

# Our Schools at Westwood Heights

Creating a Culture of Character and Achievement

*“Home of the  
Hamady  
Hawks”*



NON-PROFIT  
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WESTWOOD HEIGHTS SCHOOLS • 3400 N. JENNINGS RD. • FLINT, MI 48504 • 810-591-0870

## Students participated in Sending Letters to Our Troops for the Holidays

McMonagle Elementary students wrote letters and colored pictures for our troops on active duty for the holidays. Operation Care Packages based in Illinois requested letters from students to include in their care packages they send out. In order for the letters and packages to arrive on time we had to get in the holiday spirit early. Students in their letters thanked the soldiers for their service to our country, for keeping us safe, and for sacrificing time with their own families in order to make sure we are all protected.

Students had discussions in their classrooms about the men and women in the armed services that make sacrifices for our country and why it is important to recognize them and offer them our gratitude. Hopefully, the soldiers while off in some distant place far from home, will open their packages and know that students from McMonagle Elementary School have big hearts and send their best wishes.



## Message from the Superintendent

Dear Westwood Heights Community,

The school year is flashing past us like a bolt of lightning, so this is a good chance to stop and reflect on the events of the past three months. We have welcomed many new families into our district and our buildings are full. Nevertheless, our staff has been keeping class sizes down, the buildings safe, and the facilities clean. Our food service team is serving thousands of meals every day and we are adding opportunities for families to access food during gaps in our schedule.

Our facilities are being upgraded with new lighting and HVAC equipment. We will soon break ground on our solar energy project, which will save the district thousands of dollars every year. The bathrooms at the elementary school have been remodeled, and we will soon open the renovated Westwood Heights Community Center on Pierson Road. Stay tuned for more information on the programs to be offered at this facility.

We have added 12 new teachers this year, as well as a new literacy coach at the middle/high school, math and reading interventionists at the middle school, new aides for the music and physical education classes, and additional security guards and behavior support interventionists to keep our students on track. We also added new attendance liaisons to work with families experiencing chronic absences. Finally, we are expanding our after school programs to support our hard-working families. Our athletic teams and cheerleading programs are experiencing record rates of participation. They are a source of pride for the schools and the community. As we move into the winter sports season, we are seeing the same increased levels of interest for basketball, wrestling, bowling, and our new powerlifting team. Please consider joining our boosters to support our student-athletes.

We are looking forward to the holidays and the start of a new year. If you know of a family in need, please contact my office or speak to your building administrators. We want all of our families to share in the joys of the season. As always, thank you for entrusting the care, education, and safety of your children to us.

Happy Holidays!



## Food Service Department

The growth of our enrollment has required Director Cynthia Shaheen to hire eight new employees for the department. In addition, we will be adding a new sandwich/chef salad bar at Hamady to relieve the congestion in the serving lines. A new combination oven will arrive soon, allowing us to steam and air-fry various menu items. In addition to our daily breakfast and lunch service, we are serving over 200 after school meals and snacks each day, in addition to serving the Head Start and GSRP programs. Finally, the kitchen at Academy West is now operational, which will save on the cost of transporting their hot food.

Future plans call for a remodel of the kitchen at Hamady, and a continuous effort to seek out new menu items that are tasty and nutritious.

### Westwood Heights Phone Numbers

591-0870 .....	Administration Office
591-4330 .....	Business Office
591-4321 .....	Enrollment Office
591-5145 .....	McMonagle Elementary
591-0890 .....	Hamady Middle/High
591-0123 .....	Academy West Alternative
591-2552 .....	Transportation
591-8677 .....	Food Service Director
591-8644 .....	Special Education Director



Students in Spanish 1 had a unique opportunity to honor loved ones who have passed while also building a sense of community in the classroom. Students worked on coloring skulls, telling funny stories and sharing memories about their loved ones as part of the Day of the Dead Project. The Day of the Dead is a Mexican holiday that's celebrated throughout Mexico from October 31th – November 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Mexican holiday is celebrated by the creation of altars to remember the dead and eating traditional dishes.

The students also were each given a puzzle piece to paint with no idea of what the final image would be. They came together as a class to put the puzzle together and saw how each one of us makes up a bigger picture. This project really help set the tone for the classroom and school year. It's become an important way for all of us to heal over loss and understand every person in the room matters.



