

PUSD

PAGE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Monthly Newsletter October 2022

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ON THE COVER

Freshman mid-fielder, Makenzie Hansen, against Sabino.

Vision

A community of learners who direct our collective actions and resources toward the unique learning needs of every child in order for all students to become college and career ready and successful in a global society.

Motto

Collectively Committed to Every Student, Every Day, Every Minute.



Mission

Our schools are passionate about the learning-for-all mission and understand that every student matters. We are responsible and accountable for the education of every student that walks through our doors every day.

Meet 'Potiphars' Wife, Kira Bolger



This year's high school musical is still four weeks from opening curtain, but the cast has already been rehearsing since the third week of school.

Among this year's cast is Kira Bolger. This is her second time performing in a high school musical. Last year was her first time being involved in a stage production. She played Cogsworth in "Beauty and the Beast."

She was surprised how much she enjoyed it. And how much the theater drew her in.

"I enjoy the drama and the freedom to be whoever I want to be," she said. "To truly embody the character and create a personality people can love. I love the challenge of creating the character, giving it layers and I really enjoy how people are able to perceive what I am portraying."

This time around, Bolger will play the role of Potiphar's wife in this year's production of "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat." She says this year's character is a good deal more challenging than her character last year.

"I don't have any lines this year, but I'm in a lot more dance numbers," she said.

The cast of "Joseph and the Technicolor Dreamcoat" rehearse after school Monday through Friday.

Bolger thoroughly loved her theater experience last year. A great deal of that enjoyment came from the friendships she developed with her fellow cast members.

"I feel a connection to the people in the musical," she said.

"They are incredible people to get to know and enjoy. I became friends with pretty much everyone."

That friendship continued after the musical was over, and continues to this day.

On stage, Bolger prefers roles as the supporting cast, she said. She likes being on stage, but not the person who's in the full glare of the spotlight.

The director of the musical, Lynda Nolan, was happy to welcome Bolger to the cast last year, and was happy to see her return this year.

"She did a fantastic job," Nolan said. "It was fun working with her. She gave an amazing performance as Cogsworth. It was cute, it was fun and it was perfect."

There are several aspects Nolan enjoys as the musical's director. She loves watching the cast learn their lines, the songs and the dance choreography. One of the big highlights is watching new relationships and friendships form during the three months the cast rehearses together.

"The cast gets along so well," she said. "They are a very positive, very supportive group. Being a member of this cast is a pretty great place to be. I think that's why a lot of them enjoy musical theater. The cast nearly always forms really strong bonds while they work together."

Ms. Erica Brings New Level of Vibrancy to Lake View

Walk through the hallways and corridors of almost any elementary school in America and you'll find colorful displays created by the teachers and their students exhibited on bulletin boards and murals outside their classrooms. For instance, outside of Ms. Knapp's classroom you'll find the letter A arranged to look like the head of an alligator, with the open end of the A becoming the alligator's open mouth. A for Alligator. Outside of Ms. Weiss' music classroom you'll find she's made her bulletin board look like the keyboard of a piano, and the bulletin board outside Ms. McCleaf's classroom has a camping theme, with big letters that say, "Let's Learn S'more." On the board you'll find a campfire, and tents with tent flaps made of construction paper. You can open up the flaps and inside you'll find a photo of the student who created it. The bulletin boards are cheerful, colorful and creative. And so it goes throughout the school. Elementary schools are happy places that celebrate the joy of learning.

But stroll through its hallways and you'll see that Lake View's new art teacher, Erica Pullin-Beam, has taken the cheerful, colorful, creative murals to a whole new level.

Ms. Erica, as her students call her, teaches art to Kindergarten, first-grade and second-grade students, and the art concepts at that level are still introductory, still fundamental. During the first two months of school this year, the art students at LVP have learned what a dot is, what a circle is, as well as vertical, horizontal and diagonal lines. Which, when put into practice, is enough to create some pretty amazing art.

Ms. Erica operates with the theory that kids that age are inherently creative and artistic.

"I show them a new art concept, demonstrate what it is and let them go," she said. "After that, the best thing I can do is get out of the way and let them express their creativity how they want. If I make them follow too many rules, or make it too rigid, I run the risk of alienating them from



this thing they love. I think kids fall out of love with art and creating art if it turns into just another thing where the rules are more important than the thing itself."

