



Blackcat News

Mission Statement:

"Educating Today for a Better Tomorrow"

VOLUME 23

ISSUE 78

SCHOOL YEAR 2018-2019

FEBRUARY 7, 2019



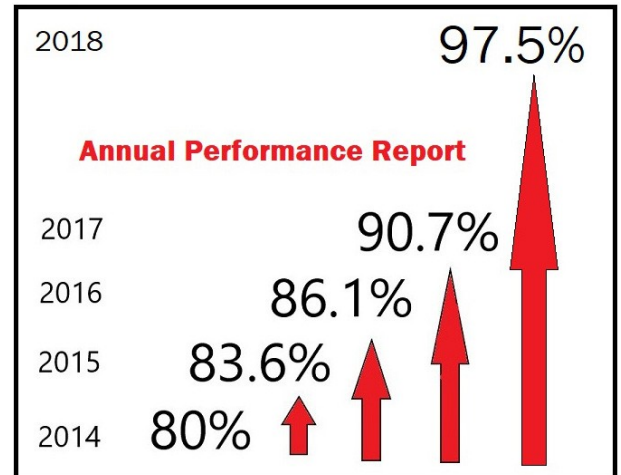
3-2-1 Blast Off

APR Score Soaring



Over the past five years, Dunklin's report card from the state has rocketed from a score of 80 percent to 97.5 percent. The Annual Performance Report (APR) is a comprehensive accounting of the expectations placed on public schools. Parents want their children to go to school, get a good education and be ready for the next step in their life. The APR awards points for attendance and test scores, as well as college and career readiness.

The APR is more than the addition of raw data. It is a series of algorithms designed to reward progress. For example, standardized tests start in the third grade and are given annually. It is easy to track a group of students through the years. If they have been performing at one level through the fifth grade and then move to a higher level in the sixth grade, it helps the district's APR



score. This is just one way the Dunklin R-5 School District improved its overall score on its path of continuous improvement. The district also received additional points for a change in the attendance formula.

The challenge facing Blackcat Nation is igniting the final set of rockets that will put the Dunklin R-5 School District in orbit with other high-performing school districts.

Pevely Teacher Erica White Received Grant

Congratulations

Pevely Elementary School Teacher Erica White received a \$700 grant from Target. The money will be used for a fourth-grade field trip on March 7th to

see the play Aesop's Fables at Washington University. Aesop was a storyteller in ancient Greece. His fables include The Boy Who Cried Wolf and The Tortoise and the Hare. White says the play lines up nicely with the fourth-grade curriculum.



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WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK ON THE BLACKCAT NEWS!!!!!!

The Blackcat News is a quarterly communication tool that we use as one way to keep you informed about Dunklin R-V School District. We want this publication to be useful to you as a patron of our schools- "Must-Read Material"!

Is there...

- Something you've read that you don't understand?
- Information that you would like to see included that is not?
- Something you want to see more often or less frequently?

We value your input! Please email your feedback to our Communications Director, Matt Lichtenstein, at mlichtenstein@dunklin.k12.mo.us

Don't use email? Call Matt Lichtenstein at 636-479-5200.

Message from the Board President

Dear Dunklin R-5 Stakeholders:

Happy New Year to all of the Dunklin R-5 Community! Welcome to 2019 and the second half of the school year! As I sat down to write this, I looked over the many things that have transpired in the first and second quarter to share with you, and to be honest, there were so many great things it was difficult to narrow it down to just a few highlights. Let me start by sharing that in November our Facility Naming Committee presented to the Board their recommendation to honor Mr. J.L. Horton for his 20 years of service as principal of Herculaneum High School. They did this by naming the high school office complex after him. The Board unanimously approved this, and in December there was a celebration and unveiling of the J.L. Horton Administrative Center. Mr. Horton's health unfortunately prevented him from attending the event. However, in anticipation of this possibility, some of the committee met with him and interviewed him about the honor. A video of this interview was shared at the ceremony. His son spoke on behalf of the family, and it was a very emotional and special event. Sadly, Mr. Horton passed away January 13, 2019, but his impact on Herculaneum High School will forever be remembered.

