

PANTHER PRESS

Parchment School District Newsletter

parchmentschools.org February 2024



IT'S ALL ABOUT THE KIDS! *Our mission is to ensure that all students are challenged to excel in their individual social and intellectual growth, while achieving those essential academic and interpersonal skills necessary to become a successful, contributing member of society.*

PLUS:
More News
Stories
Online



Superintendent's Letter

At this time of the year, I am filled with a sense of excitement and gratitude for the opportunities it brings. February is a month of significance, rich in historical and cultural milestones as the celebration of diverse voices invites us on a journey of reflection, celebration, and inspiration.

Celebrating Black History, this month marks a time to intentionally honor the contributions, achievements, and resilience of African Americans throughout history. This month serves as a powerful reminder to embrace diversity, unity, and appreciation for the stories that have shaped our nation, as we build bridges that connect our diverse experiences and shared values.

At this, the midpoint of the academic year, it is fitting to celebrate the achievements of our students, educators, and staff. Each success becomes a building block, contributing to our district's growth and excellence, and an opportunity to build bridges—connecting hearts, minds, and experiences within our school district. Valentine's Day, nestled in this month of significance, serves as a poignant reminder to prioritize love and kindness. We encourage our students to express gratitude, embrace a spirit of understanding, and make intentional contributions to create a safe and supportive learning environment. It is a chance for us to emphasize the importance of compassion, empathy, and grace in our daily interactions.

In January, we honored our Board of Education members during School Board Appreciation Month, recognizing the time, effort, and visionary leadership they provide for our school district. Our school board members approach their volunteer work like a full time job as they work to ensure our schools are accountable to the community and advocate for continuous improvement in student learning. The job of a school board member is tough, the hours long and the thanks are sometimes few and far between. Decision making processes are increasingly complex in nature. However, our school board members remain steadfast in their unwavering commitment to our children and the future of Parchment School District. Looking ahead to National Leadership Day, observed on February 20th, we are reminded of the importance of collective leadership where educators, parents, community members and students unite to guide our educational journey.

May this new year be filled with collaborative growth and shared success; one of united development and connection as we collectively shape the narrative of our community. Together, let's paint a picture that reflects the values we hold dear—diversity, kindness, and the shared responsibility we bear for the education and well-being of our children. May we be inspired not just as observers but as active participants- architects of bridges that strengthen the connections within our school district and community.

Sincerely,
Dr. Sarah Neumann

school board



Jill Wisser
President
3 years



Jennifer Miller
Vice-President
7 years



Michelle Ammon
Treasurer
7 years



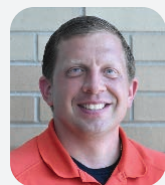
Amy Followell
Secretary
2 year



Dodi Leckie
Trustee
9 years



Ethan Garner
Trustee
2.5 years



Jeff Haspas
Trustee
7 months

contacts

Dr. Sarah Neumann, Superintendent
(269) 488-1050
sneumann@parchmentschools.org

Cathy Lawson, Finance Director
(269) 488-1065
cathy.lawson@parchmentschools.org

SCHOOLS

High School
(269) 488-1100
Craig Thornton, Principal
craig.thornton@parchmentschools.org

Middle School
(269) 488-1200
Jessica Schultz, Principal
jessica.schultz@parchmentschools.org

Central Elementary
(269) 488-1000
Julia Kaemming, Principal
jkaemming@parchmentschools.org

North Elementary
(269) 488-1400
Marcy Patterson, Principal
mpatterson@parchmentschools.org

Northwood Elementary
(269) 488-1300
Phyllis Mion, Principal
phyllis.mion@parchmentschools.org

Parchment Innovation Center
(269) 488-1470
Craig Thornton, Director
craig.thornton@parchmentschools.org

Parchment Early Learning Center
(269) 488-1360
Anna Wessing, Co-Director
anna.wessing@parchmentschools.org
Emily Whittico, Co-Director
emily.whittico2@parchmentschools.org

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Transportation Director
(269) 488-1290

Director of Operations
(269) 488-1091

Theresa Weckerle
tweckerle@parchmentschools.org

Food Service
Holly Wait, Chartwells
(269) 488-1127
hwait@parchmentschools.org

parchmentschools.org

23-24 STAFF MINI GRANT WINNERS:

