



A Message from the SUPERINTENDENT

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AT A GLANCE

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Coffee and Conversation
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IMPORTANT DATES

Board of Education Study Session
(Vision Workshop)

Tuesday, October 1, 2013
6:30-9:30 p.m.
Northville High School

Superintendent Community Coffee

Thursday, October 3, 2013
1:30-3:00 p.m.
Next Chapter Bookstore & Bistro

Upcoming

Board of Education Meetings

Tuesday, October 8, 2013
7:30 p.m.
Hillside Middle School Forum

Tuesday, October 22, 2013
7:30 p.m.
Thornton Creek Elementary School

Tuesday, November 12, 2013
7:30 p.m.
Hillside Middle School Forum

Tuesday, November 19, 2013
7:30 p.m.
Silver Springs Elementary School

No School (Election Day)

Tuesday, November 5, 2013

DEAR NORTHVILLE SCHOOL FAMILIES, STAFF AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

We are just a month into the new school year, and already our students and teachers are deeply immersed and engaged in the pursuit of learning, whether in the classroom, on our athletic fields, in the arts, or out in the community. My sincere appreciation to all of the members of our school community for your patience as we have worked through a few beginning of the school year bumps in the road (pun intended for those of you who have had to traverse 8 Mile Road going to and from school)!

I am pleased to report that as we opened the doors to our schools on September 3, 2013, we welcomed an increase in the number of students and families across the district, for a net gain of more than 90 new K-12 students. This is great news for Northville Public Schools, as well as the entire Northville community. We also have increased the overall number of teaching positions by 10, over and above replacing teachers who retired during the 2012-13 school year, which means improved class sizes for our K-12 programs.

As a district, we also have the honor of welcoming several new and familiar faces to our leadership team for the 2013-14 school year, including **Nadine Harris** as **Director of Special Services** for the district; **Deborah Madeja** as **Principal of Amerman Elementary School**; **Heather Bauer** as **Assistant Principal of Ridge Wood Elementary School**, and **Alicia Parsons**, serving in a dual role as **Ridge Wood Principal and Coordinator of Student Growth and Achievement Data**. In addition, we are in the process of hiring a new supervisor for our Special Education Center Program at Cooke School to succeed current Supervisor Mary Meldrum, who recently accepted a position with the Macomb County Intermediate School District. It is our hope that we will bring forward a candidate for Board of Education consideration in early October.

As we officially turn the corner from summer to fall and head into the heart of the school year, I want to take this opportunity to share updates in a number of areas and draw your attention to some great things happening in our schools.

TRAVELING BACK IN TIME

We once again had a wonderful day for our third graders to visit the Victorian Festival on Friday, September 13, 2013, and travel back in time to explore our community's Victorian roots. This year marked the 25th year for downtown Northville's popular weekend-long festival, as well as the unique hands-on learning experience that is the culmination of our third graders' study of local history. The more than 500 students, dressed in Victorian-era costumes, toured Northville the Friday morning before the festival opened to the public, participating in a variety of activities coordinated by Northville Public Schools with the generous support of the Northville Chamber of Commerce, local businesses and the City of Northville, as well as numerous volunteers, and school district teachers, staff and students.



culture, architecture and community. Northville High School National Honor Society students also donned Victorian wear to serve as tour guides at Mill Race, sharing skits depicting life in Northville more than a century ago.

In their travels, students played Victorian-era children's games at Ford Field, heard stories about our community's past at the First Presbyterian Church of Northville, enjoyed an interactive experience with a magician at the Town Square, listened to Victorian songs sung by the Northville High School choir at Genitti's Little Theatre, and took a guided tour of Mill Race Historical Village where they examined Victorian

This interactive learning experience allows history to come to life in meaningful and memorable ways for our students. I am proud that our community unites behind such an outstanding learning opportunity. On behalf of the entire school district, my thanks to our city leaders, community organizations, businesses, community members and volunteers whose unwavering support make this incredible experience possible year-in and year-out for our third graders.



TEACHING AND LEARNING IN TECHNOLOGY-EQUIPPED CLASSROOMS

As many of you are aware, teachers and students across the district are now teaching and learning in technology-equipped classrooms that offer flexibility for students to access the tools they need to be successful, and a stronger, more adaptable tool-set for teachers to address the individual learning needs of their students. This new interactive classroom technology — including new computers and laptops, interactive whiteboards, document cameras, and audiovisual systems — was installed at Northville High School, as well as Hillside and Meads Mill middle schools, over the summer, with installation at the district's six elementary schools taking place throughout the fall.

