



Please find below a summary of the past month's professional development, curriculum design, and personnel updates for each of the departments.

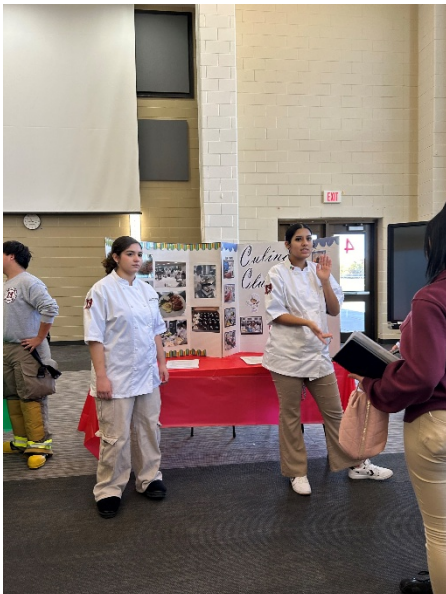
CTE Department – Colleen Del Monaco, Director
Curriculum Updates –

- ◆ West Fire Science - Chief Chiappetta brought a Thermal Imaging Camera (TIC) from the fire department. Mr. Nolan was kind enough to give accommodation for the fire science class to test the TIC. The device is used for search and rescue operations and for fire source detection when there's zero visibility. There are different models/sizes in every fire department. This is a small version - red in color, held by a student.
- ◆ West Welding assisting fire protection class by providing the fire for their thermal camera
- ◆ East Accounting II and IV classes had the opportunity to have a guest speaker this month. Jonathan Ruiz, a financial advisor from Merrill Lynch spoke to the students during career week. Students were exposed to potential college majors and career opportunities in the industry.
- ◆ East students from all areas of CTE did a fabulous job talking with Freshman at the FC Elective fair on November 26th about their course options as they transition over to Morton East next year.
- ◆ East Accounting II and IV students had the opportunity for a guest speaker, Jonathan Ruiz, a financial advisor from Merrill Lynch spoke during career week at East. Students were able to hear about potential college majors and various career opportunities related to accounting.
- ◆ Accounting students have adapted well to the “old fashioned” accounting methods and have been completing work on traditional journals, exposing students to how accounting was done before technology.
- ◆ East Early Childhood Education III students planned a family STEAM day for the Mini Mustang Preschoolers.
- ◆ East Culinary arts had a successful grab n' go breakfast the Friday before Thanksgiving break, selling homemade goodies to students and staff including the infamous scones, chocolate chip cookies, yogurt parfaits, overnight oats, breakfast sandwiches and of course coffee and lattes.
- ◆ Morton East Teaching Methods students participated in a regional Education focused team-based challenge at Triton College. 12 schools and over 200 students participated in various events focused on the field of education. The judges were amazed at what our Morton students came up with without the use of any technology. One of our student groups took 2nd place in the “interdisciplinary lesson plan” competition.



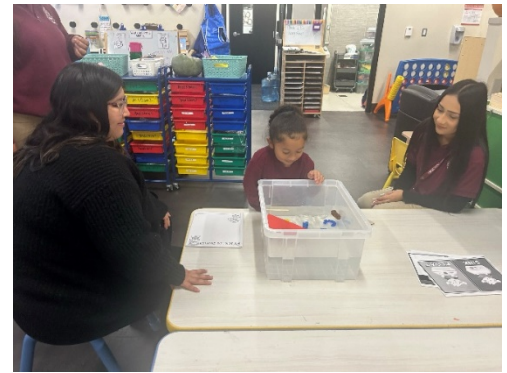
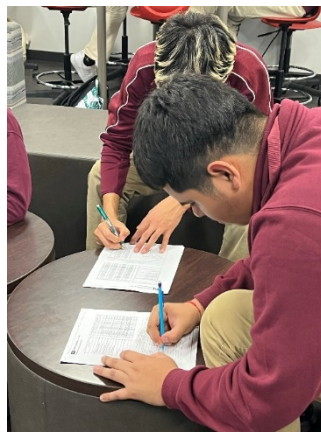
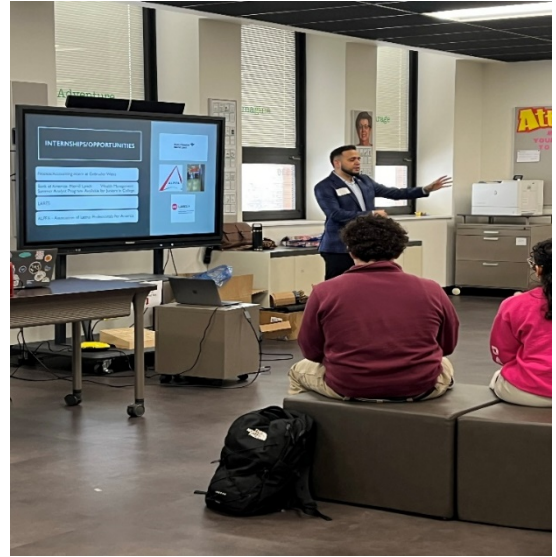
Student and Staff Accolades –

CTE Students hard at work across the curriculum ...





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Dr. Josh McMahon
Assistant Superintendent for Educational Programs





Career and Work Based Learning

- **Programmatic Updates:**

- Career Focus Week took place November 18-22. The week included a resume workshop, a trades & expo fair, a military fair, and industry professionals who visited classrooms as guest speakers. Three Morton alums were guest speakers. Dania Melendez from FGM Architects (West), Oscar Barraza from the CME Group (East) and Jonathan Ruiz (East) from Merrill Lynch Wealth.
- 7 students attended the Education Pathways Team-Based Challenge sponsored by Ridgewood HS held at Triton College on November 22nd. One team, Interdisciplinary Lesson Plan Team, won a 2nd place medal. Teacher Ashley Engebretsen accompanied and coached the students during the challenge.