After the art students have finished an assignment, Ms. Erica gathers their individual pieces of art and arranges it into a larger piece of art which she designs. The larger piece of art she displays on the walls of Lake View further emphasize the art concepts the students have been learning. There are examples of 3D art, circles, and horizontal, vertical and diagonal lines.

Lake View Principal, Brian Henderson, says the colorful, creative hallways, and the enthusiasm Ms. Erica brings to art room, have added a great spark of joy to the school.

"She has absolutely transformed the interior of our school," said Mr. Henderson. "Walk down any hallway. It's an explosion of color and shape. It makes me so happy, every day. I am so grateful to have Erica here as our art teacher."

And the students get a kick out of seeing the walls of their school covered with their art.

"It lets them experience a higher level of pride in their artwork and their abilities, and gives them an added level of ownership in the school," said Ms. Erica.

They get to see first-hand their art displayed with pride

Professional Storytellers, Poets Visit PUSD Schools



Page held its first storytelling festival last week, with four storytellers taking the stage at the Cultural Arts Building last Saturday night.

The festival, which lasted a little more than two hours, featured storytellers from West Virginia, Colorado and Arizona.

As part of the storytelling festival, the storytellers went into some of PUSD's schools the day before, and engaged with students in their classrooms. Storytellers Bil Lepp and Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer visited all six of Desert View's fifth grade classrooms and gave presentations about the process of crafting a story from inception to finished piece that's ready for the page or stage. They spent nearly three hours at Desert View, spending around 45 minutes with each class.

"My kids loved it," said fifth grade teacher, Chuck Serventi. "Students en-

joyed the visit from the storytellers quite a bit. with them in a different way. Any time we can have visitors who have specialized strengths and skills is a great thing for us.

"They may have inspired the next generation of storytellers and writers."

Two of those students were Harper Keisling and Etta Prall, who enjoyed the visit from the storytellers quite a bit.

Rosemerry Trommer was the visiting storyteller in Keisling's class. Trommer spent the first part of the class going over the elements of writing, and what should be included – and excluded – from a riveting story. For the final 10 minutes of the presentation, Trommer invited a group of eight students, and their teacher, Chuck Serventi, to act out a short play.

Steven Law, who organized the storytelling festival, arranged for Trommer

See STORY pg. 15

5 PHS Students Visit Washington DC as Part of NAFIS Conference

Page Unified School District's (PUSD) Governing Board President, Desiree Fowler, and PUSD's Indian Education Director, Carlos Begay, traveled to Washington DC last week to advocate for the district at the annual National Association of Federally Impacted Schools (NAFIS) conference.

Federally impacted school districts are those located on or near non-taxable Federal property—including military installations; Indian Trust, Treaty and Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act lands; Federal low-income housing facilities; and national parks, national laboratories and other Federal buildings and property.

Due to the large number of its students who live on the Navajo and Hopi Reservations, PUSD receives a large portion of its annual budget from these Impact Aid monies.

During the three-day conference, Fowler and Begay met with U.S. Senator Mark Kelly, and staffers for U.S. Senator Kirsten Sinema, U.S. Representative Tom O'Halleran and U.S. Representative Ann Kirkpatrick.

During their visit to Washington DC, Fowler and Begay brought with them five Dine' students from Page High School.

The five students who traveled to D.C. were all members of Page High School's Navajo Language/UNITY Club. Kamerann Tsosie, President; Bryce Williams, Vice President; Shaundeen Aguero, Social Media Coordinator; Truliajah Bitsoie, Historian; and Owen Fowler.

Bringing the students carried two advantages, Fowler explained. One: when meeting with the senators, representatives or their staffers and detailing for them the ways that Impact Aid monies benefits our schools and our students, it was a great advantage to have the students explain how programs funded by Impact Aid directly benefits them personally," Fowler explained. "If our representatives can hear that story from one of our students they will better understand



our need for impact aid."

The second benefit for bringing students to Washington D.C. was giving them direct exposure to the process and first-hand experience learning how to advocate for themselves, said Fowler.

Fowler has attended the NAFIS seven times; three times in person and four times virtually. This was the first time PUSD board members have taken students with them.