James Young	Special Olympiad Competition Funding
Kim Palms	Math Stackers Building Blocks
Noah Coston	Classroom Fish Tank
Amy Sue Manley	Large Print for Striving Readers
Kaitlin Bisel	Drawing Tablets for HS Digital Art
Jamie Fedewa	Kindergarten Sensory Bins
Hillary Campbell	Sculpture Building in the Art Room
Amanda Militzer	Choice Novel Options for 6th Grade
Lauren Hill	Harmony Horizons: A Diverse Band Repertoire Initiative
Cathy Ehrmann	Forensic Science - Unsolved Cases Files
Riley Callan	Choir Instruments

Holiday Sharing Card 2023 Design Winner



At the December 18, 2023 School Board meeting, Parchment Schools Foundation Trustee, Nanette Kokmeyer presented Hameedat Sarumi, as the winner of the 2023 Holiday Sharing Card design competition. Hameedat Sarumi, is a 5th grade student at North Elementary. Her design was selected from many other elementary artists' drawings to be the cover of the 2023 Holiday Sharing Card. Contributions to the annual Holiday Sharing Card fundraiser support scholarships and mini-grants offered through the Foundation. North principal, Marcy Patterson and art instructor, Hillary Campbell were also present to celebrate Hameedat's accomplishment.

Front row (l-r): Hillary Campbell, Fareedah Sarumi, Hameedat Sarumi, Nanette Kokmeyer, Middle row: Anisah Sarumi, Back row (l-r): Marcy Patterson, Sultan Sarumi, Azeezat Sarumi



Says Thank-You!

The **Parchment Schools Foundation** would like to thank staff, community friends and businesses who contributed to the Holiday Sharing Card in **2023**. This year almost **\$3,000.00** was donated. The monies will be used to fund student scholarships, provide mini-grants for teachers, and will help support educational projects in the District in the coming year. The Foundation sends a big **Thank-You** to all who are listed below for their financial support:

Butler, Toweson & Payseno LLC
D & S Auto/Kalamazoo Shop
Ty Kelley State Farm Agent

Bob & Nancy Klesert
Craig & Diane Misner
Dan & Mary Lou DeGraw
Dan & Nancie Closson
Dave & Larie Person
Dave & Rhonda Newman
Denny & Shauna Collison
Faupel Family
Georges & Pam Gagnon
Janet Bussema
Jim & Lynne Cowart
Joe & Kathy Creek
Jon & Julie Heasley
Laura Gibson Vessey
Mark & Cheryl Jenness
Marty King

Michael & Carol O'Connor
Mike & Cathy McCarthy
Neumann Family
Rick & Martha Serafini
Rob & Claudia Britigan
Rob & Karen Heasley
Robert & Tyria Adams
Scott & Kristine Gibson
Steve & Nanette Kokmeyer
Steve & Tina Terry
Steve Humphrey
Thomas & Cheryl Balmer
Tom and Molly Andrews

CENTRAL

Central Elementary Student Council Pet Supply Drive

January 29th - February 16th

The student council has decided to organize a Pet Supply Drive for our project this trimester. We are going to be collecting pet supplies to donate to the Animal Rescue Project (ARP), which is a local no kill rescue and adoption organization. They are funded solely through the support of pet lovers in the Southwest Michigan region.



If you are able to participate, you may begin sending in items from the list on Monday, January 29th. We will continue collecting items until February 16th and will then make the donation.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Nic Millet
2nd Grade Teacher
nmillet@parchmentschools.org
animalrescueproject.org



Here are pictures from a puppy visit from ARP!



ANIMAL RESCUE PROJECT Donation Wish List

Office Supplies

- Copy paper
- Ink cartridges HP202x and EPSON822XL
- Sharpies
- Dry erase markers
- Scissors
- Tab file folders
- Avery shipping labels 3½ by 4 in
- Avery shipping labels 8½ by 11 in
- Scotch tape

Dog Food

- Any brand of canned food, adult or puppy
- Purina Pro Plan dry dog food
- Diamond Naturals small bites dog food
- Fromm dog foods—any kind, adult or puppy
- Iams, Royal Canin, Eukanuba, Redford, Natural Balance, Nutro, Wellness, 4 Health, Zignature