East College & Career Center highlights:

- Since the beginning of the school year through 12/1/24, the Morton East CC Center has had 2,083 student contacts.
- Career Week- November 18-22
 - Events held included Trades Expo, Military Career Fair, and career speakers in classrooms
 - Fifteen different trades related organizations were in attendance for the trades expo.
 - Approximately 1,400 students took part in the various career week events
- Six college admissions representatives scheduled meetings with students interested in learning more about opportunities within their institutions.
- The College and Career Center took 40 students to an admissions presentation and campus tour at Concordia University on 11/7/24.
- CC Center staff continued to work with ISAC to prepare students and families for the FAFSA and Alternative Application
 - Both applications for the 2025-2026 year are now open

Upcoming Notable December Events:

- Morton College dual enrollment registration is taking place at Morton East on December 5 and December 10 during all supervision periods
- FAFSA/Alternative Application workshop is scheduled for December 10 from 6pm-8pm

Partnership Updates:

- Met with Jackie Dominguez from the National Association of Hispanic Nurses to discuss future partnership with Morton.
- Finalizing steps with Walgreens to place our pharmacy tech students for needed clinical hours



Special Education – Carol Best, Executive Director of Student Support

Regardless of the network issues, SPED has remained compliant with all of the IEP's across the district. Although access has been limited our communication with our families with students with disabilities has been better than ever. The families have expressed appreciation for our effort to support students with disabilities while the district works on reestablishing our network system.

College

Students were able to visit the school's elective fair last week at FC. They have had counselors visit their classrooms and received information about their interests, and ways to transition out of high school. They will be meeting with their counselors in January to select their classes for next year.

Career

The Vocational programs at all campuses have been busy in the community exploring community events, job opportunities, and volunteer opportunities.

Life

Freshman students continue to receive SEL lessons in their Edge classrooms, helping them prepare to be successful.



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Assistant Superintendent for Educational Programs

Photos of our SPED students in action:





English Learners and Modern Languages- Melody Becker

Curriculum Updates –

College

EL 3 students compared and contrasted themselves. In the middle they shared their similarities. They shared someone else's part to the class in the target language. This activity will help EL 3 students practice for their compare and contrast essay.

EL 4 students continued with their persuasive unit. Students: - created a visual stance of their research topic (pictures), participated in "Dialogue Dash w/ Peer Feedback" (video/images) a version of speed dating, students present their position and reasons to their partner and try to convince them. Afterwards their listener gives them feedback on what they did well and what they can do to improve their argument - did a "Persuasive Essay" escape room. They had to figure out the clues to form a thesis statement and use the clues to get them to the puzzle (the parts of a body paragraph they had to put back in order) to "escape" and claim their prize completed the final drafts of their persuasive essay the old-fashioned way, paper and pencil. AP Spanish Lang moved from writing to speaking. They are working on cultural comparisons Spanish Lit continues to practice the FRQs independently. SLA V is reading "La casa de Bernarda Alba", acting it out as well as watching a movie to see the difference between reading a play and actually seeing one. Through November, SLA IV began their second unit about our ancestors. Looking at different indigenous groups in Spanish speaking countries and read different legends and talked about what a real legend is. They learned how to analyze reading. They also learned the difference between verb tenses for the past, imperfect and preterit, and when to use them to get ready for them to write their own legend. Students began adding work to their honor's portfolio and have written their introduction as well as the reflection to the category they have added to their portfolio. This way they won't be stressed during the second semester working on their portfolio.

Career

Some of the ML students went to the Freshman Center for the electives fair, learning communication skills along the way.

Life

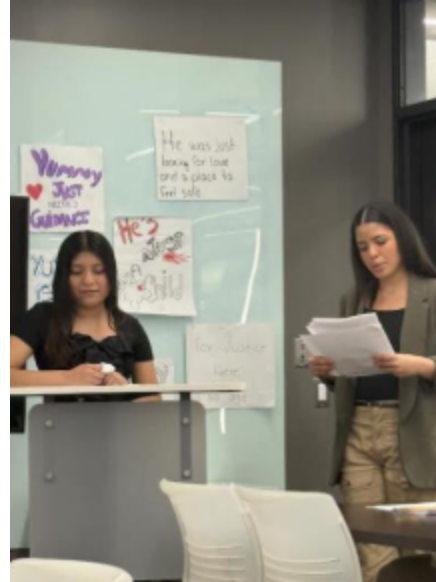
Despite a lack of technological resources, we got creative to continue to uphold the level of rigor students are used to. We continued our units to the best of our abilities and students stepped up and adapted to our new circumstances for the time being.



Student and Staff Accolades –



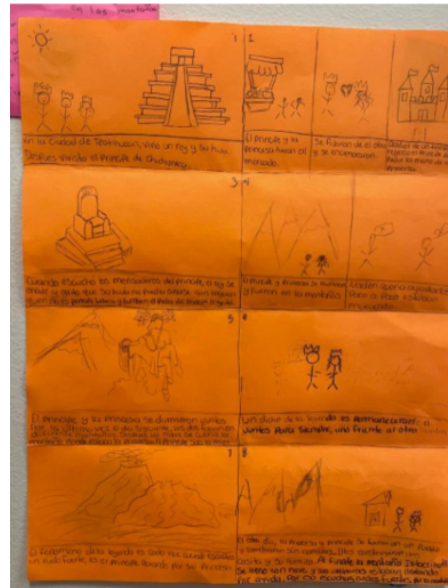
EL students visited the Trade Expo held by the College & Career Center on November 19th.