In addition, 26 Technology Teacher Leaders from across the district began intensive training over the summer with the goal of supporting their fellow teachers in the integration of the new technology into instructional practices for the benefit of all students. The Technology Teacher Leaders — including two at each elementary school, three at each of the middle schools, six at the high school, at two at Cooke School — will lead tutorials for their colleagues in the use of the technology during professional development sessions that began in August and that will continue throughout the school year. These leaders also will serve as resources to teachers and staff in their buildings as they integrate

the new tools into their classrooms and the curriculum.

These much-needed technology enhancements provide proven educational technology that adapts to individual student learning styles, strengthens college and career readiness for all students, and are a key piece in the puzzle in the district's vision for 21st century learning. The guiding principles throughout the district's technology planning are focused on what will best support student achievement and prepare students for a lifetime of learning. As instructional delivery systems are updated and refined, true student-focused, immersive learning takes place when the most appropriate technologies are available in the classroom.

Other technology upgrades that took place over the summer include a new voice communication (phone) system using IP technology and district server and storage network improvements that offer more storage and a modern user interface. Technology improvements on tap for the 2013-14 school year include upgraded building security systems, phase two installation of the digital video system, additional mobile computing devices, and the addition of student response and assessment systems.

CREATING A VISION FOR 21ST CENTURY LEARNING

Now that we have moved forward in the technology arena, the Board of Education and district leaders — with input from teachers, staff, students, families and community members — will be taking some time this year to create our vision for what Northville Public Schools should look like five to 10 years down the road in order to maximize the success of our students in the 21st century and beyond. We will begin this process with a visioning workshop on October 1, 2013 — led by Dr. Shawn K. Smith of Modern Teacher — that will include representatives from the school district's key stakeholder groups. Modern Teacher is an educational media company designed to support educators and maximize teaching effectiveness in the digital world through a wide range of innovative and customized professional development services.

A major component of the three-hour workshop will be a "flipped learning"

experience that will provide an opportunity for Board of Education members and district leaders to hear perspectives directly from students, staff and parents, including leveraging the voice of students regarding the ways in which online tools are impacting their world. The goal is to shift the dialog among Board members and district leaders toward a strategic path that focuses on modern learning environments, including methods, policies and practices, and support for teachers, principals and administrators.



As the school district's vision is refined, look for opportunities for broader stakeholder feedback. Following this process, the Board of Education will also establish district goals for the 2013-14 school year.

CANDIDATES SOUGHT TO SERVE ONE-YEAR TERM ON BOARD OF EDUCATION

As many of you may know, Northville Board of Education member Joseph Hige, Jr., has announced that he will step down from the Board at the completion of his current four-year term on December 31, 2013. In doing this, Joe is opting not to serve the additional one-year extension of his term that is the result of a new state law that went into effect in 2012 requiring that school board elections take place only during General Elections, which occur in November of even numbered years.

In the case of such a resignation, the Board's by-laws require that remaining Board of Education members appoint a legally qualified individual to fill the vacancy. The appointee will serve on the Board through December 31, 2014, and may choose to run for election to the four-year term, beginning in January 2015, in the next regular school board election on November 4, 2014. Northville school district residents interested in serving the one-year term are asked to

complete the Board of Education Appointment Application, which can be found on the district's website at www.northvilleschools.org. The deadline for applications is noon on Thursday, October 24, 2013. The Board of Education will interview candidates at a public meeting(s) to be scheduled between Tuesday, October 29, 2013 and Tuesday, November 12, 2013, with final approval by the Board anticipated at the Board of Education meeting on either November 12 or November 19, 2013. Specific dates, times and locations for candidate interviews, which are open to the public, will be announced as soon as they are available.

Joe has served as an advocate for Northville school children and families in his roles as a Board trustee and treasurer over the last four years. We value Joe's input into Board decisions and knowledge of budgetary practices, and wish him well in his future endeavors.



UNIQUE PARTNERSHIP BRINGS INTERNATIONALISM TO LIFE AT NHS THROUGH MURAL

Thanks to the funding support of three prominent community organizations — the **Northville High School PTSA**, **Mothers' Club of Northville** and the **Northville Educational Foundation** — a breathtaking, 80-foot, circular mural featuring iconic architecture from around the world now hangs from the ceiling of the Northville High School cafeteria for students and staff to reflect on and learn from. The mural was painted by local artist, independent film director and NHS parent **Dan Hackett**, who also generously donated a portion of the mural's total cost in honor of his daughter, who is a junior at the high school this year.

