



# A Message from the SUPERINTENDENT

March 1, 2013

Volume 1 • Issue 1



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## DEAR NORTHVILLE SCHOOL FAMILIES, STAFF AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Welcome to the first edition of "A Message from the Superintendent," a new format for regular communication from me to you with the latest news about important issues impacting Northville Public Schools, as well as items celebrating some of the incredible work being done by our students, teachers and staff everyday in our classrooms and across our community.

It is my hope that this newsletter will provide another opportunity for school families and community

members to learn more about our schools and stay up to date on important district issues and happenings. For your convenience, the newsletter is organized by topic — feel free to click around to those items of greatest interest to you by using the "At A Glance" menu on the left-hand side of this page.

As always, I welcome your questions and input. Thank you for your continued support of Northville Public Schools.

## ATTENDANCE BOUNDARY COMMUNITY FORUMS ON MARCH 5 AND MARCH 11

Northville school families and community members can provide feedback on several proposed options for changes to the school district's 2013-14 elementary and middle school attendance boundaries during two community forums being hosted by the Northville Board of Education in March.

Maps of the Northville Public Schools district showing the changes proposed under each of seven options will be presented and discussed at the forums and are posted on the district website at:

<http://www.northville.k12.mi.us/node/1074>.

The Attendance Boundary Community Forums are scheduled for the following dates, times and locations:

- **Tuesday, March 5, 6:30- 8 p.m.**, in the Meads Mill Middle School Cafeteria
- **Monday, March 11, 6:30-8 p.m.**, in the Hillside Middle School Cafeteria

The Attendance Boundary Community Forums will offer participants an explanation of the boundary

change options being considered by the Board; an overview of why boundary changes are necessary, including the results of a demographic study, enrollment projections and facility assessment; and the guiding principles being considered by the Board as boundary options are evaluated. School board members and district leaders will be on hand at the forums to take feedback and answer questions at small group discussion "stations." Participants also will be asked to complete a feedback form before leaving each session.

Following the Attendance Boundary Community Forums, the Board will continue to evaluate and narrow attendance boundary options — with consideration given to community input — at a Board Committee of the Whole meeting slated for Tuesday, March 19, 2013. Citizen comment and public hearing opportunities also will be available at the March 26, 2013 Board of Education meeting at Thornton Creek Elementary School. The Board is expected to vote on a final Attendance Boundary Plan for the 2013-14 school year at its April 9, 2013 meeting at Hillside Middle School.

## IMPORTANT DATES

### Attendance Boundary Community Forum

Tuesday, March 5, 2013  
6:30-8:00 p.m.

Meads Mill Middle School Cafeteria

Monday, March 11, 2013  
6:30-8:00 p.m.

Hillside Middle School Cafeteria

### March Board of Education Meetings

Tuesday, March 12, 2013  
7:30 p.m.

Hillside Middle School Forum

Tuesday, March 26, 2013  
7:30 p.m.

Thornton Creek Elementary School

## SERIES 1 TECHNOLOGY BONDS SOLD

I am delighted to share with you the district's successful sale of its Series 1 2013 School Technology Bonds in the amount of \$16.27 million. The bonds will be used to purchase and install instructional technology improvements, communications and building security systems and

related equipment, infrastructure and remodeling, as well as to pay the cost of issuing the bonds.

The district's bonds were sold as a private placement to the low bidder PNC Bank at a true interest of rate of 1.76 percent with a final maturity of 2020 (a



repayment term of about eight years). We are very pleased with the bid received and the resulting low overall cost of borrowing the district will experience over the length of this financing. The positive financial rating of the district's bond issue contributed to the opportunity to sell the bonds at a favorable rate, maximizing bond dollars targeted directly toward the much-needed technology improvements the Northville community supported in the November 2012 Bond Election.

The Technology Bond funds will support the district's technology plan for at least the next 12 years by issuing bonds through two separate series. The

Series 2 bonds, comprising \$4.6 million, will be issued in four to five years to "refresh" the district's initial technology investment from the bond and extend the viability of the district's computing devices as technology continues to evolve at an increasingly fast pace.

