



Santa Fe Trail USD 434 Newsletter | August 2017



Teaching excellence is recognized in these Santa Fe Trail Educators of the Year recipients: (from left to right) Shelly Robinson, Cindy Moulin and Amy Huizenga.

Meet your Santa Fe Trail 2017 Educators of the Year

We are pleased to announce the Santa Fe Trail District Educators of the Year award winners for 2017. These three teachers embody the best in education with their quality instruction for all students, interest in trying new delivery methods for teaching and continuing efforts to find ways to improve instruction.

Amy Huizenga, Cindy Moulin and Shelly Robinson were recognized at the end-of-year district staff breakfast in May. Each will attend a national conference of their choice this school year. Nominations for the award are made annually from building administrators.

Amy Huizenga teaches first grade at Overbrook Attendance Center (OAC). Huizenga began her career 19 years ago teaching first grade in the Topeka Public Schools. She came to Santa Fe Trail in 2006 and has taught third and first grades at OAC. An area of focus for her instruction has been the implementation of STEM

(Science, Technology, Engineering and Math curriculum). “Besides her academic instruction, Amy is passionate about building relationships with her students and families and encouraging students to develop the confidence to realize they are capable and important,” said David Fernkopf, OAC principal. Huizenga received her bachelor’s degree in elementary education from Kansas State University and earned a master’s degree in building leadership from Pittsburgh State University. She and her husband live in Overbrook, and their two daughters attend SFT schools.

Cindy Moulin is a sixth-grade teacher at Carbondale Attendance Center (CAC), where she has taught fourth and sixth grade over the last 20 years. With the many changes and shifts in education, Moulin prides herself on always trying to reinvent herself and her teaching methods. “I want kids to enjoy spending time in my classroom,” she said. Moulin has practiced

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A Message from the Superintendent



Welcome to the 2017-18 school year and to *Charger Connection* – Santa Fe Trail’s new bimonthly newsletter.

We know it’s been a while since the district last sent out a patron newsletter, so there’s no time like the present to share with all our patrons the many exciting things taking place in the district.

The need for *Charger Connection* was determined through input from our community, parents, students and staff, during our strategic plan development process. The three-year strategic plan will help the district meet the Rigor and Relationships standards for the 5-Rs of the Kansas State Department of Education’s new accreditation model. (More information about the new accreditation model will be in the October issue.)

We realized we were missing a huge segment of our patron population by not having a way to disseminate school information to everyone in the three communities – Carbondale, Overbrook and Scranton – we serve. *Charger Connection* is one of the first steps in improving those communications.

We hope you will find the newsletter content informative, while keeping you up to date on all the district happenings at our schools – in academics, athletics and activity programming.

Furthermore, one of our main focuses this year will be completing several of the action steps identified in the strategic plan, including improved district communications. Through this newsletter, we will keep you apprised of our progress in each target area.

We are looking forward to a great year ahead and continuing to provide the highest quality education and extracurricular experiences to help our students succeed today, tomorrow and in the future.

Cordially,

Dr. Steve Pegram, Superintendent of Schools

Charger Calendar of Events

- ⚡ Aug. 22 – First day of school
- ⚡ Aug. 25 – Volleyball/Football Scrimmage
VB @ 5 p.m., FB @ 7 p.m. & Cross Country Run
- ⚡ Aug. 30 – High School Student Picture Day
- ⚡ Sept. 1 – CAC Student Picture Day
- ⚡ Sept. 5 – SAC Student Picture Day
- ⚡ Sept. 8 – OAC Student Picture Day
- ⚡ Sept. 12 – Preschool Parent Night
- ⚡ Sept. 22 – Santa Fe Trail Homecoming
- ⚡ Oct. 18 – HS Super Charged Talent Show
- ⚡ Oct. 21 – Regional Cross Country & Sub-State Volleyball

Stay in touch through district communications

At the heart of every great school district, is great communication. What is not easy is always knowing which communication channels to focus on to reach our parents, staff, students and community. At Santa Fe Trail USD 434 (District) we use a combination of outlets to help ensure whatever it is we need to communicate gets heard.

The primary communication tool of the District is email. If there is a change in the school day or a district notification needs to be sent, we use email. If you are a parent of a student, please ensure we have the correct email for you in our system. Community members are welcome to subscribe to email News and Alerts on the District’s website or call any school building to be added to the email list.

Engage with us in social media for news information available at your fingertips! All school district buildings use the District Facebook page to keep parents and patrons up to date on current happenings in the district, including school activities. The Overbrook Attendance Center (OAC) also operates a page exclusively for OAC.

The [@sfthscharger](#) Twitter account is used by both the Santa Fe Trail High School and the District to provide school and district information, school activities and to share student accomplishments. The Carbondale Attendance Center and Santa Fe Trail Junior High have a separate Twitter handle, [@cacsftjh](#), which is used to share what has been posted on the District Facebook page.

The use of social media is typically one-way communication from building principals and the superintendent of schools. Once a post is made, administration continues with its responsibilities



and does not always get back to what was posted in a timely manner. Sometimes this causes issues when parents or patrons have questions with the information that was disseminated. To receive a more immediate response to a question or concern, contact the building principal. Nearly

all posts to Facebook, Twitter and email notifications come from school building administration, so they are the individuals to contact.

Don’t forget about the District’s website www.usd434.org, which contains information, announcements and upcoming events for all District school building and as you read in the

Superintendent’s Message (page 2), all school district patrons will receive by mail the new District newsletter, *Charger Connection*.

“The quality of our communication determines the quality of our relationships with our families, students, staff and patrons,” said Superintendent of Schools Dr. Steve Pegram. “We will strive daily to ensure we meet the communications needs of District patrons.”

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In the News

Santa Fe Trail USD 434
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Our mission is to support individual student needs in preparation for successful lifework.

Educators of the Year continued from cover.

blended instruction with her students, utilizing a variety of teaching tools, implemented technology into her classes and worked hard to meet each student at his or her level of learning. "Every year, Cindy looks for a better way to inspire her students to stretch their minds and knowledge base," said Michael Flax, CAC/SFTJH principal. "She is a risk-taker and evaluates her work critically to ensure she is doing what is necessary towards that end." Moulin received her bachelor's and master's degrees in education from Emporia State University. She and her husband live outside of Osage City. Moulin is a proud mother of four grown children and grandmother to six grandchildren.

Shelly Robinson teaches high school biology classes, as well as a biology class

for Allen County Community College and two concurrent classes on power plant technology through the Flint Hills Technical College. She organized and sponsored the high school Green Team, which educates communities about healthy utilization of environmental resources, focusing on recycling and reusing resources. Robinson has a talent for identifying the strengths of her students, working with them to develop those abilities and encouraging them to reach new personal heights. "Shelly was born to become a teacher," said Patrick Graham, Santa Fe Trail High School principal. "It's her calling." Robinson received a bachelor's in biology from Southwestern College in Winfield, Kan., and a master's in curriculum and instruction from the University of Saint Mary.

"All three of these teachers clearly make an impact on their students," said Dr. Steve Pegram, superintendent of schools. "Congratulations to them all."

