



Romeo Leads the Way in CTE

Every February, as part of Career and Technical Education (CTE) Month, Romeo recognizes and celebrates the achievements and accomplishments of CTE students and business partners.

CTE programs provide opportunities for our students to gain tangible skills through hands-on experiences, explore career options and find their professional passion, make valuable connections, and enhance their high school experience – all while becoming prepared for post secondary education and/or career paths.

Romeo Winners at the 34th Annual MCTEAA Awards

The 34th Annual Macomb Career Technical Education Administrators Association (MCTEAA) awards celebration took place on February 2. Two Romeo students were recognized along with TK Mold & Engineering, Inc., Romeo's outstanding business partner of the year.

Romeo's nominees for the **2024 MCTEAA Outstanding Student Award** both exemplify dedication to their education and technical skills.

Senior Elizabeth Pugh is an exemplary student who has demonstrated technical expertise across her Architecture, Construction, and Mechanical Design courses. With a 3.9 GPA, she excels academically and showcases proficiency in software tools like Revit, AutoCAD, Inventor, and Fusion 360. Elizabeth's versatility extends to hands-on expertise in framing, masonry, plumbing, roof rafting, electrical work and construction management, complemented by her OSHA certification. What sets Elizabeth apart is her seamless integration of theoretical knowledge with hands-on expertise, bridging architecture and construction classes. Her passion for innovation and problem-solving is evident, reflecting a positive "can-do" attitude that demonstrates resilience and determination. Elizabeth's commitment to Romeo is further exemplified through contributions to the varsity softball team, where she achieved All-Academic status. After Elizabeth graduates high school she plans on attending Oakland Community College, then Ferris State University, to pursue construction management.



CTE Award Winners Elizabeth Pugh and Jade Salvatore

Senior Jade Salvatore had that dreaded look of "What am I doing here?" among 33 male students on her first day in construction technology class at Romeo High School. Seemingly quiet and shy, she does not come across as "construction material." However, after soaking up all the instruction she received, Jade began to understand and master each area explored: framing, electrical, masonry, plumbing, print reading, problem-solving, design, project management, and leadership. While not always the most vocal, Jade was able to articulate her ideas after the dust settled on a flurry of ideas from the class. Her ideas are always well thought out and she pays attention to detail. Most importantly, she is able to successfully implement each project she is in charge of, directing teams of her peers along the way. Jade is so respected by students and teachers alike, there is not a project she wouldn't be entrusted to design, plan and build to the highest standards. Jade has been accepted to Lawrence Technological University this fall to pursue a degree in Construction Engineering Technology and Management.

Romeo also honored **TK Mold**, owned by Tom and Krista Barr, as an exemplary business partner for the high school's CTE programs.



Macomb County Executive Mark Hackel, TK Mold owner Thomas Barr, and Congressman John James. Photo by Lily Wisniewski '24

"Their commitment to the students and community of Romeo has been a driving force for the Machine Tool and Mechanical Design pathways at Romeo. TK Mold helped teach how to design and manufacture iPad holders for all elementary students in the district. Currently underway are plans for producing phone stands for all secondary students incorporating three different CTE programs in a cross-curricular academy-wide project (read more about this on page 4). TK Mold has collaborated with teachers and students over the years to help develop projects that showcase the manufacturing process from design and development through production.

TK Mold also allowed Romeo's Byting Bulldogs Robotics team to move into their warehouse space at the last meeting after they were displaced from their previous field. The company generously let the robotics team keep their field in the warehouse, enabling students to continue making improvements.



Letter from the Superintendent

Dear RCS Community,

I hope this edition of The Bulldog Bulletin finds you doing well as we make our way through another Michigan winter. Romeo Community Schools is full steam ahead in 2024 with a lot of momentum from year one of our Strategic Plan. The first half of this school year has allowed us the opportunity to really invest in a few key initiatives across each level of our district. Our elementary team is fully committed to the implementation of our new ELA curriculum which is

already showing positive returns in learning. At the middle level the RMS Transformation planning process brought together several stakeholder groups for a series of meetings to develop a plan that outlines the future for our middle school students. RHS has completed an update to the Profile of a Graduate and is furthering the work of the Academies. No matter the area or initiative our efforts are steadfast in meeting the needs of each individual student. I remain so proud of our dedicated staff and always find great joy in the support that comes in so many ways from this incredible community.

Annually our February newsletter honors Career and Technical (CTE) Awareness Month and this edition of The Bulldog Bulletin has a special focus on CTE and the connected learning opportunities that happen not only at Romeo High School but across our district. Romeo Community Schools is a leader in this area and we continue to strive to prepare our students to be well-rounded individuals who are fully prepared for the next step in their educational journey and beyond.

