As another school year comes to a close, I want to take this opportunity to thank you for choosing Northville Public Schools and for entrusting us with your children each day. We are truly grateful for the incredible support of the entire Northville community, which values exemplary programs for all students—whether in the academic arena, in the arts, or on our fields of play. I am likewise grateful for the collective work of our students, teachers and administrators in collaboration with parents, toward a vision that builds on our strong Tradition of Excellence and opens A World of Possibilities for all students.

School district leaders, together with the Board of Education, continue to plan for the 2015-16 school year, including a review of enrollment forecasts and ongoing evaluation of school funding proposals at the state level. As of this publication, the state legislature has reached agreement on the School Aid Bill, which has been forwarded to the Governor for consideration. If signed by the Governor, Northville will see a net overall increase of $25 per pupil, which equates to less than a 1 percent increase. We anticipate hearing news of the final School Aid Act by the end of the month.

We continue to work hard to maintain the overall fiscal health of the district. As a result of Michigan’s economic climate and the significant cuts in school funding over the past decade, we have had to make some difficult decisions—such as the softening of Michigan’s economy, largely attributed to a declining birth rate that began in 2003-04 with the severe cuts in school funding over the past five years. Enrollment projections indicate a continuation in the enrollment decline through the next five years. As we plan for 2015-16, we are cognizant of the need to maintain and/or improve class sizes where possible and continue to offer all of our students learning experiences both in and outside of the classroom that challenge them to meet their full potential as members of this 21st century world.

At the same time, we are mindful of the likelihood of flat and/or very modest increases in state funding for the foreseeable future. As with this year’s proposed state funding, it is very likely that Northville will continue to receive a relatively lower per-pupil increase than districts who receive less than Northville’s foundation allowance, which for 2014-15 was $8,099 per pupil.

Enrollment remains a significant watch point as well. Enrollment projections indicate a continuation in enrollment decline through the next five years, largely attributed to a declining birth rate that began in 2003-04 with the softening of Michigan’s economy, and which continued until 2013. We continue to enroll new families. The issue will be the degree to which we are able to make up for the difference in the larger exiting senior classes versus the number of incoming kindergarten students.

A Budget Hearing will take place on Tuesday, June 23, 2015, at 6:30 p.m. in the Hillside Middle School Forum. At this time, the district’s 2015-16 budget will be presented, followed by an opportunity for public comment. The Budget Hearing will be followed by a regular meeting of the Board of Education, at 7:30 p.m., which will offer another opportunity for public comment before the Board adopts a balanced budget for the 2015-16 school year, as required by state law.

We are also mindful of the impact these budget challenges have already had on our students, staff and parents and remain grateful for the support of our families, businesses and community organizations, who offer incredible time, talent and funding to make it possible for Northville Public Schools to provide an excellent educational experience for all students.
**Tentative 2015-16 School Year Calendar Available Online**

Tuesday, September 8, 2015 will be the first day of the 2015-16 school year for Northville Public Schools students. Due to the district’s ongoing bargaining with its employee groups, it is not yet known whether the first day of school will be a half-day or a full-day for students. Parents and students will be informed as soon as possible over the summer once this information is available.

To view the tentative 2015-16 Northville Public Schools calendar, visit the district website at [http://www.northvilleschools.org/node/487](http://www.northvilleschools.org/node/487). The final Northville Public Schools 2015-16 calendar will be available once the negotiations process with each of the school district’s employee groups is completed.

Also, please note for your family’s future travel plans, that there has been a change in the current Wayne County Five-Year Common Calendar impacting Spring Break dates for the 2016-17 and 2018-19 school years. Because the Easter holiday falls later in April in these two years, Spring Break has been moved to the first full week of April. For 2016-17, this means Spring Break will be April 3-7, 2017 (with the Easter holiday on April 16, 2017) and for 2018-19, this means Spring Break will be April 1-5, 2019 (with the Easter holiday on April 21, 2019). In both these years, there will be no school for students or staff on Good Friday.

Under a state law passed in 2007, Intermediate School Districts across the state and their constituent school districts are required to adopt a common school calendar that includes starting and ending dates, as well as winter and spring holiday dates for at least five years out.

**Class of 2015 Shines**

It was my great privilege – along with the teachers, principals, staff, administrators, Board of Education members, parents, family members and friends in attendance – to share in this significant moment in the life journey of our graduates from Northville High School on May 31, 2015, and our Cooke Center Program on June 10, 2015.

The Northville High School Class of 2015 had a lot to be proud of, as 555 students received diplomas during the May 31, 2015 graduation ceremony at Compuware Arena in Plymouth. Collectively, the Class of 2015 achieved excellence – in the classroom, on stage and in the arts, on our fields of play, and beyond the walls of our schools in service to others. Many overcame challenges or grappled with barriers – whether apparent to others or not – to earn their diploma. From record numbers of National Merit Finalists, Semi-Finalist and Commended students, National Honor Society Members, Scholar-Athletes, Eagle Scouts, Gold Award Girl Scouts, to those contributing thousands of hours to community service, the Class of 2015 has left its mark on Northville Public Schools!

On June 10, 2015, Northville Public Schools likewise had the privilege of honoring the Cooke School Class of 2015 graduates from our special education center program, serving students between the ages of three and 26. In a moving celebration of each graduate, along with his or her family, caregivers, teachers and staff had the opportunity to reflect on each graduate’s growth, as well as the powerful lessons learned from our students and their families. These students have challenged us to stretch beyond limitations, to break new ground in learning and growth, and have taught us every day the meaning of courage and perseverance.

