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North Woods International Students Experience the World



North Woods International Teacher Stacy Yellick works with students to tag monarch butterflies.

Walk into North Woods International School and you quickly notice the representation of different cultures and countries. Traditional school signage is written in multiple languages. Pictures from around the world hang on the walls and the display cases are filled with items from various countries.

"Our goal here at North Woods International School is to expose students to a variety of cultures," shares school Principal Sandy Brauer. "We hope that as they learn about other countries

they are making comparisons with their own lives and our culture and traditions here in the United States."

Parent Kirsten Daykin of Galesville open enrolls her son into the School District of La Crosse so he can attend North Woods International.

"We moved to the area from Boston and we were looking for a school with an international curricu-

lum," she said. "The opportunity to learn Spanish and be in a place that creates an excitement of other cultures was so important."

North Woods International School offers preschool through fifth grade students the district's strong academic curriculum while integrating Spanish language instruction, global events and service learning into daily lessons.

"Research shows that children learn a second language more easily at a younger age.

In addition, the data tells us that exposure to another language enhances a student's native language. So, the benefits of learning Spanish are great."

- Sandy Brauer

North Woods International Principal

When second grade students study the life cycle of a butterfly, they follow the monarch butterflies as they migrate to Mexico.

Teacher Stacy Yellick partners with a program called "Journey North" that allows her students the opportunity to connect with a class of students in Mexico and talk about the monarchs.

"We made symbolic monarchs out of paper and sent them to Mexico," explains second grader Brooke Thurman. The class in Mexico that receives them then

writes back to the North Woods students and shares that the monarchs have arrived safely.

"We told the students in Mexico to take care of our monarchs," said classmate Kennadi Tisdale, referencing both the symbolic and real monarchs the school sends.

The North Woods students release real monarchs each year. The school partners with a research project out of the University of Kansas and tags the monarchs so they can be tracked as they migrate to Mexico.

"We are anxious to hear back from the study and learn if any of our monarchs were able to be tracked," Yellick said.

North Woods International is active with La Crosse's Sister City Organization as well. When delegates from sister cities come to the area they visit classes and speak to students about their culture and life experiences. The visitors keep in touch with classes through interactive technology including skype and voicethread. In addition, classes use these services to communicate with

other schools throughout the world and classmates' family members living abroad.

First grade teacher Tara Schuttenhelm's class skyped with a student's relative in Australia.

"Skyping gives us a chance to hear speakers in their native language and ask questions about their lives and cultures. The students loved being able to see their actual home and surroundings through the computer," she shared.

Schuttenhelm's favorite skype experience was when her students skyped with another first grade class

in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. The North Woods International students sang "Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes" in Spanish to the other class and they sang the same song back in English. The students loved seeing the inside of their classroom, its decorations and the uniforms the students wore.

Students at North Woods International learn Spanish beginning in preschool.

"Research shows that children learn a second language more easily

SPANISH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

Spanish language instruction begins in preschool. Kindergarten families have the choice of a Spanish Exploration or Partial Immersion Program.

Spanish Exploration

- Classroom teachers use Spanish during daily routines
- Spanish clinical students from the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse teach Spanish lessons two times per week.
- Spanish holidays and celebrations are incorporated into the curriculum.
- Students hear presentations from international visitors from Spanish speaking countries.

Spanish Partial Immersion

- Approximately 45-50% of classroom instruction is presented in the Spanish language.
- Spanish is the primary language used in teaching the subjects of math, science and social studies.
- Each grade of the program is taught by a certified Spanish teacher.



One Size, Doesn't Fit All

When you read this issue of *CommunityTalk* you will clearly recognize our district's success in creating choices and options for learning. International education, learning through the environment and the arts, a public Montessori school, as well as a myriad of opportunities for students to discover the careers that lie ahead as in our Health Science Academy for high school students - these spe-



cialized schools expand the kind of educational experiences you would expect in a public school. Even within our more traditional schools unique programs abound such as the Global Village, School on the River and Medical Partnership to name a few.

We understand the importance of giving our youngest learners the best opportunity possible for a successful start in school. That's why our district led the way in creating free, voluntary preschool for every four-year-old. And we accomplished this in a way that brings together all

the professionals serving young children - private child care providers, Head Start and our schools to create a community-based model that has been replicated across Wisconsin.

Our commitment to smaller class sizes in early grade levels is another example of how we are committed to giving every child a great start in school. This is exemplified by maintaining the Student Achievement Guarantee in Education (SAGE) program in every one of our elementary schools. The SAGE program assures that class size in kindergarten through third grade

does not exceed 18 students. We are the only district of comparable size in Wisconsin to do so.

