



Mason Public Schools Keynotes

January 2025

District Needs Survey
Page 1

HEARTSafe Schools
Page 2

Adult Education
Offered in Mason
Page 3

What's New with the
Bulldog Bark Squad
Page 3

School Board
Appreciation
Page 4

MPS Foundation Gala
Page 4

MPS Safety Team
Page 5

Team Mason
Page 6

Inclusion Every Day
Page 7



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU! TAKE THE DISTRICT NEEDS SURVEY

Dear Mason Community Members,

As part of the Mason Public Schools (MPS) 2023-2028 Strategic Plan, the district is researching various aspects of its educational, operational, financial and facility functions, and we want to hear from you!

Because MPS values your contribution to our planning process, you are invited to complete a short survey about the future needs of MPS. Your input and insight will help us refine our strategic plan to align with both short-term and long-term goals and objectives.

The survey is being administered by Plante Moran Realpoint, who MPS has hired as a planning consultant to assist with this process. Survey results will be shared publicly upon completion in Spring 2025.

For your convenience, there will be three ways to access the survey:

- Visit www.surveymonkey.com/r/MPSCIS25 to complete the survey online.
- Scan the QR code below with your phone to complete the survey online.
- Pick up a paper copy at the MPS office at 201 West Ash Street #2a, Mason, MI 48854. Paper surveys must be returned to the MPS office by the deadline below.

We ask that you please complete the survey by Friday, January 31, 2025. We estimate the survey to take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey, please feel free to reach out with any questions via email to either kinzerg@masonk12.net or mumbyc@masonk12.net.

Sincerely,

Dr. Gary Kinzer
Superintendent
Mason Public Schools

Christopher Mumby
President
Mason Public Schools Board of Education



Scan the QR code to take the survey!

An exemplary learning community - Every student. Every day.

Schools Earn HEARTSafe Certification

Mason Middle School, North Aurelius Elementary and Alaiedon Elementary are now officially HEARTSafe certified schools! Teams of staff members in the three buildings worked to earn the designation which prepares the school community to act quickly during a cardiac emergency, potentially saving lives.

HEARTSafe certification is awarded to schools that meet specific safety standards including having automated external defibrillators (AEDs) on-site, conducting regular emergency drills and providing CPR training to staff and students.

Mason High School, Steele Elementary and Harvey Education Center teams are working this year to also earn the HEARTSafe designation.

"This training is important for our students and schools but also extends into our community," said district nurse and HEARTSafe coordinator Emily Epling. "By providing training for our educators, it is making our community safer as well."

Students across the district will also have the opportunity to take part in training and activities to make them more conscious of cardiac health and response to health emergencies.

Learn more about the HEARTSafe designation www.migrc.org/patients-families/mi-heartsafe-schools/



North Aurelius HEARTSafe Staff



Alaiedon HEARTSafe Staff



Mason Middle School HEARTSafe Staff

WHAT'S NEW WITH THE BULLDOG BARK SQUAD?



Welcome Coco! The Bulldog Bark Squad has grown by four more paws with the addition of Coco! Coco joined her handler, Kathleen VanFleet, in December and is getting acclimated to her new family in addition to making a few visits to her new school home at North Aurelius Elementary!

Thank you to Canines for Change for their ongoing support of the Bulldog Bark Squad and to Coco's sponsor the Rotary Club of Mason for supporting her in her role as a facility dog with Mason Public Schools!



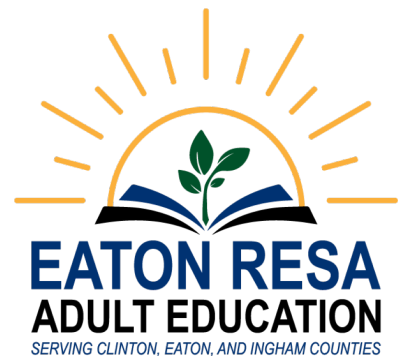
ADULT EDUCATION, GED PREPARATION CLASSES OFFERED IN MASON

The Eaton RESA Adult Education program serves adult learners in Clinton, Eaton and Ingham counties. It is dedicated to increasing work skills, literacy levels and high school equivalency credentials (GED/HiSET) at no cost to the learner.

Beginning in January, adult education classes will be offered in Mason at Mason Community Services on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9 AM - 12 PM.

