As I have had the opportunity to visit our school buildings and programs over the past several months, I have been heartened by the ways in which our teachers and students are reaching across buildings and grade levels to form partnerships in learning. Members of our Northville High School Model UN team are helping Meads Mill Middle School students establish their own Model UN team. The Reading Connections program is bringing Cooke School students together with kindergarten and first grade students at Amerman and Winchester elementary schools. And Northville Public Schools educators and community members are collaborating on the upcoming “Parent Camp” (see item on page 2) to offer a Saturday morning filled with educational sessions on a variety of topics of interest to parents from preschool to graduation. These partnerships allow our students and teachers to go beyond classroom and school walls to learn with and from each other as we strive to offer A World of Possibilities for each and every student. They also model and affirm the importance of collaboration and bringing different perspectives together to grapple with complex issues. Thank you to the teachers, staff, students, parents and community members who work each day to make this possible.

As we head into the holiday season, and prepare for 2017, I would like to take this opportunity to share updates in a number of areas and fill you in on more great things happening in our classrooms and out in the community. Enjoy the holiday season!

Northville Public Schools will close for Winter Break at the end of the day Friday, December 23, 2016, with classes resuming on Monday, January 9, 2017, with the exception of scheduled school or athletic events as communicated directly by schools or coaches. The Board of Education Offices (Central Office) will also be closed during this same time period, other than for scheduled appointments during the first week of January (1/3/17-1/6/17), with regular business resuming on Monday, January 9, 2017.

Please join me in honoring the crucial role Northville Board of Education members play in the lives of our children, our schools and our community during School Board Recognition Month in January.

Public education is the backbone of American society and local school boards are deeply rooted in this tradition. Their job is to establish the district’s vision, mission and goals and develop policies to achieve them; to strongly encourage continuous improvement in student learning; and to advocate at the local, state and national level in support of public education. This work includes an endless string of meetings and school functions to attend; reams of reports, agendas, proposals and other documents to read and study; and a never-ending commitment to thoughtful consideration of the issues, balancing perspectives, and making difficult decisions that are both fiscally responsible and focused on what is best for students.

We are fortunate at Northville Public Schools to have a Board of Education that supports our quest to open A World of Possibilities for each and every student that will prepare them for work and life in the 21st century. Together with district leaders, the seven members of the Northville Board of Education develop policies and make tough decisions that help shape the future of our school district, and in turn our community. They bear the responsibility and oversight for an annual general fund budget of approximately $70 million, 7,200 students, 830 employees, and 11 buildings. While we make a special effort in January to show appreciation to our school board members, we realize their many contributions reflect a year-round commitment. With this in mind, I invite all the members of our community to make a special effort during School Board Recognition Month to tell our Board of Education members that their hard work, dedication and commitment of time on behalf of our community’s children has been noticed, and is truly appreciated and valued. It can be as simple as writing a note, sending an e-mail, making a phone call or simply saying “thank you” the next time you see a Board member out in the community.

The men and women serving Northville Public Schools and their years of service are:

- Mr. Adam Phelps, President, four years (Retiring effective December 31, 2016)
- Ms. Cynthia L. Jankowski, Vice President, five years
- Mr. Roland Hwang, Secretary, two years
- Mr. Matthew Wilk, Treasurer, four-and-a half years
- Ms. Ann Kalass, Trustee, three years
- Mr. James Mazurek, Trustee, six years
- Ms. Sarah Prescott, Trustee, one-year and four months
- Ms. Laurie Doner, Trustee-Elect (effective January 1, 2017)
Welcome Laurie Doner — Thank You Adam Phelps!

I also want to take this opportunity to welcome the newest member of the Board of Education, Laurie Doner (left), who will assume her new role effective January 1, 2017, and express a special thanks on behalf of the entire Northville community to Adam Phelps (right), who will be stepping down from the Board at the end of December after completing his four-year term. Mr. Phelps has served as an advocate for Northville school children and families in his roles as a Board trustee, vice president and president. During the course of his tenure on the Board of Education, Mr. Phelps also served on the Finance Sub-Committee and as the Northville Public Schools Board of Education liaison to the Northville Parks & Recreation Commission. We appreciate Adam’s service to the children and families of Northville, and recognize the impact he has had as a member of the Board of Education.

Board of Education Approves Changes to Middle School Morning Transportation Service

The Northville Board of Education recently approved changes to the middle school transportation service, adding middle school morning bus pick-up at consolidated bus stops in neighborhoods and subdivisions. The changes, impacting Hillside and Meads Mill middle school students and families, will begin no earlier than Tuesday, January 17, 2017, (the day after the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday), with updated middle school bus schedules available on the district website by January 10, 2017.