As you receive this publication we are just a few days away from the February 27th Presidential Primary Election. I want to encourage all of our parents and community members to make plans to vote on our two important millage renewals. We have several informational materials on our election page at www.romeok12.org. It is also very important to remind our eligible voters that even if you do not want to participate in the primary election you have the option to select a "local only" ballot to vote on our ballot proposals. We appreciate the continued support of our voters on maintaining these important funds that we receive through the Non-Homestead Operating and Building and Site Sinking Fund millages.

Please take time to review a few examples of the great work of our staff and students along with some other important information from us. This year our district theme "Choose Joy" has us experiencing all of the wonderful work we do with our students and each other with very grateful hearts.

Go Bulldogs!

Dr. Todd R. Robinson
Superintendent



Indian Hills Principal Lisa Wujczyk and the morning announcement crew toured the construction site for the new music classroom and STEM lab. Scan the QR code to view a video of their tour.



Bond Update

Our 2021 Bond group one projects are nearing completion and we will see the work at Hamilton-Parsons Elementary, Indian Hills Elementary and Croswell Early Childhood Center coming to a close by the end of this summer.

We have finalized the planning and award of contracts for the group two projects in the 2021 Bond. Our construction schedule for these projects will begin this spring and continue throughout the summer into next school year. This includes additions at Amanda Moore and Indian Hills elementaries along with a renovation project at Hevel Elementary. This group also includes the new STEM and Robotics Facility and Outdoor Sitework renovations at Romeo Middle School. The RHS athletic facility will see new Varsity and JV Softball fields along with a new Varsity Baseball field.

Thanks again for your continued support of Romeo Community Schools and investing in our youth both now and well into the future.

GO BULLDOGS!



2023-24 Annual Notice of Career & Technical Education offerings

Each year, the Romeo Community School District offers career and technical education programs at Romeo High School. These programs are designed to prepare youth for a broad range of employment and training services and are offered under the guidance of certified teachers, counselors, and cooperative education coordinators. Scan the QR for additional information and programs offered.

Business-based Project Learning

This year, each Academy has undertaken real world learning projects that connect the students with a business partner in an interdisciplinary approach. To launch or enhance these projects, teachers within their respective Small Learning Community (SLC) teams traveled to their business partners' location to learn first-hand about their industry and how they might collaborate on a project for the year. Below are examples of projects for each Academy and unique approaches teachers are taking to create community-connected learning experiences for their students.

BEI 10 Project: Expand food truck showcase

Business partner: Lombardo Companies



Last year's food truck showcase gives an idea of what this year will look like.

The food truck project is a year-long cross-curricular project. While the business, culinary, construction and digital photography students all participated last year, the goal this year is to expand this to include marketing, entrepreneurship, history, math, video production and English.

Students in business classes are leading the project from start to finish, acting as project managers and business owners who work with the various business partners from the other CTE classes to launch their businesses. They began by brainstorming various themes and voting on food from around the U.S. To date, the students have finalized the 20 states they plan to showcase, along with the names of their food trucks and recipes.

"We are in the process of designing the logos for each of the individual food trucks," business teacher Shelly Bartolotta explained. "The students are very excited that their logos will be put on T-shirts this year."



Starting the first week in February, culinary students will make samples of all of the food for the individual trucks. Digital photography students will photograph these food samples, learning specific styling and lighting techniques to elevate their images.

In April, business students will paint the trucks, getting them ready to be showcased during Teacher Appreciation Week in May, with samples of food prepared by culinary students.

Business partner Lombardo Companies will visit the school and speak to the students about marketing and communications.

"We are thrilled to have Lombardo Companies as a business partner," Mrs. Bartolotta said. "They will be able to give the students a lot of insight into the process of starting a business, from pre-planning to actually launching the business."

She added that the expansion of this year's project is made possible by a grant

BEI 12 Project: Design, market and package a product

Business partner: Blake's



Members of the BEI 12 SLC during their site visit to Blake's on November 1.

The plan was to design, market and package a product that would be for sale at the school as well as at Blake's Orchard & Cider Mill. The BEI 12 SLC teachers visited Blake's during Professional Development Day to meet with their marketing, finance, culinary, sales and other professionals to brainstorm on how to incorporate this project into their classes.

Based on a variety of factors, the teachers decided a bakery item was the best bet. Students in Mike Archutowski's accounting class were tasked with reviewing Blake's product list and coming up with something new. A visit from a Blake's representative, who discussed with the class the business side of developing a product, helped with this process.

Accounting student Michael Ridings came up with the idea of an apple cake, and the culinary class, under the direction of Chef Monica McDougall, began experimenting with different variations.

In English class, the students taste tested the various recipes and voted on their favorites. They also will be involved in naming the final product and writing descriptive information on the packaging.

An important component of the project for the accounting students was conducting a cost vs. price analysis. This began with determining the cost of each slice of cake, including the packaging and label. Part of the learning process for the students was understanding the variation in cost.

