

Mears Named Teacher of the Year

Haley Mears of East Millsboro Elementary School has been selected as the Indian River School District's Teacher of the Year for 2021-2022.

The announcement was made at the district's Teacher of the Year ceremony on April 29. Mrs. Mears was chosen as the district's overall winner from a pool of 15 candidates, one from each school.

Mrs. Mears has been a teacher at East Millsboro Elementary School for the past seven years. She was a fifth-grade teacher at the school from 2014-2017 and has been an Intensive Learning Center teacher at EME since 2017. She began her career as a paraprofessional at East Millsboro from 2005-2009. She also served as a social studies teacher at Georgetown Middle School in 2009-2010 and as an English Language Arts teacher at Millsboro Middle School from 2010-2014. She is a member of East Millsboro's Instructional Leadership Team and a coach for the school's robotics team. She has also served as a district Odyssey of the Mind coach for the past seven years.

Mrs. Mears hold a bachelor's degree in middle level English and social studies education from Wilmington University and a master's degree in reading and literacy from Walden University. She is a graduate of Indian River High School.

"When you walk into Mrs. Mears' multi-grade ILC classroom, you will immediately notice the high expectations for learning as you watch her students actively participating in a hands-on, supportive learning environment," East Millsboro Principal Karen Clausen said. "Mrs. Mears encourages inquiry, collaborative groups, student discussions and personal goal-setting in both ELA and math. The student comfort level with these activities is clear evidence that these are routine practices in her classroom.

"Dedication to students, a passion for teaching the 'whole child' and a commitment to excellence are all characteristics that Mrs. Mears embodies. However, I think the most telling trait is that she truly cares for her students and strives to meet the needs of the individual while setting high expectations for every child."

As the district's Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Mears is now eligible for the state Teacher of the Year Award, which will be announced in October.



Haley Mears

Grants to Support Teacher Residents

The yearlong teacher residency program in the Indian River School District will continue to thrive next year thanks to more than \$435,000 in grant funding from the State of Delaware.

The district was recently awarded \$146,873 to continue its partnership with the RELAY Graduate Program and \$288,170 to partner with Wilmington University. In 2021-2022, the district will receive five yearlong teacher residents from RELAY and seven from Wilmington University.

This year, IRSD has six residents each from RELAY and the University of Delaware and five from Wilmington University.

Yearlong residents spend the entire year teaching in IRSD schools while completing their college coursework. Graduate and undergraduate students from both partner institutions participate in the program. Grant funding is utilized to pay students' salaries during their residency.

The yearlong residency program provides a more comprehensive training experience than a traditional 80-day student-teacher placement. Residents become members of the school faculty, participate in professional development and become familiar with district curriculum, policies and processes such as Individualized Education Programs and Targeted Intervention for Student Success.

The program is also part of the district's "Grow Your Own" initiative. Since the program's inception, 98 percent of yearlong interns have eventually been hired to full-time teaching positions in the district after graduation.

Indian River School District

"A Model of Excellence"

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From the Superintendent



Dear Parents,

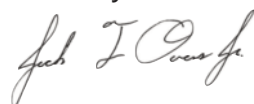
The finish line is in sight on what has been a long and challenging school year. While the COVID-19 pandemic has repeatedly forced us to rework our normal modes of operation, our staff has risen to the challenge. I am immensely proud that since September, we have been able to offer hybrid and remote learning opportunities for our students. We have worked hard to increase in-person opportunities over the course of the school year. I want to commend the teachers and staff members who made this possible and thank our IRSD families for their patience and understanding during these difficult times.

On April 29, we had the pleasure of hosting the district's annual Teacher of the Year celebration. This event was cancelled last year due to the pandemic, so it was wonderful to gather in person to recognize the talented Teacher of the Year winners from each of our 15 schools. It was our pleasure to honor Mrs. Haley Mears of East Millsboro Elementary School as the district's overall Teacher of the Year for 2021-2022. Mrs. Mears is a gifted and spirited teacher who will be a terrific representative for our district. We wish Haley luck in the upcoming state Teacher of the Year competition.