Linens and Towels

- New or used sheets, flat or fitted
- Strong need for these
- New or used towels, wash cloths, hand towels
- Blankets

Cleaning Supplies

- Bleach
- Any brand liquid HE (high-efficiency) laundry soap
- Original blue Dawn liquid soap
- Garbage bags—kitchen-size and large heavy-duty
- Paper towels
- Hand sanitizer
- Lysol or Clorox wipes
- Mr. Clean Magic Erasers

Cat Food

- Tiki Cat Stix
- Fancy Feast Broths, which helps with cats who are ill and need help eating
- Dry Purina Cat Chow complete
- Purina Kitten Chow

Cat & Dog Toys

- All Shapes and textures
- Cat Litter
- Scoopable or clumping preferred, but will accept all kinds

Crates

- All sizes and types for dogs and cats

Parchment Athletics Senior Spotlight



ABIGAIL JOHNSON is the February Parchment Athletics Spotlight Senior of the Month.

Abigail (Abby) participates in girls basketball and girls soccer. Abby joined the basketball team as a junior in November of 2022 and has been an integral part of our girls basketball program's improvement this season. The team won the Bangor Invitational in 2023 and finished runner-up in 2024. Abby will continue her senior sports season this spring with the soccer team.

Abby also challenges herself in the classroom. She is dual enrolled at KVCC while taking AP and Honors courses at Parchment High School.

Coach Kevin Lillibrige: "Abby is one of the most dedicated girls. She is driven, tenacious, funny, respectful, and intelligent."

Following graduation, Abby plans to major in Exercise Science while attending Western Michigan University. She plans to pursue a career as an athletic trainer.

QuestBridge Scholarship

Parchment High School is extremely proud of senior **ANGEL MILLER**, recipient of the QuestBridge Scholarship. QuestBridge matches high achieving students to top tier colleges across the country. Angel was matched with Washington & Lee University in Virginia, and will receive a full scholarship covering tuition, room and board, meals, expenses, and research opportunities for the duration of her undergraduate career. Angel was one of 2,242 seniors nationwide chosen from over 20,000 applicants for this distinguished honor. Washington & Lee will be flying Angel out to campus this spring to explore her new college home, and she will begin a research program this summer before beginning her collegiate career this fall.

Congratulations to Angel and her family!



CENTRAL Winter Wonderland

Students at Central Elementary earned a Winter Wonderland party for their excellent school behavior of being Respectful, Responsible, and Safe. When students came to school on Thursday, December 21st, they were instantly transported to a true Winter Wonderland. The entire school was decorated, complete with evergreen trees, snowflakes, twinkling lights, igloos, arctic animals and snowmen. Students enjoyed several different activities with their classmates and teachers. Some of these activities included dancing, snow cones, art projects, storytelling, freeze tag and a special guest appearance from the K-Wings Slappy. A huge thank you to all the staff and parent volunteers that helped bring this celebration to life!



NORTHWOOD

Science Week at Northwood

Northwood Panthers are buzzing with curiosity and exploration after our WACKY SCIENCE assembly. Grade levels will be exploring different topics (dinosaurs, forces, germs and weather) as students engage in hands-on exploration, critical thinking, and discovery. We challenge parents and guardians to keep inspiring curiosity at home by engaging with your children. Encourage them to ask questions, make predictions, and explore their own interests.



Grinch Day

The Grinch's unexpected visit to the school stirred up a mix of excitement and curiosity among students and staff alike. Dressed in his iconic green attire, the Grinch brought a touch of mischief to Northwood. His playful interactions and mischievous antics added a festive flair to the school day, leaving lasting memories and smiles on the faces of our students.



Holiday Shop

The PTO holiday shop was a success, drawing in a large number of participants and creating a festive atmosphere. Attendees enjoyed shopping for unique gifts and engaging in cheerful conversations with fellow participants. The event not only brought the community together but also provided a joyful and convenient way for people to find special gifts for the holiday season.



CALLING ALL NEW YOUNG FIVE STUDENTS AND KINDERGARTENERS!

2024-2025 Enrollment Time

Our goal is to meet the needs of all of our incoming learners. We offer two school age programs at Parchment; Developmental Kindergarten (Young Fives) and Kindergarten.