Unique and exceptional learning experiences continue to draw families to the School District of La Crosse. This school year we have 233 students coming into our district through Wisconsin's Open Enrollment program. When students can follow their interest and passions, they become motivated and engaged in learning. Our goal as educators is to discover the talents and abilities inherent in every child. Providing a wide array of choices

and options for learning is key to each student following their passion and finding success in the School District of La Crosse.

Keeping Kids First,

Jerry Kember

Open Enrollment Offers Families the Opportunity to Attend La Crosse Schools



The Wisconsin Public Schools Open Enrollment Program allows parents to apply for their children to attend school in a district other than the one in which they live. The open enrollment application period for the 2011-12 school year is from February 7-25, 2011.

"The open enrollment process allows families living outside of the School District of La Crosse the opportunity to attend our schools and benefit from our rigorous curriculum and outstanding educational programs," states Janet Rosseter, the district's Executive Director of Business Services.

Parents may apply for open enrollment in one of two ways:

- On-line at <https://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/OpenEnrollApp>.
- Paper applications may be obtained from the Department of Public Instruction or from any school district and must be delivered to the nonresident school district during the application period.

"People often get the state open enrollment program and the district's choice and charter application process confused," explained Rosseter. "If you live in another community outside of the School District of La Crosse and want to attend our schools, it is important that you complete the state's open enrollment paperwork during the February dates."

Once an out-of-district family completes the open enrollment process, they can then apply to attend any of the School District of La Crosse's choice or charter schools. In addition, a family can apply to attend any of our neighborhood schools.

"Acceptance into the district through the open enrollment process doesn't guarantee a student a place in a specific school, but we do our best to meet each families needs," Rosseter added.

For more information about Wisconsin's Public School Open Enrollment Program, call 1-888-245-2732 or visit <http://dpi.wi.gov/sms/pstoc.html>

North Woods International Students Experience the World..continued from pg. 1

at a younger age," shares Brauer. "In addition, the data tells us that exposure to another language enhances a student's native language. So, the benefits of learning Spanish are great."

Parents have the opportunity to choose between the school's Spanish Exploration or Partial Immersion Programs. Both provide students with a strong foundation in the Spanish language.

"When a student is fluent in another language they will have a leg up on the world in our current economy," shares teacher Tami Hillestad. "As students learn the language and feel more comfortable with the language, they begin to embrace the culture and with that

comes the development of tolerance and true acceptance of other cultures and ideas."

Fourth grader Justin Holzer likes being able to speak in another language.

"I like learning the names of animals, colors and numbers," he said. "If I go to another country, I know I will be able

to talk to the people, that's pretty cool."

"We live in a global world and we are working hard at North Woods International to prepare our students for lifelong success in it," Hillestad adds.

To learn more about North Woods International School visit www.lacrosseschools.org/northwoods or call 789-7000.



North Woods International students learn about food from around the world.

You may apply for **open enrollment** from
February 7-25, 2011

Summit Environmental School Connecting the Classroom and Nature

Summit Elementary School is surrounded by nature. Prairie grasslands, a frog pond and the school's garden have been used as outdoor classrooms by Summit's teachers for years. Beginning with the 2011-12 school year, the school's name will formally change to Summit Environmental School. The school's high quality curriculum will remain the same, and teachers will continue to build

even greater connections between the environment and their classroom instruction.

"Summit, like all the elementary schools in the School District of La Crosse, has built its success on giving students

a solid educational foundation by focusing on the important basic skills in reading, writing, math and science" shares Dirk Hunter, the school's principal. "We believe that the integration of the environmental

theme throughout our curriculum will help our students to build important critical thinking and problem solving skills while learning to be good stewards of the earth and its resources."

Partnerships will be one of the keys to the success of the school's environmental focus. To date, more than ten community agencies have agreed to provide programs

and services at the school, including the Bluff Country Master Gardeners who will work with second grade students redesigning and replanting the school's butterfly garden during their unit on the study of soil. In addition, the La Crosse County Agricultural Department will teach a lesson on how to keep soil healthy.

"We are excited about the environmental partners that have stepped forward and want to be involved in Summit's curriculum," Hunter added.

Summit students will participate in hands-on activities led by

teachers and environmental partners from the community, with an emphasis on using the outdoor education spaces on school property and throughout the greater La Crosse area. Students will have unique field trip experiences and the opportunity to be involved in service learning projects that promote recycling, waste reduction and conservation.

Beginning with the 2011-12 school year, Summit Environmental School will be a boundary plus choice school. This means students living outside of Summit's attendance area can apply to attend the school. Parents interested in having their child attend Summit Environmental School should complete a choice and charter school application. The application can be found on the district's website at www.lacrosseschools.org/lcsd/choice or by calling Summit at 789-7980.

Summit third grade teacher, Scott Graham is excited about the school's new environmental initiative.

"Our school's location makes us an ideal candidate for focusing on the environment," Graham said, referencing the seven different environmental zones surrounding the school.

