



Friends of Johnston ELP  
Supporting the needs of high ability students  
in the Johnston Community School District

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# Friends of Johnston ELP

## Fall 2020 Newsletter

...from the desk of  
**Mandy Dummermuth**  
FJELP President



*As we all navigate this unusual year, the Friends of Johnston Extended Learning Program Board hopes to continue to support and serve the Johnston Community School District ELP students, staff, and families. Whether your student is currently engaged in person or virtually, we invite you to get plugged in to the many resources available. You may attend our virtual programs, stay connected via our newsletter and Facebook page, and show support for our district ELP services by joining Friends of Johnston ELP annually via RevTrak for just \$20. We thank you for your ongoing support and we wish you and your student(s) the very best!*

### 2020-2021 ELP Staff

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### General questions for the FJELP board?

Please contact us at [friendsofeljohnston@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofeljohnston@gmail.com)

## ELP Teacher Spotlight

### Molly McConnell

JMS ELP Teacher

Mock Trial Sponsor

Secondary ELP Coordinator  
Middle School and High School

Johnston High School Alumna



Mrs. McConnell and her family

This year marks Mrs. McConnell's 4th year at JCSD and 9th year teaching ELP. She has a bachelor's degree in vocal music, and prior to teaching, worked with area middle school and high school show choirs as a choreographer and clinician. She loves being back "home" (she's a JHS graduate!) teaching and is very appreciative of the support her team receives from parents and FJELP.

#### **Why do you enjoy working with ELP students?**

*I really enjoy watching my students take control of their own learning. No class is the same and I enjoy the variety that the ELP class affords to my students. It is amazing to watch students mature and realize that they have control over what they want to learn, and how they learn.*

#### **What is one of your favorite areas of learning for students?**

*One activity that I like to teach to my students is about failure. So many ELP students think that they must be successful at everything they do, the first time they do it. I like to remind them that sometimes failure is the best learning experience that a person can have. Some of the greatest things we have in life were born out of a mistake or a failure. Without mistakes we would never have chocolate chip cookies or potato chips, which goes to show you that failure is delicious!*

#### **What advice do you give to parents of high achieving students?**

*Don't let your child get too caught up in being the best and doing "all the things." Students should strive for excellence, not perfection. Encourage your child to have some free time in their schedule to allow their brains to rest and recharge.*

#### **What is a highlight of your teaching career?**

*My first year teaching at Johnston was also my first year coaching mock trial. I had participated in mock trial when I was in high school, so I knew how it all worked, but I had never coached a competitive team before. Color me surprised, when all of Johnston's middle school teams made the state competition that year, with two moving on to the final four. It was definitely a proud moment for me, although, I still claim that it had nothing to do with me and everything to do with the dedication of the students and coaches participating.*

#### **If you had a completely free day, how would you spend it?**

*I would definitely sleep in and then would be happy just relaxing and spending the day with my family.*

**A few favorite books:** Harry Potter Series, To Kill A Mockingbird, The Hunger Games

**A few favorite TV shows:** The West Wing, Top Chef, Project Runway

## October 19th Parent Program

Thank you to the 33 parents and teachers who joined us via Zoom for our first program of the year:

***Self-Care: Creating Balance in Unprecedented Times and Fluid Situations***

### **Missed it??**

The recording is available [HERE](#)

**Passcode:** JHA8\*&%z

**Additional thanks to Dr. Krista Brittain, PsyD for sharing her expertise, humor and time!**



## January 2021 Virtual Program



## **NAVIGATING HIGH SCHOOL & PREPARING FOR THE NEXT CHAPTER**

*FEATURING FORMER  
JOHNSTON GRADUATES*

**Tuesday, January 19<sup>th</sup>, 7:00-8:15pm**

[Zoom Link](#)

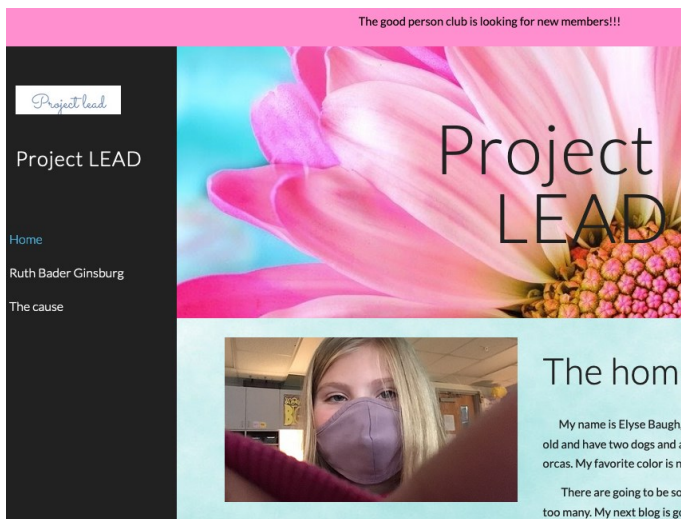
Meeting ID: 844 9659 9569 Passcode: 081234

# Elementary ELP News

## Independent Learners are making their mark on the future!

It is said that Isaac Newton did his best work when working from home during the Great Plague of London. You can read more about this [here](#). In Johnston, we have several elementary students working on independent projects while working 100% online.

## Project Highlights



**Elyse Baugh**, a 4th grader at Lawson, is combining her love of writing and strong women. She is developing a blog that features the life and accomplishments of female leaders like Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Malala Yousafzai.

