



# Blackcat News

**Mission Statement:**

**"Educating Today for a Better Tomorrow"**

**VOLUME 26**

**ISSUE 82**

**SCHOOL YEAR 2021-2022**

**November 18, 2021**



Pictured: Coach Kyle Davis, Coach Josh Ferguson, Coach Ellen Enghauser, Tye Greenlee, Ashton Parrish, Braiden Schenewerk, Damian Luther, Sam Vaughn, Will Pierce, Keith Vance, Nate Wright, Baden Costlow, and Josh Diebold and Landon Boyer. (back row) Coach Lance Hyde, Coach Stephanie Greenlee, Coach Riley Blair, and Coach Jim Kasten.

## State Champions

They're Class 3 State Champions. The boys cross country team turned in a dominant performance at the state meet in Columbia, finishing 27 points ahead of Maryville. After the race, the first-place trophy was handed to senior Will Pierce. He was in second grade the last time the boys won it all.

"The monkey is off my back," Coach Davis said in relief. When he became the coach in 2012, and the Lady Blackcats took home the top prize. Ryun Kasten was the coach in 2011, the last time the boys won. While Davis had one championship under his belt and numerous top-four finishes, this is Herculanum, where the runners in candy-striped shorts are expected to win. Moreover, his father is the legendary Steve Davis, the former Potosi coach whose teams earned seven state championships.

On November 6th at the Gans Creek Course, the air was cool, the course was fast, and time was in short supply. There were 170 runners, and everyone went out fast, creating a stampede of colors. The wide sweeping turns of Mizzou's home course reduced the bumping, but all runners want the inside lane. Some competitors fell off the pace while others gutted it out. Sophomore Sam Vaughn said, "I felt after the first K, the way I normally feel at the end of a race." Coach Davis sprinted between the sidelines, expelling his adrenaline by shouting words of encouragement. The scoring isn't based on time but the order in which your top-five finish the race. Coming in 4th and 5th were two kids from Lutheran South. Then Maryville took the next spot. Herky's fastest runner, Keith Vance, was 20th. When he crossed the finish line, the physical and emotional exhaustion poured out in the form of tears. Three seconds behind Vance were two more runners from Maryville. The following 33 seconds would seal the championship for Herculanum as Sam Vaughn crossed the line, then Nathaniel Wright, Damian Luther, and Will Pierce finished 39th overall. Maryville's final two runners finished 66th and 71st, earning them the second place trophy.

As a team, the Lady Blackcats took 8th place, outperforming their projected finish. This sisterhood of runners is turning positive thinking into an art form. After they braid each other's hair, the ink pen comes out to write positive messages on their skin. On her right hand, Raven Vance wrote Mark 11:24, a passage about prayer. They all can make a spontaneous motivation speech. Katelynn Armbruster says, "You're not only running for yourself but your teammates. Think of the people that paved this path for you. Run for the middle school students looking up to you." Kaitlin Taylor's way of dealing with the pain is asking herself, "What would Raven say?"

When the trophy was presented to the boys' team, Pierce held it above his head to the applause and shouts of those in attendance. A few in the crowd wore candy-striped shorts. They were Herculanum alumni who fell short of the top prize in years past but didn't want to miss this historic moment. The boys earned their 13th title, tying them with West Plains for the most in state history.

When the bus arrived back at the high school that evening, the runners were greeted by a crowd that included Brian Stotler, who was on the 1977 cross country team that started it all. In a classy display of support, Festus cross country runners were there as well. After the Blackcats rang the victory bell, they didn't immediately disperse. They acted as if the glory was fragile and it would dissipate with the morning sun.

They learned otherwise when they rang the bell for a second time in front of the hundreds of high school students on Monday morning.

### WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK ON THE BLACKCAT NEWS!!!!!!

The Blackcat News is a quarterly communication tool that we use as one way to keep you informed about Dunklin R-5 School District. We want this publication to be useful to you as a patron of our schools- "Must-Read Material!"

Is there...

- Something you've read that you don't understand?
- Information that you would like to see included that is not?
- Something you want to see more often or less frequently?

We value your input!

Please email your feedback to our Communications Director, Matt Lichtenstein, at [mlichtenstein@dunklin.k12.mo.us](mailto:mlichtenstein@dunklin.k12.mo.us)

Don't use email?

