

November 10, 2023

Greetings FSD Parents/Guardians & Staff,

Congratulations to the cast and crew of **Shrek, The Musical** for their outstanding performance debut last night at the Jeannette Lloyd Theater. It was such a fun and entertaining display of acting and musical talent. Missed opening night? You can still catch the show tonight at 7 PM or Saturday at the 2 PM matinee or 7 PM. You will be entertained and more importantly, come away with a warm and fuzzy feeling of Pretzel Pride. 🥨

See more photos from the show in this week's ["Around the District"](#) video.



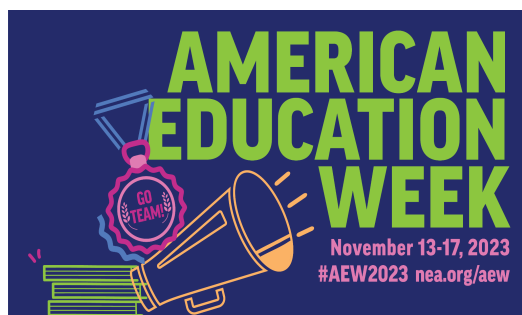
The launch of **"Soup with the Supt"**, starting with a group of students from FMS and FHS, provided me with a wonderful opportunity to dialogue with the students and to hear about their experiences as students in FSD and their impressions of their school, including ideas for improvement. Student voice generates some hard truths about how we can improve as a district. After all, they are our most important stakeholder group that we serve. I am looking forward to continuing this initiative throughout the remainder of the school year.



At last Tuesday's FSD board meeting, I had the opportunity to share the **State of the District** based on the Illinois School Report Card that was released on October 30. One of the data points that was highlighted was on chronic absenteeism.

- While the district's chronic absenteeism improved by 2% (from 37% in 2022 to 35% in 2023), we still have a lot of work to do to minimize overall absenteeism in our district. Kindergarten still showed the highest number of students who are chronically absent at 41%, which is very much close to the state average. Chronic absenteeism is defined as being absent for 10% during the school year, translating to 18 days or more, excused or unexcused. We are asking our families to please partner with our schools in helping build good attendance habits among our youngest learners.
- When it comes to Illinois School Report Card Summative Designation, every principal will be sharing their individual school information with their staff and families.

## **CELEBRATIONS**



**American Education Week** honors the team of people who work in our nation's public schools, everyone from the bus driver and classroom teacher to the food service worker and administrative staff, plus countless others. We will celebrate throughout the district all week.

**Monday - Kick Off:** The week-long celebration begins as we recognize the amazing members of the FSD Family. Happy AEW 2023!

**Tuesday - Family Day:** We will share special thanks with our Parents/Guardians for all they do to encourage and support the success of our students. There will also be a chance to enter a drawing to win a gift basket filled with FSD swag items and other goodies. Watch your email!

**Wednesday - IL School Board Member Day:** This day marks the official statewide observance of School Board Members Day in Illinois. We took the opportunity at Tuesday's school board meeting to show our appreciation to our board of education members who are committed to providing a local voice in educational decisions. Thank you FSD board members: President Mr. Jack Sosnowski, Vice President Ms. Martha Furst, Mr. Alan Greene, Mrs. Audrey Moore-Howard, Mrs. Kacey Seal, Mr. Ryan Shirley, and Mrs. Charlene Williams for your service to our children, our district and our community.

**Wednesday - Education Support Professionals Day:** Education Support Professionals (ESPs), also known as school support staff, strengthen our schools and departments across the district. They play a vital role on the education team and in students' lives inside and outside the classroom. Thanks to these amazing members of the FSD family who keep our schools running and our students safe, healthy, and ready to learn every day.

**Thursday - Thank an Educator Day:** Our dedicated team of teachers play a critical role in driving the success of our children's education and lives. They are the ones who inspire and guide our kids to become future leaders, innovators and problem solvers. Hats off to the phenomenal educators of FSD.

**Friday - Substitute Educators Day:** These dedicated professional educators provide a critical link in the education of public-school children by serving as a bridge to provide continued quality education to children in the temporary absence of regular classroom educators. Thank you to all who serve as subs in our classrooms.