Interested students must complete an application and attend a registration event to enroll. The next enrollment event is January 7, 2025, at Capital Area Michigan Works. Transportation assistance is available for registration events and adult education classes.

Learn more about Adult Education and additional services to support students at www.eatonresa.org/adult-education or call 517.492.5539.





THANK YOU MPS SCHOOL BOARD!



January is National School Board Recognition Month! Our community is thankful for the dedicated members of the Mason Public Schools Board of Education and their vision, commitment and willingness to serve the district and the community.

During a reception in December, the Board honored outgoing members Kurt Creamer and Michael Kelly for their years of service. Thank you to **Bestsellers Books & Coffee** for donating coffee for the event.

The new Board members, Matt Bennett and Lacy Harding, will begin their terms in 2025.



DON'T MISS THE MPS FOUNDATION GALA



Join the Mason Public Schools Foundation for the annual Commercial Bank Red Carpet Gala on March 8, 2025!

Tickets are now on sale for this evening of fun in support of Mason Public Schools. To purchase tickets, donate or sponsor the event, scan the QR code or visit www.one.bidpal.net/mpsfgala2025

MEET THE MPS SAFETY TEAM

The Mason Public Schools (MPS) Safety Team leads efforts across the district to improve school safety, bolster health and wellness, and prepare for emergency response.

The team consists of Mason High School Assistant Principal Adam Brandt, School Resource Officer Justin Demo, District Nurse Emily Epling, RN; MTSS Coach Julie Grech-Kramer, Mason Middle School Assistant Principal Mary Hilker-Loch, North Aurelius Principal Michael Prelesnik and School Social Worker Erinna Toodzio-Hook. Additional staff members work with the Safety Team to ensure plans and communication are shared throughout the district.

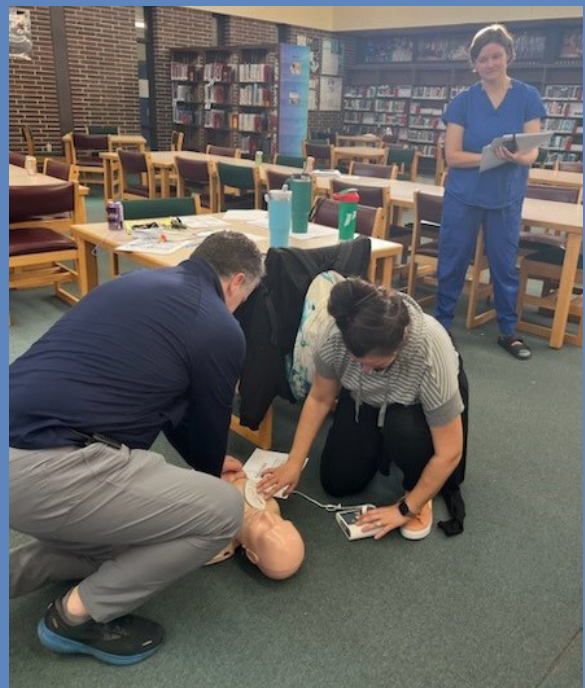
This multidisciplinary team brings a wide range of expertise to provide a comprehensive approach to school safety.

“Each member of our team has a specific area of expertise which makes our team powerful,” said Brandt. “We all come to safety from a different angle and area of focus; and by working together, we can ensure the plans and programs we’re putting in place are comprehensive and meet the needs of our students, staff and families.”

The team is focused on preparing for emergencies as well as equipping every member of our school community with the tools and knowledge they need to stay safe. The team is working to complete this goal by:

- Conducting a comprehensive review and update of the entire district Emergency Operations Plan which outlines the district’s procedures and responses to various situations.
- Updating emergency flip books with clear, step-by-step guidance for staff use during emergencies. The flip books are located in every classroom go-bag.
- Conducting drills and practices to ensure staff are comfortable with safety plans and procedures as well as the instructions in the flip books.
- Organizing tabletop scenarios that provide hands-on practice using the flip books and emergency protocols to help staff build a stronger understanding of how to respond effectively.

We look forward to sharing more information about the Safety Team and their work across this district throughout the year!



TEAM MASON- WHY WELLNESS WEDNESDAY?

