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“Every Student – Every Day”

Every Employee Important for ‘Every Student’

‘Every student . . . Every Day’ That is the official motto of the UTSC. In this issue of the *Union Township Update*, we have highlighted new UTSC personnel (See p. 3) as they join the team at the school corporation. Often when we have highlighted new staff for the UT Update, they will comment on how welcoming and helpful the UTSC staff is in getting the new staff started at the beginning of the year. This is the sign of a healthy culture which is able to attract new employees who want to work here.

Below, we highlight just a few of the many ‘good people’ that make Union Township Schools an interesting and important place to work. We need your help to find more people to make the school experience for students effective, efficient, and enjoyable.



Bus Driver – Jenny Smith

Last year’s principal at JSE writes, “Bus driver Jenny Smith is a community member who is kind, willing to go beyond



Kitchen Manager – Kim Camplan

UCE Principal Chris Gabriel writes about an employee who is important to him. “Serving 400+ students lunch every day is not easy.

Manager Kim Camplan and Head Cook Sheryl Passauer also can often be found at community events and delivering birthday treats to students. Their goal is always to make a nice meal presentation for the students.”



Custodian – Melissa Howell

A valued member of the UTMS family is Custodian Melissa Howell. Principal Joshua Goeringer reports, “Melissa is

an incredibly helpful and caring person for not only the staff and students but the building. Friendly with everyone and never backing down from a challenge, she always completes the task with a smile. I could not do without her.”



Maintenance Staff – Jay Hanaway

Principal Dan Klimzack writes, “Jay Hanaway, on our maintenance staff, is also the Auditorium Director at Wheeler High School. Mr.

Hanaway goes above expectations to make sure every production of the Bearcat Theatre Company is a resounding success. From the amazing sets he builds to the mentorship he provides to aspiring thespians, Mr. Hanaway truly is an integral part of WHS!

These are a few of the good people who serve on the UTSC Team. However, the UTSC Team needs your help to find more employees to assure that we are serving ‘Every Student – Every Day!’

Let’s Find More Good People

There are many ways in which you can be of help to make education more effective, efficient, and enjoyable for UTSC students. As with many businesses and non-profit agencies in today’s economy, there is a critical need for applicants to hold a variety of positions within our schools. Helping students perform well now requires additional bus drivers to get them to school, additional food service employees to feed hungry students, clerical and office workers to keep track of student data, and teacher assistants and substitute teachers to help our kids learn.

Are you someone or do you know of someone who would be a good addition to our UTSC Team?

Go to www.union.k12.in.us. Click on the ‘Menu’ button at the top of the page and find the ‘Employment’ button under ‘General Information’ in the left column. Perhaps you can find the right full-time or part-time position to help our kids in a way that fits you best.



Union Township Update

Volume 2

DOING WHAT’S BEST FOR KIDS!

Fall 2022

UTSC Students Continue To Achieve

Schools have experienced challenges over the past two years, along with businesses, governments, non-profits, and the world as a whole. Yet, UTSC students, teachers, and staff have met the challenge and excelled. We are proud to report some of their accomplishments on this page. Read what your students continue to accomplish.

WHS Students Perform Well

The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) is an accountability measure used by the state to rate the performance of Indiana high schools. The Wheeler High School (WHS) Senior Class of 2022 scored 73 *points higher* than the state average on the SAT last spring. The Junior Class scored 76 *points higher* and the Sophomore Class scored 74 *higher* than average on the Preliminary-SAT.

In addition, WHS has emphasized offering college level courses, which receive high school **and** college credit, taught by qualified and certified UTSC teachers. This allows students to pursue their careers or investigate areas of interest more quickly in college.

The Class of 2022 had 58% of the class graduate with 3 or more dual credits. The Class of 2023 is in the position to graduate with 77% of the class with 3 or more dual credits.