EL 2 students finished reading their novel, Yummy, and had a mock trial for the protagonist. Students used textual evidence to support their side



EL 4 and Collab students were awarded at the Student of the Month celebration on November 19th



SLA IV students analyzing Leyendas



Science Department- Eric Bjornstad, Director

Curriculum Updates –

- Physics core will be meeting on Tuesday, December 3rd to work on creation and implementation of skills-based grading/reporting for next school year.
- Science coaching partnerships have focused on the creation and implementation of more activities that incorporate analysis of real-life data. Initial feedback from science staff has been positive so far.
- PBS and HBS sent students to represent the courses at the FC elective fair on Tuesday, Nov. 26th

Professional Development –

- Five science staff attended the Northern Illinois Science Educator conference on Nov. 18th. Several science staff from surrounding Districts have shown interest in partnering with our science department to create more data-driven activities

Student and Staff Accolades –

STEM students build parallel and series circuits at FC in Mrs. Semenke's classes



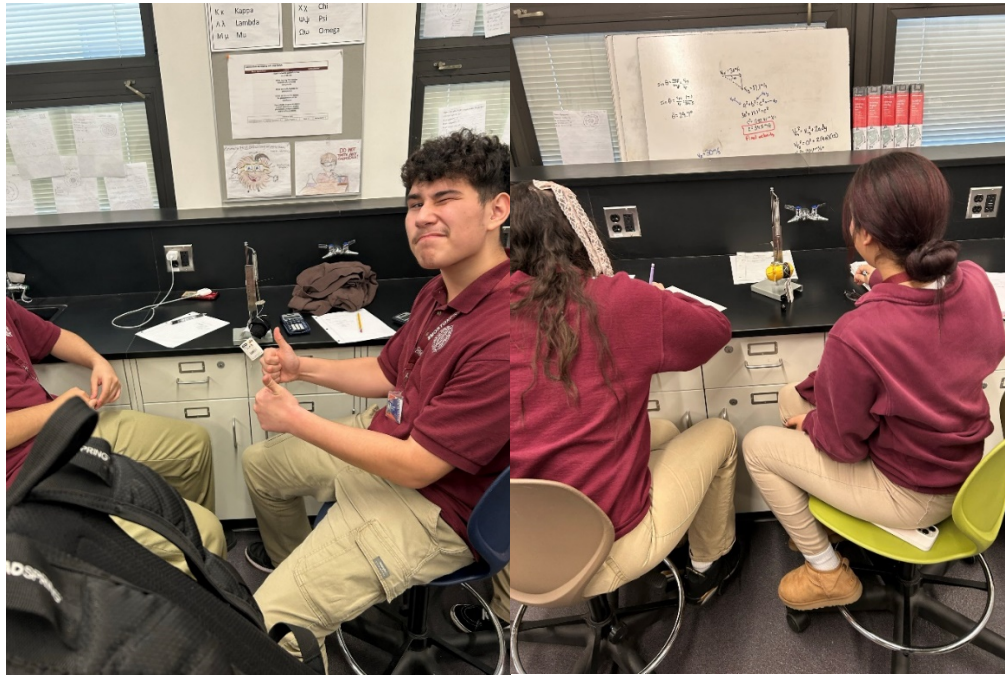
Students from East present about Principles of Biomedical Science and Human Body Systems at the Freshman Center Elective Fair.





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Students doing a Mystery Mass Lab in Mr. Kink's AP Physics