### **Greta Harrell Named the 2023 Recipient of the IASB Holly Jack Outstanding Service Award.**

This award recognizes the extraordinary work and service provided by administrative professionals who assist their local boards of education. Nominations were received from all parts of the state. The evaluation team members were most impressed by the letters of support submitted for Greta. These letters detailed the commitment and passion that Greta has shown the district, as well as her long history, and included such phrases as:



- ❖ "Greta always is a joy to work with. My day is consistently brighter when I get the opportunity to interact with Greta."
- ❖ "She has this quiet, unassuming way of coming up with a better way to do things."
- ❖ "Greta is not just a force within our district, but throughout the Freeport Community."
- ❖ "I have never worked with anyone as devoted, passionate, and competent in their role as Greta Harrell."
- ❖ "I considered writing a novel on Greta's devotion to our school district."

The 2023 Holly Jack Outstanding Service Award will be officially presented to Greta during the IASB Joint Annual Conference in Chicago, next week. Read the Official [IASB press release](#).

**CONGRATULATIONS GRETA!**



### **FHS' Jennifer Slaght Receives Distinguished Educator Award**

This award recognizes highly credentialed teachers who have achieved this status by earning any combination of 6 or more NGPF (Next Gen Personal Finance) Certifications. Jennifer earned 7. This is a lifetime achievement award and we are so proud of Jennifer and grateful that she's part of the Pretzel Family! **CONGRATULATIONS JENNIFER!**

### **American Indian Heritage Month**

American Indian Heritage Month, also called Native American Heritage Month, is observed in November to recognize the achievements and contributions of Native Americans. In 1990 Congress passed and President George H. W. Bush signed into law a joint resolution designating the month of November as the first National American Indian Heritage Month (also known as Native American Indian Month). Native American Indians have made essential and unique contributions to our Nation and to the world. We are excited to recognize NAHM and share information with our students.



### **Parents You are Invited to Participate!**

We are excited to share that the Secretary of Education, Dr. Miguel Cardona and several other U.S. Department of Education senior officials will be hosting a [live webinar](#) for parents to celebrate **National Parent Involvement Day on 11/16 @ 7pm ET!** This high energy event will focus on the Department's

commitment to supporting parents and the success of their children. **Parent Partnership: Secretary Cardona and Friends Celebrate National Parent Involvement Day, Thursday, November 16 @7pm ET**

**Registration link:**

[https://ed-gov.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN\\_BNcAor3cSY2gn0XZs6jOBg](https://ed-gov.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_BNcAor3cSY2gn0XZs6jOBg)

### **HAPPY VETERANS DAY**

To all who have served our country, we give our respect and thanks for your valiant service, for your courage and for your belief in freedom.  
**WE SALUTE YOU!**



## **Around the District**

Here's a special snippet of a few things going on "[Around the District](#)" over the last couple of weeks. One feature this week is our FMS Student Council and Carl Sandburg Student Council & Builder's Club fundraiser proceeds that were donated to the family of the Late Amy Munda Voegeli, former FSD staff member. The students sold Breast Cancer Awareness bracelets and the proceeds totaling \$700 were donated to Amy's family. Also, in this week's highlights we congratulate FHS seniors sisters/twins, Autumn & Cadence Diduch, both of whom signed intent to play their respective sports for college teams.

Facebook users check out our page for many more of the daily exciting things going on "[Around the District](#)". Academics, special recognitions, other extracurriculars, classroom learning, field trips, special events, we cover it all! You can also follow us on X (formerly [Twitter](#)).

## **REMINDERS**

### **FSD Employment Opportunities**

FSD has job openings for the current school year. For more information on job openings and to apply [visit our website, fsd145](#).

### **Upcoming Notable Dates:**

November 22-24 Thanksgiving Holiday - FSD Closed

This will be our last communication before the Thanksgiving Holiday. The next Newsletter will be on December 1st. Have a safe and blessed Thanksgiving Day. We appreciate all that you do.

Sincerely,

*Dr. Anna Alvarado,*

Superintendent of Schools