**Teagen Goudelock**, a Lawson 5th grader, is using her time writing and illustrating a trilogy of stories called Guardians. Her pen magically is weaving together fantasy tales that keep the reader captivated.

**Coraline Miller**, a 5th grader from Timber Ridge, is creating an online personality quiz using research and Scratch computer programming. When participants take her quiz, they will be matched to famous personalities like Amelia Earhart, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, and Martin Luther King. Coraline is combining her strengths in both humanities and STEM in this one project. It has been a thrill watching the final product unfold.

**Ronan Donoho**, **Henry Gehl**, and **Drew Goedken** decided they wanted to learn more about coding this fall. These Lawson 5th graders have dabbled in Scratch as well as coding Spheros. Drew would like to move beyond block coding to work on a script. While they do not have a set project planned at this time, they have hopes to demonstrate what they learn to others later this year.

## Elementary Project Highlights (cont.)

**Harper Allison, a Lawson 4th grader,** decided her love of Hamilton was a jumping off point. She has been researching the life and accomplishments of Aaron Burr. So much of what we know about Burr is wrapped up in his involvement in Hamilton's death. Harper would like to show who Burr was beyond that infamous act.

On the Independent Learning Plan, many **Wallace students** wanted to learn more about computer programming. **Mr. Kennelly, our district tech guru,** came in to work with students on getting started with Scratch. They can explore any programming topics of their choice. Many are hoping to tackle animation and video game design.

A few **5th grade students** across the district have opted to study Real World Algebra independently from home.

**Andrew Horst, a 2nd grader at Timber Ridge,** had taken an interest in world geography during the school closure and asked if he could research and study the continent of Africa for the first few months of school. Andrew created a presentation to share with his class on what he learned.



**Ada Burns, Arianna Potter, and Brook Walpole, 5th graders at Lawson,** have a mystery screenplay in the works. They have found that there is a lot of planning that goes into a mystery and are nearly finished working out the kinks so they can begin drafting. They hope to involve other classmates, and perhaps a teacher or two, in the filming once they reach that stage.

A group of **5th graders at Timber Ridge** have a desire to lead a service project to help a local organization. As of right now they are still in the early stages of planning and are hoping to get permission from Mrs. Harrison soon!

## Elementary Project Highlights (cont.)

**Clover Mitchell and Remy Jorgensen, both 3rd graders at Lawson,** are developing websites devoted to their love of reading. They are reviewing books they have enjoyed and making recommendations for others based on interest, genre, age, and reading ability.



**AWESOME!**

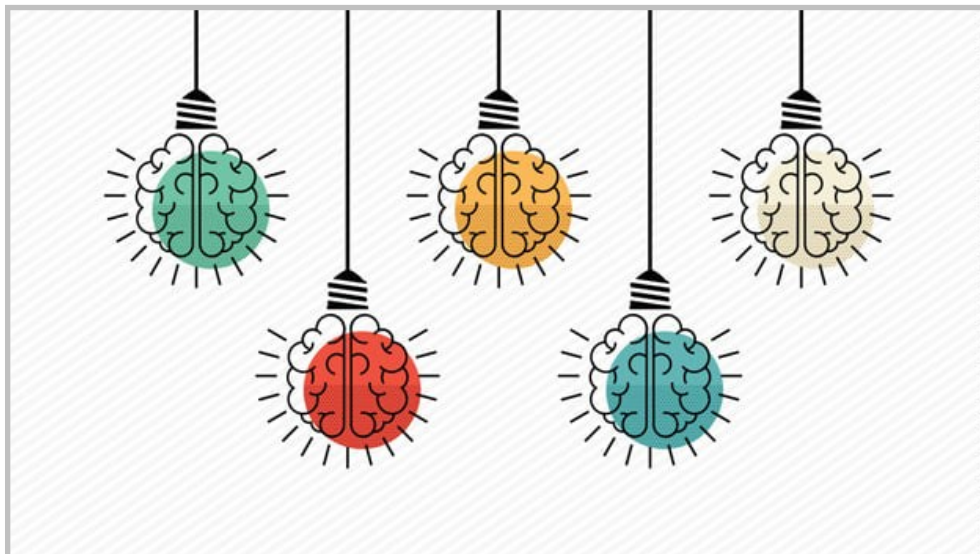
## Summit ELP News

Sixth & seventh grade ELP students at Summit have created Individual Education Plans on a topic of their choice. They utilize NoodleTools as a research and organization platform, Gale Resources and EBSCO Host through Heartland AEA's online resources, Google Calendar for goal setting and accountability, and feedback loops for peer feedback and critiquing.

### **Student topics include:**

- ⇒ Robots designed for high pressure planet exploration
- ⇒ Greater good projects to bring awareness to local charities
- ⇒ Research surrounding communication in history for National History Day projects
- ⇒ Mock Trial preparations and presentations
- ⇒ Creation of 3D rendered CAD designs
- ⇒ Development of underwater ROVs and nature-based drones
- ⇒ Future uses for Bluetooth.

Look forward to a virtual showcase in January  
to showcase each student's hard work and projects!



# Ways to Support Friends of Johnston ELP

Please support your ELP through your Amazon purchases with these easy steps:

- *Log into your Amazon account*
- *Click on your Account & Lists*
- *Find AmazonSmile Charity Lists*
- *Search for: Friends of Johnston ELP*

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Become **FJELP member and supporter** through a \$20 donation via [Revtrak](#).

These funds are used to provide annual grants to our ELP Teaching Team.

## Connect with us!

Attend our programs and provide your feedback!



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