Also at the November Board meeting, the Board approved a recommendation for JAG (Jobs for America's Graduates). This nationally recognized program currently serves more than 60,000 students in 34 states. JAG helps students stay in school to graduation, pursue postsecondary education and secure quality entry level employment. Part of our job as educators is to help students work towards graduation, and this program is another tool to help with that. This program fits perfectly into our Strategic Plan as well, by supporting student achievement. Our five-year Strategic Plan is another topic the Board has been overseeing, and is currently on track. The goal teams are working hard to keep the plan on task and are making great progress on the four main goal areas which are: Student Achievement, Stakeholder Engagement, Workforce Focus and Operations Management. For more information on this plan, visit our website and click on the District tab.

In August 2018, we thanked the community for the passage of Proposition S. The District has been working with our architectural firm on the plans for the relocation of the bus garage as well as the expansion and safe room projects at Pevely Elementary. The Board approved plans for the safe room portion of the project, allowing the


architect to submit plans to FEMA and to meet FEMA's requirements and timelines. We look forward to this project proceeding and completing the much-needed upgrades at our elementary school. When the project is completed, we want to celebrate with everyone who helped make this happen and helped us to provide a safer learning environment at Pevely Elementary for our staff and students. Updates on Prop S activities can be found on our District's website by clicking on the News tab.

The Board is looking forward to the ribbon cutting ceremony for a school-based health center at Senn Thomas Middle School on February 1st. This health center is being done in partnership with Comtrex. The clinic will provide dental and behavioral services. This will be a great benefit to our students and community. For more information, call their office at 636-224-6096.

In addition, if you would like more information regarding Dunklin R-5 and our many programs and activities, you can check out our website at www.dunklin.k12.mo.us. We also share lots of great information on Facebook and Twitter.

Our Board of Education meets the third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Central Office Conference Room, and the public is always welcome. The Board would like to thank our staff and community for their support of public education and our District. Our mission statement is "Educating Today for a Better Tomorrow" and we strive to make all our decisions based upon what is best for the children and families we serve. Thank you again for your support, it is appreciated more than I can express.


Sincerely,
Dawn M. Warner
President, Dunklin R-5 School District Board of Education



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DUNKLIN R-5 SCHOOL DISTRICT

497 Joachim Avenue • Herculaneum, MO 63048 • (636) 479-5200
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Tom Jordan, Director of Technology
Matt Lichtenstein, Communications Director
Tom Moreland, Director of Special Services
Sue Sharp, Director of Transportation
Steve Copeland, Director of Maintenance

Board Meetings are Open to the Public

The Dunklin R-5 Board of Education meets on a regular basis on the third Tuesday of each month. The meetings are held in the Dunklin R-5 Central Office beginning at 7:00 p.m. The meetings are open to the public. Patrons may view agendas and items from the meetings by going to our website www.dunklin.k12.mo.us, clicking on the District tab and clicking on "Paperless Board Meetings."

Dunklin R-5 School District is an equal opportunity employer

Donors Pick Dunklin

Teacher Angie Lefler used a website to fund new appliances for her kitchen classroom. The family and consumer science teacher needed a new deep freeze and dishwasher. Lefler knew that finding a thousand dollars in the budget would be a long journey, so she turned to DonorsChoose.org, a website that connects people to projects. In four days, the appliances were fully funded.

The website, similar to GoFundMe, is for public schools. It was created in 2000 by a history teacher in the Bronx. According to the website, Charles Best wanted his students to read Little House on the Prairie but could only procure one book from the school district. While he was making photocopies, he came up with the idea for a website to connect the public to the specific needs of teachers. Since then over 1 million projects have been funded for about 80,000 schools.

Lefler was so pleased with the results she put together another proposal to fund a new refrigerator. It took several months, but the \$900 appliance was funded, purchased, and installed. She says, "I have six kitchens working at a time so I look for sales and buy in bulk." Lefler is an experienced teacher but is new to the district. In the past few months, Lefler has already decided this is a great place to work and she wants to remain a Blackcat for the rest of her career.