With the addition of neighborhood and subdivision stops for students, the middle school morning satellite stops will be eliminated. Bus routes and stop locations for the new morning consolidated service will be similar to the current afternoon consolidated middle school routes with some minor changes in the number of bus stops, the location of some stops, and student pick-up and drop-off times. Where possible, a bus stop will be placed at a designated time at the elementary schools that previously served as middle school satellite stops. Stops also will be added on some routes to address parent and community concerns. The Northville High School satellite program for both morning pick-up and afternoon drop-off will remain unchanged.

The district first made the move to satellite and consolidated transportation services for middle and high school students in April 2010 as one of several cost-cutting measures taken by the district at the time, in response to severe cuts in state funding. The decision by the Board and district administrators to revisit middle school transportation this year came in response to ongoing concerns raised by middle school families about the morning satellite pick-up. While the Board first began considering the changes earlier this year, action was delayed until after the completion of the Six Mile Road construction project—which presented many transportation challenges over several months for the district’s bus drivers and staff, as well as students and families.

If you haven’t done so already, I encourage all elementary and middle school parents and guardians to sign up for the Durham Bus Tracker App, which provides real-time information on the location of your child’s assigned bus relative to his or her bus stop. Information on how to download this secure app is available at Durham Bus Tracker.

Northville Educational Foundation – Give Students an EDGE

The Northville Educational Foundation Annual Campaign kicked off December 1, 2016 with the goal of raising $100,000 by February 3, 2017 to support Northville Public Schools and Give Students an EDGE (Educate, Develop, Grow and Enrich our young people’s minds). For the 2016-17 school year, the Foundation has awarded the district more than $90,000 to support Innovative Teaching Grants, the Sixth Grade Detroit Zoo Partnership, the Project Lead the Way STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) curriculum programming, the third annual STEAM Fair, and Professional Development for Teachers, among other initiatives. Our heartfelt thanks goes out to each and every donor for bringing these important learning initiatives to our students. For information about Northville Educational Foundation, and how you can support the Annual Campaign to Give Students an EDGE, visit www.SupportNEF.org.

Save the Dates for Community Lecture Series and Parent Camp 2017

The Northville Public Schools Office of Instruction will host the second installment in this year’s Community Lecture Series on Thursday, January 12, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. at Northville High School. The topic is Warning Signs, Emerging Trends in Substance Abuse, led by Scott Masi, Referral and Outreach Specialist at the St. John Providence Brighton Center for Recovery.

The Office of Instruction also is hosting the second annual Parent Camp on Saturday, February 11, 2017, at Northville High School with topics of interest for parents with kindergartners through high school seniors. Registration and refreshments will begin at 8:30 a.m., with the keynote session starting at 9:00 a.m. followed by more than 20 breakout sessions on topics including Surviving the Middle Years, Information on Standardized Assessments, Results from the 2016 Michigan Profile for Healthy Youth Survey (see item on page 3), and much, much more. All sessions will conclude by 2:00 p.m. This year’s Parent Camp keynote session will feature a panel of admissions representatives from colleges and universities including Western Michigan University, Central Michigan University, Alma College, and Butler University, among others. The panel will share insights into the college admissions process and the importance of balancing your child’s emotional and physical wellbeing with course work and activities both in and outside of school.

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Northville Public Schools is now accepting kindergarten enrollment for Fall 2017. If you have a child who will be five years of age on or before September 1, 2017, please schedule an appointment with the staff from the Office of Student Data to enroll your child by visiting www.northvilleschools.org and clicking on the "Enroll" button. Staff from the Office of Student Data will be present at your child’s school to review all necessary documentation and process his/her enrollment with you on the following dates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elementary School</th>
<th>Enrollment Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Winchester</td>
<td>February 7, 8 and 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thornton Creek</td>
<td>February 14, 15 and 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver Springs</td>
<td>February 21, 22 and 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ridge Wood</td>
<td>February 28, March 1 and 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moraine</td>
<td>March 6, 8 and 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amerman</td>
<td>March 14, 15 and 16</td>
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Please follow Steps 1-5 on the website to complete the enrollment forms and gather information regarding which documents you will need to bring with you to your scheduled appointment. If circumstances prevent you from being available for an appointment during the dates listed above for your child’s school, please select an appointment at any other school. If you are unsure of which school your child will be attending, please view the Attendance Boundary Map on the district website. As part of the enrollment process, families will receive information regarding the dates and times for Kindergarten Parent Orientation and Kindergarten Round Up gatherings that will take place in the spring at their child’s school.

