**March is Reading Month**

In honor of Dr. Seuss’ birthday, March has been designated as National Reading Month, a month to motivate Americans of all ages to read every day. Reading is fun and has many benefits regardless of your age. It’s a key component of education and professional development.

**Why is reading important?**

Reading books helps us learn and understand makes us smarter, not to mention the knowledge, vocabulary expansion and thinking skills we develop. Starting in kindergarten, if a student reads 20 minutes a day at home, they will hear 1.8 million words per year. They will have read for 851 hours by 6th grade and on standardized tests, they will likely score better than 90% of their peers.

*“The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you’ll go.”*  
- Dr. Seuss.

*“There are many little ways to enlarge your child’s world. Love of books is the best of all.”* - Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis

**The Mystery Crew Needs YOU!**

Even though March is gone, The Mystery Crew would still like students to READ like Scooby Doo! At an assembly for Reading month, students celebrated with Fred, Daphne, Velma, Shaggy and Scooby Doo. Something mysterious happened at East Jordan Elementary School and this Mystery Crew was calling on you to read. Parents should encourage their children to read and help the crew solve the mystery. Below is the recommended number of minutes to read each night.

- Kindergarten: 10 minutes
- First Grade: 12 minutes
- Second Grade: 15 minutes
- Third Grade: 18 minutes
- Fourth Grade: 20 minutes
- Fifth Grade: 22 minutes
- Sixth Grade: 24 minutes

Your child can read more than the allotted time if he or she wants. Please help your child share in the joy of reading by setting aside time for reading, creating a cozy area to read and having a variety of reading material that is age appropriate and interesting. Joke books, cookbooks, how-to books and graphic novels are all great possibilities. Reading is Fundamental (RIF) books were also sent home with students.

*Looking for Preschool?*

Now taking applications for the 2020-2021 school year.  
For More Information Contact  
1-800-443-5518  
- Your family may be eligible for tuition-free preschool.  
- Taking applications for children ages 3 and 4 before December 1, 2020.

**Class of 2033**

It’s time for Kindergarten Round Up & Registration!

**Kindergarten screening is:**

**Tuesday, April 21 and Thursday, April 23**

Please plan on one hour and fifteen minutes.

Go to [https://www.schoolbookings.net](https://www.schoolbookings.net) and enter code ux9ad to make an appointment or leave a voicemail message at the office - 231-536-7564.

We welcome all children who will be 5 on or before December 1, 2020. A certified birth certificate, proof of residency and immunization records are required for registration.

East Jordan Public Schools Newsletter  
[www.ejps.org](http://www.ejps.org)
Mrs. Dunlop-Roberts hosted a “Meet the BPA Chapter” event to teach community members, parents and future members about Business Professionals of America. Business Professionals of America, better known as BPA, is a professional organization for students that allows students to learn and apply business related concepts in the form of competition. Students compete in a variety of business activities such as objective tests, Microsoft Office concepts, speeches and presentations. “This year we broke a school record with 49 student competitors that competed remotely for the Regional Leadership Conference (normally held at CMU, canceled due to weather for the first time in the history of our region) and we also broke a record with planning to bring 35 students to the State Leadership Conference which was cancelled due to the Corona Virus,” says Mrs. Dunlop-Roberts.

Meet our Present & Future Business Professionals

Congratulations to these Business, Administration, Management, and Operations 1 students for passing their Microsoft Office Specialist in Excel 2016.

Students Earn Microsoft Specialist Awards

Congratulations to these Business, Administration, Management, and Operations 1 students for passing their Microsoft Office Specialist in Excel 2016.

