

# AAPSNews

News, features, profiles and activities in The Ann Arbor Public Schools

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Issue No. 22, October 11, 2010

## Clinic treats Scarlett students to day of music

From AAPSNews Service

The day Deborah Katz dreamed about all summer took place on Friday.

Tucked away in various rooms at Scarlett Middle School were professional musicians working with band students who were spending the day immersed in music. It was the first Scarlett Band Clinic Day, funded through \$1,000 from the E. Daniel Long Fund for Excellence in Music Education, plus donations for lunch from the school's PTSO and Hiller's Markets.

"I think it's going great," Katz said following the morning clinics for seventh- and eighth-graders. "The teachers are really zeroing in on what I wanted, which is

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Middle School students enjoy one of 10 sessions during the first Band Clinic Day at the school on Oct. 8 The all-day event featured clinics specific to instrument type as well as one-on-one time for students to spend with musical experts who conducted the clinics.

## Community bids farewell to Roberts

Leadership, dedication lauded in superintendent's final week

By Casey Hans  
AAPSNews Service

As the community applauded outgoing Superintendent Todd Roberts for his can-do approach last week, a humbled Roberts sang the praises of those who surrounded him during his four years here.

"You should always recognize the wonderful work you're doing, even sometimes when others may not tell us that," Roberts said in parting comments. "When I think about my short time here, I really feel honored to be a part of this."

Roberts was honored Oct. 7, during a community reception at Skyline High

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Shoichi Hinatsu from Hikone, Japan visits with students at Logan Elementary School.

## 32nd delegation from sister city Hikone visits Ann Arbor

From AAPSNews Service

A delegation from Hikone, Japan, Ann Arbor's sister city, came for a cultural visit and educational experience in the Ann Arbor Public Schools.

The group toured the schools last week and the 14 student

visitors stayed with local host families and attended middle and high school classes. The group was here from Oct. 4-11.)

Logan Elementary Principal Terra Webster was one of the school staff members to greet visitors and take them on a tour.

"What a treat for our

Japanese-speaking students," she said. "To see their culture not only represented but invited."

Kayoko Baba of the Hikone International Friendship Association and Shoichi Hinatsu, a senior staff member with the

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## Delegation, from page 1

Hikone Board of Education, toured and asked questions about teaching styles, how non-English speaking students learn and how schools in the United States pay for books and other educational materials.

Webster explained that Logan has 360 students enrolled and that 25 different languages are spoken there. "We have a number of international fairs and festivals; we try to have two or three per year to have all of our cultures represented," she told the visitors.

She said visitors and families "can experience the diversity of culture right here in our building." It was the first time a Japanese delegation had visited Logan.

Webster told the two that non-English speakers have their lessons in English, but they also have tutors and help from translators as needed. Non-English speaking families also get assistance, including help filling out needed paperwork and tutoring help. Logan does a Language Survey of families, which helps the school to better serve its population.

Baba and Hinatsu were surprised to hear that U.S. schools paid for textbooks and other materials – something they said Japanese families must do on their own. Webster also told the visitors about the school's Harold Logan Fund, which assists students for non-school items they might need including coats, boots and even eyeglasses.

The two communicated with staff and students through interpreter Mariko Mackie.

Ann Arbor teachers volunteered to accompany the delegation on each of its visits; on this day at Logan, Dave Corsa, a teacher from Allen Elementary, was with the group. Corsa, who has traveled to Japan and hosted a number of Japanese



Kayoko Baba, left, and Shoichi Hinatsu, right, meet with Logan Elementary School principal Terra Webster. Here, Webster presents the visitors from Hinoko, Japan with gifts on behalf of the school.

visitors in his home, said he was pleased to assist. "I'm a great supporter of the Hikone Exchange program," he said. "It's incredible for the kids."

During their time at Logan, the visitors saw a sampling of classrooms and student levels, including a visit to the first-grade class of Ann Marie Borders, who served as a project director for Ann Arbor students visiting Hikone last fall. Borders has incorporated Japanese culture into her class, including allowing students to dress in traditional Japanese clothing and teaching them to eat with chopsticks as well as using cultural lessons for writing assignments.