Physics students building bridges in Mr. Smith's classes at East

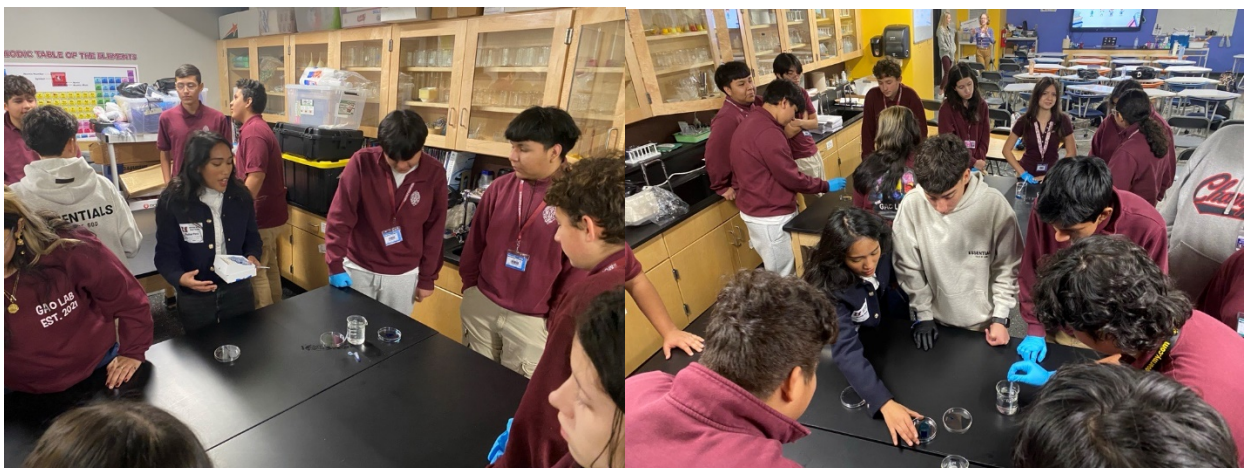


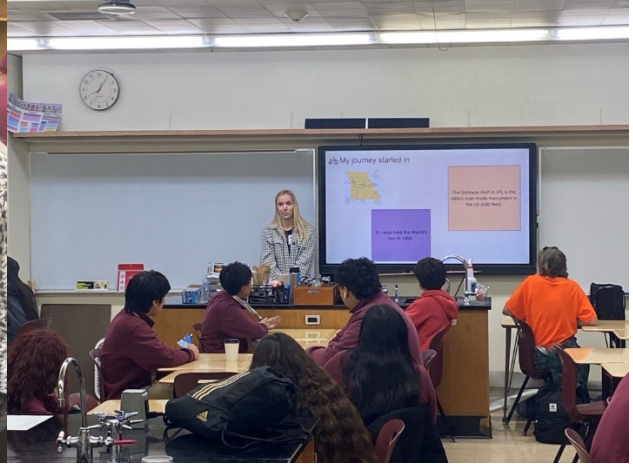


Graduate Student Guest Speakers from UIC at East Campus



Graduate Student Guest Speakers from UIC at West Campus





Skin Models in Ms. Del Real's Anatomy & Physiology classes



Zoology Students from East and West visit Shedd Aquarium





English Department – Mark Sujak

Curriculum Updates

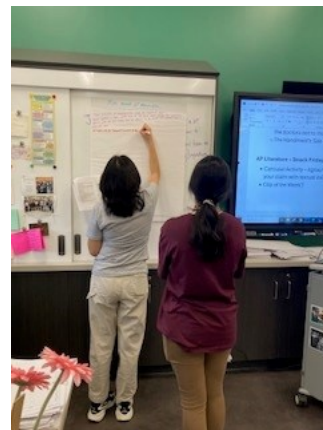
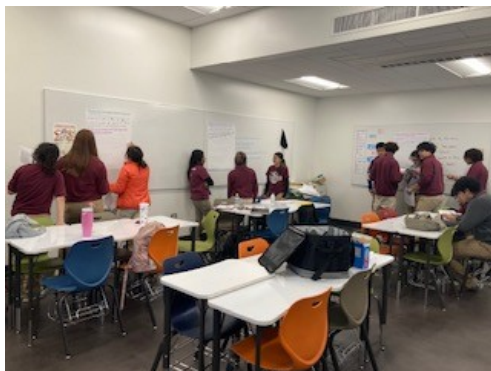
- AP Seminar students have been working on preparing for the writing tasks on the end of the course assessment, as well as their second mock task, an individual research paper and presentation.
- English II Core and AP Seminar will begin the curriculum writing process later this semester to have a new curriculum ready to roll out next school year.

Professional Development -

- Team leaders have been utilizing the resources that the instructional coaches shared focusing on improved instruction in the seven high frequency literacy skills. Teams have been integrating the skill development into their regular curriculum to ensure that this focus becomes part of the central core of the class.

Student and Staff Accolades –

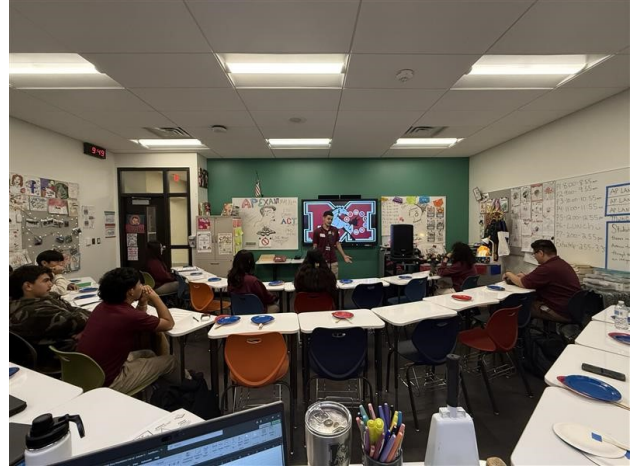
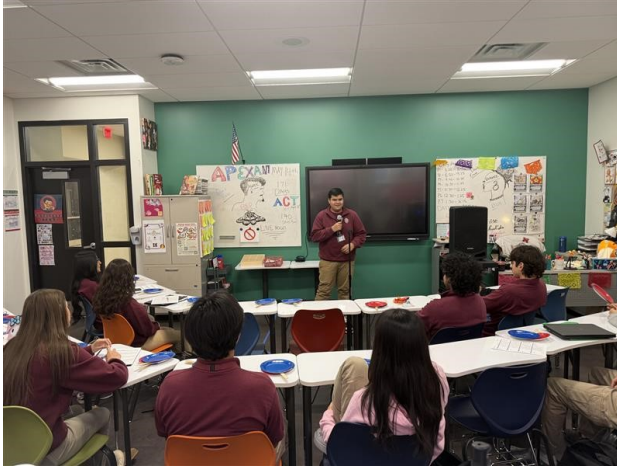
- Latin American Literature students visited the Museum of Mexican Art in Pilsen! Students looked at several art pieces related to class content and toured the murals in the neighborhood. Students saw a painting of the legend of Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl, which they read during our Myths and Folktales unit. Students looked at alebrijes, which they are creating during the final unit of the class.
- AP Literature and Composition students participated in a carousel analysis activity for *The Turn of the Screw*.





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Assistant Superintendent for Educational Programs

- AP Language and Composition students participated in a story slam modeled after The Moth to practice using anecdotes and narrative to develop and convey arguments.