At this time, we do not know what form next school year will take in regards to in-person instruction. Much will depend on the health and safety protocols mandated by the State of Delaware. However, it is our desire to have all students return to the classroom full time in 2021-2022. We will do everything in our power to make that happen. Plans for next year will be communicated to parents as we move through the spring and summer.

Once again, thank you for your understanding and support!

Sincerely,



Dr. Jay F. Owens
Superintendent

Did You Know?



Raychel Ehlers of Indian River High School has been named the Gatorade Delaware Volleyball Player of the Year. She is the fourth IRHS student-athlete to receive the Gatorade award, joining Brooke Beam (soccer), Caitlyn Forte (soccer) and Jamie Jarmon (football). A banner will be placed in the IRHS gym to commemorate her accomplishment.

SCHS Students Shine at Delaware TSA Competition

Sussex Central High School had a strong showing at the 2021 Delaware Technology Student Association (DE TSA) annual competition.

Middle and high schools from across Delaware participated in advanced contests such as architectural design, biotechnology, coding, digital video production, engineering design, music production technology, STEM animation and more.



All events required students to apply science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) to solve complex technical problems, conduct research and invent solutions. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all contests began in February and concluded in April.

Sussex Central's results are as follows:

Digital Video Production (team)
1st Place – Sussex Central High School

Extemporaneous Speech
2nd Place – Penn Smith

On-Demand Video (team)
2nd Place – Sussex Central High School

Pin Design (Delaware only)
3rd Place – Tina Witke

Promotional Design
1st Place – Rebekah Smith
2nd Place – Tina Witke

Music Production (team)
2nd Place – Sussex Central High School

T-Shirt Design (Delaware only)
2nd Place – Tina Witke

All medalists earned the opportunity to represent Delaware at the National Virtual TSA Conference scheduled for June 1-25.

Carcamo Named Carson Scholar

Maria Guterrez Carcamo was chosen to be a 2021 Carson Scholar for Southern Delaware School of the Arts.

The Carson Scholars Fund awards \$1,000 college scholarships to students in Grades 4-11 who excel academically and are dedicated to serving their communities. As a dedicated student, Maria goes above and beyond each day to challenge her peers to be the best students they can be while making a positive impact on her school and local community. She is the second SDSA student to be chosen for this award.

Wells Reaches 400 Victories

Sussex Central High School softball coach John Wells recorded his 400th career victory on May 1 when the Golden Knights defeated Newark Charter 10-0 on Senior Day.



In his 27 years as SCHS coach, John's teams have won three state championships (1995, 2005, 2008) and advanced to the state final on three other occasions. The 1995 championship represented the first state title in a girls' sport in the history of the Indian River School District.

Congratulations to Coach Wells on this wonderful achievement!

Chan Earns First Place Awards at BPA National Conference

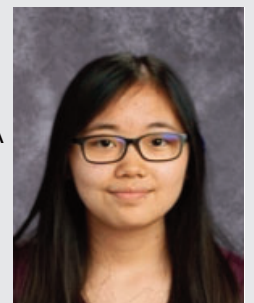
Indian River High School 10th-grader **Vicky Chan** earned two first-place awards at the Business Professionals of America National Leadership Conference that was held virtually from April 26-May 8.

Vicky's competition results are as follows:

1st Place Nationally – Administrative Support Concepts
1st Place Nationally – Management, Marketing & Human Resources Concepts
4th Place Nationally – Fundamental Word Processing

Vicky is also the IRHS BPA chapter's incoming secretary for 2021-2022.

IRHS student **Josh Bird** also earned recognition for his service in the BPA National Torch Program. This program recognizes achievements in the seven program categories of Leadership, Cooperation, Knowledge, Friendship, Patriotism, Service, and Love, Hope & Faith.



Vicky Chan

Other IRHS team members who participated in the National Leadership Conference were Lanaya Haynes, Kris Meister, Misty Hickman and Isaac Chandler.

Congratulations to all of these talented students!