The idea was born from last year's NAFIS conference, which due to high Covid-19 numbers was being held virtually. One of Fowler's meetings with an Arizona representative coincided with one of Begay's Navajo government classes. Fowler arranged for the virtual call to occur in the classroom with the Navajo students. Fowler could see that the students were intrigued by the discussion between Fowler and the representative, and toward the end of the call, the representative asked the students questions. Fowler was impressed by the way they handled themselves and by

Homecoming 2022



Page Hosts Lake Powell Cross Country Invitational



Page Middle School hosted a cross-country meet last Saturday. The course began at Lake View Primary school, then dove into the desert, going up Potato Hill and part of the Rimview Trail.

As a team, the Runnin' Panthers boys team finished second place out of six teams. Chinle took first, Tuba City finished third, Kayena finished fourth, Tonalea Day School finished fourth and Kaibeto Boarding School finished sixth.

Nyall Prather in 3rd place, Araillio Whiterock finished 7th, Max Martin finished 8th, Alek Scott finished 14th, Troy Touchin finished 17th, Noah Reid finished 18th and Kyan Scott finished in 31st place.

The Runnin' Panthers girls team finished sixth out of ten teams. Kayenta placed first, Hopi finished second, Tuba City Boarding School finished third, Chinle finished fourth, Tsehootsoo finished fifth, Shonto finished seventh, Pinon Accelerated Middle School finished eighth, Kaibeto Boarding School finished ninth and Tuba City finished tenth.

Maya Cambridge finished in the highest position for the Page runners, placing 11th overall. Mackenzie Bedonie placed 20th, Danielle Shirley placed 22nd and Star Yazzie placed 31st.

Great job, Runnin' Panthers!

LVP's FAMILY PARTNERSHIP EXPERIENCE





Lakeview Primary’s Family Partnership Experience was a great success. “We had a great turnout,” said LVP Principal, Brian Henderson. “Despite the broken pipeline that occurred the day before and some rain earlier the day of the event, the turn out exceeded our expectations.”

The goals of the Family Partnership Experience is to give families a chance to spend some time together having fun, and build the school community.

The theme was “Back to School Carnival.” It included Big Water BBQ, Brew It coffee truck, and Stellar Popcorn and Bakery.

Several Page agencies were also onsite to provide information for parents and students. They included Page Animal Adoption Agency, PHS UNITY Club, Page Public Library, National Park Service, Lake View PTO, Page Police Department, Page Fire Department, Search & Rescue, Page Little League and Page Community Youth Band.



PHOTOS FROM AROUND THE DISTRICT



AUGUST STUDENTS OF THE MONTH



Sienette Long
Lake View Primary



Kiel Jace QuimQue
Desert View Intermediate



Trysten Jay Christiansen
Page Middle School



Sequoia Dickson
Page High School

AUGUST STUDENTS OF THE MONTH



Aubrey Black
Manson Mesa High School



Kaio Bunn
Sage & Sand Virtual Academy



Announcements

List of PUSD's Early Release Dates

PUSD schools have early release at 1:30 p.m. every Wednesday.

The District has other early release dates scheduled throughout the year.

All early release times will be at 1:30 p.m.

Early release dates are:

Thursday, October 13th.

Thursday, March 9th

Friday, December 16th.

Friday, May 26th

Page Middle School Panthers

play in the NAIC Semi-finals

Tuesday, Oct. 4th | 4PM

vs. Window Rock

Page High School Football Field

PAGE HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL THEATRE

presents



Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat

November 2nd 7PM

November 3rd 7PM

November 4th 7PM

November 5th 1PM (matinee)

BOLGER from pg. 1

Bolger is a senior this year. She's also in the choir and on the varsity tennis team. You'll also find her working at RD's.

"I do pretty much everything but cook."

Bolger joined the musical theater last year following a friendly observation from one of her foster sisters, who told her, "You sound good when you sing," and encouraged her to try out for the upcoming musical.

"So I randomly tried out and I got a part," Bolger said. "It was pretty crazy. I didn't really expect to get a part."

After Bolger graduates this spring, she plans to attend college, and pursue a nursing degree.

Bolger says she hopes to become involved in the theater at college, and possibly beyond that. "I like the idea of doing community theater as a hobby," she said.

Page High School's production of "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat" runs November 2 thru 5. November 2 thru 4 are evening shows, beginning at 7PM. November 5 is a matinee, which starts at 1PM.

ART from pg. 2



in a public space, with other people enjoying it.

