



**ROMEO  
COMMUNITY  
SCHOOLS**

## **GOOD NEWS ACROSS 'R' DISTRICT**

May 20, 2024



*Teachers and staff at Romeo High School enjoyed sampling the array of food trucks as part of Staff Appreciation Day on May 7.*

## **A cross-curricular celebration of food**

*By Max Fountain '25, Romeo Student Creative Team*



Schools today are increasingly embracing diversity and inclusiveness in their educational endeavors. One innovative way they achieve this is through collaborative projects that engage students from various classes and pathways.

Romeo has settled on the exciting idea of introducing a school project centered around food trucks. Students from all three pathways and classes were not just engaged, but they were enthusiastic and dedicated, working together to make the food trucks possible for Staff Appreciation Week May 6 to 10. This was their way of giving back to the teachers, showing their appreciation by making them food with origins from different states.

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316 North Main Street • Romeo, Michigan 48065 | [www.romeok12.org](http://www.romeok12.org) | (586) 752-0225 • Fax (586) 752-0228

Shelly Bartolotta, a teacher in the Business, Entrepreneurship and Innovation Academy, was the brains behind the operation, guiding and inspiring the students every step of the way.

“We started this in September, and the students picked the state, and they got to choose from three recipes. They’ve been working on this and doing a good job; the weather turned out perfect,” Mrs. Bartolotta said.

The culinary classes worked diligently to prepare food for the teachers from various states and ethnic backgrounds. Under the leadership of Chef Jerry, the culinary program at Romeo has transformed into a bustling hub of culinary creativity. With much dedication, Chef Jerry and the culinary classes tirelessly catered to the teachers and staff of our school. Prior to the event, they prepared and executed their plan to fuel the various food trucks presented, each representing a unique ethnic background or state-inspired cuisine. From Michigan to Hawaii, Chef Jerry's students masterfully crafted dishes that tasted amazing and celebrated the different states’ cuisines.

“I think it went extraordinarily well. The students in both groups, both on the business and culinary sides did a bang-up job,” Chef Jerry said. “I’m responsible for the culinary side, and their support in making almost everything for this has been incredible. The results speak for themselves. The people are enjoying all the food, and support for Mrs. B’s class on the business side has been great. It was a great team effort between both groups to pull off what is a pretty complex project.”



That team effort also involved students from other pathways and academic disciplines in an expansion of this cross-curricular project, now in its second year.

For example, history students researched and wrote about the state’s history with food for each truck, science students tested and made hand sanitizers for the crowd, math students calculated the space configuration and made maps for the courtyard (and indoors in the event of

rain), and English students wrote about the state’s history. In addition, construction students helped build the trucks, adding shelves this year.

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Romeo also invited some of its sponsors and partners to attend the annual event to witness firsthand what was going on in the schools. Upon arrival, staff and partners were given a punch list with all the different trucks and states that they visited. One sponsor, Lombardo Homes, sent a representative to check out what the Bulldogs had been up to.

“We donated the paint for the trucks, and we also came in with our marketing team to give them feedback on their designs and the marketing aspect of what they were putting together, along with constructive criticism,” said business partner Greg Windingland.

The event not only showed appreciation to the teachers, but also created an assignment that involved all the different pathways that Romeo High School has to offer. This success is a testament to the hard work and dedication of everyone involved.



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