The school district's financing of the Series 1 bonds was conducted by the Michigan investment banking office of the brokerage firm, Stifel, Nicolaus & Company, Inc.; the financial advising firm Stauder, Barch & Associates, Inc.; and bond counsel Thrun Law Firm, P.C.

### WORK BEGINS ON TECHNOLOGY BOND PROJECTS

With the Series 1 bond sale process completed, I also am pleased to report that work is well underway on a number of Technology Bond projects approved by voters in November. At its meeting on February 12, 2013, the Northville Board of Education awarded the contract for the replacement and upgrade of the district's server and storage area network. At its February 26, 2013 meeting, the Board awarded the contract for the installation of new voice communication systems (phones).

These improvements will provide the district with a server network that has a modern user interface. Students and staff will have more storage space for collaborative work and the new system will be able to handle all of the demands of a modern educational network. This also will allow the district to offer more "cloud" based solutions for students and teachers. From a storage standpoint, these upgrades substantially enhance the magnitude of the system's capacity and provide greater ability for students to maintain their classroom and homework assignments digitally. For teachers, the greater storage capacity offers a place to gather and archive digital curriculum to share with students and collaborate with colleagues. The new server will enhance the district's ability to dynamically allocate computer system resources to allow for more digital learning technologies and systems in the future. Another exciting improvement is the addition of VMView technology, which will allow staff and students to have secure and

remote access to their files. This new system design also supports a responsible approach to ensuring that a contingency is in place should some major outage or failure occur. It provides for stabilization of the network and data access so that essential services can be supported in the case of a natural or accidental failure.



The new voice communication system will move the district from old TDM technology to newer and more widely used IP technology. The new phones will be linked to computers, allowing for unified voice messaging that can be accessed by phone with a notification via e-mail when there is a voice mail message.

The core of the new system is two redundant, server-based systems that have complete failover should one of the systems fail. There also is an Emergency Notification system included which will not only assist in getting detailed information to public safety agencies, but will also provide for internal notifications (telephone, text, e-mail) of when and where 911 calls have been placed. Within the next two months, bid recommendations for the classroom audiovisual systems, structured cabling, and electrical, mechanical and general trades will be brought forward for Board consideration.

### BOARD APPROVES PURCHASE OF SIX NEW SCHOOL BUSES

In addition to the technology upgrades underway across the district, you may recall that the Technology Bond Proposal approved by voters in November also included approximately \$2 million for the purchase of replacement buses for the district's aging fleet. To this end, the Board of Education recently approved the purchase of four new 77-passenger school buses to be delivered in April 2013, and the purchase of two special needs buses to be delivered in September 2013. The total cost of these six buses is about \$525,000. Of the district's current 46-bus fleet, 13 buses are

at least 15 years old with an average of 153,000 miles. For several of these buses it is no longer cost-efficient to make the costly repairs that would likely be necessary in the near future to keep them operational.

Although the district currently contracts with private transportation service to operate the district's bus fleet, Northville Public Schools retains ownership of the fleet. This option provides the district and Board of Education the opportunity to monitor the effectiveness and cost-savings of the contracted service without limiting future options.

### FALL 2013 KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION UNDERWAY

Northville Public Schools is now accepting kindergarten enrollment for fall 2013. If you have a child who will be five years of age on or before November 1, 2013, please contact your local elementary school for kindergarten enrollment information, as well the dates and times for your school's Kindergarten Parent Information meeting and Kindergarten Round-Up visit. Parents are asked to register their incoming kindergartners by April 30, 2013.

Please note that the November 1<sup>st</sup> age requirement mentioned above reflects the recent change in Michigan law that will roll back the age eligibility for kindergarten entry to September 1<sup>st</sup> by the 2015-16 school year. In the past, a child who was five years or older on or before December 1<sup>st</sup> could be enrolled in kindergarten. During this three-year transition, families wishing to enroll their child in kindergarten based on the



phased out date of December 1<sup>st</sup> may request a waiver. Information about the waiver process is available at:

<http://www.northville.k12.mi.us/node/610>.