Hamady's Spanish 2 students participated in the annual field trip to Mexicantown! Students took a tour of one of the oldest parishes in the United States, Ste. Anne de Detroit. They learned about Day of the Dead, the second founder of Detroit, Father Gabriel Richard, and were even able to see Father Richard's casket under glass. The Hamady students ended the day with lunch at Armando's and dessert at Mexicantown Bakery.



## *Message from the Hamady High School Principal*

A fantastic first semester of the 2019-20 school year that is rapidly coming to a close. I want to say thank you to the new students and parents for choosing Hamady High School, and to our returning students and families, I want to thank you for welcoming those that are new to the Hawk Nation. Final exams are right around the corner, but it is still not too late to take advantage of the time we have left. Coming to school every day and on time is vital to the success of every student. If you are absent 10 or more times, you must make those up in order to get a grade for the semester. We will have Attendance Recovery Interventions on December 11th, December 14th & January 11th. Final exams are on the 23rd and 24th of January, so please do your best and let's finish out this semester strong.

Best wishes,  
Mr. Les Key  
Hamady High School, Principal



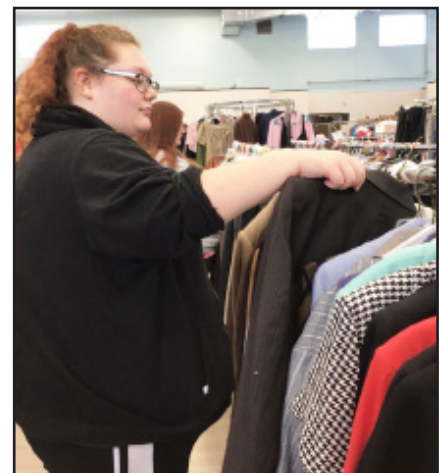
Students participating in the Bridges Program have been learning the importance of volunteering, leadership, good citizenship, and ways to give back to their community. Our amazing Bridges students took time out to help at the Center for Hope by distributing cloths to members of the community that are in need. Students hung clothing on the racks, as well as sorted, packed and provided awesome customer service. Great job Hawks for soaring high in your community!



## **Important Notice**

### Right to Know Teacher Qualification Standards

In accordance with criteria provided by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, the State of Michigan developed a plan for identifying highly qualified teachers. This plan was approved by the State Board of Education on April 24, 2003. The plan provides guidance for school districts. NCLB requires the district to notify parents annually of the following issues relating to teacher quality; the number of teachers with emergency or provisional credentials where certification requirements have been waived, data to be disaggregated by high vs. low poverty schools and progress toward meeting state objectives for having all teachers highly qualified. One hundred percent of the teachers of the Westwood Heights School District are certified by the Department of Education to teach in Michigan. 100% of our teachers meet NCLB Highly Qualified criteria.



# Holiday Concert

HAMADY MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL  
DRAMA CLASS HOLIDAY  
PERFORMANCE AND CHOIR/BAND  
CONCERT



High School Auditorium  
**DECEMBER 19TH, 1 PM**

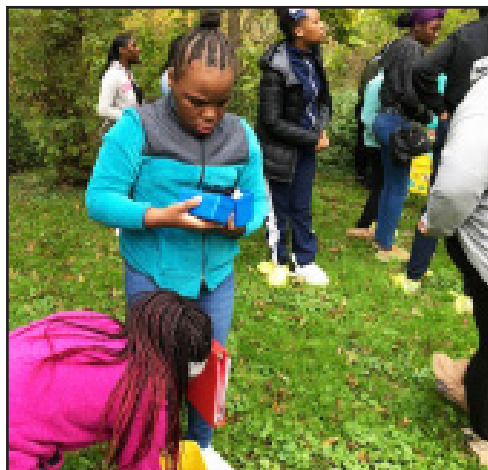
Presented by Hamady Middle/High Fine Arts Department  
**Hamady Middle/High School / 3223 West Carpenter Rd.**



## Flint River Watershed Coalition

Hamady Middle/High students participating in the Flint River Green Bridges program braved the damp, cold weather this morning as they tested the water quality of the Pine Run in Clio, MI. They will analyze their results over the next few months alongside their peers from other grade levels. Students will then complete an action project relating to the experience.

