



May 10, 2020—Issue 3

# The Grizzlies Gazette



## MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

### OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

I would like to wish each of you, again, a Happy Teacher/Staff Appreciation week, month, year! I don't think a week is enough time to express my gratitude for our Grizzly Team! You have really shown up tremendously over the course of the last 5 weeks. Your innovation, dedication and commitment to our students and each other has been exceptional! I hear again and again from staff, parents and community members about how the YCS staff have gone

above and beyond like no other district. On behalf of our students I want to say, "Thank you again"! For those of you who were unable to join in on our zoom session on Friday, I apologize. We will adjust the licensing and correct the problem for our next session on Friday, May 22nd at 3 pm. In the meantime, I will share the Powerpoint that I utilized so that you have the information that was shared.

I want to remind you to take the opportunity over the weekend to reset yourself. It seems like many of us are working harder and longer than we did during the face to face time as we plan, collaborate and learn in this new environment for ourselves....even during the pandemic. Therefore, I would like to share the last few episodes of this week's Minute With Maxwell. They are only one minute long and help to encourage me. In addition, if you are in need of support, there is a resource that you can contact for mental health support at [MIFrontlinesupport.com](http://MIFrontlinesupport.com). As a frontline responder, we need help during this time as well.

In case you might have missed the last few episodes, here is a summary with quick links to get you caught up with this week's Minute With Maxwell

- [Statement of Strength for Leaders...Prepare](#)
- [Statement of Strength for Leaders...Change](#)
- [Statement of Strength for Leaders...Go Through](#)
- [Statement of Strength for Leaders...Don't Give Up](#)
- [Statement of Strength for Leaders...Pessimist or Optimist?](#)

**Stay Safe. Stay Home. Stay Connected.**  
**Alena Zachery Ross — Superintendent**

## Food Service

On Thursday, May 8, we were able to celebrate our own superheros for National SuperHero Lunch Day. Staff were treated to lunch, given goodie bags and even got to show off their "Hero" shirts.

A million thanks to our very own Superheroes.....because not all Superheroes wear capes.



**Stay Home, Stay Safe, Stay Connected**  
**Tiffany Houston — Director of Food Services**



## Office of the Assistant Superintendent

As we ventured in this journey of remote learning as a team, I cannot help but to take notice of how closer and responsive we have become with one another. This Systemic Reconfiguration of Online Remote Learning has placed us all in the seat of first learners, allowing us to rely on each for the mastery of new learnings.

Things that are quite noticeable at YCS now is the constant communication with our students and families, our vulnerability with each other, how caring people are with one another, the level of volunteerism, the collaborative co-teaching that is taking place, the support being provided by our paraeducators, the support that our instructional coaches are providing our staff, the intentional office hours to help adults to deal with daily stress, how our principals are spending valuable time visiting Google Classrooms, and the work that many of our committees are doing to lead with intentionality, urgency, and genuine commitment to our students and families.

The Sunshine Committee has taken fun to the next level and continues to keep us all engaged as a district. Our Culture and Climate Coaches have been lifesavers providing all types of wellness opportunities for us to cope with our daily stress. The yoga, meditation, breathing exercises, daily quotes, check-ins, and other mindfulness experiences have been well received and very needed.

Student engagement, equity, and access is always at our hearts as we work with our culturally and linguistically diverse student population. Watching the distribution of devices has been a real life changer for many of our students. We can now create many opportunities where our students can demonstrate their self-directedness in learning. We have been provided with a window of opportunity that might not come again. We must continue to work together in creating the greatness we will become. We need to take time to stop and reflect on what's happening at YCS. What's happening here is not happening everywhere. We are Stronger Together! We are Saving Lives! But...we are doing it together.

*As I look at the core of Trauma Informed and Resilient Schools practices, I noticed how this pandemic has brought us together as a family. We are constantly practicing the four pillars of the Circle of Courage - Belonging, Mastery, Independence, and Generosity.*

- Belonging** - Be related, somehow, to everyone you know - Ella Deloria
- Mastery** - Mastery is the drive to strengthen one's knowledge, skills, or talents.
- Independence** - The shared responsibility to respect the power of each other.
- Generosity** - Children are the purpose of life. We were once children, and someone cared for us, and now it is our time to care. - Eddie Bellerose

Let's continue to honor the voices of many and learn from each other as we create our future together. I am PROUD of our TEAM. Together we can move mountains.

**Carlos Lopez — Office of the Assistant Superintendent**

## Business Office

I hope this newsletter finds you and your family well. What an amazing week we had. You truly are an inspiration to our students and families.

The Business Office would like to take this opportunity to appreciate the staff for their patience and understanding.

For easy access to communication with the Business office, please email Judith Wills at [jwills4@ycschools.us](mailto:jwills4@ycschools.us) regarding payroll, Renee Carrico and Barbara Boone at [rcarrico3@ycsschools.us](mailto:rcarrico3@ycsschools.us) and [bboone5@ycschools.us](mailto:bboone5@ycschools.us) respectively regarding invoices and purchase orders. You can always reach me at [pnayak4@ycschools.us](mailto:pnayak4@ycschools.us) and we will get back to you as soon as possible. We would like to remind all our staff, If you have received any invoices for the orders that were placed, please forward them to the business office for further processing.

