



## MISTAKEN IDENTITIES RESOLVED



By Maya Hernandez-Romito and Violet Eshelbrenner

Bexley Middle School has just wrapped up the production *Cases of Mistaken Identity*. The play ran from October 20 to 22 in the Cassingham Theater. There were many Bexley Middle School students who were involved in the play, and they took on a variety of responsibilities in the play.

Maya Letostak, a sixth grader said, “In *Cases of Mistaken Identity*, the most recent Middle School play, I played Lily Leighton, a mischievous seven year old. It was really fun to just run around the stage.” Maya continued, “I was glad to provide some humor in the play, and I thought it was really cool how the crew got to build an actual train. I spent a lot of time practicing how to do a good little-kid voice without mumbling. “

“All the effort helped bring the whole entire show to life,” said Abby Sullivan-Kight. They are a sixth

grader who played William Keene in the play *Cases of Mistaken Identities*. They say that it’s not just the cast that does amazing things, it’s the crew as well. “I think the crew did an amazing job with the set,” they said. Abby believes that everybody did an amazing job, and that without the whole group the show wouldn’t go on.

So many people came to all of the shows. Many of them have favorite parts. Hazel Williams, a 6th grader, said “I really liked when the entire cast was running around and being chased by the crazed murderer, Carlotta.” Another 6th grader, Ellery King, said “My favorite part of the play was when Daniel Kent was talking to the main character about Maggie.” Many have different opinions on the best part, but they all agree that the entire show was amazing!

# BIG TABLE EVENT EQUALS BIG SUCCESS

By Ruthie Gravelle

The BMS student council recently hosted an event called The Big Table where students, teachers, and administrators came together to discuss issues and ideas in our school and the community. The student council worked hard to create an atmosphere where everyone, regardless of age, could discuss important concerns, and it turned out really well.

In terms of success, School Board President and Big Table participant Victoria Powers said, “The Big Table Event was extremely successful.” She added, “From having the great idea to hold the event, to managing it so well, to having well-conceived questions, the BMS student council did an amazing job.” A student participant, Nico Ronis, remarked, “I think it was a great way for students to connect with leaders in the community.” Overall, it seems that those who participated agree that it was a beneficial experience.

The student council put in a lot of effort to make the event successful. When asked what went into the planning of The Big Table, Student Council Co-leader Ms. Nakasako explained, “Students contacted community members, followed up with them, and made signs and the question cards.” Generally, The Big Table was very student directed, which ended up making it better.

According to several stakeholders, the impact of The Big Table will be great. Dr. Jason Fine, the superintendent, said, “It will have a positive impact on the community.” He added, “It is important that community and school leaders listen to our students and provide them with an opportunity to be heard.”

The discussion at The Big Table provided lots of information and ideas for the administrators at Bexley to use in future planning. Regardless of the outcome, the participants agree that The Big Table was almost too small for all its success.





# MR. DENNEN RIDES INTO BEXLEY

By Zoe Geldis, Maya Hernandez-Romito, and Vivien Luckshaw

Every new school year comes with new faces here at Bexley Middle School. One new staff addition is Mr. Dennen. Mr. Dennen is a seventh and eighth grade Social Studies teacher. Although he has been teaching for 9 years, this is his first year teaching at Bexley Middle School.



Mr. Dennen recalls, “getting the opportunity to teach at Bexley Middle School has been a dream of mine over the last several years.” So, when he received the phone call from Mr. Caudill and Ms. Armstrong, he jumped up and down with excitement. However, there are always some challenges associated with coming to a new school. Because Bexley Middle School is larger than the schools he previously taught at, it takes some time to remember who everyone is and what their job is. Also, he says that he is still learning the traditions of this school. Overall, he is excited for what is in store for the new school year. “Everyone has made this feel like home for me since starting last month,” Mr. Dennen adds, “I envision being here until I retire!”

Some of his favorite units include the Ancient Rome unit and the Civil War unit. “By that time, the students are almost ready for high school, have the skills down, and are prepared for a big and open-ended project.” Mr. Dennen adds, “I also find it to be one of the fascinating periods in US History to cover because there was such a build-up to it. Basically, the whole school year leads up to that.” As for the Ancient Rome

unit, Mr. Dennen says, “Gladiators, a government going from a democracy to a dictatorship to a democracy again, conquering a lot of the world, and so many other aspects makes it a really fun unit!”

Things that Mr. Dennen likes to do outside of school include spending time with his wife and two dogs, watching Michigan football and basketball games, and training for competitive bike racing. Mr. Dennen

states that, “Over the last few years, I have won four state championships, and I am hoping to race the time trial national championship in the upcoming years.”

A fun fact about Mr. Dennen is that he spends 15-25 hours a week on school assignments and classwork. This is also his second year in his Doctor of Education program at The University of Findlay. He is currently putting together the first few chapters of dissertation, and is planning the study he will be conducting next fall. Mr. Dennen says that he is really looking forward to graduating in May 2024.

“People will have to start using the fancy title of ‘Doctor Dennen’ when talking to me,” Mr. Dennen added with maniacal laughter.

# SEEING MOSTLY POSITIVES FOR SEL

By Mary Aframian and Lucy Dunstan

All throughout BMS, study halls have added something called Social Emotional Learning (SEL), a time period where students complete, watch, or discuss different activities in the place of the first eighteen minutes of Study Hall. Many students and teachers at Bexley Middle School have differing opinions.

Seventh grade science teacher Ms. Sexton remarked: “I really enjoy the eighteen minutes before study hall because I love the time to talk with my students without pressure to get to a learning target of an academic class.” She also says that she would like to make SEL a different class apart from study hall so students get more of the day to use that time. Ms. Sexton strongly agrees that this is a positive change from last year, and thinks that it is an amazing and educational opportunity.

In addition, Ms. Jax, a seventh grade social studies teacher added that, “I like the idea of checking in with a group of students every day. It is nice to have some fun and informal time with them, though I would like it to occur at the end of seventh period from 3:15-3:30 because it would provide an incentive for my students to get work done, and those that want to start their work immediately after sixth period can do so without worrying that they won’t be able to get it done before going home.” With

these changes, Mrs. Jax also agreed that SEL was a positive change made this school year.

Both teachers have similar ideas about the social emotional learning time and both agree that the time should change.

Students who do not have Study Hall are not able to participate in SEL activities leaving some students feeling excluded.

When asked about if she misses having SEL time, sixth-grader Maya adds, “Yeah, and I miss a lot of things; I get in trouble because I didn’t know we had to do that (an activity).” For example, when students were required to fill out a ‘learning skills and work habits’ form during SEL time, those individuals who did not have Study Hall were unaware that it needed to be completed.

Some students have mixed emotions about the SEL period. Eighth grade student Claire Watts is not an enthusiast and said, “SEL can be fun sometimes if you have a good teacher or a good class, but sometimes you just want time to do your homework.” Meanwhile, eighth grader Penny Sidel said, “In Mr. Smith’s SEL period we just have an open gym or have some extra time to do our homework, so it is actually fun.” With a mostly positive response, what changes does the future hold for SEL?