The Bridges program is a robust expansion to Flint River GREEN made possible by the Great Lakes B-WET program. Bridges participants spend a significant amount of time using water quality phenomena to draw connections between classrooms, communities, and careers in STEM. The program is currently being piloted in seven schools in our watershed by 15 teachers. Hamady science teachers, James Hall and Tammy Wylie and support consultant, Arleatha Bryant, are among the first to implement the new curriculum and have done a fantastic job coaching their students through the process!



Hamady Middle School was chosen to be one of three stops during the Great Lakes Stuarts Leadership Conference. Twenty-one educators on this tour, from 14 different states and four different countries, toured the school to see how we have adapted our projects to fit the needs of our students, classrooms, and community over the years.

Tammy Wylie says, "It was amazing to have people around the world come and see our research and to see their presentations from other countries."

Former Hamady Middle/ High School teacher, Mrs. Bryant, gave a presentation during the tour, showing how to mitigate lead in our body through particular plant-based food. Plants that were grown by the students during the research phase were distributed to a local North-end hoop house in Flint. A special thanks to Middle School Science teacher Ms. Tammy Wylie, U of M Flint, Discovering Place coordinator Leyla Sanker, and Dr. Suzanne Knight and Ms. Arlethea Bryant, who served as the hosts.



## *Message from the Hamady Middle Principal*

Greetings Hawk Family,

The school year is off to a wonderful start and we are excited about all of the wonderful things taking place at Hamady Middle School. Our enrollment has increased and we are pleased to have all of the new faces in the building. Welcome to our school district! We hope that you are enjoying the education and culture here at Hamady Middle School where we are soaring to even greater heights.

Our Middle School Football team had another undefeated winning season this year. Way to go! Our Girls basketball team ended their season and made us proud as well. We are entering into boys basketball and girls volleyball season, so please check out the dates and times for upcoming games and come out to cheer our Hawks to victory. We are also forming two Flint Affiliation basketball teams to compete year round across the state.

In addition to sports, there are many great things taking place academically in the Middle School. Our first Practice PSAT 8 test was held on Wednesday, November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019. In the classrooms, the teachers are including 2 test prep questions, 2 academic vocabulary words, and one testing strategy weekly in addition to their lessons. We are working hard to get all of our students proficient or advanced on our state standardized tests. Mrs. Hendrix, our 8<sup>th</sup> grade English teacher, held a poetry celebration to complete their unit where students shared their wonderful masterpieces with each other and the parents who were in attendance. Our science teachers took a group of students to work on water quality testing and to also stencil drains.

This year there are 27 Blueberry Ambassadors representing our building, and each have committed to 3 acts of kindness/good deeds. Won't you join them in this wonderful task? Another student group, the National Junior Honor Society, has elected their officers for 2019-2020 and are currently working on their first community service project here in the building: painting the Parents With A Purpose room. They will also serve at the annual Blessed to be a Blessing dinner, which is sponsored each year by the non-profit organization Well of Hope to feed families. Our Student Council hosted their Halloween Dance, which had a great turnout and loads of fun! We are preparing for our Holiday Lock-In coming up on Friday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019 from 8:00p.m. until 6:00a.m. The cost is \$5.00. Permission slips are soon to come.

Please remember we have a pantry which has free supplies for students such as deodorant, soap, toothpaste/toothbrushes, lotion, feminine products, laundry detergent, socks, etc. Students may grab items any time they are in need and may also take items for family members as well. We are also opening a food pantry this month to insure that none of our students goes to bed hungry. It is important to us that basic needs are met, and we are more than happy to provide this service for our families. In addition, please make sure your students are getting a good nights' rest and arriving on time in the morning so they may receive a free nutritional breakfast to get their day started. This is very important.

Finally, I would like to wish you and your family a safe and happy holiday!

Cheerfully,

Ms. Dionna Ross, Ed.S.

Hamady Middle School Principal

[dross@hamaydhawks.net](mailto:dross@hamaydhawks.net) 810-591-8653

# Hamady Middle School Teachers Earn Internationally Recognized Certification...

Hamady Middle School teachers, Mrs. Arleatha Bryant and Mrs. Tammy Wylie are the first teachers in Genesee County to receive the Environmental Educators Certification (EEC) from the Michigan Alliance of Environmental Outdoor Educators (MAEOE). The educators completed a rigorous five-part process to receive the certification. They were recognized for their efforts as two of the four candidates that received certification at the Annual MAEOE Conference on September 29, 2019 in Tustin, Michigan.