Before they are able to bring the product to market at Blake's, they will need to demonstrate a month's worth of sales at the school store.

DEM 11 Project: Preparing Romeo graduates for the real world

Business partner: Michigan CAT

This project began with a question for the business partner: What do you expect out of a high school graduate? The answer might be as simple as: Show up on time. Follow directions. Be respectful of others.

This project explores the soft skills a Romeo graduate needs to prepare for the real world, whether it's writing a resume or email, preparing for a job interview, or creating a presentation.

These soft skills are developed in English, math, social studies and CTE classes. For example, for the soft skill "concise communication," students will write essays and create presentations in English class, learn how to articulate a multi-step problem-solving process to a peer in math class, create a bill and support it during a mock Congress debate in civics class, and write scripts for video production, theater and robotics class.

For video production, students will use soft skills to exhibit industry expectations, standards, and skills related to the various phases of production, and in robotics, students work in teams to communicate designs on a computer to the members fabricating the robot.

Other soft skills to be explored in these classes include critical thinking, constructive collaboration, preparedness and organization, and continued improvement as part of a growth mindset.



THE ACADEMIES AT
ROMEO
HIGH SCHOOL

College & Career Night

Tuesday, March 5, 2024
6-7:30 p.m.

Talk to college and career representatives about admissions, careers and financial aid, apprenticeships, scholarships and more!

Located in the commons area and auditorium of Romeo High School:
62300 Jewell Rd, Washington, MI 48094

FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

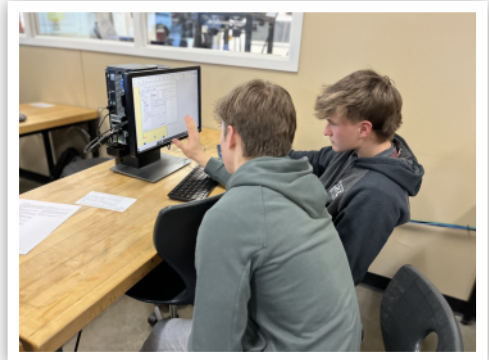
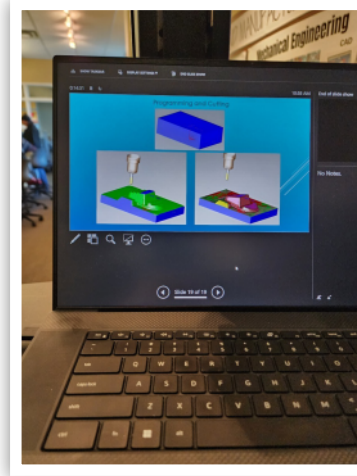
DEM 12 Project: Design and manufacture phone stands

Business partners: L&L Products and TK Mold & Engineering, Inc.

This project, now in its third year, started with Evva Dossin's drafting class in which students designed a phone stand. Dan Kiehler has forged further on the project with his Mechanical Design 1 students and students in other disciplines have gotten involved as well. The end goal is to design, manufacture, package and distribute cell phone stands to all middle and high school students.

"TK Mold helped to make alterations to the first design so it could be manufactured using plastic injection molding," Mr. Kiehler said. "This year we took the altered design and TK Mold designed an injection mold."

TK Mold also recruited INCOE Corporation to help run a mold flow analysis to test the mold design, Mr. Kiehler added. TK Mold employees came into school and the class conducted a conference call with Matt Robb, who explained the analysis.



On January 12, the computer numerical controller (CNC) manager from TK Mold trained the students in how to use the Cimatron, which is a computer-aided manufacturing program that CNC machines use to operate. This is the program the students will use to create the molds for the phone holder.

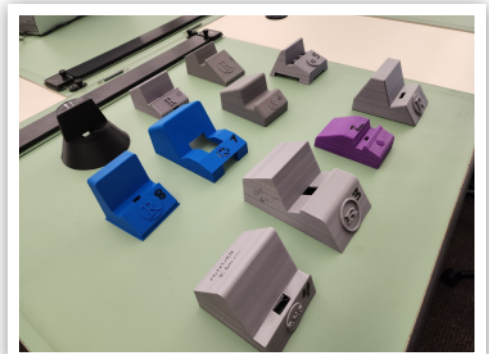
After the molds are complete, TK Mold will finish and polish them, adding all of the needed connections to use the molds in an injection mold machine. Mr. Kiehler said he expects to have mechanical design students visit the company during this process.

Other classes were involved in this cross-curricular project. Math students used trigonometry to find the surface area and application of these calculations to determine the amount of material needed as well as cost involved. Mechanical Design II students will create

spec cards, modeled after what L&L provides its customers. These cards, which will accompany the cell phone stands, include information on the material used, product uses and product dimensions. English students will proofread and recommend edits before distributing these cards.

Architecture and construction students field measured and designed the chute that will be used during the plastic injection molding process to enhance production. Finally, students in special services classes will help assemble the packages.