Larry Dishman, who coordinates the Hikone exchange program, said one of the final things outgoing Superintendent Todd Roberts did on his last day was to meet with the visiting Japanese project directors.

"It's very much an honor and, for me, is a very touching thing," Dishman said. "He's embraced this program. We have had a good ally with Dr. Roberts. He's going to be sorely missed."

Twenty-one Ann Arbor students were involved with hosting the Hikone students in their homes last week. Along with attending school with Ann

Arbor students, the Hikone students visited Greenfield Village, joined in a number of home-stay activities with host families and attended a Sunday night "Sayonara Party" at Conor O'Neill's in downtown Ann Arbor.

Japanese students attended Skyline High School and the district's middle schools while they were here. The delegations visited Logan and Angell elementary schools, as well.

On Oct. 31, a delegation of 12 Ann Arbor eighth- and ninth-grade students will travel to Japan on a goodwill mission during which the students will spend a week in Hikone, attending local schools and staying in the homes of junior high school students.

This will be the 17th delegation of Ann Arbor students to participate in the exchange program. Last year, an Ann Arbor student delegation made a special visit to Hikone to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the sister city relationship.

The Hikone dovetails into Ann Arbor's World Language initiative with The University of Michigan that brings foreign language into elementary schools.

By 2016, high school students must have two years of a world language to graduate.

## School Bells

### Pioneer earns commended honors

Ann Arbor's Pioneer High School has been selected by the National Wind Band Honors Project as a 2010 Commended Winner in its Mark of Excellence program.

The program had 138 entries this year, according to Rick Yancey, managing director of the program. "The Pioneer band is an exemplary group and a credit to your teaching and leadership," Yancey said in his announcement.

Adjudicators for the project were Craig Kirchoff, band director at the University of Minnesota; Gary Green, director of bands at the University of Miami; and Mark Camphouse, composer, assistant dean of the School of Music and director of bands at George Mason University.

"It says a lot for what we do here," said David Leach, Pioneer's director of bands since 2001, who said his school is fortunate to be involved in such a good program. "Ann Arbor has done better than most (districts) in focusing on the fine arts. We are an art-directed school district and get a lot of support."

Music performed and recorded by the Pioneer Symphony Band between September 2009 and March 2010 was submitted for review and consideration. Submitted were the band performing "Lincolnshire Posy" by Perry Grainger, and "Wild Nights!" by Frank Ticheli. Pioneer competes in the 5A class, which is the largest of the competition's categories, Leach said.

There are 86 members in the Pioneer Symphony Band this year.

### Volunteers sought for emergency event

The Ann Arbor Public Schools will host a full-scale emergency management event on Saturday, Oct. 23 as the final requirement for the grant the school district received from the U.S. Department of Education Readiness and Emergency Management For Schools, or REMS.

The event will take place at Ann Arbor Open @ Mack at 7:30 a.m. and will last no later than noon.

This event is done in cooperation with area law enforcement and emergency medical teams and is intended to test the response of the district and local law enforcement in the event of a full-scale crisis event occurring in an Ann Arbor school.

The district is seeking volunteer parents and students in grades 7-12 who are willing to play the roles of parents, students, teachers and other staff as well as playing the roles of concerned citizens. A total of 175 persons will be needed for the drill.

Anyone interested in volunteering for the emergency drill should e-mail Director of Communications Liz Margolis by Oct. 19 at [margolis@aaps.k12.mi.us](mailto:margolis@aaps.k12.mi.us).

# Community volunteers at area parks

## Students donate 960 hours in all-school event

By Casey Hans  
AAPSNews Service

**A** crisp morning beckoned and Community High School answered the call, big time.

The entire student body and some 24 faculty members fanned out around the city on Oct. 6 working with the City of Ann Arbor Natural Area Preservation Division to clean up in 10 area parks – clearing brush, cutting out invasive species and laying wood chips. Some 360 students volunteered a total of 960 hours.