In addition to demonstrating environmental awareness, knowledge, and skills, EEC candidates must participate in ongoing professional development and research to support their learning. In the final steps of the EEC certification process, candidates must develop and execute an action plan that integrates environmental topics and engage students in an environmentally relevant community-service activity.

Mrs. Bryant’s action project was titled: “Where’s the Fresh Food?” in which students researched and then grew vegetables that would help mitigate the lead in their bodies. Mrs. Wylie’s action project was titled: “What Happens Upstream Affects Us Downstream; Changing the perceptions of the Flint River”.

Both teacher’s Place-Based Stewardship Education projects have contributed to our overall community well-being. The teachers have participated in UM-Flint Discovering PLACE since 2012 which has provided Hamady with support for community-based teaching and learning opportunities.





## We are off to a great school year at McMonagle!

Welcome all of our new families and students. As our enrollment numbers at McMonagle have increased, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for adjusting to the new drop off and pick up procedures, which has made the school a safer environment.

I am thrilled to introduce our new 2019-20 school initiatives:

First, our McMonagle Elementary After-School program has been a wonderful new edition to our elementary program. The after-school program offers students sports and enrichment activities. The program takes place Monday – Thursday 3:45-6:45 PM, and students are provided dinner and a snack.

Next, we have introduced a foreign language class for all students K-6. Students are introduced to basic French lessons weekly. Merci, Ms. Fykes!

Also, McMonagle has lowered classroom sizes for all grade levels. The smaller class sizes allow teachers to create classrooms focused on high quality instruction, and a safe and organized learning environment. In addition to lower class sizes, students are provided small group instruction through reading and math interventions daily.

Finally, our new K-6 Music Program provides students daily music activities that include introductory musical processes. The music accomplishments of our students are presented in assemblies and concerts throughout the school year.

Furthermore, the staff at McMonagle Elementary recognizes the role they play in helping our children reach their full potential. We truly believe ALL students can be successful, and this belief drives the work we do on a daily basis. We encourage students to do their best; this is how they accomplish great things! We are looking forward to a great year in 2020. Happy Holidays!

Respectfully,  
Ms. Richards  
McMonagle Elementary, Principal



## 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Career Presentations

October 4<sup>th</sup>

Ms. Ann Jones, a nurse at Pontiac Hospital, came to McMonagle Elementary to present her profession of nursing to our 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students. Students were engaged while Ms. Jones discussed her profession, healthy eating habits, and taking care of our bodies. Students connected with medical experiences they have encountered and had great questions for her.

November 15<sup>th</sup>

Mr. Jamal Bransford, an Emmy award-winning video journalist and communications director at Westwood Heights, presented to our 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students at McMonagle Elementary. He discussed his profession, processes of video journalism, and his amazing Emmy Award he won for a video he created. Amirah used the newscaster's microphone in an interview, while Shane became the video journalist. Students enjoyed learning about the video journalist profession.

