

Local Schools



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Free Dinner Service Offered Across PB School District

OCTOBER 02ND 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

Free Dinner Service Offered Across PB School District

Chartwells began offering dinner services for free last week at five additional school sites where after school enrichment programs and services such as tutoring, club activities and latch-key are available to all students.

Approved sites under Missouri's At-Risk Afterschool Program include the Kindergarten Center from 3:55-4:30 p.m., Oak Grove and O'Neal Elementary from 3:50-4:30 p.m., Junior High from 4-4:30 p.m., and Poplar Bluff High School from 5-5:30 p.m.

Students participating in athletics or band can receive meals to go, which "is going to touch a lot of lives," Assistant Superintendent of Business Dr. Amy Jackson reported Thursday, Sept. 19, during the school board meeting. Superintendent Dr. Scott Dill added that the meals would be "nutritionally balanced," as opposed to vending machine snacks.

Chartwells, a long-standing partner of the R-I school district, received a total of \$15,000 in grant funding through No Kid Hungry Missouri in order to purchase backup ovens, as well as warmers and coolers to create the storage space necessary to serve the additional meals.

So far 260 dinners are being served daily by kitchen personnel, officials have recorded. Dinner is already available at Eugene Field, Lake Road and the Middle School for students who participate in 'power hour' through the Boys and Girls Club on campus.

“Mom or dad may have to work until 5 or 6,” explained Dixie Harden, food services director. “Now you know your child has had something to eat and you’re not in rush mode when you get home to feed them, because you no longer have to worry about your child being hungry.”

Dinner through Missouri’s At-Risk Afterschool Program, administered by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, is federally-reimbursable under the United States Department of Agriculture since the approved schools serve at least 50 percent of children eligible for free and reduced-price meals.

Following summer school, Chartwells provided children a total of 8,500 meals for lunch and breakfast at Poplar Bluff Head Start and Wheatley School with help from a near \$5,000 grant under the same initiative, in cooperation with Family and Community Trust. Meals served throughout July exceeded 10,000 counting those offered through the BGC, Harden reported. Chartwells also sponsors the district Mule Packs program, distributing around 150 bags of nonperishables bimonthly to students in need.

“When you’re in the cafeteria, you can tell when kids are hungry, and to know some kids may not get a meal when they go home [drives] me,” said Harden, noting that dinner is optional if students have arrangements afterward. “I love challenges and am blessed to have the team I have and be able to help in these ways.”

Janice Vincent (forefront) and Angie Kearbey of Chartwells serve hot ravioli to elementary students on Thursday, Sept. 26, at O’Neal.

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

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Eddie Moss Day celebrated at PBJHS

SEPTEMBER 26TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

Eddie Moss Day celebrated at PBJHS

Poplar Bluff, Missouri - Former NFL player Eddie Moss was recognized on the field where he once played on Thursday, Sept. 19, during Poplar Bluff Junior High's first home football game of the season.

Earlier in the day, Moss spoke about leadership to 115 students in a pod named in his honor under the Junior High's house system, which groups students across classes and grade levels in an effort to create a sense of camaraderie within the school community.

"In order to be a leader, you also gotta be a follower," said Moss, who graduated from PBHS in 1967. "If you're just barking orders, you become a dictator. You gotta listen to the people around you too."

Having a "good attitude, integrity and people skills" are also key leadership qualities, Moss noted. In preparation for his hometown visit, the students toured the Poplar Bluff Museum to learn about the Moss family, and other pieces of local history displayed in a building over a century-old that the R-I district sold to the city for a dollar

Moss began his athletic career as a basketball player until he started "growing wider instead of taller," he joked. Past Mules Football coach Jim Lohr took the budding student-athlete under his wing during the summer of Moss' sophomore year to teach the young man the game. Summertime typically meant farm work so it was a "big deal" for his parents JD and Willie Marie to allow him to stay with the coach, Moss explained, describing Lohr as a "second father."

As a varsity Mule, Moss played a number of positions including offensive center, defensive nose tackle, running back, fullback, linebacker and later in college, tailback. "It

helps to play a lot of positions,” he advised the students about being versatile. The Mules went undefeated in 1966.