Call Mr. Lichtenstein at 636-479-5200 ext. 1010



# Message From Board President

Hello Dunklin R-5 Community,

If you have social media and you don't follow Dunklin R-5 School District, please do. Many great things are happening around the district, and this information gets shared on our website and social media.

Let me share a few highlights. Both our girls and boys cross country teams had a spectacular year. It ended with the Boys Cross Country team as State Champions! Our high school football team had their first District win in many years, and although a tough loss ended the season in the second round, it was a great year overall. Several high school and middle school band students were selected to play in the All-District Honor Band. It is a huge honor to be chosen to do this.

Recently, I had the honor of attending the Missouri School Board Association's Annual Conference, and at that event, our Taylor Early Childhood Center was honored as the Early Childhood Education Program of the Year in the Mid-Size School category. This is the second time Taylor has been awarded this from the MSBA Future Builders Foundation! The Board, Administration, and Staff are so proud to be a part of this great district and want to say Great Job to everyone for their hard work and accomplishments so far this year.

One topic that is on everyone's mind is our Covid 19 Response Plan and our protocols regarding Covid-19. The Board has made the Covid-19 Response Plan a standing item on our monthly agenda. I can assure you that we will continue to monitor things as we move forward, and if changes are needed, we will not hesitate to make them. We want to do our best to provide the best education possible while also remaining cautious. For those students who feel comfortable attending class, we encourage your efforts to be in-person. We know that social interaction is an essential part of student engagement.

The Board of Education meets the third Tuesday each month at 7 p.m. Our meetings are open to the public. Please see each agenda for meeting location as we have moved the meeting around the district to allow for space as warranted. The Board's focus in every decision is to do what is best for the kids and families we serve and to support our district's mission statement, "Educating Today for a Better Tomorrow."

Sincerely,

Dawn M. Warner, Board President  
Dunklin R-5 School District

## Dr. Freeman

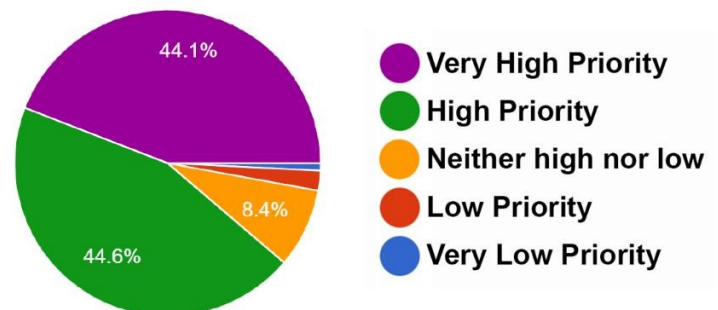
Blackcat Community:

As I begin to write this it is hard to believe that it is already mid-November, and the holiday season is fast approaching. The holidays can be a very exciting time and what an exciting time it is to be a Dunklin R-5 Blackcat! We have fantastic opportunities happening within our schools each day for our students. Everything from the Pre-K- 12th grade Project Lead the Way initiative and Lighthouse Teams at Pevely Elementary. We have also added a new outside cafeteria area and Science Lab tables at Senn Thomas Middle School. Finally at Herculanum High School we have added a student cheering section called the "CAT Pack" and many upgrades on the high school campus.

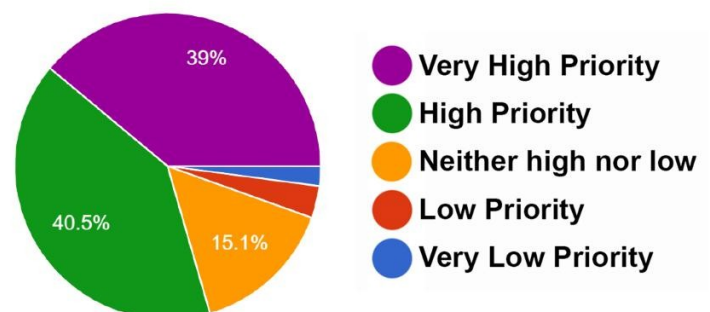
The Herculanum Football Team won their first District game since 2014, and our boys cross country team took first place in the state class 3, which tied the state record with 13 total state championships. It is always a great day in Dunklin R-5, and I am so honored to be a part of this great community.