All six of our elementary schools are fully-engaged in The Leader in Me framework, which emphasizes a culture of student empowerment that helps unleash each child’s full potential. To find out more about this innovative school-wide model, visit the Curriculum & Instruction page on the district website. If you have any additional questions about your child’s school, click on the link to the school’s website on the district home page at www.northvilleschools.org.

The Northville Public Schools Early Childhood Education and Extended Day Programs offers a program called Kids’ Club at each of its elementary schools. This tuition-based program allows parents the option to have their child participate in a before and/or after school childcare program. Kids’ Club is offered as an option from as early as 7:00 a.m. to the start of school and from school dismissal until 6:00 p.m. Early Childhood also offers Half-Day, Pre-K PLUS, School-Day and Full-Day programs for children as young as 3 months old and toilet trained. A Parent/Child class is also available for children who have turned two by September 1, 2017.
Early Childhood will host **Curriculum Parent Night Open Houses** on Tuesday, March 7, 2017, from 6:30-8:00 p.m. at each of the locations where preschool programs are offered including Main Street School, Thornton Creek Elementary School, Ridge Wood Elementary School and Winchester Elementary School. These Open Houses are intended for potential new families to our programs and are designed for parents and guardians. Webinars will also be provided for program overviews, curriculum information and the registration process. More detailed information will be forthcoming via the Early Childhood website, the Early Childhood The Family Connection newsletter, ListServ and the Northville Record.

**Winter Weather and Snow Day Protocols**

With the first snow day of the school year under our belts, I want to remind school families, students, staff and community members of our protocols for inclement weather days. Please know that we do not take the decision to close school lightly. We value learning, and recognize the impact that cancelling school has on our students and families. The safety and wellbeing of our students, staff and families is paramount.

When a “snow day” or “inclement weather day” is called, it is done as early as possible (before 5:30 a.m. and often earlier, including the night before in some cases). The decision is made after much deliberation among district officials who monitor road and building conditions throughout the night in consultation with other area school superintendents and with expert advice from a national meteorologist who can help predict a storm’s path as much as 48 hours before it reaches our area. The weather conditions and issues taken into consideration in closing schools due to weather include:

- The amount of snowfall and its impact on road (including side roads and dirt roads) and parking lot conditions and the ability to safely transport students to school.
- The timing of a storm and the ability of local road crews and district personnel to clear roads and parking lots in time for the safe transport of students to school.
- Ice or freezing rain and its impact on road and parking lot conditions — as well as the potential for downed trees and power lines — and the ability to safely transport students to school.
- Dangerous temperatures or wind chills that carry a high risk for frostbite in a short period of time. To close school based on cold alone (rather than in conjunction with concerns about road conditions, bus issues or other safety considerations), the actual temperature combined with wind chill considerations are greater (colder) than -19 to -22 degrees below zero. This figure is based on the range of temperature/wind chill that carries a higher risk of frostbite at the 30 minute threshold (for exposed skin). For a detailed wind chill chart, go to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration website.
- Building problems such as loss of heat, power or water service.

The quickest and easiest way to learn about school closings is via the district’s parent notification system (Edulink), which uses the main contact information within Mi-STAR to call parents with snow day notifications, student attendance issues, building updates and other important information. Details regarding the Edulink call-out system and the options available for parents can be found on the district website.

School closing announcements are also sent out via the district’s ListServ e-mail service, and through radio and television stations that participate in the Detroit Media School Closings Alliance: WJBK-TV (FOX 2), WDIV-TV (Local 4), WXYZ-TV (Channel 7), WWJ-TV (CBS Detroit), WKBD-TV (CW 50), WWJ Newsradio 950 and News/Talk WJR-AM 760.

Although it seldom occurs, it also may be necessary to close school early due to weather. In the event of an early closure, every effort is made to release elementary students no earlier than 3:15 p.m. (normal dismissal is 3:45 p.m.). This may mean that high school and middle school students are released earlier than their normal dismissal times in order to keep the buses running on time for elementary students. Again, notification regarding an early school closure is made as soon as possible by LISTSERV, Edulink, the district website and local TV and radio stations.

With the shift in weather, it’s also an appropriate time to make sure each and every student has the necessary outdoor gear to travel to and from school safely and to enjoy opportunities to get outside for recess. The general rule of thumb for outdoor recess at the elementary level is an actual temperature and wind-chill above 0 degrees. There are resources available for those who may find it a hardship to secure the necessary winter gear. If this is the case, please contact your child’s principal and/or school social worker for assistance.

I hope you will find this information helpful as we prepare to traverse another Michigan winter and all that it may bring. Stay safe and warm.