Math Department - Megan Holub, Director

Curriculum Updates

- The Math Department wrapped up our first semester curriculum writing at the end of October. We had many teachers writing and refining curriculum for the courses:
 - Integrated Math II Honors
 - Integrated Math III Honors (new course this year)
 - AP Precalculus (new course this year)

- While we have a long way to go to complete our current status of writing, we have 5 days scheduled next semester to continue working on curriculum. The classes that will be focused on will be:
 - Integrated Math II Core / Honors
 - Summer Bridge Courses
 - Summer STEM Course

Hanover Research: Dr. Josh McMahon and Megan Holub met with the representatives from Hanover Research on October 21st to discuss the finalized Benchmark Project. We also discussed the survey that 67 teachers completed in November. We look forward to seeing the results to this survey.

Next, Megan Holub will be sending Hanover the names and contact information of about 20 teachers and administrators to complete an in-depth and in-person survey about Carnegie Learning.

The next scheduled meeting is December 19th. See the list of scheduled projects that will continue throughout the rest of the school year:

Hanover Actions	Hanover Timeline	Morton Actions	Morton Timeline
Hanover provides detailed Scope of Work and survey instrument for Morton's review	✓ 9/19/24		
		Morton approves Scope of Work and survey instrument	✓ 9/27/24
Hanover programs and tests survey. Hanover sends survey links and launch instructions to Morton	October 2024	Morton forecasts the survey with its community	October 2024
		Morton launches weblink	10/28/24
Hanover monitors response rates and provides updates to Morton	Week of 10/28/24		
Hanover closes survey	11/1/24	Morton announces survey close	11/1/24
Hanover delivers PPT Analysis and Data Supplement	Early December		

Great things we've done:

Math Department during the Internet outage: The teachers at all 3 campuses have been doing a great job at continuing the learning. They have been getting creative with offline type activities. Many activities can still be done without internet – carousels, white boards, break out boxes, Building Thinking Classrooms, and collaboration in groups. Students have continued to stay engaged!



Integrated Math III: The Integrated Math III Core and Honors teams at East and West completed their yearly catapult activity. Students build and use the catapult to model parabolas.



The Morton Roadmap

Content Support Discussions: The Math Content Support teams at each campus have reviewed the interventions and math labs, discussing potential changes to better support our students.

*We have an exciting opportunity for 2 pairs of teachers at East and West. We will be pairing up some teachers to pilot a coteaching class in our Integrated Math Core sections. We look forward to getting this started next semester.

Megan Holub is setting up professional development for these teachers before second semester so they can have some time to work together.

ACT Focus: The November ACT lessons were postponed, so we are excited to continue these after winter break.



Professional Development

Math Department Book Study: This book study will continue after winter break!

**Empowered Minds:
Exploring *Building Thinking Classrooms in Mathematics***

"Thinking is a necessary precursor to learning, and if students are not thinking, they are not learning." Peter Liljedahl, author of *Building Thinking Classrooms*, found through research that only about 20% of students in math classes are actually thinking and reasoning about mathematics. *

Join us to explore the 14 teaching practices that Peter has found enhance learning. We will discuss Peter's theories and our own personal experiences with working to get kids thinking! EVERYONE is welcome regardless of experience with BTC!

Mondays/Thursdays 3:30 to 4:30pm
9/19/24, 10/21/24, 11/21/24, 12/9/24,
1/16/25, 2/10/25, 3/20/25, 4/14/25, 5/15/25

Location: TBD based on enrollment—Teachers will be allowed to sign out at 3pm to accommodate travel. Timesheets will be provided.

Send any questions to Heidi:
hkeske@jsmarton.org

Join by filling out this form:
<https://forms.gle/f3aayjH1i22xsynVA>

Literacy PD: The Math Department was lucky to have an entire day with the Instructional Coaches who delivered some PD on Literacy in the Math classes! Every PLT Lead in the district attended. The coaches did a wonderful job and really made a connection between Math content and Literacy strategies. It was perfect timing, because teachers were able to use some of the strategies as soon as the following week!

Co-teaching: Four teachers will be receiving professional development next month for co-teaching. More information to come. We look forward to this amazing opportunity to increase teacher to student ratio to help support our core teachers and students.



Physical Education / Health / Driver Education – Clay Reagan, Director

Curriculum Updates –

This has been a challenging few weeks, but the teacher and students have adapted and stayed on track to wrap up the semester. Our Health classes have utilized the limited amount of books that we have and created some great group projects that will be used in the future. Student and teachers have embraced the challenge.

We currently have four sections of Driver Education bookwork taking place during night school. Although a little more challenging, teachers have made adjustments and 120 students will receive their permit before Christmas break.

Physical Education classes have been able to operate in their normal fashion, aside from some construction. That have share and combine facilities and continue to be productive each day.

The PE department participated in the Elective Fair at Freshman Center on November 25th. It was a great opportunity to introduce all of the great classes that students can take at East as sophomores.

Our future curriculum work includes continuing our Health curriculum, as well as working out curriculum for Driver Education and our new dance course that will be offered next year.