Good Year for Middle School Students

The 2021-22 school year was the first year that UTMS competed in the *We the People* competition. This constitutional competition was an in-class project that tied civic and language arts curricula in Mrs. Brown-Benjamin’s Honors



UTSC Elementary Students Score Big

High test results on the Indiana Reading Evaluation and Determination (IREAD) last spring show that almost all UTSC students are reading proficiently. IREAD is given to 3rd grade students to make sure they have a good grasp of reading skills. *UTSC had 114 students out of 119 taking the test pass IREAD, a ‘top 10’ state ranking.* That 95.8%

passing rate compares to an average passing percentage of public schools at 91.9% and non-public schools at 81.6%.

Indiana

Learning Evaluation and Readiness Network (ILEARN) assessment measures the proficiency of students in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics in grades 3-8. While test results for spring 2022 show that UTSC students performed well overall, we are happy to note that they were 1st in ELA for Porter County in 3rd and 6th grades, and first in math for 3rd and 4th graders. We congratulate the students, parents, and teachers who made learning a priority for our students.

The Superintendent's Corner

By John Hunter, Superintendent of Schools

It has been a good start to another school year in UTSC. In spite of the fact that we are down five school bus drivers, our parents and students have been phenomenal in collaborating with our bus drivers as we work to continue to provide transportation for our students. We recognize the inconvenience of bus stops in our neighborhoods and are hopeful we will one day find additional drivers and expand our services. We ask our community to be mindful of our students transitioning to and from bus stops in our neighborhoods in an effort to keep them safe.

UTSC has completed the expansion of the fieldhouse at WHS. This new space provides a new classroom, multipurpose room, three individual restrooms, two new lockers rooms, and much needed storage space. Our transportation building is underway with an anticipated completion in Mid-November. Our UCE 2022 project bids returned much higher than anticipated. All bids were rejected and we are currently revising the project scope to be able to rebid the last project phase. UTSC also continues to improve our outdoor facilities. A Request-for-Proposal (RFP) for turf surface is due in late October. This project will replace the current football field with turf that can be utilized for football and soccer. Other improvements include a new track surface, LED lighting, updated fencing, a new entry and additional parking. We are excited about the improvements being made to our facilities to benefit our students and community as we continue in our mission for *Every Student, Every Day!*

The **Union Township Update** is a communication tool from the Union Township School Corporation to the taxpayers of Union Township. It presents topics of importance about the schools for the Union Township taxpayers so they may gain insight into how their public schools are being effective and efficient.

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Principal of the Year Barnes in New Role

Mrs. Leigh Barnes capped her 8.5 years as principal at Simatovich Elementary by being named Principal of the Year for District 1 of the Indiana Association of School Principals (IASP). The honor recently was bestowed on her by her fellow principals in Jasper, Lake, Newton, and Porter Counties. She recently was informed of her honor which is to be publicly recognized in Indianapolis on Sunday, November 20, 2022 at the IASP Fall Conference. She will be recognized with 11 other District winners statewide from which one will be announced at the Conference to be the 2022 Indiana Elementary Principal of the Year.

Mrs. Barnes assumed a new role on July 1, 2022 as UTSC Assistant Superintendent. She holds a bachelor degree from DePauw University and master degrees from U. of Michigan, Purdue, and Indiana Wesleyan universities. She holds education licenses as a teacher, a principal, and a superintendent.

“Winning this IASP award is a thrill for me, but my true reward is in helping students and working with teachers,” explained Mrs. Barnes. “Now, I am able to support all of our principals and provide instructional leadership for all teachers. In my new role, I can continuously improve the experience for all UTSC students. That is exciting to me!”



UTSC Asst. Superintendent
Leigh Barnes

New Principal at JSE - Kristen Hankins

Mrs. Kristen Hankins thinks she made the right choice about coming to the UTSC. “I feel like I am home,” Mrs. Hankins said with a laugh. “Becoming principal at John Simatovich Elementary (JSE) has been surprising for me. The culture and staff are so welcoming here. I can see that Mr. Hunter knows the students, staff, and community well. I am glad Mrs. Barnes is still here to be a partner as I learn my new role at JSE.”