In preparation to take this project to the next level, the DEM 12 SLC team toured L&L Products, an applied engineering and materials science company located in Romeo, and learned about the chemistry involved in manufacturing the parts and how to streamline the process.



HHP 10 Project: Design and write cards for residents

Business partner: Orchard Grove Senior Living

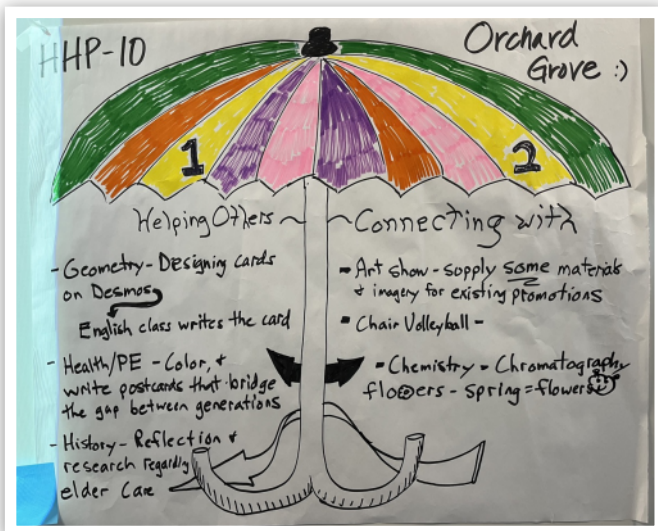
When the HHP 10th grade Small Learning Community (SLC) team visited Orchard Grove Senior Living, they weren't sure how they were going to tie the visit back into a cross-curricular project.

Upon their return, they settled on the idea of building connections with the seniors in an old-fashioned way – by writing letters to them.

The English part of this assignment was straightforward; more challenging was incorporating math, social studies, chemistry, art and physical education to the project.

In geometry class, students were studying rotation and reflection. Math teacher Jennifer Boggio came up with the idea of having the students use the linear functions on their online graphing calculators to create snowflakes. She then printed the snowflakes on card stock and passed the cards along to Tammy Glielniak and Katie Gibson, who co-teach English 10, to work with their students on writing notes to the seniors.

“They were learning writing skills, but they were also learning about another generation,” Ms. Glielniak said, adding that in class they discussed “the lost art of writing a postcard or letter” and what topics are appropriate to include in their notes.



to make and sell prints that would appeal to Orchard Grove residents.

Another way to connect with the seniors is through physical activity. Physical education teacher Roxanne Anderson hopes to enlist the volleyball team to visit the seniors and play chair volleyball with them.

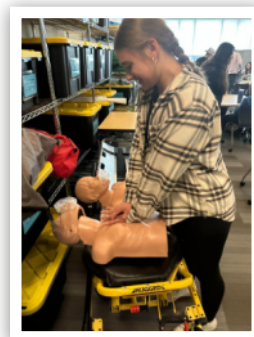
“The connection in some content areas is easier than others,” HHP Principal Mike Jones pointed out, “but we know in education that when you can make that learning experience more real and when kids can apply it to real life, they perk up and tend to pay attention a bit more.”

HHP 12 Project: Saving Mrs. Bulldog

Business partner: Ascension

Mrs. Bulldog is having a heart attack. What is the process involved in a 911 call to get her the medical care she needs?

HHP students are learning about this in a full-year project split between their teachers and subjects. Each class will facilitate different activities that involve the same 911 call about Mrs.



Bulldog's medical situation.

Language classes will work on translating the 911 call into Spanish and German. These three call transcripts will then be given to the EMT teacher to review with their class and talk about how the call would be handled, how to keep the caller calm, and how to help the patient while waiting for EMS to arrive.

The medical assistant classes will then determine treatment of the patient upon arrival and discuss situational awareness (“What if?”) scenarios.

Students in Anatomy class will take the 911 call script, analyze the scenario and discuss anatomy of the heart, including major blood vessels, learn about major cardiovascular diseases, watch a heart bypass surgery and, finally, dissect a heart.

Lastly, psychology classes will discuss reading the patient's feelings, stress levels, and environmental awareness. They will also assess their own stress levels and discuss stress management techniques.

During the November PD Day, teachers visited Ascension, where they observed the ins and outs of an emergency room. They also were able to listen in on a 911 call.

“Ascension has been a great partner for our project,” said Spanish teacher Rosana Hunsberger. “They answered all of our questions regarding our project as well as gave many examples of different roles in the ER and around the hospital. We were able to speak to several people with different jobs in the hospital and relay this information to our medical students. They now know that Ascension has also graciously volunteered to come speak to students about careers and life in the hospital, and have invited students to come observe or job shadow.”