Recently, the ESSER III Funding Survey was sent out with six (6) questions, and the two (2) questions that received the highest priority from our patrons, faculty and staff are listed below. Currently, the district is working on plans to address the current learning loss and ways to accelerate learning. In addition mental health was another top priority. The Dunklin R-5 School District has entered into a partnership with Chestnut Health Services to provide an additional school-based counselor on our campus each day. We are extremely grateful to be able to begin the process of addressing these two high priorities within our district. We will continue to address all of our student needs each day.

### Addressing learning loss for students and student engagement



### Addressing mental health needs



Please visit our website at [www.dunklin.k12.mo.us](http://www.dunklin.k12.mo.us) for the latest updated information. Follow us on Facebook at Dunklin R5 School District and follow me on Twitter at @DrClintFreeman. Have a great holiday season.

Dr. Clint Freeman, Superintendent of Schools



# Intramural Sports

We have an intramural program this year for our 6th grade students. They can participate in numerous athletic activities that are offered in the upper grade levels. High school and middle school coaches organize each sport with the help of Herculanum athletes. The program gives our younger kids the opportunity to build a relationship with their future coaches at a younger age and develop the skills needed to participate as they get older.

We've had over 15 students at each intramural activity offered this school year. A new intramural sport starts each month, and kids can join at any time. It's designed to give students a passion for athletics and help boost participation when they get to 7th grade.

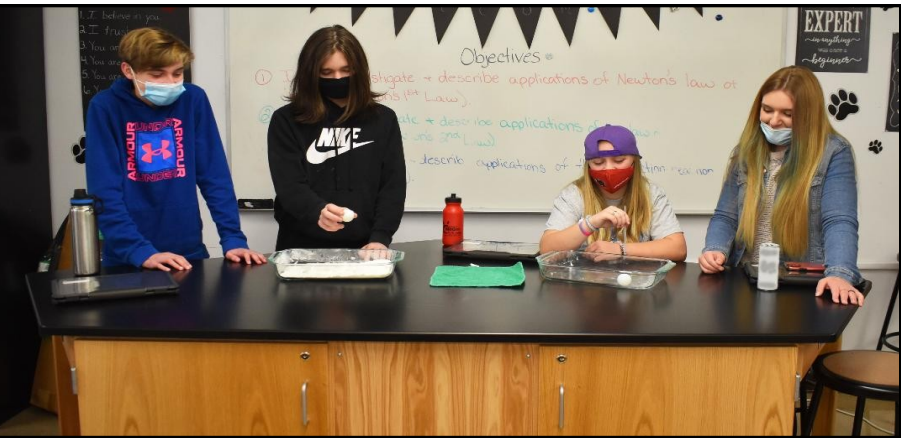
The goal is to expand this program to our younger students in the elementary school. It is all about giving kids more opportunities, and all skill levels can participate. We have some kids playing a particular sport for the first time. Intramurals are beneficial for everyone, and I am excited to see them progress over the next few years.

Trent Sauer  
Assistant Principal/Activities Director  
Senn-Thomas Middle School



Pictured: (back row) Nurse Heather Engelbach, Nurse Tonya Goodwin, Teacher Amanda Britain, and Julie Hartmann. (front row) Forrest Engelbach, Lux Eder, Samantha Null, Max Eder.

Some students and staff wore blue on the first of November for Type 1 Diabetes Day. They want to bring awareness to this incurable disease and support those with T1D. Type 1 diabetes is thought to be caused by a combination of genetic susceptibility and environmental factors. Two elementary students and four high school students have this type of diabetes.



Pictured: Jackson LaPlante, Aaron Stockley, Hannah Larsson, and Olivia Green

# STMS New Science Lab

The middle school has new lab tables, and additional cabinets will be added soon. According to the manufacturer, the oak workstations have solid epoxy resin surfaces that are impervious to standard chemicals and heat. The five-sided tables allow students to gather in groups while still facing the teacher. Principal Tracy Lewis says, "The tables allow the class to be more project-based, and science curriculum lends itself to having tables of this nature. Hands-on activities promote engagement, critical thinking, and support those 21st century skills."