Community High teacher Marci Tuzinsky said partnering with the city this fall has allowed Community students to make a noticeable impact in a short time. “This was the largest work day (the Natural Area Preservation) has ever organized,” she said.

The Ann Arbor Transportation Authority also contributed, offering bus vouchers to allow students to get to the various sites easily.

For the Community Service Work Day students organized into their school Forum groups, which are small communities students spend their four years in while enrolled at Community. The groups allow them to bond both in school and for service projects, said teacher Anne Thomas, whose Forum group was working at the Leslie Science and Nature Center.

There, students worked in a prairie area clearing paths in preparation for a Halloween event – some created the pathways while others used loppers to trim back brush.

The school’s Forum Council first discussed doing an all-school event on an early release day last spring, when students tackled invasive garlic mustard at city parks and also worked at some elementary schools. Sophomore Rianna Johnson-Levy was participated. “I was part of the garlic mustard contingent,” she said. “It was intense. They showed us the plant and it was the whole forest – it was a lot of work.”

Teacher Kevin McGraw, working at a Leslie



Community High School students work at Leslie Woods (above) and at the Leslie Science and Nature Center (below) during the school’s second Community Service Day. The all-school event took place at 10 parks.

Woods site this fall, said the inaugural spring event “was such a school wide success, we put it in the hands of the park agency. We’re feeling blessed.”

Also at Leslie Woods was teacher Craig Levin, who said students were ready for this second challenge. “After last spring, they were begging to do it again,” he said.

Students wielded saws and a lot of elbow grease as they took down Autumn Olive, buckthorn and honeysuckle plants during last week’s fall cleanup. Jason Frenzel, volunteer and outreach coordinator for Ann Arbor Natural Area Preservation said the city was pleased to partner with the Ann Arbor high school.

“Community’s been really fun to work with,” he said. “They’re really getting a lot done here.”

Frenzel said the city relies on many volunteer groups to help keep the city’s parks in shape.

Working at the Leslie Science and Nature Center, senior Christine Hagan said it makes more sense for the school to do a service project on the early release day instead of trying to attend condensed classes when it is hard to accomplish anything academically. “I feel we are

doing more to help here,” she said.

In addition to Leslie Woods and the Leslie Science and Nature Center, Community High students and staff also worked at other sites last week: Bird Hills Nature Area, Black Pond Woods, Bluffs Nature Area, Cedar Bend Nature Area, Dolph Park, Gallup Park, Kuebler Langford Nature Area and Mary Beth Doyle Park. Students also worked at Greenview, which the city helps to manage with the school district and neighborhood volunteers.

NAP also coordinated with a number of other local organizations that loaned tools and referred additional volunteer leaders: the Stewardship Network, Mattheai Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum, Legacy Land Conservancy, the Friends of Greenview Nature Area, the Conservation Stewards Program and the AATA. The city’s Forestry and Park Operations also participated.

About 50 paid staff hours were spent on the cleanup and another 45 hours spent by volunteer leaders.

Students and NAP officials said they expect to continue the effort each fall and spring in future years.



**‘Community’s been really fun to work with. They’re really getting a lot done here.’**

– Jason Frenzel, volunteer and outreach coordinator for City of Ann Arbor Natural Area Preservation

## Todd Roberts, from page 1

School's commons area. His last day with the district was Oct. 8.

Roberts also thanked the community and talked about partnerships the district has developed with The University of Michigan and the "bold new strides" made by the AAPS Educational Foundation.

Roberts is leaving Ann Arbor to be closer to his extended family. He has accepted the post of chancellor of the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics.

Ann Arbor Board of Education President Deb Mexicotte praised Roberts for his positive approach. "We have always been a district of 'yes,'" she said. "We have always said yes to achievement ... to honesty and fair play ... to reaching and aspiring and to doing whatever we can to bring our students the best experience possible." She cited the World Language initiative in elementary schools, finishing the comprehensive building improvement plan and building a strategic plan as highlights of Roberts' time in Ann Arbor.