Pictured: Mrs. Lefler and the new refrigerator.

Dedication Ceremony J.L. Horton Administrative Center



Pictured: Gerald Horton, Eva Horton and J.L. Horton.

The office at Herculaneum High School was renamed the J.L. Horton Administrative Center during a dedication ceremony in December. Mr. Horton was unable to attend for health reasons, but there was a good crowd of family and friends. Serving from 1964 to 1984, he was a steady presence during a tumultuous time in American history. Students respected Mr. Horton because he was strict and because he truly cared about them. Principal Horton rarely ate lunch because he spent all three lunch periods visiting with students in the cafeteria. The 94-year-old Herculaneum resident passed away on January 13th, one month after the dedication ceremony.

For updates and District news, including inclement weather school closing information, follow Communications Director Matt Lichtenstein on Twitter:
Matt Lichtenstein@BlackcatMatt



Herculaneum High School Donates Stairs

Students at Mapaville State School for the Severely Disabled can practice going up and down stairs after a donation from Herculaneum High School. The state school already has a set of therapy stairs, but they are too small. Each step is about half the height of the steps found in most homes.

Dunklin R-5 Director of Special Services Tom Moreland found out about the need during a meeting. He knew it was a quality-of-life issue for these students and their families. If you can climb stairs, you can ride a bus. He recently talked to a parent who has to carry her teenage daughter upstairs every night for bed. Moreland asked if the high school shop class could build a set of stairs and the project was set in motion.

As word spread, Lowe's donated the materials. Herculaneum industrial arts teacher Jordan King created the design, and his more-experienced students went to work. King says, "The students who completed the stairs are always happy to use their skills to help someone else." It took a couple of months before they were carrying the stairs through the front door of the state school. The Blackcats then stood back and watched as Mapaville students worked their

way up and down the stairs. There are only four steps to reach the platform at the top, but a harness was used to keep one of the older students from tumbling down. It was a reminder that daunting challenges come in all forms. Herculaneum senior Dalton Cook said, "We had a small picture, but when we actually got here, I felt like it was a lot different experience than what we thought it would be." Senior Ashley Haun said, "It was a good feeling to see the kids using it." Some of the other students who contributed to the project include Zach Lodike, Noah Northcutt and Cole Counts.

Mapaville Building Administrator Brad Mora had nothing but praise for the therapy steps. Mora said, "They're wonderful, they're perfect. Perfect size, not just the steps themselves, but the actual platform gives them plenty of room to go up to the top, walk and then turn around and come back down." Mora was a key contact for the project and arranged for students to give a demonstration. Two of the younger students who participated had attended Taylor Early Childhood Center. Mapaville serves about 38 students from across Jefferson County.

A short video about the project was posted on the Dunklin R-5 School District Facebook page. It has been viewed more than 14,000 times.



Pictured: Cole Counts, Jordan King, Zach Lodike.



Pictured: Physical therapist Kristie DeCollo, student Judah and Building Administrator Brad Mora.



Renaissance Recognizes Students for Achievements

Renaissance is an academic club for everyone. During the assembly in December, they gave out certificates for perfect attendance at the high school and recognized others for their achievements. It gives students the opportunity to cheer for academics just like they are cheering for a sports team. The final award presented is for the Student of the Quarter. The winners are senior Giorgia Valfre', junior Jonathon Coffman, sophomore David Teague, and freshman Paige Drinen. Their parents were secretly invited in advance of the ceremony. Once the winners were announced, family members appeared from backstage to take part in the special moment.

Missouri Quality Award

When the Dunklin R-5 School District got a poor report card from the state in 2014, it rejected quick fixes and embraced a slow, methodical, quality improvement plan. The district score on the Annual Performance Report was 80 percent. It was far from the worst in the state, but it was the lowest APR score in Jefferson County and well below everyone's expectations. Top administrators turned to the Baldrige Excellence Framework.