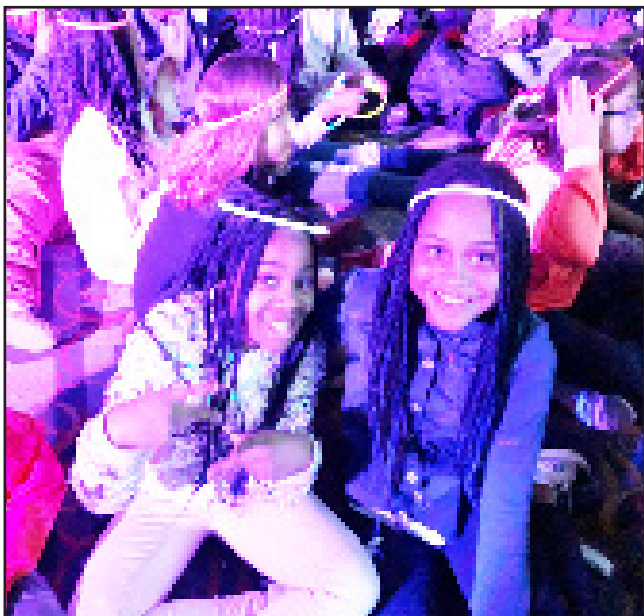




## Blueberry Ambassadors

Twenty-eight, 3<sup>rd</sup> thru 6<sup>th</sup> grade, students from McMonagle Elementary attended the kick-off party for Blueberry Ambassadors on October 22. Mrs. Torsch, Ms. Bradshaw, Mr. Gardner, and Ms. Smith attended the activity with their students. These students learned about the role of a Blueberry Ambassador. Phil Shaltz challenged them to do random acts of kindness in their communities. When they do these acts they give a card that asks the recipient to pay it forward to someone else. Mr. Shaltz stated: “it’s about caring for each other and doing a little something, causing an avalanche of good.”

Our students were served pizza and had an energizing dance party kicking off the celebration of kindness with other students from all over Genesee County.



## Humane Society of Genesee County Visits McMonagle Elementary School

Mari Brooks, Humane Society Educator at the Humane Society of Genesee County, came to give presentations to our first, third and fifth grade classrooms for the second year. Depending on the grade level, she read books about rescue animals which outlined how to properly take care of animals and what to do if an animal is being abused.

Students got to ask questions about what goes on at the Humane Society and learned what types of animals they take care of and rescue. Each time Mari comes to do a presentation, she brings a furry friend for the students to meet. It was awesome to have our students get the opportunity to pet a kitten or bunny for the first time and the students were overjoyed with the experience. Educating our students about the Humane Society is important to have them know there are organizations in our community that help care for abandoned animals and that there are caring people in the world.





## Jr. Hawk Ambassadors Volunteer at Soup Kitchen

On October 11<sup>th</sup> the Jr. Hawk Ambassadors: Tyler Sillman, Darrean Houston, Abraham Veitengruber, Miracle Stribling, Taylor Arnold, Amy Cintron, Kristen Smith, Gabbriell Nelson, PTO volunteer, Mrs. Harrison and Mrs. Rolando-List lent their helping hands at the North End Soup Kitchen. Students packed goodie bags full of candies, set up and helped serve our local residents with a delicious meal. The students were humbled by their experience of giving back to those in our community that have fallen on hard times. The students learned that giving of your time and a friendly smile goes a long way to make others feel that somebody cares. The Jr. Hawk Ambassadors plan on assisting at the soup kitchen again later in the year.



McMonagle Elementary hosted its annual Trunk or Treat activity on Thursday, Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup>, for the children in Genesee County.

Hundreds of kids attended the Trunk or Treat event. Kids were able to go trick or treating in the school's parking lot going to and from decorated vehicles. Owners of the vehicles will decorate their vehicles and/or the trunks of their vehicles and pass out candy.

Thanks to all the Staff and Students for your participation.

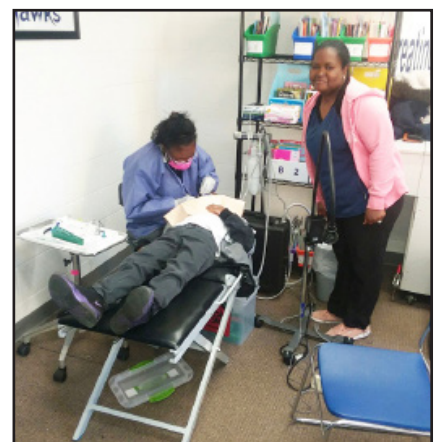


Thanks to Mott Children's Dental Team for completing dental screenings and sealants at McMonagle Elementary School. One goal of the program is to identify children who have urgent dental needs and link them with a community dental provider.

Mott Children's Health Center Health Educator Angel Nash stated: "It was a pleasure to work with the students and staff at McMonagle Elementary and, on behalf of the Mott Dental Team; I thank you for your cooperation and support".

Poor performance in school is often traced to poor dental health. Nearly 51 million school hours are lost, annually, due to dental related health issues such as nutritional deficiencies, severe pain, and infection

Thank you Mott Children's Health Center!