Retired AAPS Superintendent Scott Westerman was on the citizen committee that participated in hiring Roberts in June 2006. "The qualities you possess set the stage for making the most of the talent and interest others have," he said. "You have left an immense legacy." Westerman noted the opening of Skyline High School as well as Roberts' progress in closing the achievement gap as his key achievements.

Martine Perreault, chairwoman for the Ann Arbor PTO Council, lauded Roberts for his exceptional listening skills and said the PTO Council grew and blossomed under his leadership, becoming involved with school finance and budget issues and improving communication for parents.

Brit Satchwell, president of the Ann Arbor Education Association, said he respected Roberts' leadership, especially sitting across the bargaining table. "When you have everybody saying 'I can work for that guy,' you have everybody ... entering into this collaborative atmosphere where everything suddenly becomes possible," he said.

A humorous presentation from Joan Fitzgibbon and Michael Madison, Ann Arbor principals representing The Ann Arbor Area Administrators Association offered an evaluation of Roberts, but with serious undertones noting his decisiveness and leadership during his four years here.

Speaking on behalf of The University of Michigan's School of Education was Dean Deborah Lowenberg Ball, who said the partnerships that have developed under Roberts'



Todd Roberts greets well-wishers last week during a reception in his honor at Skyline High School.

watch are unheard of elsewhere.

"Very few communities manage to do this in a very serious way," she said. "We didn't continue the rhetoric of how might we build partnerships, how might we work together. In quick succession over the last four years, Todd ... proposed one really interesting idea after another."

She said initiatives that team U-M teachers with the district, such as the elementary World Language program and the district's Summer Learning Institute are unique. She said Roberts has agreed to continue serving on her Dean's Advisory Council and that the university is committed to continuing the partnerships with the district's new leadership.

Deputy Superintendent for Operations Robert Allen is now serving as interim superintendent as the AAPS Board of Education searches for a permanent replacement for Roberts.

Ray & Associates, an Iowa professional services firm, is leading the search. A series of meetings will be planned yet this month to get community input. Those meeting dates are not yet firm and will be posted on the AAPSNews site when they are scheduled.

## Band Clinic, from page 1

sound. And the students are really focused. They've been at it since 8:15."

Katz earned the fund's first award last spring, named after retired Ann Arbor music teacher Dan Long. Long and his wife, Kay, also a retired Ann Arbor music teacher, visited Scarlett and said it is the type of activity he envisioned when the fund was set up eight years ago.

"This is exactly what I had in mind," he said, after spending the morning observing.

Katz said she wanted to bring the 10 professionals to Scarlett to give her students the experience of a private music lesson – because many don't get that opportunity.

Both Eastern Michigan University and The University of Michigan were represented at the clinic as well as a number of private music teachers from the area. The grant paid for a stipend allowing the teachers to come for the day. Students had full clinics as well as time to meet and interact with the teachers one-on-one. The experts did clinics on flute, oboe, bassoon, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, French horn, trombone, baritone/tuba and percussion instruments.

Between 120 and 130 students are involved in the Scarlett band program and Katz said she would like to "grow the program and raise the bar at the same time." Katz said she would like to see the clinic day continue either once or twice each year for Scarlett music students. She said if any local group or business is interested in sponsoring it, she would name the day in their honor. She can be reached by e-mailing [katz@aaps.k12.mi.us](mailto:katz@aaps.k12.mi.us).

To donate to The E. Daniel Long Fund for Excellence in Music Education visit [www.aaacf.org](http://www.aaacf.org) or call 734-663-0401.



**BOX OF GOODIES** — First-grade teacher Josh Tumolo at Ann Arbor Open @ Mack received \$1,000 in classroom supplies, including a new desk chair, from OfficeMax as part of the company's "A Day Made Better." He was one of 1,000 teachers around the country to get the box of gifts. "It was a complete surprise – I'm just as surprised as you are," he told his students.