In the 1980s, Secretary of Commerce Malcom Baldrige Jr. had two passions; quality improvement and rodeo. He believed that American businesses could get a competitive advantage through better management. Baldrige took special interest in the Quality Improvement Act of 1987 and in recognition of his contributions, Congress named the annual award in his honor. The 64-year-old died in July of that year after a calf-roping accident.

Since that time, the Baldrige Excellence Framework has empowered organizations to accomplish their missions, improve results, and become more competitive. It starts with core values and then it guides organizations to evaluate processes and results. Using the framework, the Dunklin R-5 School District developed new methods that produced measurable results. The APR score improved by 3.6 points in 2015 and was up another 2.5 points the following year. In



addition to test scores and graduation rates, the district now tracks everything from employee satisfaction to fund balances and security cameras. In 2017, the APR score for the district was 90.7 or an improvement of 10.7 percentage points from 2014. The processes and data went into a 35-page application for feedback from the Midwest Excellence Institute. In September examiners came on campus and talked with teachers, administrators and students. They were complimentary in the final report, writing, "The district's services and programs wrap around the student to promote a positive learning experience." They also gave advice for the next steps in the self-improvement journey.

In November, the Dunklin R-5 School District received a quality award from the Midwest Excellence Institute at an event in Columbia, Missouri. Lieutenant Governor Mike Kehoe spoke at the awards banquet and helped present the trophies.

Superintendent Stan Stratton says, "I'm excited for our district, and the award confirms we are on the right path. During the banquet, we were introduced to some outstanding organizations that used the same Baldrige framework to make dramatic improvements. We can do it as well, and our students will be the beneficiaries." Deputy Superintendent Clint Freeman and Transportation Director Sue Sharp have already started the 50-page application process for the Tier 1 award, which is the highest available on the state level.

Representing Dunklin R-5 at the awards banquet were Superintendent Stan Stratton, Board Member Susan Hartmann, Transportation Director Sue Sharp, Food Service Director Nichole Arnold and Communications Director Matt Lichtenstein.

Sharp, Arnold and Lichtenstein wrote the application.



STMS Career Fair



Students interacted with a variety of professionals during the Career Fair on January 18th at Senn-Thomas Middle School. The speakers included a chef, an engineer, a firefighter, a pharmacist, and an attorney. A favorite among the students was Matt Bunch, who teaches biomedical science at Jefferson College. He brought in some specimens to pass around the classroom, such as a sheep's heart and cow eyes. Another hit came from the welding department at Jeffco's Area Technical School. Under close supervision, demonstrators allowed students to hold a torch and try a TIG welder.

Nick Vassel tells students he met Spider-Man.

The IT security specialist works for Novacoast and recently signed a new client, Warner Bros.

Abby Reeves, Dalayna Clark and Mya Martinez check out a sheep's heart.



Dunklin R-5 Notebook



@DrClintFreeman @BlackcatMatt @BlackcatUpdates

Thanks to Comtreia and Delta Dental, students can get both dental and behavioral health services while at school. There are consent forms on the district website. Look under the Departments tab for Health Services. Find out more by calling (636) 224-6096 on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday.

Dunklin R-5 is hosting a Job Fair on February 19th. You can fill out an application in advance through the district website. Look for "Careers" under the district tab. Interviews will be conducted from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. in the high school cafeteria.

Basketball – We host Crystal City tomorrow night, February 8. JV teams start at 4 p.m., with Girls Varsity at 6 p.m. and Boys Varsity at 8 p.m.

It's time to buy your yearbook before prices go up. Visit the website yearbookforever.com to order a middle school or high school yearbook.

Kindergarten registration for the 2019-2020 school year will be on March 26th and 27th at Pevely Elementary School. Children must live in the district and be 5 years old on or before July 31, 2019. Appointments can be made starting March 4th by calling (636) 479-5200 Ext. 3006.

Reading tutors are needed at Pevely Elementary School starting in August. No degree is required and training will be provided.