Moss earned a full ride to Central Methodist University in Fayette, but unfortunately sustained injuries in an auto accident causing him to lose the scholarship, he reflected. He persevered to play football at Indian Hills Community College in Iowa eventually transferring to Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau, where he was named to the All-Conference team.

In 1972, Moss was drafted by the Buffalo Bills but was the last player to get cut during preseason. He returned to Poplar Bluff to help coach the Mules, yet soon would receive a second break, getting picked up by the St. Louis Football Cardinals from 1973-76. He finished his professional career with the Washington Redskins, from 1977-78. He was inducted into the Missouri Sports Hall of Fame in the Class of 2016.

Moss, who turns 71 on Friday, Sept. 27, resides in St. Louis with his wife Phyllis. Earlier this year, Moss was gracious enough to donate his collection of sports memorabilia to the PBHS wall of fame, revamped by security officer Wesley Lewis.

Eddie Moss Day was organized last week by communication arts teacher Chris East. Each of the school’s houses are named after famous living Poplar Bluff alumni including TV producer Linda Bloodworth-Thomason, basketball player Tyler Hansbrough, voice-over actor Scott Innes, author Linda Ladd, football player Derland Moore, and Moss himself. The other pods will seek opportunities to make similar connections with their namesakes, according to Principal Candace Warren.

Pictured: Eddie Moss sits with PBJHS students after signing autographs over lunch on Thursday, Sept. 19, in the FEMA gym.

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

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New Class Teaches Students Value of Community Service

SEPTEMBER 11TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

New Class Teaches Students Value of Community Service

A focus on developing a sense of community at Poplar Bluff Junior High School has led students to seek out ways to contribute to the community at large.

Last year, each pod within the building's 'house system' adopted a community organization to fundraise for including the Bread Shed, FosterAdopt Connect SEMO, Hearts for Rescue and St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry, plus visits were made to area nursing homes.

The student-led efforts were so well-received that a dedicated elective was created this semester called Community Service Learning.

“It fits perfectly with what [Principal Candace Warren] is trying to do with houses—trying to build a community here at school—but also as a town,” social studies teacher Aaron Duncan explained. “The more unity you have in the community, the more energy there is, and the positive influence rubs off.”

Duncan, and his colleague Lyndsee Moon in the social studies department, approached Warren in the spring with the idea of introducing the elective and, upon receiving approval, the class quickly filled up. The course description reads in part: This experience will allow students not only to become familiar with the community in which they live but

will also allow them to see themselves as active, powerful people who can make positive contributions through these efforts.

The participants are presently practicing their “elevator speeches” to effectively raise awareness as they learn about different societal issues, according to faculty. Guest speakers from the nonprofit sector may soon be invited to discuss their missions. The ultimate goal will be to select charitable causes to get involved with in the community, or to create their own philanthropic campaigns.

“I feel like a lot of students don’t think they can [make a difference], and we’re showing them that they’re capable of doing something productive,” Moon said. “We’re teaching how you can help make our community a better place no matter what your age is, no matter what is wrong.”

The house system modeled at PBJHS was originated by the Ron Clark Academy in Atlanta to establish a family-like culture by providing students the opportunity to connect with peers across classes and grade levels that they may not otherwise have a chance to interact with.

“In order to give this age group of students a sense of empathy, we’re exposing them to different populations and organizations so they can play an active role in serving others, because we want to develop leaders,” Warren stated. “These students will be the leaders in our community one day, so we might as well start now.”

Pictured: Students Carley Brooks (forefront) and Makayla Schalk, now freshmen, help collect several bags of trash on a walk to Bacon Park during the annual PBJHS EdExpo in May.

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

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TCC Starts First New Program in Over a Decade

SEPTEMBER 10TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

TCC Starts First New Program in Over a Decade

Poplar Bluff, Missouri - The Poplar Bluff Technical Career Center has launched its first new program in over a decade this school year with the addition of computer science in what was once the health occupations classroom.

The instructor, Michael Barrett, received a full month of training through Project Lead The Way in Indianapolis over the summer in order to develop a transformative learning experience for students interested in the burgeoning career field.