The mural is an important visual example of the school district's efforts to integrate internationalism into the culture and curriculum of its schools in keeping with the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum. Thanks to the ongoing funding support of the Northville Educational Foundation, Northville Public Schools is currently in the candidacy phase to become an IB World School, with plans to offer both the IB Diploma Program for highly motivated 11th and 12th graders, and IB Middle Years Program for all students grades 6-10.

Working in concert with the district's IB administrators and teachers, the mural features architecture, both past and present, from 20 different countries, including Japan, Germany, Lebanon, India and Russia, to name just a few, that are representative of our district's current and evolving student population.

Our heartfelt appreciation to the NHS PTSA, Mothers' Club of Northville and the Northville Educational Foundation, as well as artist Dan Hackett, for bringing this incredible piece of artwork to fruition for the benefit of all our students and staff. A community dedication ceremony for the mural is planned for the near future and a plaque recognizing the donors and artist will be permanently installed outside the cafeteria.



POINTS OF PRIDE FROM ACROSS THE DISTRICT

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

- I am delighted to report that many of our teachers and students once again took advantage of a wide range of learning opportunities throughout the summer months aimed at strengthening the skill set of teachers and allowing students to build knowledge in key academic areas and explore enrichment opportunities. This includes 30 teachers from Northville Public Schools who attended the **Galileo Learning Summit** in August together with 470 educators from across the tri-county region; more than 100 teachers and staff from Silver Springs, Winchester and Ridge Wood elementary schools who took part in *The Leader in Me* training sessions; more than 50 teachers and administrators from across the district who participated in **technology training**; and the record 848 students who took advantage of learning opportunities offered through the school district's **Summer Connections** summer school program, including 650 students who took online courses through Michigan Virtual School.
- I also am proud to report that **18 Northville High School seniors have been recognized as National Merit Scholar Semi-Finalists and nine as National Merit Scholar Commended students** by the National Merit Scholar Competition. National Merit Scholars are recognized as academically outstanding based on the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholar Qualifying Test taken their junior year. National Merit Semi-Finalists rank among the top 1 percent of their peers academically nationwide, and Commended students rank among the top 5 percent. Congratulations to all these students on this outstanding achievement. The Board of Education will honor these students during its October 8, 2013 meeting at Hillside Middle School.

- When the more than 200-member strong **Northville High School Mustang Marching Band** took the field for the first home varsity football game a few weeks ago, they were clad in new, colorful, sleek, modern marching band uniforms thanks to the support of many generous donors from across our community. Our sincere appreciation to the many families and businesses who contributed to the Adopt-A-Uniform drive, as well as to the Conrad Langfield Fund and the Ruth Heyman Shattuck Foundation for their significant donations. Go Mustangs!





COFFEE AND CONVERSATION WITH THE SUPERINTENDENT

Finally, I would like to personally invite Northville school parents, guardians and community members for coffee and informal conversation at the first **Superintendent Community Coffee** of the 2013-14 school year. The coffee will take place **Thursday, October 3, 2013, from 1:30-3:00 p.m. at Next Chapter Bookstore & Bistro**, 141 East Main Street in downtown Northville.

The coffees, which I started hosting last year, offer school families and community members the opportunity to ask questions, offer input and learn more about the school district in a small group setting. I also am eager to hear from school families and residents about those issues and concerns that are most important to them. The coffees have an informal format. Those attending are welcome to come and go at any time during the specified timeframe.

Look for additional Superintendent Coffees to be scheduled for school families, community members and staff throughout the 2013-14 school year. Specific dates, times and locations will be sent via LISTSERV.

Thank you for your continued support of Northville Public Schools. Together — students, teachers, staff, parents and community members — we commit to building upon our outstanding educational and service opportunities for our students that will grow creativity, drive achievement, and inspire the next generation of wise and compassionate world citizens.

We are looking forward to an outstanding 2013-14 school year!

Sincerely,

Mary K. Gallagher
Superintendent

Community Coffee With the Superintendent

Northville Public Schools Superintendent Mary Kay Gallagher invites parents and community members for coffee and an informal opportunity to ask questions, provide feedback and/or discuss school district issues.

**Thursday, October 3, 2013
1:30 – 3:00 p.m.
Next Chapter Bookstore & Bistro
141 East Main Street
(Downtown Northville)**