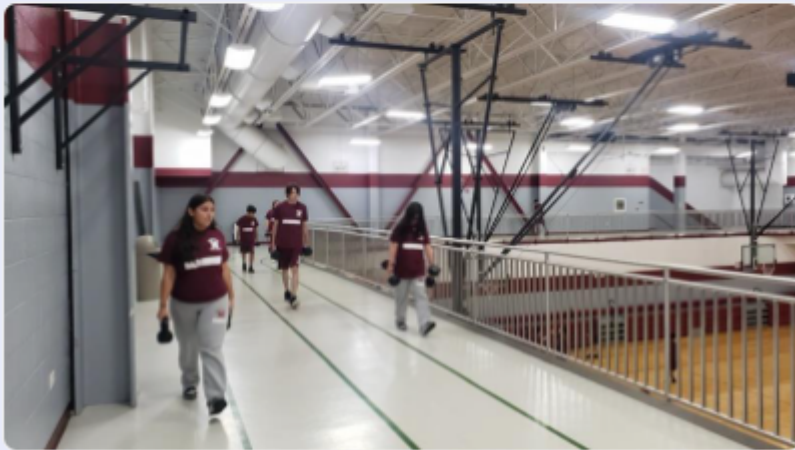
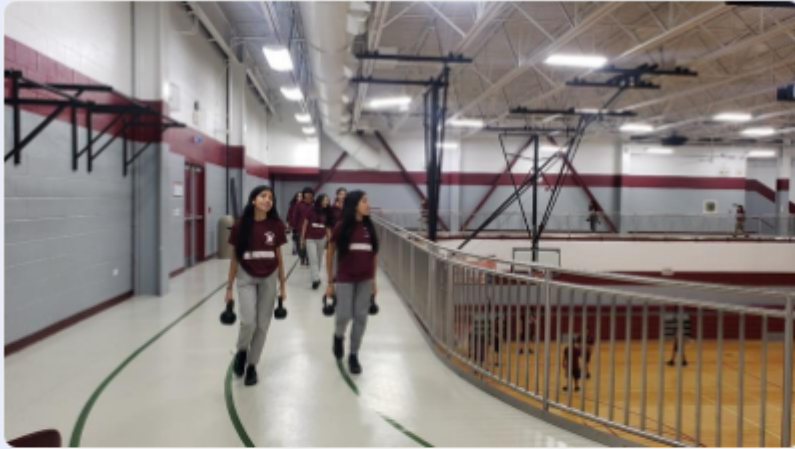
Professional Development –

On November 19th the new teachers participated in their second after school professional development. Josh McMahon, Randy Borgardt and Carol Best hosted the session. New teachers took part in ISBE training, focusing on Cultural Competency, SEL in the classroom, and issues surrounding homeless students.



Student and Staff Accolades –

Mrs. Perotti's Freshman PE class incorporating functional fitness into their workout.





Innovation and Accountability- Samantha Skubal, Director Professional Development -

- Biliteracy and Instructional Coaches
 - Literacy PD
 - This month, the coaches completed their most recent installment of the Literacy PD to the departments of CTE, SPED, PE/Health, Fine Arts, and Modern Language. So far, the coaches have provided customized professional development on the development of literacy skills for each specific department to the departments listed above, Math, English, Edge, and English Learners. The next two sessions will be Science and Social Science.
 - Round two of the PD will happen during the next two upcoming Institute Days, where we will provide a follow up session for teachers on how to amplify what they learned during their full day PD, and continue to move forward with literacy for all.
 - Lunch n Learn
 - The coaches provided teachers with a Lunch n Learn this month around providing skill feedback through learning progressions.
- Freshman Edge
 - Edge teachers met again this month to continue work on the curriculum. The teachers met with Career and College Counselors to discuss how they can collaborate to bring college and career into the class more effectively. Teachers and counselors will work together to write unit four, which will focus heavily on college and career.



Student and Staff Accolades –

- Biliteracy and Instructional Coaches
 - Major Appreciation
 - The coaches at all campuses have played a vital role in helping get our district back up and running over the last few weeks. From being available to reset passwords and get students logged on to working with teachers to pivot their lessons in a way that keeps things engaging and relevant, the coaches have done it all. Appreciate them today and every day!
 - Field Trips
 - The coaches have collaborated with several teachers this month to provide field trip opportunities to our students. These experiences have been rich opportunities for students to deepen their learning. Some of the





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Dr. Josh McMahon
Assistant Superintendent for Educational Programs

trips this month included the Art Institute and Cultural Center and the Mexican Art Museum.



Social Science and Fine Arts- Kevin Vesper, Director
Curriculum & PLT Updates

- The department remains on track with each buildings roadmap goals. Below our snapshots of our key data points (as of 11/11/24):

Social Science Grades

Goal: 82% of students will have an A, B, or C
 Current Reality: 82.41% of students have an A, B, or

Campus	Pass Rate	ABC Rate	%_A	%_B	%_C
Alternative	88.37%	65.12%	11.63%	39.53%	13.95%
FC	92.51%	82.63%	14.52%	40.57%	27.54%
West	93.57%	86.73%	27.70%	39.12%	19.90%
East	87.63%	78.41%	29.63%	26.76%	22.01%
Total	90.95%	82.41%	25.83%	34.49%	22.09%

Fine Arts Grades

Goal: 88% of students will have an A, B, or C
 Current Reality: 90.63% of students have an A, B, or C

Campus	Pass Rate	ABC Rate	%_A	%_B	%_C
Alternative	92.31%	92.31%	38.46%	38.46%	15.38%
FC	100.00%	100.00%	90.00%	10.00%	
West	97.55%	93.24%	63.17%	20.86%	9.21%
East	94.87%	87.75%	50.14%	22.08%	15.53%
Total	96.22%	90.63%	56.92%	21.47%	12.24%

- The Social Science and Fine Arts teachers did an excellent job this month navigating the network issues by continuing to provide quality and engaging learning opportunities for our students. Below are just some of the many examples of what was happening in the classroom during this unique time:
 - Created daily SEL check-ins, with a strong focus on goal setting.
 - Provided more opportunities for students to engage in peer revision on argumentative and analysis answers.
 - Students analyzed physical pictures, artifacts, and writings that they otherwise would have seen only on their laptop screen.
 - Video students worked on creating physical storyboards for future projects.
- Due to the network issues, two of our November department curriculum revision days had to be rescheduled for next semester. They will now take place on January 30th and February 25th. We will still remain on track for those course and their curriculum wave/timeline.
- On November 21st, the Chicago History PLT went on a field trip to the Chicago History Museum and several landmarks in the area. Students focused on a primary source from the trip and practiced their analysis skill on the following school days.