"As a staff we are committed to using our outdoor educational spaces to promote global awareness, environmental education and the



Summit Environmental students explore the outdoors in their school garden.

importance of the management of resources within our curriculum," he added.

Hunter believes that Summit's environmental focus will become a model for other schools throughout the state.

"We are on the cutting edge of environmental education thanks to our impressive teaching staff and outstanding community partners. I'm excited about what the future holds for Summit," he said.

To learn more about Summit Environmental School call 789-7980 or visit www.lacrosseschools.org/summit.



Beginning with the 2011-2012 school year, Summit Environmental School will be a boundary plus choice school.

This means students living outside of Summit's attendance area can apply to attend the school.

Middle School Cooking Contest Gets Kids Cooking



Middle school students are being encouraged to get creative in the kitchen and come up with a healthy and tasty recipe their peers would enjoy. The contest, called the "Smart Eats Get Cooking Contest" is sponsored by the School District of La Crosse's School

Nutrition Department's Smart Eats Program.

Students can submit a recipe in one of three categories; entrees, salads and side dishes or desserts and snacks. The recipe must take 30 minutes or less to prepare and includes one or more locally grown fresh fruit or vegetable. Official entry forms can be found at www.lacrosseschools.org/lcsd/getcooking. Recipes must be submitted by 12:00 p.m. on February 28, 2011.

Two finalists from each recipe category will compete in a "Top Chef-like" cook-off at Logan Middle School on April 14th at 4:00 p.m.

in the school's auditorium. The event will include the cook-off and a percussion ensemble by Hintgen Elementary School students and teacher Deb Michaels. The students will use common kitchen utensils to create music while the votes are being tallied. The grand prize is an iPod nano.

Smart Eats is an exciting new initiative designed to incorporate fresh, locally grown produce into students' daily diets. The program's goals are to teach children that healthy foods taste good and are fun to prepare. In addition to the Get Cooking Contest, the Smart Eats

Program has offered a farm tour, fresh fruit and vegetable program, kid's cooking classes with Piggy's Chef Chris Roderique, adult "Eating with the Seasons" cooking classes and a fine dining after school class at Logan Middle School.

"Our students have enjoyed locally grown farm-fresh broccoli, honey glazed carrots, rhubarb cake, purple potatoes, yukon gold potatoes, beets, parsnips, honey crisp apples, and red kuri squash so far this year," shares Joni Ralph, Supervisor of School Nutrition for the School District of La Crosse. "We are changing the school's meal scene

and creating healthier habits for our students' future. Students are trying new foods and we've had many smiling faces as a result."

Preschool Offers Parents Options, Flexibility



Preschool teacher Kylie Burns leads a group activity with her students at Hintgen Elementary.

When it was time for Jaime Hauser to enroll her daughter Gracie in preschool, she had many concerns.

"I wanted Gracie to have the opportunity to attend preschool, but I also wanted to keep her routine as close to the same as possible," Hauser said. "We loved the daycare center she was in and

wanted her to be able to

continue there."

The School District of La Crosse's preschool program allowed the Hauser family that opportunity.

"We have designed our preschool program in such a way that it tries to meet the needs of all families," shares Mark White, Supervisor of the district's Prekindergarten Programs.

Preschool programming is offered in nine district elementary schools as well as in seven child care centers throughout the community. All of the sites offer bussing to and from students' homes or daycare providers.

"The preschool experience allows children to come and learn about school," shares preschool teacher Kylie Burns. "Students learn important social skills and the basics of the educational system."

Hauser, of Holmen, open enrolled her daughter into the School District of La Crosse so she could attend preschool at Hintgen.

"Gracie has had an outstanding experience at Hintgen. She loves

coming to school every day and is more than prepared to enter kindergarten," she said.

Burns believes one of the roles of preschool is to instill a desire and a passion for learning in students.

"It is a positive and upbeat start

to a child's schooling. I love seeing the excitement in the students' eyes each day as they enter my classroom," she said.

To learn more about the School District of La Crosse's Preschool Program call 789-7006.

2011-2012 Preschool Sites Listing

- Congregational Preschool
- Coulee Children's Center
- Elm Grove Day Care (La Crosse Day Care)
- Emerson Elementary
- Gundersen Lutheran Child Care Center
- Hamilton Early Learning Center
- Hintgen Elementary
- La Crosse Montessori Preschool
- North Woods International
- Roosevelt Elementary
- Spence Elementary
- State Road Elementary
- Summit Elementary
- Toddle Inn Day Care
- Western Technical College Parent Child Center
- Coulee Montessori (at Roosevelt)

"One Community, One Book"

Teachers Hope Author's Visit Inspires Students



Students at Central and Logan High Schools will get to meet an award-winning author and learn what it takes to become a published writer this spring. The project, called "One Community, One Book", is bringing author Kathryn Erskine to La Crosse for both student and community presentations. Erskine is the author of *Mocking Bird*, which recently won a national book award for young people's literature.

