

District Reporter

STEGER
DISTRICT 194

Winter 2019

Columbia Central Presents Disney's Mulan Jr.

This season, Columbia Central Theatre Club presented the Disney production, *Disney's Mulan Jr.* Based on Disney's Oscar-nominated film, *Disney's Mulan Jr.* is a heartwarming celebration of culture, honor and the fighting spirit. With hit songs and a story packed with action, humor and heart, *Disney's Mulan Jr.* brings ancient China to life with a modern sensibility.

The Huns have invaded and it is up to the misfit Mulan and her mischievous dragon sidekick, Mushu, to save the Emperor! Defying the village matchmaker, Mulan takes up arms and disguises herself as a boy in order to spare her father from having to serve in the army. As the great battle with the Huns approaches, Mulan must choose between revealing her true identity as a girl or saving all of China with her clever plan.

The Columbia Central Theatre Club is open to students in grades 5-8 and is sponsored by Columbia Central Music teacher Ms. Heather Olsen and Steger Intermediate Center 3rd grade teacher Ms. Lisa Wendt. *Mulan Jr.* marks Ms. Olsen and Wendt's fifth production at Columbia Central and the quality of these shows is second to none. The months of hard work shown by both students and staff that goes into each performance is evident. Everything from stage crew responsibilities to set and costume design is done with care and amazing attention to detail. These



all lead to an experience that leaves students with such joy in learning and performance that smiles abound following the last curtain call. These productions are truly the masterwork of District 194.



Coming Soon
a fundraiser
*Masquerade
Murder
Mystery Dinner*

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A word from the
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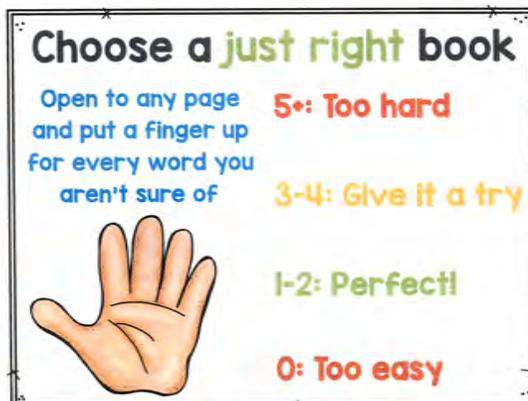


From Around the District



Family Game Night: Steger Intermediate

The Steger Intermediate Center hosted a Family Literacy Night in January. Over 70 families and 200 people attended this event entitled Family Game Night. Families created, played, and then took home various games in both Math and Reading. Literacy Night in Steger School District 194 has long stood as a way to enhance parent involvement in our elementary schools. When District 194 transitioned into grade level centers, Family Literacy Night continued and became a great way that families could see our community's new schools, meet their children's teachers and explore literacy with their sons and daughters. Family Game Night at the Intermediate Center was a great night of family bonding.



Columbia Central Receives a Visit from The Reptile Man

Students at Columbia Central were treated to a fantastic exhibition of cold-blooded creatures by locally famed Herpetologist, Jim Nesci.

Jim Nesci is an experienced expert in the reptile industry. He is the pioneer of Reptile Education Programs and Parties. He has owned and worked with reptiles his entire life, starting as a young boy fascinated with dinosaurs. He was invited to his first school to give a reptile presentation by a teacher-friend. He has since educated and entertained groups of all kinds at all levels of schools, daycare facilities, preschools and universities.

Jim and his group of reptiles have appeared on The Oprah Show, Animal Planet, The Tonight Show, HGTV, Regis & Kelly, and The Today Show. Locally, they have appeared on Eric & Kathy, 190 North, Don & Roma, Wild Chicago, and Early Edition. Jim has also guest lectured at The Shedd Aquarium, Lincoln Park Zoo, The Field Museum, and The Academy of Sciences.

Jim's love for reptiles is infectious and apparent throughout his presentation. Students are invited to touch or hold various reptiles including snakes and tortoises. But the grand finale to every show is the unpacking of Jim's best friend, an 8 foot long alligator named Bubba.

Student Safety Information

School District 194 is fully committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students. This includes students' everyday travel to and from school. District 194 has worked extensively with local law enforcement in both Steger and South Chicago Heights to improve safe travel while crossing streets near each of our three schools. District 194 utilizes crossing guards paid by the South Chicago Heights and Steger Police Departments. It is also important that parents and community members are cognizant and aware of changes in speed limits near school zones. The following ordinances are currently in place in both Steger and South Chicago Heights:



Sec. 82-342. - Special speed limit while passing *schools*.

(a) On a *school* day when *school* children are present and so close thereto that a potential hazard exists because of the close proximity of the motorized traffic, no person shall drive a motor vehicle at a speed in excess of 20 miles per hour while passing a *school zone* or while traveling upon any public thoroughfare where children pass going to and from *school*.

