

CANTON NEWS UPDATE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Canton Downtown Development Authority's Ford Road District To Exhibit Plymouth-Canton Community Schools K-8 Grade Student Artwork

(Canton, MI – June 24, 2025) Canton Downtown Development Authority's Ford Road District, in partnership with the Plymouth-Canton Community Schools (P-CCS), the Partnership for the Arts & Humanities, and the Canton Commission for Culture, Arts and Heritage, recently installed over 150 light-post banners, each containing an original drawing created by P-CCS K-8 grade students.

"The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is proud to support this inspiring collaboration that brings together art, education, and community," said Bart Patterson, Canton DDA Chairperson. "Partnering with these groups was a natural fit for our vision to celebrate creativity and showcase the incredible talent of our youth right here in Canton. These student banners not only beautify our Ford Road District but also reflect our deep commitment to the arts and the next generation."

This public art presentation was made possible thanks to a generous grant from the Partnership for the Arts and Humanities to the Plymouth-Canton Community Schools, enabling the banner display of student artwork along Ford Road, as well as the installation of 50 lawn signs along the Lower Rouge Trail, each featuring a different P-CCS student's drawing.

"Plymouth-Canton Community Schools values arts education for its role in developing students' creativity, critical thinking, and communication skills," stated P-CCS K-12 Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator Cathie Williams. "This project helps students see how art can positively impact a community and encourages them to view themselves as artists. It fosters social-emotional growth and community connection. The project was made possible through the creativity of student artists, the support of art teachers in fostering student skills and selecting submissions, and assistance from Partnership for the Arts and Humanities, the Canton Commission for Culture, Arts, and Heritage, as well as the Canton DDA."

P-CCS elementary and middle school art teachers selected the final artwork for display on the banners and on the Lower Rouge Trail. In addition, P-CCS Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator Cathie Williams was instrumental in securing the grant and designing the banners collaboratively with the Partnership for the Arts and Humanities, with the goal of allowing students to see themselves as artists and how art can impact a community.

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“The creative and vibrant artwork that will be on display through the end of the year exemplifies the amazing results that can be obtained when several Canton community organizations successfully collaborate to shine a spotlight on the many talents of the Plymouth-Canton Community Schools students,” said Laura Mortier, Canton Recreation and Performing Arts Manager. “These banners are just another example of how a special partnership with these organizations enabled Canton’s Ford Road District to help strengthen the identity of Canton’s primary retail corridor by conveying a message that the community values the cultural arts and contributions by local youth.”

The Canton Downtown Development Authority (DDA) oversees the development of the designated downtown area, as well as enhances the economic vitality of Canton’s Ford Road District, which is a three-mile section of Ford Road from just west of Canton Center Road to the City of Westland boundary, east of I-275. This thriving commercial corridor boasts over 300 businesses and a low vacancy rate by continually attracting new businesses, as well as retaining those already established.

Plymouth-Canton Community Schools remain committed to developing capable, involved citizens who recognize that they are citizens of the world, who use critical thinking skills, and are lifelong learners. P-CCS continues to deliver an innovative educational experience which propels each student to excellence, ensuring that student achievement remains high for all students at P-CCS.

The Partnership for the Arts and Humanities is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) cultural arts organization that works in collaboration with the Canton Commission for Culture, Arts and Heritage. The Partnership for the Arts and Humanities is committed to encouraging the development of cultural arts within the Canton community.

Established in 2003, the Canton Commission for Culture, Arts, and Heritage continues to serve as advocates in promoting public awareness of culture, arts and heritage in the greater Canton community. This dedicated group of volunteers remains committed to encouraging the development of cultural arts programs that are accessible to everyone within the Canton community.

For additional information on the Canton Ford Road District’s current banner display, visit www.cantonmi.gov/393, or call 734/394-5197.

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