

FSD145

Freeport School District

February 5, 2021

Dear FSD 145 Staff and Families,

Though the weather outside is frightful, I hope that this communication finds you well. It's a great weekend to stay in and read a book, watch a movie, or play games with your family. Certainly, if you are a football fan, you are excited for Super Bowl weekend and are rooting for one team or the other. Whatever you are doing, stay safe and warm as we face this weekend's bitter cold temperature.

National School Counselors Week

On this last day of NSCW, we give another *“shout-out”* to our amazing FSD School Counselors. Thank you for the work that you do with and for our students.

YOU ROCK!

FSD 145 School Counselors

Carl Sandburg School - Christine Hodges & Morgan Frost

Freeport Middle School - Danielle Jackson & Steven Jordan

Freeport High School - Jeff Lawfer, Paul Heimer, Sara Shockey & Stacey Shorter

Freeport HS College & Career Center- TJ Jackson

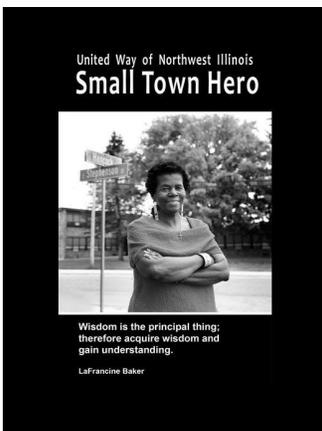
Freeport Alternative High School - Lynn Dunn

United Way Small Town Heroes

Last week, the staff of Banks Bergagna Education Center received a “Small Town Hero” award from the United Way of Northwest IL. Led by Associate Principal, Sarah Swords, they were not only recognized for their efforts in education but they were also recognized for the food drives they have organized and that have benefited their students throughout the pandemic.

Also named a “Small Town Hero” was FMS educator, LaFrancine Baker. Ms. Baker has impacted the lives of students in FSD, over the span of her more than 40-year career. She is known for encouraging them to do and give their best and exposing many of them to college through spring break college tours. She also produces and directs an annual program celebrating Black History Month. Each year upwards of 50 students grades 6-12 participate in this production.

Congratulations to Banks Bergagna and Ms. Baker, and thank you for representing FSD145 in such an exceptional way. We're “Pretzel Proud” of you!



Black History Month

The Equity Department will provide additional Black History resources each week, during Black History Month, to assist staff with celebrating the contributions of African-Americans, Past & Present. Embedding Black History resources in the areas of ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies and the Arts will make for a more robust learning experience for all students in Freeport SD 145. Follow us throughout the month on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) as we highlight individuals whose achievements and contributions are worthy of note.

Spotlight on Curriculum and Instruction : Culturally Responsive Teaching and Leading Standards

The Illinois State Board of Education is proposing the state implement Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) and Leading Standards for teacher preparation programs at the university level. The proposed standards will be voted on Feb. 16 by the Joint Commission on Administrative Rules, where Democrat and Republican lawmakers will review them. If approved, the standards will be implemented in colleges and universities across the state by October 2025.

Here are additional facts that can help build understanding of what CRT is and what it is not:

- The proposed standards are NOT what will be taught to children in K-12 classrooms, but are intended to prepare future teachers and administrators to “view and value their students as individuals within the context of their families and communities.”
- These standards will impact teacher preparation programs to better prepare teachers to work with diverse populations and to bring inclusivity into our classrooms. It will give new teachers the tools that they need to talk about race, culture, and diverse identities in ways that veteran teachers may not have been prepared for when they were in college.
- In the Freeport School District, our teachers have already been given opportunities to learn Culturally Relevant Teaching Practices. In fact, at a recent Institute Day where teachers had 36 professional learning sessions to choose from, the session on CRT was among the top 5 attended sessions.
- The teachers in Freeport know that in order to increase the academic achievement of our district, we must be better teachers of ALL students.
- In Freeport we strive to provide instruction that is innovative, inclusive and student centered and to do that we must consider the perspectives of our students including their cultural backgrounds, their families and their experiences.
- Freeport has been implementing Culturally Relevant Teaching Practices through the AVID Program, which embeds its research in CRT.
- The standards are not meant to be used to indoctrinate students. Neither are they meant to encourage or recruit students to join protests or rallies due to political affiliations. As a public school system, we are focused on improving student achievement by supporting students’ social and emotional needs and creating the best environment and opportunities for them to achieve their potential so they can be productive members of their community.

Please feel free to reach out if you have any additional questions regarding the CRT Standards.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION **Remote Learning By Choice (RLBC)**

Families who wish to change their selection to or from RLBC should follow the processes below

- **In-person to Remote-** Sign up using the [Remote Learning by Choice](#) form.
- **Remote to In-Person-** Contact the ETC at 815-232-0580 or your student’s school to request a return to in-person. Return dates are offered every two weeks for the remainder of the school year.

Placement depends on openings that take into consideration building capacity, staff availability and our ability to maintain social distancing in classrooms. Elementary students may be offered a spot in a different school building if their home school capacity has been met. This is a temporary solution.

The next deadline to request a return to in-person placement is **02/09/21**. Requests received by this date will begin in-person instruction on **02/16/21**, if capacity in buildings/classrooms allow.

Physical & Immunization Requirements

If your student is switching from Remote Learning by Choice to In-Person/Hybrid the required physical examination and immunizations must be on file. [Please click here to see for more information on what students require physical exams/immunizations.](#)

WEEKLY REMINDERS

IMPORTANT - Notification of Emergency Closings

In the event schools must be closed due to extreme weather conditions, notification will be sent to families by phone call and text message. **You may still opt in to receive text messages from us by texting Y to 67587.** Notification is also sent to local radio and news stations, posted on our social media sites (Facebook, Twitter), and our website www.fsd145.org. In the event that we have to close school due to inclement weather, all students will follow the full remote learning schedule. The [Remote Learning Quick Guide](#) is available on our website.

COVID Vaccination & Positivity Rate Updates from the Stephenson County Health Department

The overall 7-day rolling positivity rate is 8.9% in Stephenson County as of Feb.1, and 4.8% in Region 1. As of 02/01/2021, SCHD has notified us that there are 3 active student (1 new) and 3 active staff cases in FSD. Information regarding our [COVID statistics](#) can be viewed on our website. We will continue to provide information regarding vaccination of staff as it becomes available.

Grab-N-Go & Meal Delivery & Pick-up

For families signed up for **bus delivery** you will receive a delivery tomorrow, February 6. Also, tomorrow is the next pick-up date at **Carl Sandburg School** from 10 am - Noon, for Group A / Group B blended students and any remote choice learners who are not on the bus delivery route.

Upcoming Important Dates:

- President's Day Holiday - Monday, February 15, 2021 - District Closed
- 3 Hour School Improvement Day - Wednesday, February 24, 2021 - All students attend remotely
- Spring Break - March 22-26, 2021

Feedback & Questions

If you have missed our weekly communications to families, you can read them here. [Weekly & Special Community Communications](#). Please call your student's schools with any questions or comments.

It is our privilege to serve your children and we can't thank you enough for your support in this great responsibility. As well, we thank the many community entities that partner with us as we work to be "All In for All Kids". We are "All In" this together! Have a wonderful weekend!

With gratitude,
Dr. Anna Alvarado
Superintendent of Schools