# McMonagle Elementary



# Holiday Programs



McMonagle Elementary  
3484 N. Jennings Rd

12.19.19 5:30pm



## *Message from the Academy West Principal*

We are off to another great start at Academy West with one term in the books for the 2019-20 school year. As always, we are pleased and excited to offer our students the opportunity to get back on track toward graduation by taking credit recovery courses via online classes while receiving face-to-face core class instruction in the classroom with a highly qualified teacher. The best part of all is we are able to offer all of this within a four-day school week, allowing our students additional time to work or take care of some of the various other responsibilities that our young people manage today.

Another benefit that we are excited to offer to our students this year is staff-to-student mentoring for seniors who are expected to graduate in June of 2020. Our awesome staff at Academy West is so committed to supporting our students in their goals for graduation that they work with students during their lunch hour to make sure they are maintaining their attendance, grades, and behavior along with providing guidance in any other areas of their life where they may need additional support. We are looking forward to making even more progress in term two and beyond as we strive to offer the most relevant and appropriate educational opportunities possible for our future leaders.

I hope you enjoy the articles shared on this page and I am elated to inform you that each of these pieces was created by one of our extremely talented students!

On behalf of the staff at Academy West, I wish you and yours a happy and healthy holiday season!



Student Council members from Academy West have been doing a remarkable job in the community.

The students have been volunteering at several events like the Renaissance Fest, Breast Cancer Walk, and the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan, taking out time to make care packages for the UAW union members who were on strike. Thank you for making a difference in the community.





### Care to Have a Cocoa Session

It seems like the snow is here to stay. What a better time for students at Academy West to open their new school store, StuCo. StuCo Cafe', a new student-run store serving hot chocolate, pastries, and a cool place to relax. Academy West students Antoine Hampton tells us why he is excited about the new place. "I enjoy coming in from chilly weather to a cup of StuCo sensational cocoa. With a variety of toppings to choose from can make an average dull freezing morning into a housewarming status in the school."

Academy West Student Council group, headed by Ebony Thomas, runs the store Monday -Thursday every morning and during the lunch hour. Money made at the cafe are able to go towards their Senior Prom and class trip. Students at Academy West also have access to other items in the store, like personal hygiene items and cloths for free.

Student Antoine Hampton stated: "StuCo Cafe' is a place for students to come together to talk and feel safe before going into class. It's also a great way to calm the busy minds of cold bodies into relaxing ready for the day productive warm bodies."



### Food Bank of Eastern Michigan/ Best Food Forward Kickoff Written by: Rayana Smith

The Best Food Forward in October was a grocery giveaway to Flint families that were a part of the Westwood Heights community. Families were overjoyed to discover that the bags were filled with produce, meats, potatoes, and shelf staples such as peanut butter and crackers. We also had the opportunity to contribute at the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan. We formed an assembly line and created over 200 bags of personal care items for individuals that were impacted by the UAW strike. We take pride in being active members of the community and having the opportunity to give back.





The staff of the Academy West Adult Education program was chosen to be one of the presenters at this year's Michigan Association of Community and Adult Education (MACAE) conference at Crystal Mountain. The adult ed. program has had great success over the past five years, quickly becoming one of the top programs in the state. Thus, the staff was asked to present about the best practices

we use to keep adult students motivated, coming to class, and invested in their own education. The adult classroom is a family, and we work hard to make sure all our students know that. Our presentation focused on sharing the strategies we use to build and maintain a fun, family atmosphere that leads to student success.





## Adult Education Attends MiCareer Quest

Several students from the Academy West Adult Education program had the opportunity to attend the MiCareer Quest event held at Dort Federal Event Center on Wednesday, October 23rd. This event gave high school and adult students throughout the area a chance to explore high demand careers in the major career pathways including construction trades, health sciences, manufacturing, and more. Students were able to hear about the different careers while also trying many hands-on activities involved with those careers.



A group of students from the Academy West Adult Education program took an educational trip to visit the state capital and Michigan History Museum in Lansing, Michigan on Monday, November 4th.

The purpose of the outing was to expose the student's classroom teaching of History and Civic lessons to real life. For many of the students, this was their first time visiting The State Capitol and the History Museum.

The student tells us, "I really love the architect of the capitol building and all the information about our legislators."

Exposure on this trip provides opportunities for students to build connections between their classroom teachings and to learn by doing in real-world contexts.

