Deamario Thomas. Not present was Michaela Swift.

Article and photo submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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## District-Wide Public Speaking Contest Winner

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### District-Wide Public Speaking Contest Winner

Poplar Bluff High School senior Logan Dunlap won the Southeast District speaking portion of the 2017 Missouri Sheep Producers State FFA contest earlier this month at Osage Beach, later placing fourth at state.

The contest is designed to develop individual public speaking skills and to promote interest in and awareness of the many different aspects of the sheep industry, according to a press release issued by the organization. Logan's speech topic was sheep production in Missouri.

Logan is a senior FFA officer at PBHS with plans of running for state office, according to his sponsor Kathryn Clark, agriculture teacher. Last spring, he earned a group one rating at the state competition for extemporaneous speaking.

Pictured: Logan Dunlap (far left), along with the other district-wide winners, were presented awards and \$50 checks on Sunday, Dec. 3, at the Tan-Tar-A Resort.

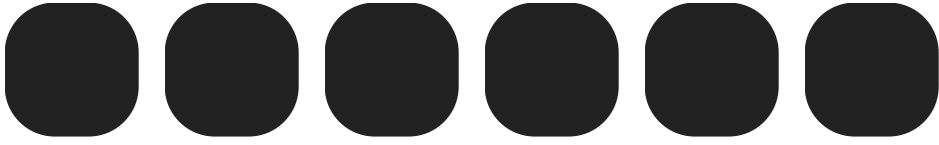
Photo and article submitted by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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