Mrs. Hankins had been principal at Lake Village Elementary in North Newton for the past four years. Previously, she has taught 3rd & 4th grade, 5th grade science, and high ability students at Kolling Elementary in the Lake Central Schools over her 12 years there. Her bachelor’s degree is in elementary education from Purdue Calumet (now Purdue Northwest). Mrs. Hankins received her master’s degree in curriculum design from Indiana Wesleyan, which led to her administrative license (K-12). She also holds an Educational Specialist degree from Indiana State University. “I want to listen and grow throughout the year and build on the great things the JSE staff has been doing,” Mrs. Hankins stated. “I also look forward to beginning work on my doctorate in education next fall.



Mrs. Hankins and her ‘Principals for the Day.’

Bearcats Attract New Personnel

Middle School Dean/AD

Tim Brunton is the new UTMS Dean/Athletic Director. Mr. Brunton lives in Union Twp. and his wife is a graduate of Wheeler High School. “I have many things to learn and will ask for help and advice. I am glad I made the choice to work at Union Twp. after holding a similar position at Washington Twp.”



Tim Brunton
(Dean/Athletic Director)

New Teachers for UT Middle School



UTMS (L-R): Christa Essany (Family/Consumer Science);
Molly Ochall (Art); Laura Ornelas (6th grade Grammar/Writing);
Drew Berry (Health/Wellness)

Christa Essany (FACS) – Valparaiso University; “I have pre-school and 6th to 8th grade experience.”

Molly Ochall (Art) – Valparaiso University: “I have experience at Barker MS and Westville MS/HS.”

Laura Ornelas (6th Grammar/Writing) – IUPUI; “I have 9 years of teaching experience at Hanover and Hammond;

Drew Berry (Health/Wellness) – University of Illinois; “I am proud to coach the three UTMS Cross Country runners who made it to State this year. I also coach JV Basketball.”

New Faces at John Simatovich Elementary



JSE: Amy Roberson
(5th grade)

JSE (L-R): April Yates (Nurse);
Carey Minton (Secretary)

Amy Roberson (5th) – “I am in my 18th year of teaching. I have 2 years of experience at Boone Grove in 5th grade and 15 years teaching 1st and 3rd grade in Georgia. I am a happy Wheeler HS grad.”

Carey Minton (Secretary) – “I moved from Food Service last year to the office this year at JSE.

April Yates (Nurse) – “I have been a nurse for 15 years including working with kids at the Porter Hospital Emergency Room.”

New Teachers at Wheeler High School



WHS (L-R): Byron Faulstich (World History);
Giana Hamady (Special Ed); Jeffery Biggs (Law Enforcement)

Byron Faulstich (World History) – Indiana University; “I have experience at Plymouth HS and Knox HS. I also am the basketball coach.

Giana Hamady (Special Ed) –Purdue NW; “It is good to be back home in the UTSC where I was a student from K to 9th grade.”

Jeffery Biggs (Law Enforcement) – “I have 27 years in law enforcement especially in investigations. If I inspire one kid to go into law, I will be successful.”

New Support Staff at Union Center Elementary



UCE (L-R): Laura Lawson (Nurse); Lindsay Anderson (H/S Advisor);
Lori Miller (Secretary)

Laura Lawson (Nurse) – A healthy student is a student who can learn better. I not only want to help students with injuries and sickness, but I want to help them make healthy choices.

Lindsay Anderson (Home School Advisor) – “My background at Porter Starke Services has prepared me well for my role as H/S Advisor. I hope to be a connection for the home for students facing issues.”

Lori Miller (Secretary) – “As school secretary, the day just flies by. This is my first year at UCE. I just want to be of help for the students and parents.”