Erskine's visit is sponsored by the La Crosse Public Education Foundation. "Our hope is that this event will get students excited about reading," shared Geva Thole, Executive Director of the La Crosse Public Education Foundation.

In addition to paying for Er-

skine's presentations, the La Crosse Public Education Foundation is buying enough copies of the book so every high school student in the district can read it.

Mocking Bird was chosen because the high school English department believed the book had themes that students could make connections to in their own lives.

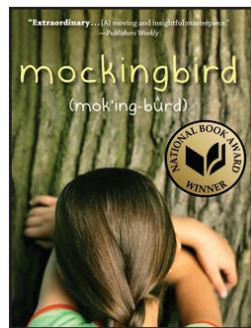
"One of the main themes in the book is the idea that you never try and hurt someone," shared Susan Beauchamp, an English teacher at Central. "We work hard in middle and high school to teach our students empathy and to help them gain an understanding of what other people are going through and how they are feeling. The main character in the

book struggles to understand those feelings and the grief and hardship that the people in her family and community are going through. I think that struggle to put ourselves in another's situation is something our students can relate to."

Mocking Bird has a literary connection to Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mocking Bird* which is celebrating its 50th Anniversary this year.

"Both books have an underlying message about not doing harm to others. We are able to draw connections between the two books," Beauchamp added.

"This event fits well with the mission of the La Crosse Public Education Foundation because it will get students excited about learn-



ing," Thole stated. "We know this project could not be funded through the district's tight budget, but the experience could be life changing for students."

Erskine's workshops will take place April 18th and 19th and include book readings, writing workshops and an author book signing. An author reception will be held after the evening community presentation.

"This has truly become a school-wide event. Numerous departments are getting involved in the project," Thole added.

Art students will be creating posters to promote the book readings. Family and Consumer Science classes will prepare snacks for the author reception.

"We looked at what our resources were here at Central and how we could get more students involved. As a result, we have gotten buy-in and ownership throughout the whole school and the project has really taken an interdisciplinary approach which is very exciting," Beauchamp commented.

The community event



Author, Kathryn Erskine

which includes a book reading, author signing and reception is scheduled for Monday, April 18th at 6:30 p.m. in the Central High School auditorium.

Organizers say that if the project is a success they may consider making an author visit an annual event.

"Literature can be a powerful tool in opening up lines of communication between generations and bringing a community together. I am hopeful that this event will do just that," Thole added.

To learn more about Erskine's visit go to the La Crosse Public Education Foundation's website at www.lpefonline.org or call 787-0226.

Health Science Academy Gives Students Hands-On Experience in Health Care



Health Science Academy student Julie Every with her mentor from the Franciscan Skemp Family Birthplace.

Students in the School District of La Crosse's Health Science Academy have been busy touring the local medical facilities and job shadowing their mentors this past semester.

Logan Senior Julie Every spends each Thursday morning in the Family Birthplace at Franciscan Skemp Healthcare.

"Each time I job shadow a different nurse and get to observe what they do," shares Every. "I see mothers with babies that are just a few hours old and watch as the nurses observe how both mother and baby are doing. It is very exciting to watch the reactions of new parents."

Classmate Damion Figueroa is interested in either a law enforcement or medical career. He spends his mornings with the Gundersen Lutheran Security Department learning how his two fields of interest work together. "Overall it's a different look at health care," he said. "Most people don't know all the responsibilities

and demands on hospital security staff, especially with all the construction at the hospital. It's been a great learning experience."

"We are able to offer customized field experiences for the students," said Annette O'Hern, Coordinator of Career and Technical Education. "As students find careers of interest, we are able to partner them with a professional mentor in that area and often coordinate an internship or job shadowing experience."

Figueroa's most memorable experience was sitting in on an actual Chapter 51 case, where law enforcement and hospital security were assisting a person struggling with mental health issues. "It was interesting to see the whole process play out and how the different agencies work together," he shared.

The Health Science Academy, began during the 2009-10 school year through a partnership between the School District of La Crosse, Gundersen Lutheran, Franciscan Skemp, the Health Science Consortium and the areas three institutions of higher education. Nearly 50 high school students are

enrolled in the Academy, taking courses that integrate their English and science curriculum with real world experiences in the health care industry. Each day students spend three hours at the Academy and then return to their high school campus for the remainder of the school day.

"The Health Science Academy is a great opportunity for our students to immerse themselves in the health sciences through our community's outstanding medical and higher education institutions," states Associate Superintendent of Instruction, Randy Nelson.

For Julie Every, her mornings spent in the Family Birthplace have taught her about compassion and that there are many different types of families. "I love to stop and talk to families and see how they are doing," she shared, "especially families whose baby is in the neonatal intensive care unit, I like to check and see how they are doing."

