



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Japhet School opens doors of redesigned school and new STEM lab

CLAWSON, Mich., Aug. 31, 2021 -- Japhet School is opening its doors to parents, students and trustees on Thurs., Sept. 2 from 4 to 6 p.m. for an Open House to showcase some exciting new changes prior to the start of the 2021-2022 school year. Japhet School, an independent, character-based school, received a large grant the school received in support of a new STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) lab that will bolster Japhet School's middle school science program.

A larger learning space is now set aside for this year's 5th- through 8th-graders, and includes tools and materials to broaden the exploration of physical, life, and earth sciences. The enhanced classroom supports greater opportunity for long-term, project-based units of study in STEM, as well as Global Studies and Readers' and Writers' Workshops. Attendees will have the opportunity to meet with faculty and staff in their classrooms and tour our new STEM lab and Middle School classroom.

Japhet redesigned and moved all classrooms to make room for the new STEM lab and a larger space for the middle school students. Each classroom was moved and refreshed to make room for the change. In addition, the library has a new home in the building.

"We are excited to welcome parents and trustees back to Japhet School for the first time in more than year since the school was open for students and faculty but was closed to all visitors during the previous school year due to the pandemic," said Kerri Vizena, head of school, Japhet School. "Last year, students went into Japhet without any escort into the building from parents. Parents -- some of them first-time Japhet parents -- trusted their children would be safe. And faculty welcomed their students, trusting parents that children would not come into school exhibiting any signs of illness," said Vizena.

Taking advantage of the outdoors to extend the campus

"We are also excited to extend the boundaries of our campus even more this school year by making more use of the courtyard at the school, as well as two local parks that are within walking distance of the school," said Vizena. "Learning outdoors is far more memorable for children."

The middle school is also moving to a model of Partnership Teaching for the coming school year, which allows for a greater level of flexibility, enhancing the multiple modes of education that are currently present in other Japhet classrooms. Depending on the lessons, students can gather together as a large group to infuse a conversation with ideas and energy or break out into smaller, more dynamic groups to support different needs, abilities, or areas of interest. It allows students to feel there are free perspectives and possibilities with each new iteration. This change will support an increased focus on project-based learning and elevate the focus on student-centered curriculum.

“Our middle school environment provides a rich experience for students where they explore concepts in-depth,” said Kerri Vizena, head of school, Japhet School. For example, in language arts Japhet’s middle-schoolers write, edit, and design an all-school student newspaper. In science, students had a virtual face-to-face with avionics engineer Kevin Pratt of the Blue Origin space program. Students spent the year building their knowledge of earth and space science, along with concepts relating to hydroponics and environmental impact, in preparation for designing their own space communities. They were excited to discuss their ideas with an expert in the field.”

Japhet’s mission is to combine character education with a strong academic program. “The small, but mighty Japhet has risen to the occasion and worked with the challenges of the pandemic to innovate and find new ways to demonstrate our character values,” said Vizena.

Japhet’s first day of school is on Wed., September 8.

Since its founding in 1973, Japhet School has always been a small and unassuming school, providing a peaceful educational environment for students. An independent school for children in Preschool through 8th grade, Japhet School’s mission is centered on ethics: it “nurtures and prepares each child for life by integrating character education with a strong academic program.” It’s co-ed and non-religious. Families pay tuition to attend.

Japhet School has limited enrollment availability for the 2021/2022 school year for grades 3 through 8. To inquire, visit www.japhetschool.org.

About Japhet School:

Founded in 1973, Japhet School is an independent school, serving children in the metropolitan Detroit area in preschool through eighth grade. Its mission is to nurture and prepare each child for life by integrating character education with a strong academic program. The school provides small classes of fewer than 20 students in each, which enables teachers to challenge students with academic material that is appropriate for their intellectual readiness, regardless of age or grade. Integrated with strong academics is Japhet School’s national award-winning character education curriculum, which builds a peaceful community within the school. The school’s public speaking curriculum gives graduates confidence in leadership roles. Japhet is a National School of Character: it was the first school in Michigan -- and the first independent school in the country -- to receive this award. To learn more about Japhet, visit japhetschool.org.

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