**Points of Pride from Across the District**

Every day in our classrooms, through the arts, on our fields of play, and through extracurricular endeavors, our students and teacher from across Northville Public Schools give us much to celebrate. Here are just a few recent highlights

- **Winchester Elementary School** third grader Ellie Scott had a great idea two years ago, after reading a story in Highlights magazine. She wanted to buy "Buddy Benches" for the school playground to help students make friends and feel less lonely. She shared her idea with Winchester Principal Kelly Lindsay, who shared it with the school’s Parent Lighthouse Team, who worked with the entire school community to purchase two Buddy Benches – one for the kindergarten playground and one for the main playground. When asked by Ms. Lindsay what she hoped the benches would do at Winchester, Ellie answered, "I hope these benches will help students at Winchester feel more included…and help students make new friends."

So often in our schools and in life, we as adults have ideas of what should be done, but it is way more powerful when it comes from our students. Thank you Ellie for reminding us of this!
• Kindergarten and first grade students at Amerman and Winchester elementary schools are reaching across school buildings and programs to partner with the young adult students in our special education center program at Cooke School, launching an innovative initiative aimed at addressing the instructional needs of our elementary school students and the social and vocational needs of our Cooke students. Through the Reading Connections program Cooke School students and teachers visit Amerman and Winchester classrooms once a month to read stories to the students using adaptive technology including whiteboards and adaptive switches. After the story is read, the Cooke teacher and student lead an activity related to the story to build reading comprehension among our elementary students. This is an awesome partnership that is creating volunteer and learning opportunities for all of these school communities, while also raising awareness and acceptance of students with disabilities.

• Please join me in congratulating Hillside Middle School science teacher Hadley Brill on being named the Michigan Science Teachers Association (MSTA) 2017 Science Teacher of Promise. Ms. Brill was selected for the honor for inspiring her students, demonstrating the potential for science leadership, and exhibiting a passion for science and teaching. Ms. Brill will be honored at an awards ceremony during a special dinner at the 2017 MSTA Conference on Friday, March 24, 2017.

• Also kudos to Northville High School math teacher Ashleigh Apostolovski who recently received a $500 International Baccalaureate Educator Grant from the National Society of High School Scholars (NSHSS). The grants provide additional resources to IB educators seeking to deepen and enrich curriculum content and increase student engagement. One of only 20 U.S. high school educators selected from 14 states, Canada and the Virgin Islands, Ms. Apostolovski will use the grant to purchase a subscription to Snowflake, an online program with rich manipulatives to illustrate difficult mathematical ideas.

• A heartfelt thank you goes out to Walnut Creek Country Club in South Lyon and Eagles for Children for their generous donation of more than $6,600 to the Cooke School special education program for the purchase of two small Rifton activity chairs, which provide versatile and adaptable seating for those with disabilities. Also, our thanks to Cooke staff members Cathy Shapero and Sue Capoccia who were instrumental in Cooke being selected to receive this funding.

• What started out as a quest by Northville High School senior Vinith Raj and his friends to share their love for reading with those less fortunate in the Detroit area, has spread across the state and the country with more than 2,500 books collected and donated to schools and literacy-based organizations to help ensure all students have access to books and the opportunity to experience the joy of reading. Called PagesToThePeople, Vinith and his friends Hersh Desai, Sohil Adwani, Maneesh Malpeddi and Lauren Fane, created the nonprofit in early 2016 after being disheartened to learn that many Detroit schools lacked books on their bookshelves. PagesToThePeople now has chapters in Troy, Michigan; Johns Creek, Georgia; Elkhorn Wisconsin; Berwyn, Pennsylvania; and Issaquah, Washington. This past August, Vinith and his friends drove to the Osborn Collegiate Academy of Mathematics, Science and Technology in Detroit in a car packed with books for the school's first real library.

• Congratulations to three of our Northville High School athletic coaches who were honored recently. Girls Swimming and Diving Coach Brian McNeff has been named the Girls Swim and Dive Coach of the Year after leading the NHS team to a 5th place finish in the state competition. Junior Varsity Volleyball Coach Rick Vander Veer (also an eighth grade science teacher at Hillside Middle School) is the Michigan Interscholastic Volleyball Coaches Association Sub-Varsity Coach of the Year. And, NHS Boys Varsity Lacrosse Team Coach Greg Durham was honored recently as the 2015-16 Coach of the Year by the Men's High School Lacrosse Coaches Association.

On behalf of the entire Northville Public Schools community, I wish you all a safe and joyful holiday season filled with fun, laughter, shared traditions and time spent with close family and friends. As always, I thank you for your continued support of Northville Public Schools.

Happy New Year!

Mary K. Gallagher
Superintendent