

## Local Schools



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# 4th Grade Scholastic Meet Language Arts Winners

MARCH 09TH 2020 BY DEE LOFLIN

## 4th Grade Scholastic Meet Language Arts Winners

Dexter, MO - On Thursday, February 20, 2020 the Stoddard County Scholastic Meet was held at the Bearcat Event Center for their awards presentations.

The scholastic meet features academic competition between the seven county schools and Woodland Schools.

Those schools are Advance, Bell City, Bernie, Bloomfield, Dexter, Puxico, Richland and Woodland.

Students in fourth through eighth grades test in areas of analogies/spelling, math, science, language arts, social studies, and at the upper levels in general achievement and declamation.

The event offers a unique and much-anticipated opportunity each March for the best of the best academically to test their level of knowledge and problem solving in a one-day testing event.

Each age group and area of award will featured in a separate article on the ShowMe Times!

In Language Arts at the fourth grade level from left: Ryder Ford of Advance third place, Aly Burdyslaw of Puxico second place and Kiley Pratt of Bernie first place.

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## PB Alumnus Returns for Black History Month Assembly

MARCH 06TH 2020 BY DEE LOFLIN

[PB Alumnus Returns for Black History Month Assembly](#)

Poplar Bluff, MO - A Poplar Bluff alumnus who leads intercity youth development training throughout the country shared his “tips for a successful life” on Thursday, Feb. 27, during an assembly observing Black History Month at Junior High.

“Get connected,” “stay away from messy people” and remember that “you have value,” stated Cortez Higgs, founder of The Catalyst Effect, to the seventh and eighth grade audience in the gymnasium.

The first piece of encouragement from Higgs pertained to students participating in activities outside of the school day, whether it is athletics, band or another extracurricular club

“A lot of you, if you don’t get connected or engaged, you’re going to live inside a box,” the PBHS Class of 1996 graduate said. “...You only have so much room to go inside the box before you hit the wall.

His next piece of advice was a cautionary tale about associating with the wrong crowd, and how succumbing to peer pressure can ruin one’s chances for a hopeful future.

Higgs used \$5 from his wallet to demonstrate his final lesson of the day. He captured the reaction of a group of volunteers after dropping the bill on the ground and stomping on it.

When asked if Zoe Freeman would accept the money even though he proceeded to “call it names,” the student replied affirmatively, explaining that it still “has value.” Higgs rewarded the student with \$10 for providing such an astute answer.

“Just like this money, no matter what anyone says or does to you, what they say or do to you does not determine your value,” Higgs concluded. “In spite of the mistakes you make, in spite of the issues or the families you’re with, in spite of what clothes you have, where you live – you have value.”

At the beginning of his lecture, Higgs noted that he grew up in poverty and was the child of a teenaged mother. Despite having experienced some trauma in life, he said, he went on to become an ordained minister, having studied biblical theology at Bethel College, and served as a petty officer in the U.S. Navy, among other feats.

Higgs currently resides in Newport News, Va., with a wife and four children. He has traveled to 45 schools across the country through the Department of Justice, discussing race relations and gang violence prevention.

The schoolwide assembly was spearheaded last year by paraprofessional LaRonda Mack and co-teacher Courtney Rutledge of the Life Skills class. Rutledge graduated with Higgs, and helped arrange for the visit this year. For the remainder of the program, a planning committee was formed that also had student representation.

Other features of the annual event included a performance of “Lift Ev’ry Voice and Sing,” known as the Black National Anthem, led by student Leara Hopson; a special tribute to the late Kobe Bryant; a living museum featuring the depiction of 30 black inventors by students; and a mural contest. The Life Skills students prepared a lunch for the invited guests.

Pictured: Poplar Bluff native Cortez Higgs of The Catalyst Effect receives an ovation from the audience following his Black History Month speech.

Article and photo by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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## Oak Grove Proves that Spelling is Not a Lost Art

MARCH 06TH 2020 BY DEE LOFLIN

[Oak Grove Proves that Spelling is Not a Lost Art](#)

Poplar Bluff, MO - Oak Grove Elementary won the 11th annual Butler County Community Resource Council Spelling Bee Championship with two classmates vying for the top spot on Wednesday, Feb. 26, at Fox Radio Network.

Journey Warren was named the 2020 champion, spelling the 87th word v-o-r-t-i-c-e-s correctly over finalist, Clint Wallace, also of Oak Grove. Representing the other elementary schools were third graders Willem Thurston of Eugene Field, Brody Oatman

of O'Neal and Miley Baker of Lake Road.

Event moderator Kathern Harris of the CRC Children and Youth Succeeding in School Committee stressed that all the contestants were winners for making it to the championship upon competing in a three-week tournament at their respective schools. Oak Grove hosted an additional round in order to narrow its three-way tie down to two.

Last year Oak Grove also sent two competitors to the spelling bee, which ended in a tie between Oak Grove and Lake Road after the finalists spelled all 190 words on the list correctly over the radio. This year the difficulty of the words was increased to a fifth grade level, according to Harris, who noted that some of the tie-breaking words were used in the Scripps National Spelling Bee.

The spell-off was emceed by Dave Wyman of the Missouri Department of Transportation, who serves the CRC as a member of the Parents Working Committee. The spelling bee aired live on KYEX 88.3/98.3 FM, the radio's nonprofit station. Fox Radio has been broadcasting the spelling bee since the event's debut in 2010 to help raise the stakes and provide the students with a memorable experience, confirmed owner Steven Fuchs.

Pictured (From left) Willem Thurston, Miley Baker, Journey Warren, Clint Wallace and Brody Oatman pose at Fox Radio Network last week before going on air.

Photo and article by Tim Krakowiak, Communications/Marketing Director, Poplar Bluff R-I School District

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## 8th Grade 2020 Scholastic Meet Science Winners

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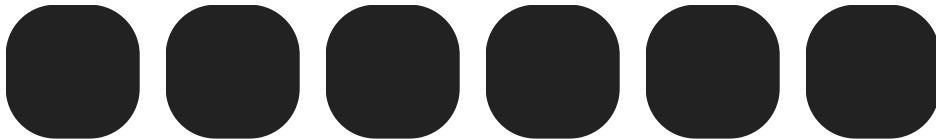
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At the eighth grade level in Science from left: in a tie for third place Rachel Beecher of Bernie and Harli Hinkle of Woodland, Alex Porter of Richland second place and Marie Fees of Dexter first place.

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## 7th Grade 2020 Scholastic Meet Science Winners

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testing event.

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In seventh grade Science from left: Jack Shirrell of Advance third place, Chris Sutton of Bernie second place and in a tie for first place Logan Williamson of Bloomfield and Korbin Williams of Dexter.

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