Call Alice Menne at (636) 479-5200 Ext. 2002

or sign up at

www.oasisnet.org/St-Louis-MO/tutoring



<https://www.facebook.com/DunklinR5/>



Sardo Received the Emerson Excellence in Teaching Award

She thought it was junk mail and almost threw away the notification. She didn't really believe the letter claiming she had won something, but it seemed related to education so she asked an administrator about it the next day. Dr. Crabtree told her it's real and receiving the Emerson Excellence in Teaching Award is quite an honor. Only one teacher in the entire school district is chosen for it every year. After learning the details, special education teacher Kathy Sardo says she was both excited and overwhelmed.

She has been a teacher for over 20 years, the last five in the Dunklin R-5 School District. Sardo's classroom has a familiar structure, but students are working on life skills. Can they brush their teeth, cook food or be a self-advocate? These become goals, and it may take two or three years to reach them. Sardo says the "aha" moments in special education are less frequent, so you cherish every one. Fortunately, she works with the same students throughout their high school career.

Director of Special Services Tom Moreland nominated Sardo for the award and persuaded the committee that she was the best choice. He says, "Kathy has been able to help these students accomplish things that parents and staff never thought were possible." Partnerships have been established

with the YMCA, a local food pantry and a nursing home. Students gain volunteer work experience at these organizations by greeting customers or operating washing machines. Sardo also works with other school districts to arrange social outings during the day with similar students. They may prepare meals together or go on a field trip. Students in the life-skills classroom also get the chance to raise money for the Special Olympics. During half-time of a basketball game, these students will play dodgeball to the cheers of a packed house. It's a fan favorite and the audience gets a chance to contribute to the charity.



On November 11th Sardo attended the award ceremony at the Ritz-Carlton. She saw the ice sculpture, enjoyed some hors d'oeuvres, listened to the speakers and eventually walked up to receive her Tiffany apple. There is a grant opportunity with the award, and Sardo would like to buy a job skills unit for about \$2,500. She also wants to buy some prepaid mobile phones for students to practice making calls, having conversations and responding in an emergency.

Her advice to someone new to special education is to trust your gut. She says, "You chose this for a reason, know you're capable and don't let it overwhelm you." Sardo says, "There's not a day I wake up and say, 'I don't want to go to work today.'"

Dow Writes Questions



Herculaneum High School science teacher Holly Dow is writing test questions for the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. They will show up in the End of Course Exams taken by high school science students across the state.

Dow started out judging the questions created by other professionals. She was serving on the Science Content and Bias Review Committee. They would review about 180 questions in four days to make sure they fit within the guidelines. Next she was hired to help write the test questions. Dow says, "I'm pretty excited, it's an honor to be picked."

Dow spent the last week of January being trained as an item writer and working on her craft. Her questions will appear in the 2019-20 exams.

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Job Fair

We are accepting applications and interviewing for:

Food Service
Maintenance

Bus Drivers
February 19th

Join us between 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. in the Herculaneum High School Cafeteria. Applications can be filled out in advance on the district website.



Dunklin R-5 School District

3-Month Blackcat Calendar

FEBRUARY 2019						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28		

18-19 No School (President's Day and Professional Development Day)

MARCH 2019						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

8 End of 3rd Quarter

14-15 No School
14 Parent-Teacher Conferences (1/2 Professional Development)

APRIL 2019						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

19-23 No School (Spring Break and Professional Development Day)

MEN **WOMEN**

Alumni Games



February 9th

It's a weekend of fun.

Friday night the Blackcats host the Hornets. Alumni will be recognized during half-time of the varsity boys game.

Saturday there is a shoot around from 4-5pm before the Alumni Games.

Find out who's the 3-point champions during the contest for men and the contest for women.

There will be a game for men and for women.

The entry fee of only \$20 includes a t-shirt.

Don't want to play? Buy a t-shirt for \$15 and take part in all the fun.

To sign up email Coach Riley Blair at rblair@dunklin.k12.mo.us or stop by the high school office. We'll need your name, the year you graduated, your shirt size and payment.

One man and one woman will be awarded the title of MVP after their respective games.

Don't miss the meet and greet after the games at the AMVETS.

All proceeds will be used for scholarships for both a senior male and senior female basketball player from the Herculaneum Basketball Alumni.



BLACKCATS