As Every and her fellow Academy participants complete their final year of high school and begin to

think about their future academic and career aspirations, they have a wealth of knowledge from their Health Science Academy experiences.

"The Academy gives students a taste of collegiate rigor as well as hands-on experiences in a professional environment," O'Hern said.

Academy teacher Tom Kammer believes the tours, guest speakers and job shadowing opportunities give students a solid understanding of the various careers needed in the health care industry. "Our students learn quite quickly that there are more than just doctors that work in a medical institution," Kammer added.

To learn more about the School District of La Crosse's Health Science Academy call 789-7185.



Students Learn Through Discovery at Coulee Montessori

At Coulee Montessori, a charter school located in Roosevelt School, children learn primarily through self-directed learning and discovery.

"The Montessori learning environment is very different from what we traditionally think a classroom should look like," shares Principal Laura Huber. "Our classrooms are very busy with multiple forms of learning happening all at once, and yet they are a very calm and peaceful place."

The Montessori classroom looks different from a traditional classroom. Students meet as a group around a class platform and sit on

the floor when they participate in group lessons. Once a lesson is complete the students move to their own work spaces to complete their individualized work plan using Montessori materials.

"I like the idea that children are responsible for their own work," shares Coulee Montessori teacher Cathy Fuchs. "We are building independence and cooperation in our students."

Each student's individualized work plan ensures that they cover the necessary work and topics each week. The students, however, have the choice in which order they complete their work.

Coulee Montessori has a Children's House for preschool and kindergarten

students, E-1 classrooms for first through third grade students and an E-2 classroom for fourth and fifth graders. The Coulee Montessori middle school serves students in 6th through 8th grade.

"The multi-age classroom allows students to interact and learn with students of different ages and abilities," states Huber. "Students learn to be good role models and benefit from re-teaching topics that they have mastered."

Self-directed and individual learning is based on the Montessori philosophy that children have an innate desire to learn, and they learn best in an atmosphere where they are allowed to participate actively and work at their individual pace.

"The benefit of self-directed

learning is that students can progress more quickly in areas of strength and take the necessary time to learn material they have not yet mastered," Huber adds.

"Our students learn independence from the very beginning. They learn to be responsible for their own work. By the time they are a 3rd grader, they know what needs to be done to take care of their learning," shares Fuchs. "Learning



Coulee Montessori students work together on a team building activity on a school field trip.

that independence and responsibility is what will make them successful citizens."

To learn more about Coulee Montessori call 789-7760 or visit www.lacrosseschools.org/montessori.



School of Technology and Arts I Unleashes Students' Creativity

Katelin Thompson loves to play her violin. Her parents are impressed with their daughter's musical ability at such a young age. When they began thinking about where to send Kaitlyn to school, they wanted a school that would emphasize the arts and unleash her natural creativity.

"We looked at all the public and charter schools in the district before Katelin entered kindergarten," shared mom, Jennifer Thompson. "Katelin is a very creative and artistic child and when we visited SOTA I, we knew it was the right fit for her."

The SOTA I third grader is in her third year of strings lessons and has been in the school's orchestra since second grade.

"The integration of music and the arts into the elementary curriculum is one of the things that makes SOTA I unique," said Principal Steve Michaels.

SOTA I, a charter school located at Hamilton School, offers kindergarten through 5th grade students a unique learning opportunity by blending daily lessons with hands-on creative experiences. Dance, movement, music, drama, theater, media and visual arts are all integrated into the school's curriculum.

Strings lessons begin in first grade for all interested students and performing in the orchestra begins in second grade. The school has a strong arts staff that includes the district's only drama specialist, an orchestra teacher and a visual arts teacher.

"The arts are incorporated into all aspects of our curriculum from the second and third graders using song to learn their multiplication facts to the fourth and fifth graders acting out a debate between Native

Americans and settlers," Michaels shared. "We see that our students gain a higher level of understanding and retention by using the arts."

The school's multiage and continuous classroom means students spend two years together with the same teacher (called looping).

"There are strong relationships built between our students and their classroom teacher," Michaels commented. "The academic benefits of looping are many and we see that in how our students perform."

The multiage classroom allows older students to serve as mentors and role models for the younger students. Research shows that when older students teach information and skills to younger classmates, their academic performance

dramatically improves.

"The multiage classroom was one of the main reasons we chose SOTA," shared Thompson. "When Katelin is the younger student in the classroom she looks to the older students for help, and when she is one of the older students the reteaching reinforces her learning. It's been a great experience on both ends."

The charter school is also known for its strong parent involvement. The parent group, known as the SOTA Steering Committee, works collaboratively with the school's teachers and principal to support learning as well as provides financial support for field trips and classroom supplies and classroom volunteers.