"The joy art brings to other people is one of its greatest values," Pullin said. "I think it's an important part of their education to see that."

This is Ms. Pullin's second year teaching at Lake View. Last year she taught Kindergarten. When she heard the art teacher position was opening up, she leapt at the chance.

"My childhood dream was to be an art teacher," she said. "But I didn't pursue it because at the time I was getting my degree a lot of schools and districts were getting rid of art programs. It just seemed like an impractical decision."

To qualify for the position, she needed to earn an art certification.

"I studied for a month straight," she said. "After I learned that I had passed the exam, I couldn't wait to tell Mr. Henderson [Lake View Principal] and get started."

And so far, it's everything she dreamed it would be. She loves making art, and introducing a new generation to the world of art and creativity.

"I want to stay at the elementary level," she said. "I love the enthusiasm they bring to art and to learning. It's pretty infectious."



Ms. Pullin is also known for the costumes she wears to school. She has dressed as a shark, an angel, an apple, a T-Rex, and a skeleton to name a few. Last year she dressed in costume 160 out of 180 school days. The costume she wears usually coincides with the letter of the alphabet her kids are learning that day.

And, as you'd expect from an artist and art teacher, Ms. Pullin creates all the costumes herself. A great many of them get fabricated the night before she intends to wear them.

"Oh, I wish I was a seamstress," she laughs. "That would make it so much easier. No. I mostly use felt and a hot-glue gun. But it turns out okay. I also spend a good bit of time browsing the Halloween aisle for costumes and accessories."

Ms. Pullin is married to Myles Beam, who teaches sophomore English at Page High School. They have four kids.

to visit Keisling's classroom.

"Without any coaxing from anyone else, Harper wrote and produced two plays for her classmates last year," Law said. "I was very impressed by how creative they were, and the fact that she had the initiative to do it and see it through. I wanted her to meet an adult female who has had a successful career in the creative arts."

Keisling is writing two new plays this year. One is a Halloween-themed play titled, "The Town of Glow" which she hopes to have ready for the Desert View stage in November. She is also co-writing a second play with her friend and fellow fifth-grader, Etta Prall, called "The Young Detectives."

The two young writers are writing all the dialogue and action themselves, which usually occurs during recess or on weekends.

Lepp, who has been working as a professional storyteller for xx years, and visiting classrooms at nearly every storytelling festival he attends, says the classroom visits and instruction from visiting storytellers has a great impact on students.

"One benefit is that kids who are maybe poor readers or have difficulty writing are introduced to a new way to share their creative talents orally," said Lepp. "Kids at the fourth and fifth grade level are really beginning to understand the power of language. Concepts such as puns and metaphors are beginning to make sense. And listening to and creating oral stories is a fantastic way to explore the many uses of language. Listening to stories, and creating stories, increases vocabulary, comprehension, and speaking skills. Telling stories increases self-confidence.

"Even if kids don't plan to tell stories in the future, exposure to language use is never wasted. The better people speak and write, the better they will do in most any career."

While Trommer and Lepp were spending time with Desert View fifth graders, a third storyteller, Navajo Poet Laureate, Laura Tohe. Tohe spent her with students from Page High School and Page Middle School's Navajo Language and Navajo Government classes. Tohe spoke to the Navajo students about the role that storytelling plays in preserving and celebrating Navajo history, heritage and culture. In doing so, Tohe shared stories from her own childhood and background.

"It was very effective," said Kimberlee Williams, who teaches Navajo language and government classes for Page High School and Page Middle School. "They were able to connect with her, especially over their shared kinship. The middle school students really enjoyed the stories she shared."

Williams said she would like to see Dine' writers and poets visit the school throughout the year.



PUSD Governing Board President, Des Fowler, sat in on one of Tohe's presentations with the middle school's Navajo Government students and was impressed by what she saw.

"I think the students were engaged with her story," she said. "At the end of her presentation, she opened it up to a Q and A with the students who wanted to ask her questions. They asked her a lot of questions about Navajo culture."

Fowler believes a key factor in the student's interest was having a shared kinship, a shared background and a lot of shared life experiences as Tohe.

Fowler asked Tohe what interested her in becoming a storyteller.

"She said she loved to read a child, and using her imagination took her to new places and that her to go outside the box. Once that started, she continued to build upon it."

