



Superintendent's Newsletter

Extraordinary Opportunities. Innovative Teaching. Exceptional Learning.

December, 2022 | Fremd High School

Hello! I'm Lisa Small, Superintendent of High School District 211. Welcome to the December edition of the Superintendent's Newsletter.

I'm currently in a culinary classroom at Fremd High School, where our students have recently created hundreds of cupcakes in their annual cupcake wars competition. They've also worked on gingerbread houses and perfected the recipes for delicious and complex cookies.

That kind of hands-on learning is what District 211 is all about. We give our students an opportunity to have fun exploring many skills, and in many cases, they may lead to a college major, a job opportunity or a full career right out of high school.

The culinary arts courses are in our Family and Consumer Sciences department which also offers classes in design as well as teaching pathways for early childhood and K-12 teaching.

We offer great college major and career exploration in many other courses. Our schools annually welcome in junior high students for early exposure to Science, Technology, Engineering and Math courses to encourage participation in high school. Our business students work with community leaders to develop new products and marketing plans that culminate in a business pitch competition for prize money funded by donors. Our healthcare students can earn a Certified Nursing Assistant credential through Harper College before they graduate from high school. Some of our top architecture students recently competed for the chance to have their home design built by our own building construction students.

We continue to expand opportunities in other applied technology courses and recently welcomed Jay Timmons, president and CEO of the National Manufacturing Association at Palatine High School. He told reporters District 211's model for learning is one that should be replicated nationally. You can see videos, media articles and photos of all of those experiences in this newsletter.

All of these opportunities tie into our Strategic Plan priority of postsecondary success and our goal of having all students engage in experiences that prepare them for college and career readiness.

I encourage you to discover more about our career pathways and the outstanding courses we offer. Our Career Pathways page and our Curriculum Guide are linked in this newsletter.

In our schools, students and staff are now preparing for final exams followed by winter break. It is a busy and potentially stressful time for our students. We offer many resources through our Student Services departments. In the video portion of this newsletter, students from our District



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Wellness Team discuss tips for de-stressing, relaxing and staying positive while at school using school resources.

Finally, the arrival of winter means the return of potentially extreme weather. Decisions to close school are based on various factors.

District 211 has always planned ahead for bad weather and has a longer school calendar than required by the state. Therefore, should the temperature get extremely low or we have so much snow that our buses cannot travel safely, D211 will have a traditional, old-fashioned snow day with no school - that means no school in-person and no school online.

We have guidelines in place for closing school and canceling activities based on extreme cold weather. That link is contained in this newsletter, and available on our District's home page.

As we all know in Chicago, winter weather can easily change especially when predicting the amount of snowfall. Therefore, decisions on closings are typically made in the early hours of the morning and communicated prior to 6 am at the latest. Communications will occur via our school and District websites, emails and texts sent both in English and the language you've identified as your preferred language within Infinite Campus, robocalls in English, and on our District social media channels.

We also will text students. This is a reminder that if you have not entered your student's cell phone number in Infinite Campus, you are able to log into your portal and do so. This will allow your student to receive official texts about key District information on their phone.

We recognize there are some students who may need resources to cope with the extreme weather. If your child is in need of a winter coat, hat or gloves, please reach out to their counselor for assistance. Our schools are connected to community resources and also have winter wear and other items available at the school. We offer our sincere thanks to all who contribute to this effort.

Thank you for joining me for this newsletter to close out the semester. I wish our students and staff a wonderful winter break. We look forward to seeing you back in 2023!