- **Young Fives** - Available for students turning 5 years old between September 1, 2024-December 1, 2024, and **resident students only**.
 - This is a full day district program, housed at Central.
 - Instructional focus on social and emotional skills, gross motor and fine motor and academic skills needed for Kindergarten.
- **Kindergarten** - Available for students turning 5 years old prior to September 1, 2024.
 - This is a full day program housed at both Northwood and Central.
 - Instructional focus on academics and social and emotional skills.

If you have questions in regards to placement please feel free to contact the building principal.

Central Elementary
Julie Kaemming
jkaemming@parchmentschools.org
269-488-1000

Northwood Elementary
Phyllis Mion
phyllis.mion@parchmentschools.org
269-488-1300

KALAMAZOO RESA
Career Connect
CTE | EFA | EMC

Information Nights 2024

Want to know more about the programs and classes that Kalamazoo RESA has to offer? Please join us for a short presentation followed by a Q & A session to answer any questions you may have about the many options available in Career and Technical Education (CTE), Education for the Arts (EFA) and Early/Middle College (EMC).

KRESA staff will be hosting the following virtual and in-person information sessions:

- ▶ Thursday, Jan. 25 CTE/EFA/EMC from 6:00-7:00 p.m. via Zoom
- ▶ Tuesday, Feb. 6 EMC from 5:15-5:45 pm and 6:45-7:15 p.m. | IN-PERSON during Career Connect Open House at the Air Zoo
- ▶ Tuesday, Feb. 20 CTE/EFA/EMC from 6:00-7:00 p.m. via Zoom
- ▶ Thursday, Feb. 29 EMC from 6:00-7:00 p.m. | IN-PERSON at KRESA Wile Auditorium*

*KRESA Wile Auditorium is located at 1819 East Millham Avenue Portage, MI 49002

For Zoom meeting links, visit the Information Nights section at kresa.org/apply

Also, join us for the Career Connect Open House on Tuesday, February 6 from 5:00-7:30 p.m. at the Air Zoo.

We look forward to enrolling your student for the 2024-2025 school year! To enroll, simply call or stop by Northwood Elementary, Central Elementary or the administration office (269-488-1054). You must fill out our pre-enrollment form on the enrollment tab of the district website that will be available April 1.

Kindergarten Roundup will be taking place on May 14, 2024 for Northwood Elementary and May 21, 2024 for Central Elementary.

It should also be noted that Parchment is a Schools of Choice (SOC) 105 and 105c District. We can enroll children who reside in Kalamazoo County and just outside the county boundaries. Parents just need to submit a SOC application by June 2, 2024. After April 1, applications can be found in all buildings and on the District website: www.parchmentschools.org under *District Information*.



NORTH

Holiday Lights

North students learned about diverse winter holiday celebrations from around the world: Diwali, Los Posadas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Santa Lucia, and Chinese New Year. Each has unique customs and traditions that make it special and cherished by the communities that observe them. These celebrations are connected by a theme of light. Students completed an electronic tour, heard music from around the world, made crafts, and sampled foods from the six different celebrations.



COATS and THE WHEEL!

The HOUSE excitement at North keeps getting better and better! In addition to their monthly chant competition, students are spinning a virtual version of the "The RCA Wheel" to earn HOUSE points. Staff are recognizing and voting for students who display outstanding leadership qualities and awarding them with a special coat! In order to receive a coat, all staff that know this student have to pass the vote unanimously. The desire to earn a coat is pretty strong among students and it is definitely showing in their demeanor!



Parchment Innovation Center

Financial Literacy Reality Fair



Parchment Innovation Center (PIC) students were able to participate in the Financial Literacy Reality Fair this year in our building. KRESA brought their team and resources to engage our students in the reality of budgeting and finances. Students participated in three sections related to the real world job experience.

Students started preparing weeks prior to the event researching career fields and fine tuning their resume for their post graduation career goals. During the Financial Literacy Reality Fair students were given salary information related to their career choice. From there, students had to make decisions on housing, transportation, entertainment, clothing, food and more, then students had to calculate their monthly budget. Some students realized a BMW 5 series was not in their budget. Students were allowed to go back and revise their choices.