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Assistant Superintendent for Educational Programs

Department Highlights

Congratulations to Emerson Steinhaus on their directorial debut at Morton West High School with musical *The Lightning Thief*! It was a giant success that left the audience leaving happy. Enjoy some pictures from the show:

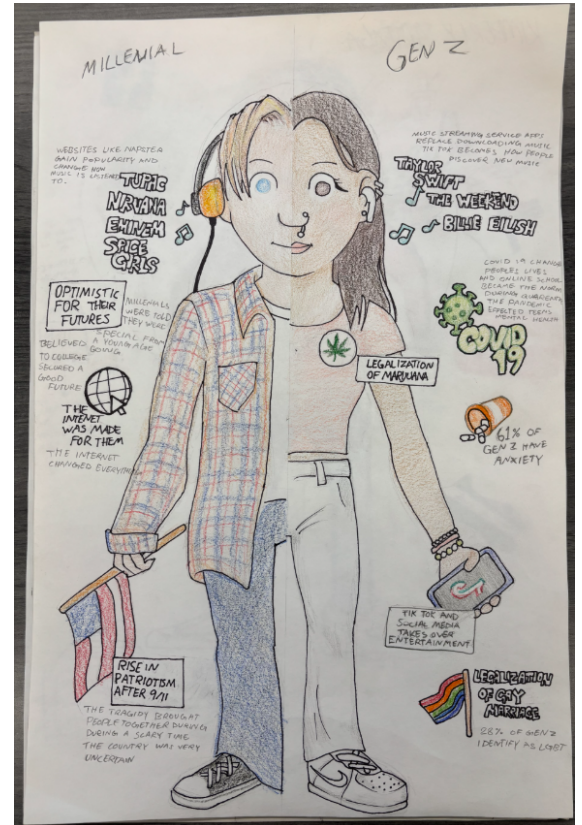




For a few weeks, teachers and students had to continue learning and practicing their skills without the internet. Below are some visual examples of how students continued and enhanced their learning experience:



Visual art students practicing their *critique* skill by providing peer feedback on their art work



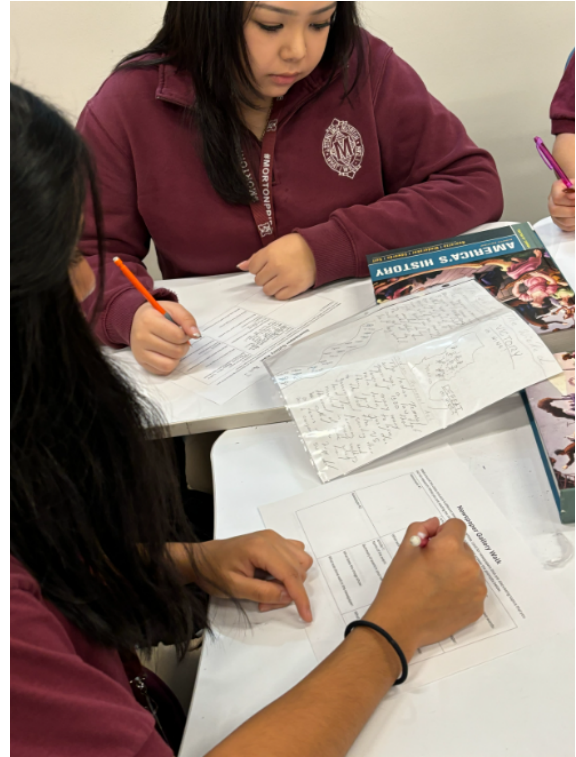
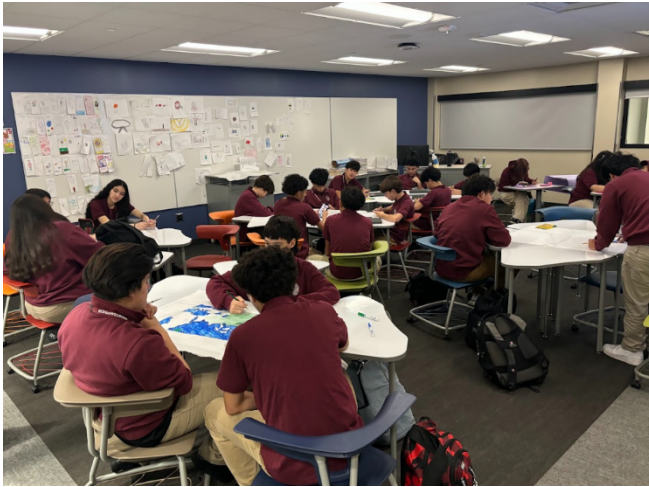
Students in AP Government created a generations *compare & contrast* poster.



AP Human Geography students writing their *argumentative* essays the old-fashioned way.



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Morton West held a Civil War history trunk event in the Knowledge Center. Students practiced their *comprehension & analysis* skills with the help of a guided worksheet. The skill engagement was tremendous and the students had fun while learning!