In addition, Northville Public Schools is exploring offering one section of HALF-DAY kindergarten again next year. During the kindergarten registration process, parents interested in the half-day program will be

asked to complete the "Kindergarten Half-Day Enrollment Commitment Form" which is available on the district website at <http://www.northville.k12.mi.us/node/584>. A decision regarding whether there is sufficient interest to offer a half-day program, as well as the location for the class, will be finalized and communicated to parents in late-May or early-June.

### AMERMAN PRINCIPAL DR. ANDERSON RETIRING IN JUNE

Many of you may have already heard that long-time Amerman Elementary School Principal Dr. Stephen Anderson will retire at the end of this school year. Dr. Anderson has served the Amerman school community, as well as the larger Northville Public Schools community, for 21 years. During Dr. Anderson's tenure with Northville Public Schools, his leadership has been instrumental in a number of arenas, including a steadfast commitment to parent involvement and education; Amerman's Green School effort (achieving Emerald status); offering a variety of learning-centered extra-curricular opportunities for students (i.e. Lego Robotics, Chess Club, Science Olympiad); securing grant funding for project work; and a tremendous focus on action research.

We appreciate Dr. Anderson's leadership, and look forward to recognizing him for his service to the children, staff, and community of Northville Public

Schools as the end of the school year approaches. We also appreciate the ample notice of retirement that Dr. Anderson has provided, as it will allow for a thorough search and selection process and a thoughtful transition in leadership. We consider the process of selecting a building leader to be critically important, and value the input of staff, parents, and students.

The time line and process for posting, interviewing, and hiring a new principal for Amerman Elementary School is available on the district website at [www.northville.k12.mi.us](http://www.northville.k12.mi.us). Updates will be provided as information becomes available including dates and times for the opportunities for staff and parent input into this process.

### NORTHVILLE AND DETROIT STUDENTS JOIN FORCES TO FEED THE HUNGRY

Once again this year, students from all six of our elementary schools in Northville are joining forces with inner-city Detroit students to learn more about world hunger and, most importantly, do something about it through the Kids Against Hunger Michigan Coalition "Michigan Project" and the Gleaners Community Food Bank Kids Helping Kids initiative.

The eight food packing events, which got underway in late-January and will continue through March, bring together elementary students from different experiences and cultures to work and learn side-by-side at Detroit area landmarks including the Arab American National Museum in Dearborn and Gleaners in Detroit, as well as the Jack Doheny Supplies warehouse in Northville.

Kids Against Hunger is an international, volunteer-driven organization dedicated to providing food to malnourished and starving children throughout the world, including right here in metro Detroit. Through the Kids Against Hunger "Michigan Project," which specially tailors food-packing events to the school setting, more than 5,500 Northville and Detroit students have worked together to pack over 750,000 meals since 2005.

This marks the eighth year Northville and Detroit students are coming together to pack food for Kids Against Hunger, as part of a partnership with local non-profit organizations such as Bridgepointe, the Plymouth Kiwanis, the Conrad Charitable Foundation, Mothers' Club of Northville, and other local school and community groups. Northville Public Schools is also pleased this year to welcome several area businesses as sponsors of the Kids Against Hunger and Kids Helping Kids events providing more than \$7,000 to purchase the food and packing materials, cover shipping costs and/or provide transportation to the packing events. Sponsors include:



- **Gold Sponsor** — Patti Mullen & Associates, Remerica Hometown One
- **Silver Sponsors** — Grand Rapids Building Supply, Inc., and Durham Transportation Services
- **Bronze Sponsors** — Clark Hill PLC; Tom Holzer Ford, Inc.; Stifel Nicolaus & Company, Inc.; and Wright & Hunter, Inc.

We believe very strongly that Kids Against Hunger and Kids Helping Kids are an integral part of what makes our schools and our community strong. Just as we value exemplary academics, athletics, the arts and extra-curricular opportunities — the opportunity to stand shoulder to shoulder with students from inner-city communities in service to others empowers our students, strengthens relationships, builds awareness of our global society, and offers an incredible service experience for those students, teachers and community members who participate.