During the second rotation students sat down for a one on one mock interview with our KRESA partner Donny Herber. Students were able to put into practice the soft skills they have been learning in our work readiness courses. Donny gave the students tips on how to make personal connections with the interviewer and body language. Students not interviewing were observing and taking notes.

The last rotation spot was Bronson Hospital Human Resources. Emily Miley, an Organization Development and Learning Specialist from Bronson Healthcare, spoke to our students on interview prep and resume building. Students had the opportunity to ask questions and get feedback on their resumes.

After all the students were able to experience all three groups, they came together to reflect on their experiences and discuss the choices they made during the reality fair. Students shared that they learned more about themselves and their priorities during the budgeting. Students stated they will have to start small and work their way into the brand new cars and fancy living arrangements. They also shared that it was nice to hear from someone in the business and a person who does the hiring, about what she (Miley) looks for and some great do's and don'ts. When discussing the mock interviews, students said it was nerve racking to have peers watching but definitely will make interviews easier in the future.

The Parchment Innovation Center would like to thank KRESA and Bronson Healthcare for helping organize the event.

Career Paths and Options

The Parchment Innovation Center (PIC) has been busy! In January the students continued exploring career paths and post high school options. As a group they visited KRESA IT department, WMU College of Health and Human Services, and seniors toured KVCC. PIC welcomed Emily Miley back from Bronson Human Resources Department to speak about all the possible career opportunities within the hospital. Students discovered the hospital offers career options to fit hundreds of interests!

In January PIC students visited Lounsbury Excavating. Students had the opportunity to talk and interact with each line of work offered within the company. Lounsbury Excavating was



more than accommodating with our big group of students! The students even got to participate in their excavating simulator! We look forward to many more career exploration opportunities over the coming months!





Book Awards

The new award books for 2024 were announced on January 22nd, 2024 at the American Library Association Midwinter Conference. These books were selected by committee members who read hundreds of books that were considered for these awards. Here are the top award winners for 2024:



Randolph Caldecott Award (most distinguished illustrations):

Big by Vashti Harrison

John Newbery Award (outstanding children's story):

The Eyes and the Impossible by Dave Eggers

Coretta Scott King Award (outstanding story or illustrations by an African American):

Nigeria Jones by Ibi Zoboi

Michael L. Printz Award (excellence in literature for teens):

The Collectors: Series edited by A.S. King

Pura Belpre Award (best book by a Latinx author and illustrator):

Mexikid: A Graphic Memoir by Pedro Martin

Schneider Family Award (story highlighting a disability):

Henry, Like Always by Jenn Bailey

Robert F. Sibert Award (informational book):

The Mona Lisa Vanishes: A Legendary Painter, A Shocking Heist, and the Birth of a Global Celebrity by Nicholas Day

Theodor Seuss Geisel Award (most distinguished beginning reader book):

Fox Has a Problem by Corey R. Tabor

William C. Morris Award (best YA book debut):

Rez Ball by Byron Graves

Excellence in Nonfiction for Young Adults:

Accountable: The True Story of a Racist Social Media Account and the Teenagers Whose Lives It Changed by Dashka Slater

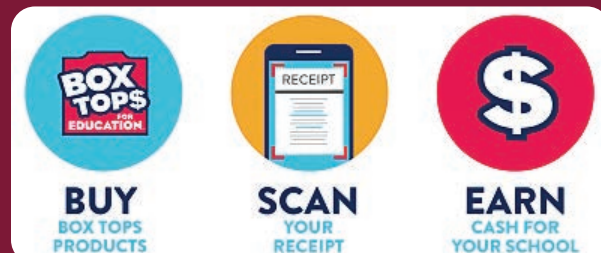
There are many honor books and other awards that were announced. To see a full list of the award winners, please visit: <https://www.ala.org/news/press-releases/2024/01/american-library-association-announces-2024-youth-media-award-winners>

Book Donations are Needed!



Do you have books for young readers that you no longer need? If you would like to donate them, I would love to take them off your hands for our Community Book Baskets and our Little Free Libraries. We are running low on books for young children. If you are interested in donating books, please email me at amanley@parchmentschools.org and/or drop them off at any of the school building offices and let them know the books are for Ms Manley. Thank you!!