Our Seniors Sign Letters of Intent to Continue Athletic Careers

Congratulations to our Seniors signing letters of intent to continue their athletic careers:

- Maggie Stevenson signs to participate in track at Grand Valley State University.
- Cooper Stevenson signs to play football at Aurora University.
- Aaron Nachazel signs to run track and cross country at Lake Superior State University.
- Molly Kitson signs to run track and cross country at Northwood University.
- Caleb Carson signs to run track and cross country at Rochester University.
- Ben Hardy signs to run track and cross country at Aquinas College.
- Ethan Nachazel signs to run track and cross country at Lake Superior State University.
- Alex Schlueter signs to run track and cross country at Madonna University.
- Caleb Carson signs to run track and cross country at Rochester University.
The stress of trying to avoid this virus, the rapidly changing information we hear on the news or other sources, and the fear of what is unknown may understandably increase worry and anxiety. The following are some additional resources that may be helpful to you or to your family as we all work to navigate the personal impact of this pandemic. The Center for Disease Control, (CDC) provides some excellent guidance in their online resource, Mental Health and Coping During COVID19:

“Taking care of yourself, your friends and your family can help you cope with stress. Helping others cope with their stress can also make your community stronger.” Things you can do to support yourself:

• Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.
• Take care of your body. Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep and avoid alcohol and drugs.
• Make time to unwind. Try to do some other activities you enjoy.
• Connect with others. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.

Some other internet resources that may be of help:
The Jed Foundation Tips for Self-Care and Managing Stress.
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Taking Care of Your Behavioral Health: Tips for Social Distancing, Quarantine, and Isolation During an Infectious Disease Outbreak.
SAMHSA Coping With Stress During Infectious Disease Outbreaks.

If you need more information, you may contact:
Rebecca Litzner at 536-2204
Amber Southerton at 536-7307
(Be sure to leave a message with your name and contact information).

The MDHHS also has a COVID19 hotline at 1-888-535-6136.

Students Perform with the Young Americans!

“The Young Americans inspire the world through music with their captivating performances, signature youth programs, and performing arts college.” Our students, in grades 3 to 12, were able to enjoy a visit from 40 talented Young American students recently. Our students had the opportunity to sing, dance and perform along with the Young Americans at the workshop held at the Middle/High School. One student was quoted as saying, “This is just as much fun as Disneyland.” The workshop culminated in a performance in the Middle/High School gym to a very enthusiastic group of parents and community members. Great job by a group of talented students!

EJ Extravaganza Celebrates Our Local “Champions for Children”!

Staff and community members were honored at the annual EJ Extravaganza. The EJ Extravaganza is an annual fund raiser for East Jordan Public Schools and the money raised is used for scholarships and special school projects at both the elementary and the middle/high schools.

Board President, Ted Sherman presents EJPS employee, Tom Reid with the “Red Devil” award.

The “Champions for Children” award is given to an organization or group of people who go above and beyond to help the students of EJPS. This year the award was given to the Health Department of Northwest Michigan.

Board President, Ted Sherman presents Ruthann Sheridan with the “We Are EJ” award honoring her late husband and retired teacher, Tom Sheridan.
Staff Spotlight

Kelsey Wright

This month, EJPS is proud to highlight Kelsey Wright as our Staff Spotlight. Mrs. Wright teaches Spanish, Technology and Yearbook at East Jordan Middle/High School. She is an incredible foreign language teacher who makes learning fun and gets students excited about learning.

Mrs. Wright grew up in Petoskey, Michigan and graduated from Petoskey High School. As a high school student, Mrs. Wright knew she wanted to be a teacher and worked as a Teacher Aide in the elementary schools. She attended Central Michigan University, although it was music she originally intended to study and was a vocal music major for two years. A very inspirational experience taking a Spanish course caused her to change her plans as to what she would be teaching. Mrs. Wright also attended Universidad San Francisco in Quito, Ecuador where she lived for seven months. She previously taught at Gaylord High School. This is her first year as a Red Devil.

Mrs. Wright believes her greatest teaching strengths are her ability to build a smiling environment for her students. After that, she lets her passion for culture and the Spanish language take over and the results are rewarding. The aspect of teaching Mrs. Wright enjoys most is the relationships she builds while watching the growth her students exhibit. Bringing a smile to a student’s face or eliciting a laugh are daily goals for Mrs. Wright. To do this, she is constantly working to create a comfortable, safe and fun environment for her students. After that, she lets her passion for culture and the Spanish language take over and the results are rewarding. One of the most memorable experiences for Mrs. Wright are the visits from students of the past who come to share what they are doing now. Talking with past students and learning about what they are doing is very rewarding for Mrs. Wright. She even keeps a box of notes from students and loves to go through them.