“I’m 61 years old and I’m having a blast! I love teaching this stuff, and we’re just getting started. The further we go along, the better,” Barrett said. “And being able to substitute a math or science credit? My goodness, that’s a great opportunity! We’re gonna be packed with students.”

The career educator participated in consecutive workshops in July outlining PLTW Essentials and Principles, covering a year’s worth of curriculum in two-week blocks, he explained. The coursework—designed by the nation’s premier provider of science, technology, engineering and math curriculum and professional development—will teach app creation, coding and programming using software such as Blockly, Python and VEXcode.

"It allows you to think of new ways to problem-solve," commented senior Maria Powell, who was collaborating with classmate Jeremy Bell on Friday, Aug. 30, to create characters for an interactive game using MIT App Inventor. "It's a disease," added junior Aron Johnson, referring to the time one can spend working out the details.

Barrett, who obtained his master's degree in administration as well as a bachelor's in engineering management through Arkansas State University, spent almost 20 years of his tenure teaching advanced manufacturing at the Northeast Arkansas Career & Tech Center in Jonesboro, which was also a PLTW certified school. More recently he served as project director for Three Rivers College.

In May, the Missouri State Board of Education approved the updated computer science performance academic standards to include the core concept areas of computing systems, networks and the internet, data and analysis, algorithms and programming, and impacts of coding. Upon receiving district approval, high school students will have the option to substitute a computer science credit in place of a mathematics, science or practical arts credit toward graduation effective in 2019/20, according to a recent memo by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Last year, Gov. Mike Parson signed the STEM Education and Computer Science Bill into law at the Poplar Bluff High School campus in an effort to curb outsourcing and capture some of the job market in Missouri. Sen. Doug Libla of Poplar Bluff served as handler of the legislation, which also established a fund for future public or private financial support.

In January, the R-I Board of Education approved a proposal to add the program at the Technical Career Center, where startup funds are available under the federal Perkins Act and through matching enhancement grants. School officials are currently working on creating a weighted AP module of the program to be offered as early as spring semester, according to Director Charles Kinsey.

"We're highlighting the fact that career and technical education in 2019 is not what people may think it was back in the 70s, 80s and even 90s," Kinsey stated. "Students [pursuing] career technical fields, no matter the program, will attain the same entry-level of knowledge as college graduates, if not higher."

Pictured: Maria Powell, a senior, performs a magic trick utilizing binary numbers. "With computer programming, math is our friend," instructor Michael Barrett (left) says.

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

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MRTF Awards \$500 Grant to PBHS teacher

AUGUST 29TH 2019 BY DEE LOFLIN

MRTF Awards \$500 Grant to PBHS teacher

Poplar Bluff High School business education teacher Pamela Davis was awarded a \$500 grant from the Missouri Retired Teachers Foundation on Wednesday, Aug. 14, so students can create interactive folders detailing concepts learned in personal finance class.

“Students will be learning objectives centered on budgeting, saving, credit/lending, checking, financial decision making, spending, taxes and earning income,” wrote Davis in her proposal. “My goal is to help them prepare for their future by creating a resource of knowledge, which they can take with them to reflect on.”

The funding will be used toward supplies for approximately 90 students, including file folders, binding rings, play money, hole punches, writing utensils and other materials.

Davis was among seven regional recipients chosen in the association’s annual classroom grant program.

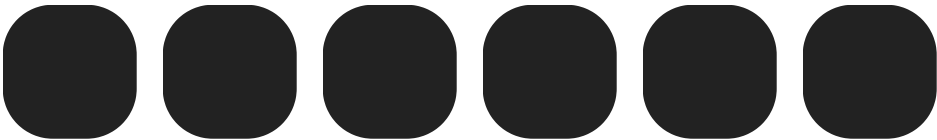
Pictured (Left to right) R-I Superintendent Dr. Scott Dill, MRTA Region 12 Vice President Anne Moyer, teacher Pam Davis, MRTF board member John Moyer, Butler County Unit Vice President James Barnhill and Butler County Unit Secretary Jan Duffy.

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

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