In Search of a Career Pathway

Ninth graders are continuing on their journey of deciding a pathway for the remaining years of their high school experience. That pathway will determine which Academy they join for their 10th through 12th grade years – the Academy of Business, Entrepreneurship and Innovation (BEI), the Academy of Design, Engineering and Manufacturing (DEM), or the Academy of Health, Human and Public Service (HHP).

MiCareerQuest

On November 14, students from the 9th Grade Academy were among approximately 8,000 students and chaperones from more than 125 high schools across the six-county region who participated in the Michigan Career Quest Southeast at the Suburban Collection Showplace in Novi. According to event organizers, Romeo was the largest group in attendance.

Traveling the more than 400,000 square-feet of floor space, the 9th graders had the opportunity to meet with employers and engage in hands-on activities in four career quadrants: advanced manufacturing, construction, technology and health sciences, all in alignment with the 12 career pathways within Romeo's Academies.

The focus of the career expo was to showcase the skills needed to succeed in nearly 200 in-demand, high-skill jobs. The event was designed to spark students' curiosity and, most importantly, expand their knowledge of career possibilities available to them after graduation.



Opportunities in Manufacturing

Ninth graders who expressed interest in advanced manufacturing when selecting their top three pathways for next year were given the opportunity to tour three local manufacturing companies during a mini-manufacturing day on February 6, discovering possibilities for future job shadowing, internships and careers. Parents also were invited to an insider's look at Lanzen Incorporated, L&L Products and TK Mold & Engineering, Inc.



Lanzen President Terry Lanzen leads a group on a tour of the manufacturing floor.

A Sneak Peek at MCC

All 9th graders had the opportunity to spend a morning touring Macomb Community College as part of their exploration into future college and career paths. Pictured here, students experience the realm of possibilities in a 3D animation studio in the media and communication arts department.



Posing in front of the green screen are, from left, David Guerrero and Zaydia Gocha.

2024-2025 Schools of Choice

Unlimited Schools of Choice

An unlimited number of applications will be accepted for Young 5 to 8th grade and the Virtual Academy (grades 6-11).

Application period: March 18 - August 23, 2024

Limited Schools of Choice

A limited number of applications will be accepted for grades 9-11.

Application period: April 10 - May 9, 2024

If there are more applications received than the number of seats open, a lottery will be held. Parents or guardians will be notified by May 24 of status or need for a lottery. First round enrollment must be completed by August 5. All communications regarding this process will be completed no later than August 29.

Go to [RomeoBulldogs.org](https://romeobulldogs.org) for enrollment information. Questions? Contact the Enrollment Center at (586) 281-1404 or email enrollment@romeok12.org.

Online Career Card Sorting

Some of the 9th graders already had a career in mind when they started the process. Others changed their minds along the way.

The process is known as career card sorting. Once completed manually using cards, the students now perform it online, sorting a host of prospective careers into categories – green for careers of interest, yellow for possible careers, and red for no interest.

The goal, once completed, is for each student to rank their top three pathways for next year, which will determine which Academy they attend. Whether they get their first, second or third choice will be announced during the Pathway Reveal Ceremony on March 8.



9GA student Avery Glugla, pictured above, believes the career sorting process was “extremely useful in narrowing down jobs that fit my personality, interests and lifestyle.” The architecture career pathway in the Academy of Design, Engineering and Manufacturing (DEM) is her top choice.

For Naya Jovanovski, the law and public safety pathway in the HHP Academy is a clear first choice.

“When I was going through it, I had a career in mind,” she said. “I want to be a lawyer when I’m older, so I want to do something down that pathway and that goes along with law and public safety. I’m not sure exactly what kind of lawyer I want to be; I just know that’s something I want to do when I’m older.”

Andrew Canu also wants to be a lawyer, but his father, who practices family law, recommended he select another pathway for high school and pursue this in college before seeking a Juris doctorate degree.

Andrew plans to select engineering as his top pathway and attend the DEM Academy, while taking crossover classes in law in the HHP Academy.

Alison Hudgens initially thought she wanted to pursue the marketing pathway in the BEI Academy, but after talking with her mother and doing independent research, she opted for information technology instead. The classes in that pathway really interest her, in particular cybersecurity.

Another elective is AP Computer Science, which she thinks she will benefit from because this year she is enrolled in Microsoft Business Applications and enjoys doing projects using PowerPoint and Excel.

“My friend’s mom does an IT job and she said that the certifications you get from doing the classes here are really good and can get you a really good job in the future,” Alison said. “I thought it was really cool you can take classes to earn certifications before you even graduate.”

LAW & PUBLIC SAFETY CAREER PATHWAY

FORENSIC INVESTIGATOR

Forensic Investigators are responsible for collecting evidence such as fingerprints, tissue, fluids, from crime scenes without tampering or damaging it. They also analyze samples in a laboratory.