Go Blackcats!



## DUNKLIN R-5 SCHOOL DISTRICT

497 Joachim Avenue ▪ Herculanum, MO 63048 ▪ (636) 479-5200

Dr. Clint Freeman, Superintendent  
Mr. Joe Willis, Assistant Superintendent

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### Board Meetings are Open to the Public

The Dunklin R-5 Board of Education meets on a regular basis on the third Tuesday of each month. The meetings are held at 7:00 pm. Check the website for the location. The meetings are open to the public. Patrons may view agendas and items from the meetings by going to our website [www.dunklin.k12.mo.us](http://www.dunklin.k12.mo.us), clicking on the District tab and clicking on "Paperless Board Meetings."

Dunklin R-5 School District is an equal opportunity





Pevely Elementary School was awarded a \$40,000 grant from the Jefferson Foundation. They'll use the funds to purchase all-accessible playground equipment for the new playground directly behind the building. The project was started with leftover construction funds, and visitors will see a new basketball court surrounded by a fence. Additional playground equipment was ordered months ago in hopes of having it in place by September. However, supply chains remain unpredictable, and the ship date has been pushed back again. At press time, the equipment is scheduled for delivery next month.

Fourth- and fifth-grade students will primarily use the new playground, and it will reflect the interests of the older elementary students. For example, there will be a tetherball pole but no slides or climbing obstacles. Principal Katie Dunlap says, "Older students are more sports oriented." There will also be shaded areas for students to gather, like a small park. The generous grant will allow for the purchase of playground equipment for students of all abilities, including specially designed swings and a concerto piece that allows students to make music.



While the weather was still warm, on October 27th, Pevely students enjoyed a Halloween Parade. The kindergarten and first-grade students walked around the back of the building while older students cheered from the sidelines. Principal Katie Dunlap was Oscar the Grouch, Dean of Students Michelle Liles was Pete the Cat, and Asst. Principal Adam Dixon wore a squirrel costume. The fifth-grade teachers had a



group theme. Nikki Henson was the Orkin exterminator, while Brittany Umfleet, Dawn Pingel, Teresa Douglas, Michelle Wands, and Jennifer Teague were spiders. Staff members at Senn-Thomas were characters from the movie "Inside Out". Each wore a brightly colored wig that represented an emotion. There are plenty of pictures on our Facebook pages.

## Online Store

Pevely Elementary School has an online store for clothing and accessories. Principal Katie Dunlap says many elementary students wear Blackcat gear supporting high school teams, but the younger kids wanted their own clothing. They now sell various items, from youth T-shirts (\$17.99) to cooking aprons (\$18.49). You can pick a ball cap (\$18.75) from 24 designs. Money made from the sale of clothing goes back to the

elementary school. It may be used to buy basketballs for the new playground or sensory boxes for classrooms. Pevely has made less than \$200 so far, but the store is still new. To visit the store, search 1st Place Spiritwear. There is also a link on the weekly newsletters emailed to parents.





# EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM



*FUTURE BUILDERS*  
*FOUNDATION*  
MISSOURI SCHOOL BOARDS' ASSOCIATION



## OF THE YEAR AWARD

### 2019 and 2021 Award Winner

Taylor Early Childhood Center was recognized this month for being the best in the state, again. The Missouri School Board Foundation awards the designation to schools in three categories according to size. In Missouri, no early childhood center of the same size has ever won the award twice. During the fall conference, Taylor's Director Charissa Kappler gave a short presentation and answered questions. They showed a video about the school that can be found on YouTube. It's titled "Dunklin R-5: Taylor Early Childhood Center 2." The celebration of successful programs is one way to highlight their importance in education. Much of the most critical brain development in children takes place before they reach kindergarten. According to a Harvard study, children who attend a high-quality early childhood education program are less likely to be placed in special education, less likely to be retained in a grade, and more likely to graduate high school than their peers who didn't attend such programs.

## Firefighters Visit Schools



Pictured: Evelyn Stamps and Lucas Haas.

fire. Others saw the spray and thought waterpark. They tried to reposition themselves in front of the hose. The vigilant firefighters and teachers kept the children safe and dry.

