

Paper trail to help track students

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Over their careers, Clarenceville students will amass a paper trail that teachers believe will clear a path for academic success.

This fall, student portfolios are being created for those in kindergarten through grade nine.

Folders will contain samples of student work and records.

Such record keeping isn't new. A district committee of teachers and administrators set a uniform list of what should be included for elementary and secondary students.

"(The information) is there, but it's in different places," said Barb Church, curriculum director. "The intent of the portfolios is to pull key information into one place."

Expandable folders — emphasis on expandable — will contain separate files for career awareness and employability skills; English language arts; math, sci-

ence and social studies; and recognition and achievements.

Clarenceville has 1,900 students and includes parts of Livonia, Redford and Farmington Hills.

Such files are seen as being helpful to

CLARENCEVILLE SCHOOLS

teachers who have new students. Previous writing samples and test scores will show areas where a student excels or needs help.

"You can tell a lot about a student by looking at his folder," Church said.

"We want our children to work at their instructional level; not their frustration level."

Student portfolios are more than a display of strengths and weaknesses, a high school teacher said.

A career awareness file would show if

a student has interest in particular field. That information is helpful in finding ways to motivate a student.

"The possibilities are endless," said Barbara Gutman, a Clarenceville High English teacher who served on the portfolio committee.

"It allows students to see their own progress, that's number one. Number two, it allows teachers to see progress as well."

Classroom teachers will maintain portfolios in elementary school. In middle school, the child's English Language Arts teacher handles the role.

For high school students, the portfolio's main part will be kept in the Media Center while career information will be kept in the Career Center.

Students receive their portfolios when they graduate, which could be helpful tool when applying for college or a job.

"If they keep track of everything they've done since the sixth grade, they can put together a pretty convincing portrait of themselves," Church said.



STAFF PHOTO BY BILL EBERLE

Rockin' ribbon: At an assembly celebrating Hillside Elementary's selection as a National Blue Ribbon School, staffer Raida Sheena, parent Rana Souboni, school board member Pam Christian and Hillside student Nayoung Chung cut the ribbon dedicating the rock and plaque.

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education program, one of only four schools in the nation to receive that honor.

Hillside is currently involved in a two-year research project with Wayne State University based on a commitment to include all students and adapting to ensure diversity. Classrooms include students who are gifted as well as those who are severely disabled; staff members are trained in educating each child, rather than generalized instruction.

"This award to me means we have achieved our mission — so far, because this is a journey — to make sure every child is welcome, every child is cared for and no child is left behind," Cotillon said. "This is the heart and soul of our school."

Although the program highlighted

diversity, cooperation and partnerships with the Parent-Teacher Association — in front of a gymnasium filled with parents, grandparents and students — other reasons Hillside lays claim to Blue Ribbon status aren't hard to find.

The mother of one special education student, the first "fully included" autistic child, wrote in support of the Blue Ribbon award.

"The benefits of learning side-by-side with general education students has been enormous. While at Hillside, she has learned more than just academics, she not only is very aware of her peers and what is socially appropriate, but dreads missing even a day of school."

Former Student Council President Jacob Clark returned to his alma mater Friday to present a flag to current Presi-

dent Andrean Kendall.

"To make this school great, it takes great leaders, from the School Board all the way down to student leaders, like Andrean," he said.

A walk through the school's hallways provides further evidence. Above the lost and found table, over the small pair of jeans, the sweatshirts, jackets, hats and even a sleeping bag, a row of construction paper blue ribbons proudly declares the school's special place in state and national education circles.

"Mrs. Drinski's class says Hillside is a Blue Ribbon School because it provides a safe environment where students, parents and staff take on responsibility for all student achievement."

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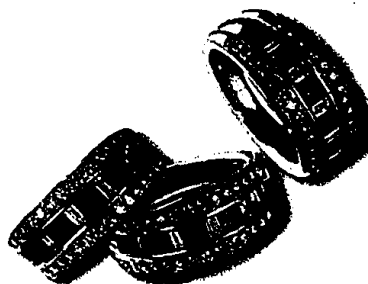
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