"On any given day we have one or more parents assisting in each of our classrooms," said Michaels. "The level of parent involvement is not only impressive, but also sends a message to students that the adults in their lives value education."

The SOTA I school year ends with a culminating project, called an informance, where students share what they've learned through perfor-



SOTA I student Katelin Thompson loves to play her violin.

mance.

"Each year at the informance we've watched our daughter grow in her development and confidence. The SOTA I program has given her the skills and confidence to go out on stage, speak lines and perform," Thompson added.

To learn more about the School of Technology and Arts I call 789-7695 or visit www.lacrosseschools.org/sota1.



SOTA II students prepare for a performance.

Coulee Montessori

Look inside Coulee Montessori middle school teacher Gina Morken's classroom and you quickly notice it is not a traditional learning environment. Students sit on the floor, work regularly in groups and talk amongst each other as they complete their work. The 6th through 8th grade multi-age classroom makes up the Coulee Montessori Middle School Program.

"The Montessori philosophy is about teaching the entire child. We don't just teach the academics, we also work hard to meet students'

social and emotional needs," shares Morken.

The hands-on approach to learning is why many of the students have chosen Coulee Montessori.

"It is so hands-on, instead of learning the material in a textbook we get to go out on a field trip and actually study there. I couldn't stand sitting in a desk all day," Coulee Montessori student Zayne Wicks said.

"We have our direct instruction like other classrooms, but after that I give them directions and then they work in groups on projects to complete the lessons," Morken said.

The Montessori educational philosophy involves the integration of all areas of the curriculum into research projects and service learning.

The three-year looping curriculum allows the Montessori students to receive the entire middle school curriculum, but in a different order than their peers at the district's other middle schools.

"It is our integrated approach to learning. We teach based on themes including history themes and science themes. Our language arts and other subjects are all integrated into these themes," Morken shares.

The students also coordinate service learning projects each year that are integrated into the curriculum. The projects are designed to make students more aware of their surroundings and the impact they can have on their community and the world.

"Service learning is about helping the students to realize that they can really help the community," says Morken. "It is based on the Montessori work, Education and Peace. We first look at problems globally and then locally. Next we try to find

Charter Schools Offer Middle School Options

a local way that we can contribute to the goals of the global world here in La Crosse."

To learn more about the Coulee Montessori Middle School Program call 789-7760 or visit www.lacrosseschools.org/couleemontessori.

School of Technology and Arts II

Middle school students at the School of Technology and Arts II (SOTA II) showcase their learning through performance and the visual arts.

"We have a hands-on curriculum that integrates the arts with the traditional middle school curriculum," shares SOTA II teacher Nick Pretasky. "Our students learn by doing and show what they've learned through performance."

The 6th – 8th grade charter school enhances the district's middle school curriculum by uniquely blending daily lessons with movement, media technology, music/

strings, drama/theater and the visual arts.

"By learning through the arts, our students are able to tap into their creativity and truly experience and understand the core academic curriculum," Pretasky shares. The charter school uses a project-based learning approach where students complete projects that integrate multiple subject areas and the arts into a final piece or production.

"We believe that learning through the arts meets the needs of our students and gives them the skills to feel comfortable and confident during their middle school years," shares Dr. Penny Reedy, SOTA II Principal. To learn more about the School of Technology and Arts II call 789-7670 or visit www.lacrosseschools.org/sota2.

Middle School Students Welcome Exchange Students into Their Classrooms, Homes



Students in Logan Middle School's Global Village have been busy making preparation for their upcoming visitors. In the coming weeks a group of middle school exchange students will be coming to La Crosse to learn about life and education in the United States. Logan Middle School families will serve as host families,

opening their homes to the students during their two week visit.

"Serving as a host family is a great way for our students to make a connection across the globe," shares Logan Middle School Principal, Dr. Troy Harcey. "During their time together we hope that the visiting students and our students engage in dialogue about the similarities and differences of their lives and cultures."

Hosting the exchange students fits perfectly with the Global Village's mission to create an exciting learning environment that develops confident, contributing citizens in an ever-changing and inter-connected world.

Logan Middle's students will show-off the Coulee Region to their guests, taking them skiing and snowboarding at

Mount La Crosse and visiting local landmarks during their visit.

The Global Village began in 2009 for Logan Middle School's 6th grade students. During the 2010-11 school year the program expanded to include 7th graders, and will do so again for the 2011-12 school year for 8th graders.

"As we designed the program we wanted our students to constantly be making connections between what is happening here in La Crosse to what is happening around the globe," shares 6th grade Global Village teacher Robin Fleig. "As a result, we've had some very interesting and meaningful conversations about the economy, the environment and humanitarian efforts over the course of the school year."

Global Village teachers incorporate traditions and routines from other cultures into their daily lessons. Several mornings a week the program's 7th grade students participate in an exercise routine that mirrors what students in China do each morning.