Herculaneum Fire Chief Kevin Baker distributed plastic firefighter hats. He was dressed in full turnout gear, including the breathing apparatus. Many of the 3- and 4-year-olds don't know what to make of the disguise. Baker says, "Crying happens a lot. It's a shock to some of them. Some of them have seen us before, so they are used to the gear, which is very beneficial. That tells us it's working." Normally students watch a firefighter put on all their gear. Captain Scott Grupa says, "We show them we are the same people; we just have all this stuff on." In an emergency, they want kids to identify firefighters as the good guys

trying to help them. Building that trust usually takes more than one visit to Taylor.

The Dunklin Fire Department has the same objective when visiting hundreds of children at Pevely Elementary School. This year firefighters raced to put on their gear to the delight of students. The level of understanding goes up dramatically with the older kids. Firefighters can share safety messages and talk about specialized equipment, like infrared cameras. October was fire safety month.

The massive display of lights, colors, and chrome brought smiles, confusion, and energy to the youngsters at Taylor Early Childhood Center. Those overwhelmed by the fire truck would glance down at the familiar parking lot. Others were fascinated and pointed to items they recognized, like a shovel or fan. After they circled the truck, students took turns handling the fire hose. Most were content to start and stop the flow of water. A couple seemed to understand the concept, slowly moving the nozzle back and forth as if putting out a grass





# High School Teacher Being Honored



Pictured: HHS Principal Stephanie Dix, Superintendent Dr. Clint Freeman, Jordan King, and Assistant Superintendent Joe Willis.

Leaders in each building were given the delightful dilemma of choosing a teacher to win Emerson's Excellence in Teaching Award. It's like picking a dessert at The Blue Owl Restaurant & Bakery. There are so many mouth-watering creations worthy of an award. Those administrators then ranked the four candidates, and the points were tallied.

This year's winner of the crystal apple is industrial arts teacher Jordan King. He says, "It's nice because this is a different type of classroom. A lot of schools have gotten rid of their shop programs, so this shows the district appreciates this type of hands-on stuff." Anyone willing to teach high school students how to use power tools safely is gifted with patience, but King creates a comfortable environment to explore woodworking. The experience of turning a board into a birdhouse builds an untapped

pride in many students. King says, "I treat my class like a job site. They work independently, but I'm on them when I need to be, especially with safety issues." There are no compromises when it comes to the safe operation of lathes and table saws.

King is generous with his skills and time. Not long ago, our district was shopping for a good quality, floor-standing podium. Learning they can cost over \$2,000, administrators turned to King, who built a new hardwood podium for the theater. It was King's students who refurbished the Lending Libraries at Taylor and Pevely. A couple of years ago, Mapaville State School was teaching disabled students how to navigate stairs. They needed a small set of steps leading to a platform. King created the design, and some of his best students built and helped deliver the steps. The Mapaville students climbed the practice stairs with glee but often needed assistance coming back down.

King took on a new responsibility after Herculaneum High School received a grant from Project Lead the Way. He attended evening training sessions to teach a new course, Engineering Essentials. The self-described farm boy does residential construction during the summer. His real-world experience coincides with every aspect of the new course. While wiring a house is different from wiring a circuit, the basics are the same. Principal Stephanie Dix says, "His students are thriving with the problem-solving curriculum." King will attend a banquet for teachers and college professors being honored by Emerson.

The other outstanding teachers nominated for the award are 8th-grade English teacher Maria Stout, 5th-grade math and science teacher Brittany Umfleet, and Taylor Early Childhood Center's Kerri Huskey.

## DAR Good Citizen

Congratulations to Paige Drinen for being named Herculaneum High School's DAR Good Citizen. Drinen recently attended a Good Citizen's Tea with winners from other area schools. The participants are now eligible to apply for a scholarship offered by the Daughters of the American Revolution.

*"Congratulations,  
Paige"*

Paige Drinen



Blackcat Princess Lyla Dearing  
and Jackson Dearing

## Blackcat Princess

During homecoming, Blackcat Princess Lyla Dearing was escorted by her brother Jackson Dearing. Lyla's favorite color is rainbow, and her favorite food is chicken nuggets. When she grows up, she wants to be big like Mommy.