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Teachers of the Year Recognized

Teacher of the Year winners from every district school were honored at a special ceremony on April 29. They were:

Teacher

Amy Absher
Erin Bullock
Karen Coty
Bethany Flood
Eileen Gartman
David Grise
Christine Hogsten
Sarah Johnston
Laura Marsh
Shelley McBride
Matthew McCowan
***Haley Mears**
Ashley Rowe
Matthew Selba
Alina Wrench

* - Overall IRSD winner

School

Lord Baltimore Elementary School
Southern Delaware School of the Arts
Georgetown Middle School
North Georgetown Elementary School
Howard T. Ennis School
John M. Clayton Elementary School
Phillip C. Showell Elementary School
Georgetown Elementary School
Long Neck Elementary School
Millsboro Middle School
Selbyville Middle School
East Millsboro Elementary School
IRSD Early Learning Center
Indian River High School
Sussex Central High School

Congratulations to all of these gifted educators!



From left, State Rep. Ron Gray, IRSD Assistant Superintendent Karen Blannard, IRSD Teacher of the Year Haley Mears, Board of Education Vice President Leolga Wright and IRSD Superintendent Jay Owens at the district Teacher of the Year celebration on April 29.

More photos from the Teacher of the Year celebration and a tribute video recognizing each school's winner can be viewed on the IRSD Facebook page

New Curbside Meal Service Schedule

The Indian River School District has implemented a series of changes to its weekly curbside meal pickup service.

Curbside meal pickup will now take place at four locations **every Wednesday from 3:30-5:00 p.m.** Meals are free of charge and available to all children 18 years and under at the following locations only:

- Indian River High School (Bus parking lot)
- Long Neck Elementary School (Bus parking lot)
- Millsboro Middle School (Bus parking lot)
- North Georgetown Elementary School (Bus parking lot)

Morning curbside meal distribution has been discontinued. In addition, sites will now be providing four-day meal bags instead of five-day bags.

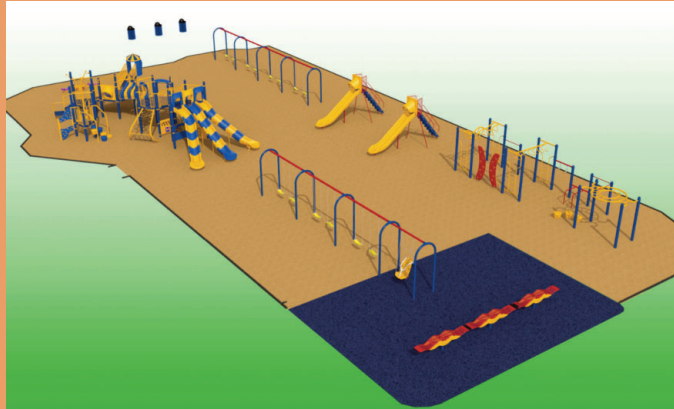
Parents or guardians may drive up to the meal distribution location where a nutrition services staff member will hand them a "Meals to Go" package in a contactless fashion. Parents and guardians are advised to clear space in their vehicle's trunk prior to arrival.

Prom Night Fireworks



Indian River High School teacher George Ellis captured this spectacular photo at the school's prom on May 1. After being cancelled in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the IRHS prom was held in an outdoor tent in the athletic stadium and the evening culminated with a fireworks display. Photos and videos from the event can be found on the school's Facebook and Instagram pages.

Long Neck to Break Ground for Playground This Summer



After more than a year of tireless fundraising and partnering with various community organizations and businesses, Long Neck Elementary School is pleased to announce that it will break ground for its new playground in the summer of 2021. The school raised approximately \$90,000 for the project through PTO fundraising efforts and community donations. See artist rendering above.

Lending a Helping Hand



With spring finally upon us, students in the district's Transition And Parallel Program (TAPP) recently chipped in to help beautify the grounds of the G.W. Carver Center in Frankford. On April 30, TAPP students assisted Chief Custodian Dan Shively in spreading mulch in the flower beds surrounding the school. The TAPP program teaches 18-21 year old students with special needs functional life and job skills to help them become more independent individuals.