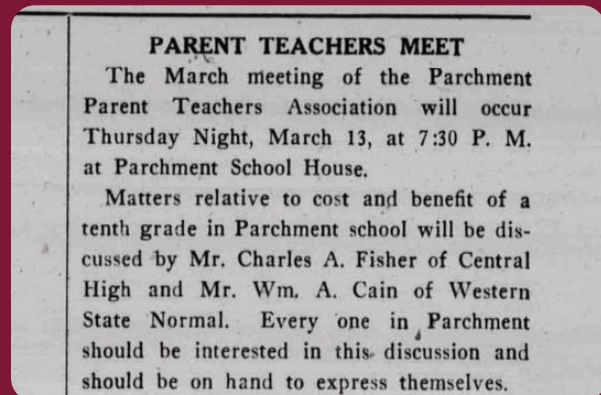
BoxTops for Education



If you would like to support the Parchment Middle School Library, sign up using the BoxTops for Education app and designate Parchment Middle School as the school you are supporting. Every paper receipt scanned into the app, or digital receipt emailed to BoxTops that has eligible items on it supports the PMS Library. We appreciate your support. To earn extra BoxTops when signing up, please use this code: N3IE6NOV

Thank you!

Parchment History!



From the *Parchment News* March 8th, 1924.



EVENTS FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES FEBRUARY, MARCH, APRIL 2024

Preschool Story Times

Wednesday & Thursdays, 10 am Designed for 3-5 year olds but all children age 5 and under are welcome to attend.

Scavenger Hunt

Ages 3+. A new scavenger hunt every month!

kidsCREATE (ages 4-10)

Make a fun craft to take home! Always available in the Children's Corner.

kidsCREATE Special: Valentine Creation Station (ages 4-10) Feb 9 - 14

Make your own valentine for someone special.

2nd Sundays Live

Sunday, Feb 11, 2:00 pm (for adults & families)
Coffee with Friends performs at the Parchment Community Library's free monthly concert series. Check the library website to confirm details. Doors will be open from 1:30-2:15 pm.

Great Michigan Read Book Discussion

Monday, Feb 12, 6:00 pm (adults and teens)

Join the Parchment Book Group to discuss *Firekeeper's Daughter* by Angeline Boulley.

Big Furry Friends: Therapy Dog at the Library

Tuesday, Feb 13, 4:30-6:30 pm

Visit with a therapy dog from Big Furry Friends in the Teen Area at the library. All ages welcome.

The Great North American Eclipse

Wednesday, Feb 21, 6:30 pm (adults and teens)

Kalamazoo Astronomical Society President Richard Bell will give a preview of April 8's total solar eclipse, explain why solar eclipses happen, and show how to view them safely. Eclipse glasses will be given to attendees at the end of the program.

Early Readers Book Club

Kicks off on Saturday, Feb. 24 10:30-11:30 am Grades K-2

Register on our website or call the library at 343-7747. Learn more on our website www.parchmentlibrary.org

Dr. Seuss' Birthday Jam

Saturday, March 2, 10 am - 12 pm. Lots of Seussical activities!

Reading Together Book Discussion

Monday, March 4, 6:00 pm (adults and teens)

Join the Parchment Book Group to discuss *Yellowface* by R. F. Kuang.

2nd Sundays Live

Sunday, March 10, 2:00 pm (adults and families)

Whiskey Before Breakfast performs Irish music at the Parchment Community Library's free monthly concert series. Check the library website to confirm details. Doors will be open from 1:30-2:15 pm.

Eclipse Series Book Discussion

Monday, March 11, 6:00 pm (adults and teens)

Join the Parchment Book Group to discuss *Sun, Moon, Earth: The History of Solar Eclipses, from Omens of Doom to Einstein and Exoplanets* by Tyler Nordgren. Participants will receive eclipse glasses.

Big Furry Friends: Therapy Dog at the Library

Tuesday, March 12, 4:30-6:30 pm

Visit with a therapy dog from Big Furry Friends in the Teen Area at the library. All ages welcome.

Friends of the Library Book Sale

Saturday, March 16, 9 am-1 pm (Early Bird Admission \$2 8-9 am)

Bargain books for all ages and interests!

Eclipse Craft Party

Saturday, March 23, 10:00-11:30 am (all ages)

Drop in to create indirect solar viewers, envelopes to hold your eclipse glasses, and eclipse-related crafts and/or artwork. Participants will receive eclipse glasses.