### NORTHVILLE HIGH SCHOOL HONORS NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARS

At a special breakfast event sponsored by the Northville Educational Foundation (NEF), Northville Board of Education members, NEF Board members, Central Office administrators, principals, counselors and teachers will join parents in celebrating the success of 28 Northville High School seniors receiving National Merit Scholar honors. Among the 28, are 11 receiving "Commended" honors; three National Merit Semi-Finalist; and 14 National Merit Finalists. National Merit Commended students rank among the top 5 percent of seniors nationwide academically, while Semi-Finalists rank among the top 1 percent nationally and Finalists represent

the top less than 1 percent of their peers academically. Students can invite their parents and siblings, and also have the opportunity to ask a teacher who has had an impact on their success to the National Merit breakfast, scheduled to take place on Tuesday, March 19, 2013. It is truly a privilege each year to honor these outstanding students and to hear them pay tribute to their parents for the support, wisdom and guidance they offer, as well as to hear powerful examples of the impact that our passionate, dedicated and caring teachers and counselors have on their success.

### BRYAN MASI NAMED MIAAA REGION 11 ATHLETIC ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR

I am very pleased to share with you that the Michigan Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (MIAAA) has named Northville High School Athletic Director Bryan Masi the Michigan Region 11 Athletic Administrator of the Year. There are 14 regions in the state and Region 11 is comprised of school districts in Wayne, Oakland, Livingston and Genesee counties. Masi was nominated for this honor by his colleagues in the Kensington Lakes Activities Association (KLAA). He will receive the

award at the MIAAA State Conference in Traverse City on March 18, 2013. Bryan is an outstanding athletic director who has worked tirelessly to make athletics an integral part of the Northville Public Schools learning community. Through his leadership and commitment, our student athletes at both the high school and middle school levels compete at the highest level of interscholastic competition to reach their educational and athletic goals. We are fortunate to have Bryan as part of our team.

### NORTHVILLE HIGH SCHOOL CHAMBER CHOIR HONORED AT THE 8<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MICHIGAN MUSIC CONFERENCE

The Northville High School Chamber Choir accepted the honor of performing for music educators across the state at the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Michigan Music Conference in January, 2013. The Chamber Choir (*pictured below*) is one of 10 choirs in the Northville High School choir program of over 560 students, and is the largest High School choir program in the state. The select mixed ensemble of 20 singers has the opportunity to experience in-depth study of choral music at an accelerated pace, enabling them to achieve sensitivity to precision, musical nuance, and aesthetic quality. The Chamber Choir performs at school concerts, community events, and festivals with various styles of music from madrigals to 20<sup>th</sup> century compositions and special emphasis on a cappella selections.

students each, selected from across the State for performing at the highest level. Ashley Hart, Michael Dause, Annelie Herrmann and Lauren Wickett were also selected among the top 120 singers in the state to go on and perform at the All-State Honors Choir at the prestigious Michigan Youth Arts Festival in May. Congratulations to each of these students for making the State and All-State Honors' Choir, and for the hard work and many hours of practice they put into achieving at this level!

Additionally, Northville High School students Patrick Murray, Ashley Hart, Michael Dause, Annelie Herrmann and Lauren Wickett, as well as Hillside Middle School students Jackie Cole, Maddie Green, Emily Mazzara and Jaya Thyagarajan were honored to perform as members of the State Honors Choirs. The Honors Choirs are comprised of no more than 100

We have tremendous pride in our choir program, and value the opportunity to hear our students' voices lifted in song under the talented direction of Choir Directors Mark Krempsi, Mary Kay Pryce and Beth Richert at the high school level; and Amanda Good and Vicky Kopistiansky at the middle school level. This tremendous participation in our choir program underscores the degree to which our students, our families and our community values a comprehensive high school program and the integral role that the Performing Arts have in our student's education and experience in Northville Public Schools.

Finally, I would like to personally invite Northville school parents, guardians, and community members for coffee and an informal conversation at my next Superintendent Community Coffee on Wednesday, March 20, 2013, 1:30-3 p.m., at the Next Chapter Bookstore & Bistro, 141 East Main Street in downtown Northville. The coffees 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 coffee will have an informal format. Those attending are welcome to come and go at any time during the specified timeframe.

We have much to be proud of as we continue to work toward providing the best possible educational programs for all students. Thank you to our students, teachers, staff, families and community members for all that each of you do to help make this possible.

Sincerely,

*Mary K. Gallagher*

Mary K. Gallagher  
Superintendent