TYPE OF DEGREE:
FOUR YEAR DEGREE

ANNUAL JOB OPENINGS:
3

5 YR JOB GROWTH OUTLOOK:
+8%

HOURLY WAGE:
\$28.04

SALARY WAGE:
\$58,232

ROMEO HIGH SCHOOL

Kat Rice also found it beneficial to talk with her parents about career possibilities – something she doesn’t think she would have done if not prompted by the 9GA approach. Her first choice is the education pathway in the HHP Academy and her second choice is the business pathway in the BEI Academy.

“I thought I wanted to go into some kind of medical research, but after going through the slides and talking to my parents, I considered some business opportunities too,” Kat said. “It’s always beneficial to have these skills. I talked to my parents a lot about this because I really want to make sure I’m making the right decision. It’s very important for college to make sure you know what you want to do.”

Alexa Mackovski was on the fence between the health services and law and public safety pathways, both in the HHP Academy.

“Going through the slides helped me realize all my career choices were in law,” Alexa said. “I love reading books about that, I love listening to podcasts. I’m a part of my school’s debate team, which helps me focus on the path I would like to take.”

This decision was reinforced in discussions with her parents.

“They said do something that you can focus on when you get to 10th grade so when I go to college I can save money and focus on what I want to do,” Alexa said.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CAREER PATHWAY

INFORMATION SECURITY ANALYST

Information Security Analysts plan and carry out security measures to protect an organization’s computer networks and systems. Their responsibilities are continually expanding as the number of cyberattacks increases.

TYPE OF DEGREE:
FOUR YEAR DEGREE

ANNUAL JOB OPENINGS:
16

5 YR JOB GROWTH OUTLOOK:
+12%

HOURLY WAGE:
\$45.67

SALARY WAGE:
\$94,993

ROMEO HIGH SCHOOL

Using Xello as an online platform, educators at Romeo High School created career cards with the help of Macomb County Planning and Economic Development.



Photos courtesy of First Street Photography

You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown

Romeo Theatre Company brought the popular "Peanuts" characters to life during a performance of *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* January 26 and 27.

This upbeat musical based on the classic comic strip by Charles Schultz starred Sawyer Lackowski as Charlie Brown, Jimmy Vitale as Schroeder, Porter Rice as Linus, Kayla Sak as Sally, Petra Kelley as Lucy, and Chloe Allen as Snoopy.

"Happiness is working with a group like you," Director Kendra Knoblock wrote in her Director's Note in the program, paraphrasing Charlie Brown himself. While thanking her students, Mrs. Knoblock added, "I honestly wish I could do a documentary on what it takes to put on a production. The audience has no idea (unless they are a parent of yours) of how many hours you give to create a production."



Scholastic Art Awards

Congratulations to the winners of this year's Scholastic Art Awards. The mission of the Scholastic Art Awards is to identify students with exceptional talent and recognize and showcase their work at the regional and national level. Regional Gold Key winners will move forward and be judged for the national competition in March of this year. "Over 4,500 students in our region submitted works, so these young Romeo High School artists have a lot to be proud of," said art department chair Lisa Joseph. The exhibition takes place in February at the College for Creative Studies, and the awards ceremony is held at the Detroit Institute of Arts.

This year's winners are:

- Ava Gedert** ('24): 2 Silver keys
- Gabrielle Gilliam** ('25): 1 Gold Key, 1 Honorable Mention
- Malana Mather** ('24): 1 Silver Key
- Emma Stanifer** ('25): 2 Gold Keys
- Connor Stone** ('24): 2 Gold Keys, 1 Honorable Mention

Clockwise from upper left: "Adam," Gold Key, by Connor Stone; "Trap," Gold Key, by Connor Stone; "See No Evil," Gold Key, by Emma Stanifer; "Eschatalon," Gold Key, by Emma Stanifer; "Tanghulu-Dragon," Gold Key, by Gabrielle Gilliam; "Glimpses," Silver Key, by Ava Gedert; "Ava," Silver Key, by Malana Mather.



Middle School Transformation Planning Team Wraps Up

The final meeting of the Middle School Transformation Planning Team took place on December 14, 2023. This team, made up of teachers, students, administrators, parents and community partners, was charged with transforming the experience for Romeo Middle School students through community-connected learning with non-profit and community-based organizations. Exploring themes of Explore, Engage and Empower, team members delved into how teaching and learning will support the physical, intellectual, emotional and social needs of a middle school student.



The Best Christmas Pageant Ever

The Romeo Middle School Theater cast and crew delighted audience members on December 15 and 16 with a performance of *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*. In this heartwarming and hilarious holiday play, directed by music teacher Chelsea McKay, the small town of Elmwood was in for a surprise when the rowdy and unconventional Herdman siblings decided to join the annual Christmas pageant. Known for their mischief and mayhem, the Herdmans took over the lead roles and turned the traditional pageant upside down.