Before Fowler and Tohe parted company, Tohe promised to send Fowler a list of other Native American authors and poets who might be interested in visiting the school district to give workshops.

"We all have our stories, and those stories are important," said Fowler. "Sometimes you just need to bring a storyteller into the classroom who can show the students how to get started telling their own stories."

Fowler agreed with Ms. Williams, in that she'd like to invite Native American to visit the district throughout the year and conduct workshops with the students.

The festival was organized and produced by Steven Law, PUSD's PR Coordinator. Law was also one of the storytellers Saturday night. Law was encouraged by the turnout at the storytelling festival and how much the students enjoyed spending an hour engaging with the visiting storytellers in their classrooms.

"One of the greatest things about stories and a communal storytelling gathering is the ability it has of bringing a community together," Law said. "Page is already a tight-knit community. I hope something like this will only enhance that."

Law says he plans to make the Grand Circle Storytelling Festival an annual September event, and invite more storytellers into PUSD's classrooms as part of it.

This story was written by Julia Beame, for the Lake Powell Chronicle, and shared with PUSD.



the knowledgeable answers they gave.

She saw the same thing from the five students last week while they were in D.C.

“The other schools’ superintendents were so encouraging to our students, and were very impressed they had traveled so far to share their stories with the congressional leaders in person,” said Fowler.

The group left Page after school on Friday, Sept. 16, and traveled to Phoenix. They flew to D.C. Saturday. The conference began the next day. The delegation flew back on Wednesday.

Fowler, Begay and the students attended meetings and met with congressional leaders and staffers during the day. In the evenings they prepared their material and messaging for the next day’s meetings. Fowler and Begay also used that time to discuss with the students what they were learning.

“At first, some of the students got out their devices and tablets and started using social media, but we had them put them away,” said Fowler. “I explained to them that this

was the only chance we had to talk and discuss our plan for the next day. We needed to have a real conversation.”

Between the day meetings, the students also got to tour the capital, which was arranged through O’Halloran’s office. They met with representatives with the Navajo Nation’s D.C. office, and they visited the Museum of the American Indian, and the Holocaust Museum.

“I learned a lot,” said Kameraan Tsosie.

One of Tsosie’s favorite parts of the trip was visiting the museums. “I learned a lot more about history by visiting the museums than I had read in textbooks,” she said.

For Tsosie, one of the biggest connections for her came when visiting the Museum of the American Indian, and the Holocaust Museum in a close proximity of time. It really highlighted to her how similar the Navajo’s Long Walk was to the Nazi’s treatment of the Jews in World War II.

“What happened to the Jews during the holocaust was basically the same thing that happened to Navajos during the Long Walk,” she said.

Seeing how Navajos were portrayed and represented at



the Museum of the American was a real eye-opener for the students. The section of the museum designated for the Navajo is a disappointingly small slice in the giant facility.

“I couldn’t believe how small it was,” said Bryce Williams. “It was a tiny display about a tiny part of our history. They could have done a much better job.”

It highlighted to Williams what he and the others were already learning: If you don’t advocate for yourself, no one will.

Both Tsosie and Williams said they are enjoying their roles as leaders in the Navajo Language/UNITY Club. Having a chance to do that on a national level last week sparked in them an increased desire to continue as leaders in the Navajo Nation when they become adults.

“Taking on leadership roles takes an extra level of commitment, time and energy, but it’s needed, and it’s worth it,” said Tsosie, and Williams agreed with what she said.

Williams said talking to the representatives in person had a deeper impact than if they’d done it virtually, or just

emailed material. “Being there in person shows how committed we are to what we’re advocating for,” he said.

Both Tsosie and Williams hope that sending student advocates to the NAFIS Conference can continue in future years. “It was an amazing experience, and it would be great if more students could have that,” said Williams.

Carlos Begay saw a lot of growth in the students during the trip.

“We tried to emphasize to them that the advocacy they were doing wasn’t just for the Navajo Nation, wasn’t just for Page, but for all Native American tribes,” said Begay. “I think the trip was a real awakening for them, seeing the real-life structure, being involved in real-life functions with real-life consequences. I saw a lot of light bulbs turning on.”

Funding for the trip came from the Indian Education Committee and Johnson O’Malley and Navajo Language/UNITY Club, which has been raising money for such a trip for years.