**"Go  
Blackcats"**







Pictured: Joseph Scherrer, Barbara Stotler, C.C. Ice

Three inspiring leaders were inducted into the Blackcat Hall of Fame this fall: the late Bill Stotler, Joseph Scherrer, and C.C. Ice. They were announced at a home football game before their friends and family met in a hospitality room. The following evening, a banquet was held in their honor in the high school cafeteria.

The most emotional tribute came from Robin Guidicy. The former basketball player said Coach Stotler filled the role of a father figure in his life. At one point, Guidicy became silent behind the podium, trying to manage the flood of emotions. He was followed by Doug Stotler, who comfortably talked about his dad before smoothly transitioning into thanking the school community for this honor. In an unscripted move, Barbara Stotler came to the podium to express her appreciation. She said years ago, they were headed to St. Louis to make more money but stopped in Herculaneum. She said, "I'm glad we did."

Scherrer, the valedictorian for the Class of 1985, join the Air Force ROTC program at Washington University. The retired colonel sums up his Air Force career by saying, "It's 24 years, 19 moves, four deployments, five commands, 39 countries, and one wife." He was in the Pentagon for a couple of years, starting in 2005. At the time, the Chinese figured out how to break into our unclassified networks. Scherrer was tasked with writing a national military strategy to protect our data. He formed an elite team, wrote the strategy, and got it coordinated with the four services, 52 defense agencies, the National Security Council, the Department of Homeland Security, the CIA, and several other three-letter agencies. It took just over a year, which he considers warp speed when dealing with national bureaucracies. Scherrer says, "No one will know that I was a part of that, but that is part of my career highlight

reel." Other memorable moments include watching the wall come down in Germany and being sent to Saudi Arabia after 9 -11 to help run the air campaign against the Taliban. While his picture will be hanging on the wall at Herculaneum High School, he accepted the honor on behalf of the entire Class of 1985.

Ice has been in some of Hollywood's biggest movies, like "Avengers: Infinity War" and "The Hunger Games: Mockingjay Part 1 and Part 2." She's a world-class stunt performer who captivates audiences with intricate fight scenes, crashing through walls and jumping through glass. Standing at 5 feet, 5 inches, she might be the toughest person in major media. Her husband is Justin Eaton, the stunt double for Captain America. He introduced Ice at the banquet. Eaton said, "I have never known another performer in this field or person in my life to have her tenacity, her creativity, her grace, her professionalism, or her heart." If the audience was expecting to hear from the fearless warrior who devastates on-screen opponents, they might have been surprised. Ice revealed herself as a soft, humble, appreciative Blackcat. She said, "I take the lessons I learned here with me each day along my amazing and challenging journey ... honesty, strength, integrity, kindness, empathy, teamwork, fortitude, creativity, problem-solving, hard work ethic, and most importantly, a moral compass to navigate this challenging journey through the entertainment and film industries."

As the accomplishments of Stotler, Scherrer, and Ice were revealed during the evening, those in attendance could only feel pride. The objective of school districts is to prepare students for a great shot at life. That was the life work of Coach Stotler and the legacy of Scherrer and Ice. These new members of the Hall of Fame illuminate the possibilities for all Blackcats.





Pictured: (back row) Asst. Coach Amy Duncan, Annabelle Bryer, Alexia Ashe, Emily Gruhala, Abby Callahan, Kayla Greer, Head Coach Nicole Coleman, (middle row) Maria Castillo-Orellana, Ella Hoskins, MacKenzie Duncan, Haley Smith, Riley Passananti, (front) Macey Pilliard.



Under new coach Blane Boss, our varsity football team had five wins this season, the most since 2014. The Blackcats lost in the second round of District playoffs.

The Dunklin R-5 School District has earned the designation of a POW-MIA Campus. We received the proclamation during Herculeaneum's Veterans Day Celebration.

We expect to provide Thanksgiving meals to 45 families in our district. Thanks to Bright Futures Dunklin R-5, our generous students and their families, as well as Joycie Gonzalez-Meyer for this incredible feat.

Our Veterans Day events will take place after our press deadline, but we would like to thank our employees who have served. They are Graham Schoonover – Army, Shelia Schoonover – Army, Jeff Reed – Marines, Linda Rieckenberg – Women's Army Corps and Ill. National Guard, Bill Thomas – Army, Val Lauterborn – Army, and Dan Cramer – Air Force.

