



Board of Education Recognitions

December 2024

NAME/SCHOOL	RECOGNITION
<p>Ms. Danielle Patterson Teacher Seth Boyden Elementary School</p> <p><i>submitted by</i> Maureen Davenport & Shannon Glander Seth Boyden Administrators</p>	<p>At Seth Boyden, Ms. Danielle Paterson helped a group of ten fourth-grade students work together for a week to create a presentation about composting for the kindergarten classes.</p> <p>They split into five pairs, with each pair presenting to one of the five kindergarten classes.</p> <p>The fourth graders did a great job explaining how the school composts food scraps and why it's good for the environment. The kindergarteners enjoyed learning about it and asked lots of great questions!</p> <p>After the presentation, the fourth graders decided to take action. They made a plan to collect food scraps from the lunchroom and take them to the compost bin every day. Mrs. Patterson helped guide the students with their work.</p> <p>This project was a wonderful example of teamwork and helping the environment. The fourth graders showed great leadership and made a positive impact at our school.</p>
<p>Columbia High School Chamber Choir and Mr. Nick Diaz Music Teacher Columbia High School</p> <p><i>submitted by</i> Eshaya Draper Director of Communications</p>	<p>Congratulations to the CHS Chamber Choir and music teacher, Mr. Nick Diaz, for performing at the South Orange Performing Arts Center with Broadway star Mandy Gonzalez this month.</p> <p>In her "Home for the Holidays" show at SOPAC, Mandy Gonzalez sang holiday carols and hit songs from Broadway musicals she's performed in– including Hamilton, Wicked, and In The Heights.</p>

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	<p>We are proud of our high school's singers and appreciate the opportunity from Mandy Gonzalez to include our Columbia students as a part of the experience.</p>
<p>Ms. Rahmiece Lawson Teacher Seth Boyden Elementary School</p> <p><i>submitted by</i> Shannon Glander & Maureen Davenport Seth Boyden Administrators</p>	<p>Thank you to Ms. Lawson from Seth Boyden Elementary School for leading the affinity group Mocha Matter.</p> <p>Your dedication to inclusivity, belonging, cultural competency, and diversity is unparalleled for students.</p> <p>Thank you for being a leader and an inspiration.</p>
<p>Dr. Donovan Smalls Assistant Principal South Orange Middle School</p> <p><i>submitted by</i> Eshaya Draper Director of Communications</p>	<p>Dr. Smalls from SOMS presented at the National Alliance of Black School Educators International Conference on Friday, November 22nd, in Atlanta, Georgia.</p> <p>His presentation included strategies for other educators to navigate the dynamic challenges that come with educational leadership in schools.</p>
<p>Mrs. Kerri Waibel Director of Access and Equity</p> <p><i>submitted by</i> Dara Gronau, Shannon Glander, Maureen Davenport School Administrators</p>	<p>MMS and Seth Boyden are proud to recognize Ms. Kerri Waibel for her incredible leadership in Restorative Circles training. Kerri's expertise and dedication have provided staff members with powerful tools to strengthen connections and foster a compassionate, inclusive school culture.</p> <p>Ms. Waibel organized an intergenerational learning experience that brought together Principal Gronau, five MMS seventh graders, and five staff members. The moment centered on student voice, which Ms. Gronau described as 'an experience they won't soon forget.'</p> <p>Ms. Waibel's engaging and thoughtful presentations have provided Seth Boyden and Maplewood Middle School staff with valuable tools to build stronger connections with students and each other. Through her guidance, they have gained deeper insight into the power of restorative practices and how they can transform school culture, promote empathy, and address conflicts constructively and respectfully. Seth Boyden and MMS staff were deeply grateful for her lasting impact and commitment to district</p>

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