"The students love to do the

exercises and it sparks great conversation about the lifestyles and traditions in China," said Jenna Fernholz, 7th grade Global Village Teacher. "I really believe our 'learn by doing' approach makes a difference for our students' understanding of other cultures."

Exposing students to a variety of cultures is a priority in the Global Village. A partnership with the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse's Office of International Studies allows exchange students and visiting scholars the opportunity to visit classes and give presentations on their home countries, their traditions and customs.

"One of the most important things we can do to educate our students is to expose them to people and places very different from what they see here in La Crosse each day," states Global Village 7th grade teacher Heather Rosene. "As we explore elements of culture that are similar to and different from our own, we allow students to appreciate the lifestyle they have, in addition to striving to reach goals they might

not have even dreamt of on their own."

The Global Village also incorporates a great deal of technology into its curriculum, allowing students to connect personally with others across the globe. The students used skype technology to visit with Logan Middle School teacher Matthew Christen during his recent teacher exchange to China. The students asked each other questions about music, food and school during their "skype visits." Several of the Chinese students who participated in the skyping will be visiting Logan Middle School.

"The Chinese students exchange will be a remarkable experience for our students," comments Harcey. "People that our students met from across the globe through the use of technology just a few weeks ago will now be sitting next to them in school and guests in their homes. These opportunities really make for rich cultural understanding."

To learn more about Logan Middle School's Global Village visit www.lacrosseschools.org/loganmiddle.



Middle School Students participate in morning exercises similar to how Chinese students complete a morning exercise routine before the start of the school day.

German Club Opens Students Eyes to the World

The school day may end at Lincoln Middle School when the final bell rings, but thanks to an after school German Club the learning continues.

"German Club gives me a chance to help students truly experience the German culture," explains German teacher Rita Murphy. "We can read about it in a book, but the experiential learning is so much more beneficial."

Lincoln's German Club meets multiple times each month. Students learn traditional games, try foods from the country and coordinate an annual Oktoberfest celebration. Students practice the language by playing board games, and German trivia and watching German movies. Each year club members participate in a major field

trip to either Christkindlmarkt in Chicago or the Fasching in New Ulm, Minnesota.

"One of the goals of the club is to provide an opportunity for students to travel and see the world," shares Murphy. She hopes these trips will spark students' interest in learning about different cultures, travel and world language.

"In high school world language students have the opportunity to travel internationally. I see these day trips as a way to prepare them for those experiences," Murphy said.

The club also encourages students to continue their world language studies.

"You can go anywhere as a tourist and visit, but when you know the language it can open your eyes to the world and you truly get to know

the people," she adds. "We have an outstanding world language program in the School District of La Crosse," states Sandy Brauer, Supervisor of World Languages. "We offer more world language choices than other districts our size throughout the state, opportunities for international travel, and clubs like the German Club, that give students the chance to truly experience another culture."



German Club members (left to right) Jack Curtis, Evan Thompson, and Adam Scott enjoy a hot chocolate at the Christkindlmarkt in Chicago.

We Appreciate These Donations to Our Schools

Emerson Elementary School

- Wanders Family cash donation for food pantry
- Cara Bishop donation of hot chocolate & coffee during Emerson power outage
- Darrell & Shelley Dickinson donation of food items for food pantry
- Doug & Nadine Happel donation of Thanksgiving turkey for food pantry
- Jeff & Kristin Trohkimoinen donation of food items for food pantry
- Peter & Karen Hansen donation of snow pants & hats; cash donation for food pantry
- Ernie Harter donation of food items for food pantry
- Mike & Colleen Jankowski donation of food items for food pantry
- Lynn & Rich Tully donation of food items for food pantry

Franklin/Roosevelt/Coulee Montessori Elementary Schools

- Bethel Lutheran Church cash donation for Franklin food pantry
- La Crosse Postal Workers donation of school supplies for Franklin/Roosevelt
- Franklin PTO Americorp pledge
- Gundersen Lutheran Medical Foundation cash donation for substitute costs, classroom supplies & field trip transportation for Intergenerational Project
- Pastor Lisa Shank, Bethel Lutheran Church donation of 40 turkeys & 15 bags of Thanksgiving fare for Franklin food pantry
- La Crosse Fire Department donation of food items for Franklin food pantry
- Coulee Montessori Parent Group Americorp Pledge

Hamilton Early Learning Center

- GAP Foundation cash donation to purchase supplies
- New Beginnings Christian Fellowship cash donation for classroom/student support
- Cabane 830 donation of school supplies
- Mary Baron, Cathy Juan, Bill & Jean Drazkowski donation of children's coats, hats, & under-

garments

- Sister Mary Ellen Huebsch, FSPA donation of teaching materials
- Ruth & Paul Karis cash donation to assist school/students in funding
- Target "Take Charge of Education" cash donation
- UW-La Crosse WEA Student Group donation of school supplies
- Tammy Hayden donation of books & clothing
- UW-Madison Western Campus of Nursing donation of hats & mittens
- VRW Auxiliary & Past Presidents Club donation of hats & mittens
- Shannon Yachwak donation of bird seed