(b) For the purpose of this section a *school* day shall begin at 7:00 a.m. and shall conclude at 4:00 p.m.

(c) This section shall not be applicable unless appropriate signs are posted upon streets and highways. Such signs shall give proper due warning that a *school zone* is being approached and shall indicate the *school zone* and the maximum speed limit in effect during *school* days when *school* children are present.

(Code 1969, § 71.602)

State Law reference— Similar provisions, Ill. Rev. Stat. ch. 95½, § 11-605.

District 194 asks that everyone observe these ordinances in order to ensure the safety of our students.

Thank America's Teachers

Special thanks goes once again to the Steger and South Chicago Heights communities for their continued daily voting in the Thank America's Teachers Contest. All three of our teachers won in the last Thank America's Teachers contest. They are all from Columbia and their winnings are going towards the Washington trip.

Congratulations to:

- Hailey Pickrum
- Jessica Toran
- Laura Smokoska

Total winnings to date is \$147,500.



Curriculum and Instruction Corner

Many months prior to that warm August day when the sun comes up in the east and our students rise and shine for their first day of school, the district was hard at work creating the school calendar with the instructional day in mind. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) requires every school district to provide 176 instructional days for our students, which is roughly 36 weeks of school.

It is within these instructional days where the magic happens. Typically, when one thinks of an instructional day, a couple of critical questions may come to mind such as, "What do we want our students to know (standards)" and "How will we know they have learned (assessments)?" These are definitely at the forefront for teachers. However, teachers don't stop with these questions. They are also thinking about, "What do I do if my students didn't learn it?" and "What do I do if my students already learned it?" The teachers use their expertise in collaborating with colleagues, studying and analyzing student data, writing meaningful assessments, and developing and preparing engaging lessons. The descriptions above and much more are included in instructional days as well as school improvement days.

A school improvement day is embedded in the instructional day because we ask our teachers to make smart and resourceful decisions when it comes to our students' learning. Some wonder what teachers do during those school improvement days. Teachers are provided with the necessary time and tools to equip them with the knowledge and resources to improve student learning. With a student-centered approach, we focus our efforts on the right kind of questions so we can raise achievement for our students. Oftentimes, school improvement is synonymous with professional development; thus, we tailor our school improvement time to maximize the potential for teachers to grow professionally.

In the end, we are all learners and through that learning, we work together to best utilize the instructional day. While we often don't refer to schools as a business, we do make it our business to ensure that the students of Steger School District 194 are provided with rich curriculum.

When you think of school...

What do you see?



What do you hear?



What do you feel?



STEGER DISTRICT 194

Administration Center
3753 Park Avenue, Steger, IL
753-4300

Columbia Central
94 Richton Road, Steger, IL
753-4700

Steger Intermediate Center
3411 Hopkins Street, Steger, IL
753-4200

Steger Primary Center
3341 Miller Ave, South Chicago Heights, IL
753-4100

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!
[HTTP://www.sd194.org](http://www.sd194.org)

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A Word From Superintendent Hahto

On July 1, 2019, Dr. David Frusher, currently Principal of New Tech High School in Zion-Benton, Illinois, will take his place at Steger School District 194 as Superintendent of Schools. Dr. Frusher was confirmed for the position by the Steger Board of Education in December after a five-month in-house superintendent search.

After determining the qualities desired in a new superintendent, in June 2018, the Board of Education commissioned a team to create and conduct a formal superintendent search. That team consisted of Board President Michele Helsel, Board Vice President John Geraci, Transition Consultant Anne Luering and me, ably assisted by my Administrative Assistant Claudia Brennan.

Our first step was to use the Board's requirements to put together a brochure that included a summary of the district, a listing of both the professional and personal qualities the Board was seeking for the position, and information on how to apply. The brochure went out to districts in our region and beyond. Of the more than thirty applications received, nine of them earned high marks on a standardized rubric and these individuals were invited for interviews with a small team consisting of the four search team members as well as selected district administrators. Of those, the top three were invited back for a set of two back-to-back interviews, one of which was with the Board of Education and selected district administrators, and the other made up of a team of district and building administrators and teachers from all three schools.

Using the combined recommendations from both interview teams, the Board of Education named Dr. Frusher as the top candidate. He was duly offered

the position and the Board approved his hire in December.

Since the start of the new year, the Steger District Office has been preparing for Dr. Frusher's arrival. This spring, Dr. Frusher will begin visiting the district to attend Board meetings, tour the schools, meet certified and classified staff members and get to know the Steger and South Chicago Heights communities. He will be introduced to the rich history of the district and provided with the Board of Education's plans and expectations for moving the district forward in the years to come. The community will be invited to get to know Dr. Frusher at a Meet and Greet on a date to be determined.

Be sure to visit our website, www.sd194.org, for additional updates on Dr. Frusher's transition as we prepare to welcome him into the Steger 194 family.

Patricia Hahto, Ed. D.
Superintendent



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