Winter Sports Highlights

7th and 8th Grade Boys Basketball

From the initial tip-off to the final buzzer, our four Romeo Middle School boys basketball teams demonstrated dedication and a commendable work ethic. Confronted by formidable opponents, the players rallied and the games unfolded like a thrilling roller coaster, marked by intense plays and pivotal moments that kept spectators on the edge of their seats. Victories were celebrated with resounding cheers, serving as a testament to the collective effort and growth of our teams. In the face of defeat, our athletes displayed admirable resilience, bouncing back with even greater determination. Each dribble down the court became a valuable lesson in teamwork. Since the season has ended, the memories forged on the court will serve as a lasting legacy, instilling important values of sportsmanship and fostering a sense of camaraderie that will undoubtedly resonate with our young athletes.

Competitive Dance

The Romeo middle school competitive dance team started their season in May of 2023. They participated in UDA Summer Camp, fall football games, winter boys basketball games, three regional



competitions in Southeast Michigan, and so much more. These girls learned how to continue to strive for growth regardless of competition results. Their goal was to always be better than the last time they performed and to treat one another like family.

Competitive Cheer

The Romeo Middle School competitive cheer teams have spent the new year competing across southeast Michigan. In the midst of snow days and team illnesses, these athletes pushed through adversity and came out on top. Throughout this season they bonded as individual teams and a program, and supported one another on and off the mat.



Lü Interactive Playground

Indoor gym at Romeo elementary schools will never be the same. With a Lü Interactive Playground system, students of all ages can enjoy interactive games brought to life on a 12' x 19' projection, a multi-colored LED lighting system, dual speakers and a high quality sound system, a movement detection camera that allows for interaction with the projection, and an internal computer with device mirroring capacity.

The system has been installed at three out of five elementary schools, with the rest slated for completion this spring.

Amanda Moore Elementary physical education teacher Beth Flanigan is new to the system, but has been enjoying testing it out with her students and looks forward to additional training to discover its full potential.



Kindergarten students at Amanda Moore Elementary follow dance moves on the Lü dance app.



One app her students have enjoyed is called Target, where students throw balls at targets projected onto the wall. The sensor recognizes if the target is hit and that team gets a point.

"It's been very useful since we are currently working on throwing skills," Mrs. Flanigan explained.

There are also sports apps where a student can shoot a basketball at a projected basket, kick a field goal, and score on a soccer net.

Mrs. Flanigan often begins the class using an app that projects six different emotions on the wall and the students tap the wall to indicate the emotion they're feeling. This data is then conveyed on a pie chart demonstrating the overall emotions of the class.

"My younger students really like a dance app where they can follow along and learn different moves," she said. "I've also become fond of the timer. I can project the timer on the wall so the class knows exactly when the round of that game or activity is over."

There are also educational apps, including a math program that provides equations and students either tap the wall or throw a ball at the answer they believe is correct.

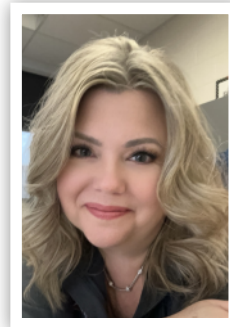
P.E. teacher Zac Puszczuk is the veteran user of the Lü system, as it was installed at Hamilton-Parsons Elementary School in October, earlier than any other elementary school. Prior to its installation he had the opportunity to see the system in action at a school in Roseville.

The school launched the new program with a Glow Party, and since then Mr. Puszczuk has been learning the ins and outs of the Lü. For example, he discovered it works best as a center or station for small group learning, and has found the throwing applications are most popular. The camera feature is helpful in allowing him to demonstrate a skill, and he has enjoyed exploring different features, such as the lights, scoreboard, animated polls, and an application that instantly generates random teams.



Washington Thrives as a Caring School Community

Washington Elementary School Principal Dana Hepner was featured in a recent issue of *Collaborative Classroom* in a Michigan Leader Spotlight focused on how the school built a thriving school culture as a Caring School Community.



Caring School Community is a multiyear school improvement program that aims to promote core values and a schoolwide feeling of community.

In her interview, Ms. Hepner shared her pride in the "diverse population of students and the dedicated staff of Washington that work tirelessly to move mountains in the name of what is best for children."

"Students are much more aware of how their actions and behaviors impact those around them and our school culture as a whole. It has been a delight to watch students grow in their language for recognizing behaviors and becoming more aware of their choices."