Spring Break @ PCL

March 25-29

Check our website (parchmentlibrary.org) to find a schedule of fun activities at the library during Spring Break.

Eclipse Glasses Giveaway Day

Tuesday, April 2, 9:00 am - 7:00 pm (all ages)

Show your Parchment Community Library card at the front desk and get a free pair of eclipse glasses while supplies last!

Total Solar Eclipse Watch Party

Monday, April 8, 1:45-4:30 pm (adults, teens, and families)

Bring your eclipse glasses and indirect viewers to watch the moon take a bite out of the sun! Outside viewing of the partial eclipse as weather permits. Indoor viewing of livestreams from totality.

Big Furry Friends: Therapy Dog at the Library

Tuesday, April 9, 4:30-6:30 pm

Visit with a therapy dog from Big Furry Friends in the Teen Area at the library. All ages welcome.

Parchment School District Art Show

Open House Wednesday, April 10, 5-7 pm

An open house will kick off the month-long display of student artwork on the main floor of the library.

Text to Learn

Make any time learning time! Sign up to get 8-10 messages per month with fun activities you can do at home to help prepare little ones, ages 5 and under, for school success. Text TALK to 75547 or fill out the online registration form at texttolearn.com or email talk@ypslibrary.org. (Note when registering: zip codes must be 5 digits only and birthdays must be mm/dd/yyyy.)



Parchment School District
 520 North Orient Street
 Parchment, MI 49004

Non-Profit Org
 US POSTAGE
 PAID
 Kalamazoo, MI
 Permit No. 696

****ECRWSS****
RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMER

Alumni Update by Dave Person

Heather Knotts Graves, class of '88

Heather Knotts Graves has a love for learning that started while a student in Parchment and has continued during her journey through her bachelor's and master's degrees and into a career that offers educational pursuits to others.

"One of my greatest joys is just showing what is possible, whether that is for myself, or the kids I work with, or the staff I work with," says Graves, a 1988 graduate of Parchment High School who currently serves as Executive Director of the Catamount Institute, a youth development and outdoor and environmental education organization in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

While the institute is open to anyone ages 2 through 18, it has positioned itself to work with those who are disadvantaged or disabled. Graves says it does such things as lead inner-city youths on a hike to the summit of Pike's Peak and make the natural world more accessible to those with disabilities.

The bottom line, she says, is "trying to remove any barriers kids have to being outdoors and improving their mental and physical health."

"We really place an emphasis on getting kids outdoors that may not have access," she says.

Graves' journey through higher education and career has been long and winding, but self-fulfilling for the first-generation college student.

"I wouldn't say that I took the most traditional route," she says. "I did go to Kalamazoo Valley right after high school, and went to Western after that, but it took me eight years to get my bachelor's (in English and Spanish) because I worked two or three jobs and went to school part time."

One of those part-time jobs, at the YMCA of Greater Kalamazoo, turned into a full-time position as a director in the youth development and child care department after she graduated from WMU.

"I did that for a few years and then I had an

Read the full story at parchmentschools.org.



ONE APPLICATION. DOZENS OF SCHOLARSHIPS.

GENERAL APPLICATION IS DUE APRIL 1
APPLICATIONS OPEN ANNUALLY ON JANUARY 1

GET MATCHED WITH 60+ SCHOLARSHIPS

Kalamazoo Community Foundation (KZCF) makes applying for scholarships easy. Fill out one application to get matched with scholarships and grants that fit you and your educational plans. With 60+ scholarships, you can find opportunities to pursue the future you want.

* Due to the delayed release of the FAFSA, the 2024 General Scholarship Application window will be extended to run from January 1 to April 1.

YOU CAN USE MOST OF OUR SCHOLARSHIPS ALONGSIDE THE KALAMAZOO PROMISE TO HELP COVER:



TEXTBOOKS



TUITION & FEES



ROOM & BOARD



COURSE MATERIALS

GET YOUR FUTURE STARTED TODAY

SCAN TO LEARN MORE
or visit bit.ly/HowToApply24

402 EAST MICHIGAN AVENUE | KALAMAZOO, MI 49007 | 269.381.4416
 SCHOLARSHIPS@KALFOUND.ORG | KALFOUND.ORG