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Assistant Superintendent for Educational Programs

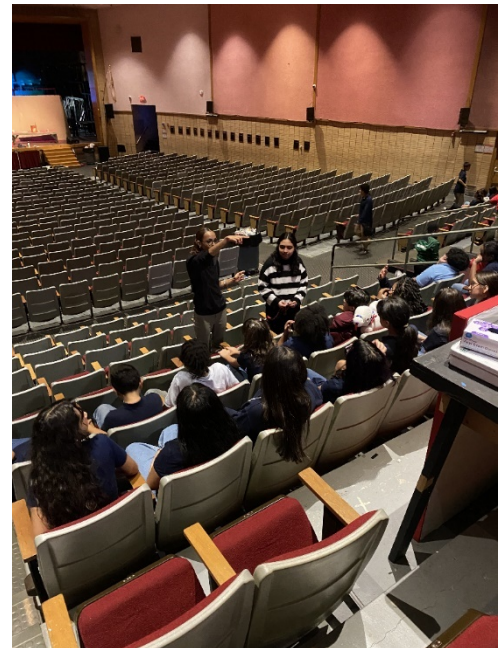
The Morton West Theater Department recently held its annual Theater Workshop. Our feeder schools spent the entire day learning the different skills and opportunities in theater. It was a wonderful day!



Students practicing their choreography skills.



Students trying choir for the first time.

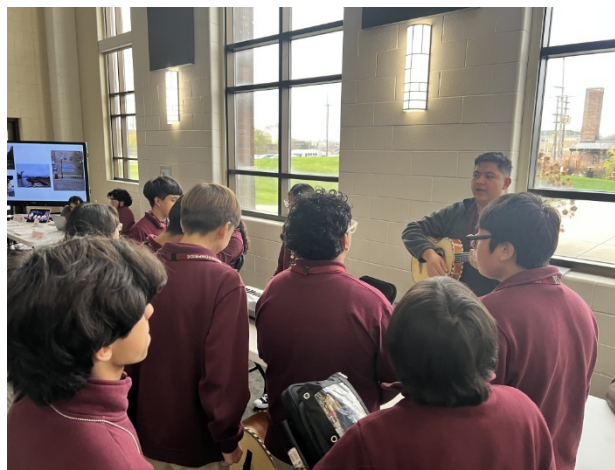
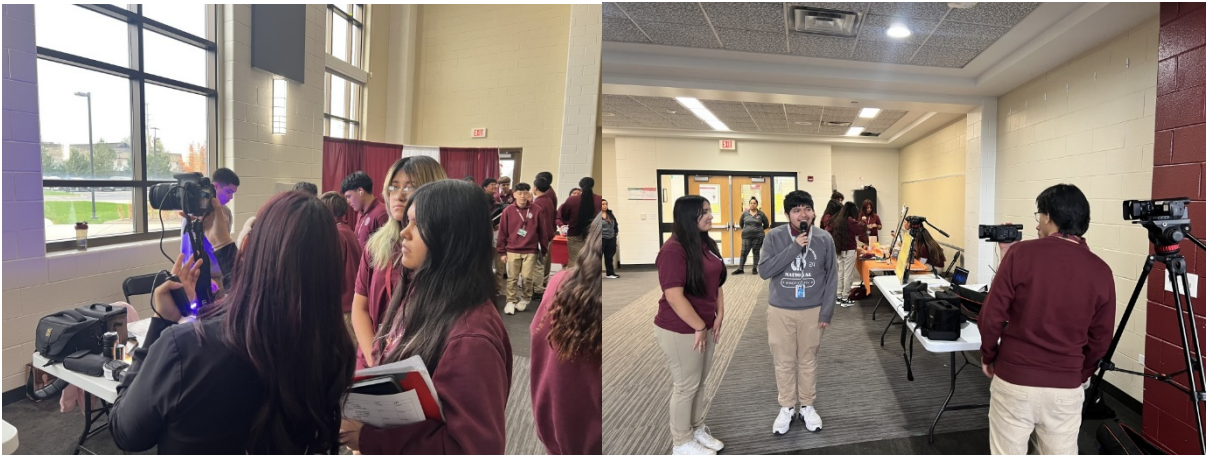




Multi-Tiered System of Supports Department – Gloria Ramirez-Solis, Director
Curriculum Updates –

Our counselors have been busy planning and taking students to tour different colleges to spark more interest in post-secondary options. Recently, the East counseling team provided students the opportunity to visit Concordia University, while the Freshman Center counseling team partnered with the Morton College admissions team to tour Morton College.

The FC counselors and assistant principal of operations partnered with directors to host a two-day 10th grade Elective Fair. Several Morton East students attended to answer specific questions about electives and promote the courses they showcased. The first day featured fine arts, music, physical education, social studies, and modern language courses, while the second day focused mainly on career and technical education courses. We thank all who participated in showcasing the wide range of electives offered, as these courses help prepare our students to be college- and career-ready.



East hosted a Trades and Manufacturing Fair, as well as a Military Fair. Students were provided with valuable information about these career pathways, including detailed descriptions of job opportunities, required skills, and potential educational paths. Representatives were present to answer questions, offer insights into the work environment, and discuss potential internships. The event allowed students to explore different options, ask questions, and consider how these fields align with their interests and career goals. Opportunities like these ensure that our Morton graduates are career-ready.



Professional Development –

Several of our counselors attended the Illinois School Counselor Association conference, where the sessions focused on domains such as advocacy, college and career readiness, leadership, program and intervention development, race and equity, multicultural access, school counselor self-care, and school culture.

Student and Staff Accolades –

Despite navigating network challenges, the counseling team quickly problem-solved and continued course request selections using an alternative to Naviance. They created new presentations and materials to support students in their 4-year planning. In addition, we appreciate all the flexibility the student support staff has shown through these obstacles, ensuring that student support groups continued to run seamlessly.



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