—Dana Hepner,
from *Collaborative Classroom*

2023-2024 District Calendar

Monday & Tuesday, February 19-20

No School - Mid-Winter Break

Wednesday, March 6

No School (All Students)

Teacher Professional Development

Friday, March 8

½ Day Grades K-8 - Records Day

End of 2nd Trimester

Tuesday, March 12

High School Conferences*

Wednesday, March 13

Middle School Conferences*

Thursday, March 14

Elementary Conferences*

March 22-29

No School - Spring Break

School Resumes Monday, April 1st

Friday, May 24 & Monday, May 27

No School - Memorial Day

Thursday, June 6

Half-Day (All Students)

Friday, June 7

Last Day of School

Half Day (All Students)

*Evening Times TBD

Robo Bulldogs Advance to International Competition



They had a rough start to the day, but the Robo Bulldogs, Indian Hills Elementary School's FIRST LEGO League team, battled back from near the bottom to take second place at the state tournament on Saturday, December 9.

As a result of their performance, team members, from left, Jonah Peter, Ben Miller, Jonathan Aymen, Julian Francis and William Cherfoli, pictured with their coaches, Rachel Miller, left, and Julia Cherfoli, right, advanced to the Western Edge Invitational in Palm Beach, California on May 31 to June 2, where they will face teams from across the U.S. and around the world in this two-day competition.

The boys first competed in a regional qualifying event in November, where they won the Champion award, having earned the overall best score in four categories – their innovation project, presentation, robot

games, and core values of teamwork, innovation, fun, creativity and discovery. This was the second time in Indian Hills history that a team advanced to the state championship.

In the early rounds of the state competition, the teammates ran into some glitches. In round one, their robot started spinning in circles in the middle of the table. In the second round it powered down completely.



"We went into lunch at the half-day mark, and we sat down and said, 'That was bad, right? That didn't go well,'" Mrs. Cherfoli recalled. "So we made a decision to try to come back and put the morning behind us."

They switched robots to their back-up bot. From there, the key was to keep practicing and to focus.

Their hard work and persistence paid off.

"They blew their presentation away," Mrs. Cherfoli said. "They killed it in the next two games. We went from 40th to 16th place and then they did their presentation and ended up second overall."

Coming back from near the bottom of the pack to place second out of 48 teams was a testament to the fact they never gave up.

"I was really proud of them for being able to come back like that after such a discouraging start," Mrs. Cherfoli said. "There were things that were out of their control. Once we switched bots it was smooth sailing from there."

Made with Love

Hevel Elementary School first grade teacher Brenda Heimbuch teamed up with her mother, Roberta Jannette, on a special project that benefited her students in two ways: it gave them a way to express their creativity and to stay warm outdoors during the winter.

Mrs. Heimbuch said her mother "is always on board to help, especially because it impacts the kids in my classroom."

The idea was for each student to design their own hat on a template, using whatever patterns and colors they chose. Mrs. Heimbuch handed the designs over to her mother – an expert knitter – who recreated each hat within three weeks.

"I had her come in so I could get a picture and she could see the kiddos receive them," Mrs. Heimbuch reported. "Their excitement was beyond cute. The students were able to thank her and talk to her a little bit about the hats. It gives them something that they can say they designed and had it created just for them to hopefully cherish and remember in years to come."



Roberta Jannette, far right, poses with her daughter's first grade students at Hevel Elementary.



**ROMEO
COMMUNITY
SCHOOLS**

316 N. Main Street
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2023-2024 BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Kindergarten and Young Fives Information Night

Our annual Kindergarten and Young Fives Information Night will be held on Tuesday, March 19, from 6:30 7:30 p.m. Parents of incoming students are welcome to attend at their neighborhood school or a school of their choice. Learn about a typical day for a kindergarten or young five student, as well as what needs to be done to complete the enrollment process.

Young fives is intended for children who turn 5 after May 31, 2024, but before December 1 of the same year.

Prospective kindergarten students should be five on or before September 1, 2024.

Potential schools of choice families are welcome to attend information night at any elementary school.

Election Day is February 27

Romeo Community Schools has two important renewals on the February 27 Presidential Primary Election Day ballot.

The **Non-Homestead Operating Millage** Renewal

- Is not levied on primary residences, but applies only to businesses, second homes, vacant land and rental property.
- Represents \$10.5 million annually or 12% of the school district's operational budget.
- Is required of all Michigan school districts to receive their full share of state aid (per pupil funding).

The **Sinking Fund** Renewal

- Generates approximately \$3.4 million annually.
- Is used to cover facility repairs, updates and instructional technology, allowing the operating budget to fund educational programs for students.

To learn more, go to romeok12.org and click on the election tab in the upper-left corner.

It's never been easier to vote in Michigan! You can vote absentee, or new this election you can participate in 9-day in-person voting prior to Election Day.

Thank you for your continued support of Romeo Community Schools!

Notice of Nondiscrimination

In compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disability Act of 1990, and the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act of 1977, it is the policy that the Romeo Community School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex (sexual orientation or gender), disability, age, height, weight, marital status or any other legally protected characteristic, in its programs, services or activities, including employment opportunities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: Director of Employee Services, 316 North Main Street, Romeo, MI 48065. (586) 752-0230.