Hintgen Elementary School

- Wal-Mart (La Crosse) donation of school supplies
- Alliant Energy Foundation & Wayne Ziegler (in honor of Kylie Burns excellence in the classroom) cash donation for program supply needs
- Jan Sahagian-Crandall donation of books for LMC & classrooms
- Randy Eddy cash donation for Random Acts of Kindness
- Shopko South Employees cash donation for Essentials for Student Learning & Achievement
- Beautanica Spa Staff & Customers & Fox 25 donation of mittens

North Woods International School

- Target Corporation cash donation to purchase classroom supplies

Southern Bluffs Elementary School

- PTO cash donation to assist with purchase of AV equipment

Spence Elementary School

- PTO cash donation to purchase art supplies

State Road Elementary School

- PTO cash donation to purchase classroom equipment
- Marilyn Hannum cash donation for Random Acts of Kindness

Summit Elementary School

- PTO Americorp pledge; cash donation for classroom expenses for Environmental School Project

Lincoln Middle School

- Anonymous donor cash donation to assist in purchase of show choir dresses
- Donald & Mary Blaha DeBoer cash donation to assist in purchase

of show choir dresses

- Tammy Hayden cash donation to assist in purchase of show choir dresses; volleyball socks & uniforms; donation of books for LMC; seat cushions for Medial Partnership; & donation of show choir neckties
- Brian & Nancy Manske cash donation to assist in purchase of show choir dresses; & 7th grade Medical Partnership
- Kurt & Mary Mueller cash donation to assist in purchase of show choir dresses
- Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company cash donation to assist in purchase of show choir dresses
- LeJardiniste Garden Guild cash donation to purchase items for food pantry
- Kelly Fox cash donation to purchase socks for volleyball
- PTO cash donation to purchase Math Smartboard Software; orchestra storage cabinet; athletic uniforms; & student reward coupons
- Stephanie Hawkins cash donation for 6th grade Global Connections
- Milt & Jackie Schmida cash donation for 6th grade Global Connections
- Jean Crayton cash donation for 8th grade Student Activity Fund
- Michael & Robin Schultz cash donation to purchase show choir dresses
- Scott & Theresa Smillie cash donation to purchase show choir dresses
- Joe & Mary Alvarado cash donation for 7th grade Medical Partnership
- DM Harris Law LLC cash donation for 7th grade Medical Partnership
- Joy Keon Rumball donation of computer lab toner cartridges
- Linda Losen cash donation for 7th grade Medical Partnership
- Richard & Barbara Morrison cash donation for 7th grade Medical Partnership
- Hogan Special Concerns cash donation to food pantry

Logan Middle School

- Ronald McDonald Arts for Young America donation of tickets for "Fringe" performance
- Hogan Special Concerns cash donation for food pantry

- Herb Kohl Education Foundation, Dairyland Grant/Jeff Kurisch, cash donation to purchase technology education materials/supplies

Longfellow Middle School

- Global Awareness Competition cash donation to fund Fair Trade Program
- Anonymous donor cash donation
- La Crosse Paralegal Association donation of food items for food pantry
- Longfellow Middle School staff donation of food items for food pantry
- Hogan Special Concerns cash donation for food pantry

Central High School

- Exxon Mobile Corporation cash donation to purchase classroom supplies for Science Department
- Booster Club cash donation to upgrade sound system
- Lady Raiders Basketball Club cash donation to purchase adjustable backboard
- La Crosse Public Education Foundation (Appreciation Award) cash donation for classroom use

Logan High School

- Booster Club cash donation to purchase boy's basketball warm-ups; repair track & field & cross country tent
- Booster Club "Cans for Kids" Program cash donation for girl's swim team, cheerleaders, SEA Club, CD department, Spanish Club, Ranger Renaissance, French Club & Band
- La Crosse Community Foundation - Barb & Dave Erickson Fund cash donation to purchase food items for Family & Consumer Education department
- La Crosse County Bar Association cash donation to pay for mock trial competition entry fee

- La Crosse Public Education Foundation cash donation to purchase Academic Achievement classroom supplies & equipment
- Michelle Kerska cash donation to purchase books for LMC

Logan High School/LaCrossroads

- Kathy Spelker cash donation to purchase supplies for "Making it Now!" student run business in LaCrossroads at Logan
- Rotary International cash donation to assist with purchase of monogramming equipment for "Making it Now!" student run business in LaCrossroads at Logan

CommunityTalk

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