We are committed to continuing to follow the direction of our county leadership, whether it is staying home when needed, working remotely or working on-site when needed. We will be here to support the District to ensure it operates smoothly during this unprecedented time.

We are an amazing team! We are family and we are Stronger Together.

**Stay Safe, Stay Well, Stay Connected.**

**Priya Nayak — Director of Business and Finance**





## Student Support Services

The first week of “school” is in the books! It was exciting for our student support services staff to see their students and to engage them in this new process of learning for our students as well as their families. Most of our students now have the technology to ensure that their learning continues outside of the walls of a brick-and-mortar classroom. This technology opens up incredible possibilities for our students who have to engage “differently”. It also allows families to learn together with their students.

However, exciting this new phase is, know that we miss you! We are truly looking forward to face-to-face learning soon. Until then, be safe, be healthy, and stay well.

**E. Ruth Jordan — Student Support Services Director**

## Communications Department

The Marketing and Communications team has been meeting weekly to focus on the next steps for YCHS Senior graduation celebrations plus Transition Up virtual videos for our incoming 8th grades moving onto the high school and incoming 5th graders to the middle schools. We will even have a virtual video for our youngest learners who will move onto the elementary school. In these new social distancing times, we must become innovative to get our students and staff ready for the next level! Stay tuned on the debut of our virtual building tours!



When communicating with families, please share the [Ypsi Live information](#) sent out last week explaining how families can receive FREE Comcast internet support to help with distance learning. There are contact numbers and emails for each building to help with any additional questions.

This week we also launched a [YCS Hotline](#) to help with COVID related questions and general questions regarding technology, academics, mental and physical health, and more. Again, please share with your families and post in your google classroom communications.

Lastly, we are in the final stage of our [YCS Distribution Plan for families who did not have transportation](#) to receive a technology device for their students. We must ensure that all students have access to the district devices, so please share with your families--specifically if you know if a family that has transportation issues. If they do, please have them contact Kim Searcy to schedule a Friday, May 15th distribution.

**Stay Safe. Stay Home. Stay Connected.**

**Taryn Willis — Marketing and Communications Coordinator**



## Facilities

YCS Facilities continues to support district efforts in three major areas: food distribution, COL education plan, and the maintenance of our buildings. The facilities team has also been extremely busy supporting YCS in other areas outside our normal scope of work. Our department is coordinating with other community organizations to develop a COVID-19 testing site at Perry ELC. We are also discussing the possibility

of developing another testing site on the Eastside of Washtenaw County. Community-based donations continue to pour into the district in support of our students. These donations require the support of our department to receive and process these items. We are working with several district committees to coordinate these donations and make them available to our students in the near future.

Please be sure to follow staff entry processes, wear your PPE, and practice 6ft social distancing whenever in public and especially when entering YCS buildings and while on The YCS campus. Under our revised essential staff entry plan, you MUST screen and sign in at each building you access throughout the day.



**Stay Home (whenever possible), Stay Safe, Stay Connected**

**Aaron Rose — Director of District Operations**





## Human Resources

What an inspirational week May 4-8, 2020 has been! Everyone has stepped up to the plate to make remote learning successful for students, staff, and families. I can say with true appreciation job well-done team, job well done!!

New guidance regarding evaluation was released under the Executive Order [2020-65](#). Human Resources will guide building administrators. Building administrators will guide

staff. The evaluation changes are for instructional staff only, all other staff will be evaluated as usual. Please be sure to reach out to your building administrator if you need clarification on your evaluation. It is also crucial that everyone remains flexible as we adapt to new executive orders as they are or may be released. We will navigate these changes together and continue to hold each other up during this global pandemic.

The Human Resources [FAQ](#) is linked here again to help with the many questions that we all have during this time. If you have pressing questions or just need more information please contact me at [smccarty3@ycschools.us](mailto:smccarty3@ycschools.us).

Meaningful work assignments will continue to evolve. It is important to remember that you must be available for work during your regular hours of employment. See the FAQ linked above for further clarity. Many of you will be asked to assist with supply distribution, additional technology distributions with transportation, assisting with packing and distribution of donations. Others will be called upon to participate in Summer School planning, 2020-21 school year planning and calendar development. It has been truly amazing to see what we as a collective team can accomplish. Your unique talents and skills have risen to the top and we have come together as a cohesive and dedicated team. Watch your emails for requests from the Work Assignment Committee.

The Emergency Family Medical Leave Expansion Act and Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act under the [Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#) requirements have been passed by the House of Representatives and Congress on March 18, 2020 and signed by the President of the United States. The Board of Education has approved a policy for each act to help guide staff as needed. Communication will go out to impacted staff next week. Human Resources will help guide staff members through these new leave options.