Team Mason articles shine a spotlight on students, teachers, programs and projects in all buildings and grades in the district. Team Mason articles are written by Dr. Janet Alleman, MPS Instructional Consultant and Professor Emeritus at Michigan State University. Read all of the Team Mason articles at www.masonk12.net/district/team-mason



Again, Mason Public Schools (MPS) has recognized a cutting-edge need, addressing students' mental health, and is working to address it with Wellness Wednesdays.

Contributions from a host of administrators and faculty helped provide a plethora of rich opportunities for our secondary students to address the goal of paying attention to mental health which is at a national crisis in our country.

During the first high school Wellness Wednesday of the year, the building was bursting with positive energy!

The range of activities facilitated by the teachers fell into five categories: mindfulness, wellness, nutrition, fitness and happiness. While students had a choice, they knew if the activity they chose was overbooked, there were other terrific options.

Taking a nature walk, learning to wobble, making decorations for homecoming, creating friendship bracelets, silent reading, playing tennis, meditating and playing Spanish Bingo were among the more than 40 terrific choices.

The responses from students and faculty were overwhelmingly positive and cell phones were a forgotten item.



Obviously, the intent was for students to later replicate the activities they experienced on Wellness Wednesday in order to enhance their daily lives. More Wellness Wednesdays are already in the works to further fuel building habits of good practice.

"It is health that is real wealth – and not pieces of gold and silver," said Mahatma Ghandi.

Stay tuned for more information about Wellness Wednesday, it is alive and well!

WHAT STUDENT SAY ABOUT WELLNESS WEDNESDAY

"It gave us time to simply chill."

"I've had no deadlines."

"We got to just be kids."

"It felt so good to simply recharge."



DIVERSITY COMMITTEE REFLECTS, LOOKS AHEAD

Self-reflection helps us grow. As the Mason Public Schools (MPS) Diversity Committee celebrates its seventh year, there is much to be proud of!

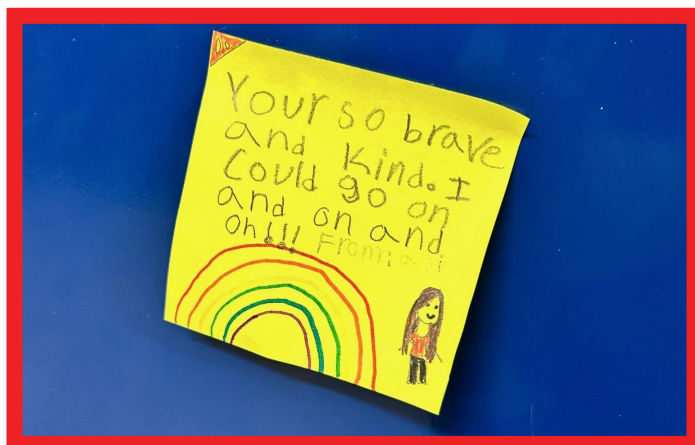
The committee brings together teachers, staff, administrators, students and community members for a common goal. Together, they work to create a better learning environment for all students and staff.

In its early years, the committee focused on making MPS a welcoming place for learners from diverse backgrounds. Over time, its focus has expanded to promoting equity, inclusion and belonging for everyone.

Recently, the committee has prioritized student experiences and put a focus on naturally promoting inclusion in classrooms and throughout our schools. The committee spearheads district-wide initiatives and assists with lesson planning and events for Inclusion Week. Held each February, Inclusion Week highlights topics including belonging, self-acceptance and empathy.

To reflect its expanded mission, the committee has changed its name to the **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) Committee** this year.

Updates on DEIB activities can be found in the weekly Mason Minute District Newsletter and in Dr. Kinzer's State of the District Address released this December.



Mason Public Schools
201 West Ash Street, Suite 2A
Mason, MI 48854



EVERY STUDENT. EVERY DAY.

Mason Public Schools
Keynotes

Mason Public Schools is committed to academic excellence in a safe environment where students develop critical thinking skills, are empowered to succeed, and are encouraged to serve their community.

SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Gary Kinzer
kinzerg@masonk12.net

CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

Tracey Wooden
woodent@masonk12.net

ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT OF ACADEMIC SERVICES

Randy Barton
bartonr@masonk12.net

DIRECTOR OF INSTRUCTION

Melissa Netzel
netzelm@masonk12.net

DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Rick Brooks
brooksr@masonk12.net

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Lisa Bercaw
bercawl@masonk12.net