Pevely's PTO will hold a Santa Night on December 10th. Reservations will be required for your family. Follow Lil' Cat Club PTO on Facebook.

Don't miss the STMS Winter Band Concert Dec. 8th at 6:30 p.m. in the High School Theatre or the HHS Band Concert Dec. 12th at 2:00 p.m.

Reminder: We will be off school Wednesday through Friday next week for our Thanksgiving break. Next month we'll have an early release day on December 17th leading into our winter break. Our first day of classes after the break is January 4th.

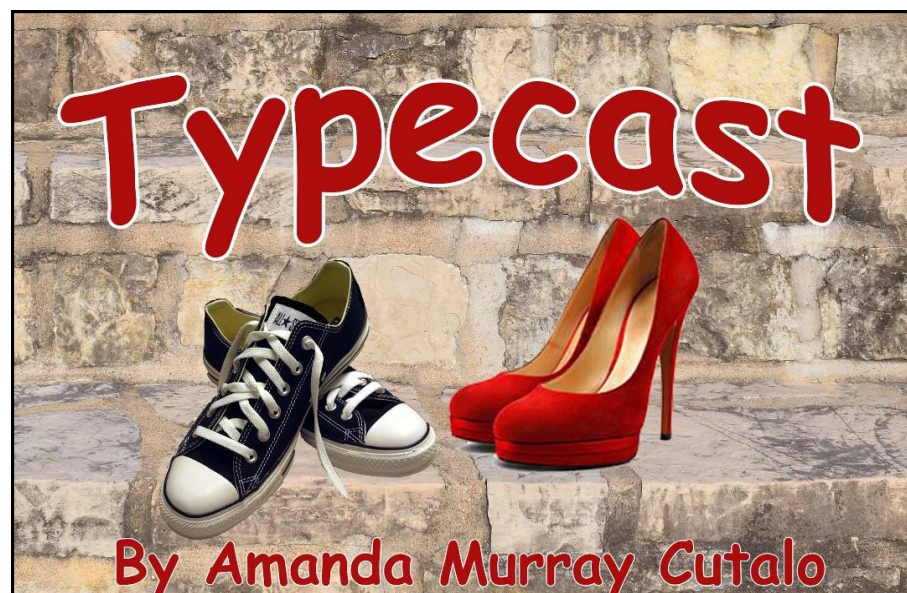


# Varsity Takes 2nd in Districts

"I wasn't ready for it to be over," Head Coach Nicole Coleman said after her first year running the varsity volleyball program. The team took second in Districts against a strong Notre Dame team. The Lady Blackcats had some beautiful sequences setting up devastating spikes against their opponent, followed by an accidental serve into the net. Coleman says, "I kept telling the kids they are going to kill me with a heart attack or aneurysm this season. We would work so hard to get the ball back in our hands and then have some type of unforced error." All high school coaches have their version of this emotional rollercoaster that goes with the territory.

Coleman was the assistant volleyball coach for three years. She says, "I believed in the program that Coach Meda had running... those values and what we're teaching the kids on and off the court, so that transition for me was great." It took a bit longer for players to adapt to their new roles and leadership positions, but they came together mid-season and played as a team. One obstacle the girls faced was letting a bad play influence the next play. Coleman says, "About halfway through the season, we decided we needed to be goldfish and have memories of about three seconds." It helped, but that's difficult for a young team.

Coleman has nothing but youthful energy when she talks about next season. She says, "We have a heck of a group coming back next year. I have nine returning and some talent coming up underneath them. We are already plotting and planning for what comes next."



**By Amanda Murray Cutalo**  
**What happens when the basketball coach takes over play rehearsals?**

**Don't miss the comedy Typecast  
December 3rd and 4th  
in the Dunklin R-5 Theatre.  
\$5 for adults and \$3 for students**

**Cast Members:** Jane: Brooklyn Buchner  
Audrey: Violet Oppen Heidi: Emily Gruhala  
Debra: Natalia Garrett Myra: Kyra Warner  
Juliet: Lauren Nappier Willow: Savannah Kweon  
Ms. Thespis: Leah O'Neal Mr. Ball: Brandon Prince