Please check your email at least 2 times per day. If you are experiencing difficulties with your email please contact technology support at [techsupport@ycschools.us](mailto:techsupport@ycschools.us).

Once again, thank you for your dedication and support during this time. The teams have come together not only to work hard, but also to have fun. This has been a time like no other and has shown all of us what it means to enjoy and appreciate our co-worker's family. YCS is Stronger Together and together we are saving lives.

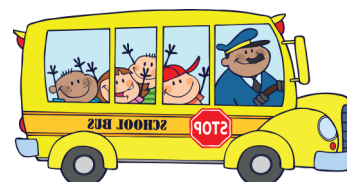
**Sue McCarty — Human Resources Director**

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## Transportation

I hope this message finds you well. Thank you to all of the transportation staff that worked during the technology distribution. Even through the rain and the cool temperatures-you smiled and motioned the flow of traffic and kept your cool when others didn't.

**AnnArbor.com** was out and took some pictures that included transportation staff and highlighted our district for all the great work going at YCS to assist our families during this pandemic.



A number of you will be called upon this week to assist with the delivery of the devices not picked up. The transportation office will reach out when we have more details.

If you have been impacted by covid-19 please contact HR. If you were assigned a work assignment during the closure and you are unable to fulfill your commitment, you are expected to report your absence through **AESOP** per district policy.

Please continue to take care of yourselves and your families.

**Be well and stay safe.**

**Kim Searcy — Director of Transportation**



**"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." –**

**Helen Keller**

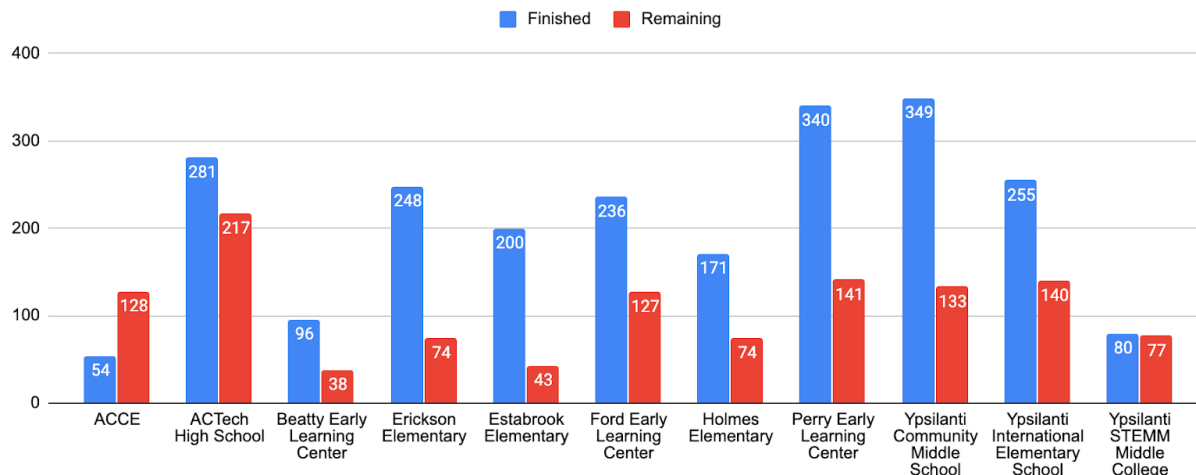
**SAVING  
LIVES**





## Technology

This past week we saw the distribution of nearly 66% of the total student devices available go out to families. This effort was combined with many volunteers including coaching staff, building secretaries, transportation staff and technology staff. Here are the numbers:



This coming week, Technology will be working with Transportation to make near home deliveries possible for student devices. This is a monumental undertaking and will require quite an effort to ensure success. If you know of a family that is in need of at-home devices for near home delivery, please have them contact 734-221-1321 or 734-221-1308. If you still need a device to work from home; please contact the technology department at [techsupport@ycschools.us](mailto:techsupport@ycschools.us). Someone from the department will contact you on the pickup process. Devices are limited; on a first come/contact, first serve basis.

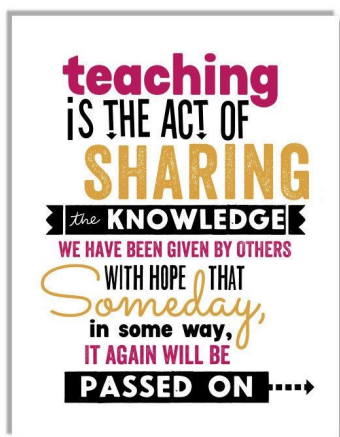
**Nik Jackson - Technology Director**

**"One piece of log creates a small fire, adequate to warm you up, add just a few more pieces to blast an immense bonfire, large enough to warm up your entire circle of friends; needless to say that individuality counts but teamwork dynamites."**

— Jin Kwon

**"The strength of the team is each individual member.  
The strength of each member is the team."**

— Phil Jackson



**We will continue to keep you informed of developments in our departments twice a month. Please watch your email for the**



**Teaching  
saves lives.**