When she is not teaching, Mrs. Wright is an avid long distance runner, enjoys snowboarding with her husband, Drue and taking long trips to hike, camp and snowboard around the country. She is a yoga enthusiast and has three dogs.

If you see Mrs. Wright, you might ask her to quote, “The Office”, she and her husband still enjoy watching this series on a looping basis. She eats an avocado a day and has close ties to Happy’s Taco Shop in Petoskey.

Thank you Mrs. Wright for bringing your passion for the Spanish language and learning to East Jordan Middle/High School. You are an important part of our East Jordan Public School family!

Vocational-Technical Student of the Month

East Jordan Middle/High School senior, Lillii Armstrong, has been selected by the CTE faculty as the February 2020 Career & Technical Education Student of the Month. Her CTE courses include welding, BAMO and auto. She plans to pursue a career in welding and fabrication in the future.

Lillii enjoys powerlifting, juggling, working with livestock, and welding. She is a four-time state champion powerlifter. She has also been a top qualifier at Nationals and placed 3rd in the World Powerlifting competition. She will continue to compete at elite powerlifting competitions throughout the year. Lillii is the daughter of Patsy Armstrong.

Alumni Spotlight

James Gee

We are proud to feature James Gee as our Alumni Spotlight feature this month. James graduated from East Jordan High School in 2000. Before going to Central Michigan University, he enrolled in an international missionary school, Youth With A Mission, in Lakeside, Montana. From there he did missionary work in the form of music and theater in Hong Kong and China. “I even played in Chinese Harley Davidson bars, says James, that was quite the experience!”

James continued his education and graduated with Honors from Central Michigan University with his Bachelor’s Degree in Elementary Education and then went on to obtain a Master’s in Administration from Central Michigan University. (Fire Up CHIPS). He has applied to Michigan State University to complete his Doctorate in Educational Leadership.

James taught 4th grade at Grand Ledge Public Schools for ten years. He credits his time as a Camp EJ counselor for guiding his decision to devote his career to working with and educating children. “I also admit that I am an entertainer at heart and what better of an audience to have than 10 year olds,” says James. He has spent the last four years as an elementary principal in Grand Ledge, Michigan. James reflects that, “though the audience has changed, my sphere of influence has drastically increased and I can help more teachers and students.”

He and his wife, Carly have three children; Sage, in 8th grade, Ashlyn, in 6th grade and 3 year old Grayson. He says that, “it has been amazing to see how each of them have grown and the two oldest have embraced my love for performing and are involved in musicals, plays, band, and choir.” James and his family are frequent visitors to northern Michigan and he is also busy carting his children to all their extra curricular endeavors.

James has nothing but fond memories of high school as a Red Devil. Some particular things that stand out are, his time in MST (Math, Science & Technology) with three talented educators; Sharon Moeke, Alice McPherson, and Bill Aten. “MST prepared and propelled me to be successful in higher education and for that I will forever be grateful,” says James.

“Secondly, being part of an amazing cross country program under the coaching of Matt Peterson and Dennis Snarey and winning the 1998 Class C state title is a wonderful memory and experience. I enjoyed my teammates and the shenanigans we would get into,” James remembers.

“Last, but not least, performing on stage as an EJ Thespian under the direction of Paula Vollbach was an essential part of my time in high school and what shaped my passions and my character going forward. I loved the thrill of performing on stage in front of a live audience and captivating them with singing, dancing, and acting. These memories bring such a smile to my face,” says James.

Fun fact: By a fluke of circumstance, James was an extra in the Batman V. Superman movie and he can easily be seen in the second trailer, 20 seconds in by Clark Kent’s face via this link - https://youtu.be/fis-9Zqu2Ro.

We would like to thank James for sharing his story as the alumni feature and we are so proud of his accomplishments!

If you would like to suggest someone for an upcoming Alumni Spotlight, please send their contact information to: kbrown@eips.org.

Attention Parents

We want to make sure our families are receiving the latest information about the school closure. You can visit our facebook page @ East Jordan Public Schools for news as it occurs. We will also send emails to our families. If you need to update your email address, please send to: anachazel@eips.org for elementary students and ewimmer@eips.org for middle/high school students.