On behalf of all of us at Northville Public Schools, I want to thank the members of the Class of 2015 for being active, contributing members of our school community. They have enriched our lives and have challenged us to become better educators and better human beings. We wish each of these graduates all the best as they take this next step in their journey, knowing that each has the tremendous potential to make the world a better place for all of us today and for future generations.

**State Looking for Parent Feedback on New M-STEP Student Assessment**

With the administration of the first Michigan Student Test of Educational Progress (M-STEP) behind us, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is seeking parent feedback on the new student assessment. To participate in the survey go to [https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/spring2015M-STEPParentsSurvey](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/spring2015M-STEPParentsSurvey). M-STEP, which replaces the 44-year-old Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP), marked the first time all statewide assessments were administered online. Students from across Michigan in grades three through eight, as well as 11th graders, took the summative assessment in three-week testing blocks during the April to early-June testing window set by the state. For more information about M-STEP, visit the MDE website at [http://www.michigan.gov/mde](http://www.michigan.gov/mde).
NORTHVILLE HAS ANOTHER OUTSTANDING REFLECTIONS YEAR

Northville students had another outstanding year for participation and the number of winners in the nationally sponsored PTA Reflections program, including three winners at the national level, with one – Lauren Atkinson from Meads Mill Middle School – taking first place in Middle School Photography. Other national winners are Hanna Ichikawa from Thornton Creek Elementary School who placed fourth in Intermediate Visual Arts and Aditya Amoskar, from Ridge Wood Elementary School who was fourth in Primary Literature.

In total, Northville students from elementary through high school submitted 400 entries with 115 moving on to the state competition. Twenty of those students won awards at that state level (there were more than 7,000 state entries), with five selected to go on to the national level.

Other Northville state winners include – in Music Composition: Alex Ge, Meads Mill; In Literature: Ryan Afsari, Thornton Creek; Kristina Mallabo, Meads Mill; and Anoushka Ravindran, Northville High School; In Visual Arts: Julia Jin, Ridge Wood; Nicole Zhong, Amerman Elementary School; and Liana Lau, Hillside Middle School; In Photography: Anderson Herdoiza, Moraine Elementary School; Rachel Asher, Silver Springs Elementary School; Cate Leneschmidt, Thornton Creek; Alexis Aulepp, NHS; and Malcolm Wang, Hillside; In Dance: Kayla Berlin, Silver Springs; and Madeline Makowski, Ridge Wood; and in Film Production: Jonah Gonyou, Silver Springs; and Santiago Ordonez, Thornton Creek.

Each year, K-12 students from across the country enter the National PTA-sponsored arts competition. Work can be entered in six categories: literature, music composition, visual arts, photography, dance choreography, and film production. As the title of the program implies, entries must “reflect” that year’s theme. This year’s theme was “The World Would be a Better Place if….” Entries are submitted in four age groups – lower elementary school, upper elementary, middle school and high school.

All Northville Public Schools Reflections participants whose entries won in the state competition were honored at a special ceremony at the Northville Art House in May, with the works of all those who competed in the state competition on display for the entire community to view. Thank you to all these talented students for sharing their incredible artistic ingenuity with us! The theme for next year’s Reflections Program is “Let Your Imagination Fly.”

GEARING UP FOR SINKING FUND SUMMER PROJECTS

The school district has a number of much-needed capital repair and improvement projects slated for our school buildings over the summer that will be funded under the district’s original Building and Site Sinking Funds millage, approved by voters in 2011 and set to expire at the end of the year. As you are probably already aware, our incredible community overwhelming supported a five-year renewal of the Sinking Fund millage in the May 5, 2015 election, with those funds becoming available beginning with the 2016 tax levy. Summer projects to be completed with funds from the 2011 Sinking Fund millage include:

- Flooring projects at Amerman and Moraine elementary schools and Meads Mill Middle School
- Lighting projects at Amerman, Silver Springs and Winchester elementary schools, Meads Mill and Northville High School
- A fire alarm project at the high school

In addition to these Sinking Fund projects, the district also has capital improvement projects planned for the summer that will be paid for with General Fund dollars. These include roof repairs at Amerman Elementary School; interior painting at Amerman and Moraine elementary schools, Meads Mill and Northville High School; and roof projects at Amerman, Meads Mill and Northville High School.

MOTHERS’ CLUB GRANT SUPPORTS PROJECT LEAD THE WAY CURRICULUM

Thanks to a generous grant from Mothers’ Club of Northville, the innovative Project Lead the Way curriculum will be available to more than 1,000 of our middle school students beginning this fall. Project Lead the Way will allow the district to expand its science, technology, engineering and math opportunities for our middle-schoolers with a focus on understanding that there is more than one way to reach a solution. Through topics such a robotics, flight and space, and DNA and crime scene analysis, Project Lead the Way students will use their natural curiosity and imagination to engage in creative problem solving. Using the same advanced software and tools as the world’s leading companies, students see firsthand how science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) impact their everyday lives. Project Lead the Way provides a strong foundation for further STEM learning in high school. During the 2015-16 school year, 100 percent of our sixth graders and 60 percent of our seventh and eighth graders will take the two foundation courses for the
District Summer Hours – Elementary and middle school offices will be open from Friday, June 12, 2015 through Tuesday, June 23, 2015, and will reopen for the 2015-16 school year on Monday, August 10, 2015. The Northville High School office will remain open for the majority of the summer, with limited staff, from 7 a.m.-11 a.m. and noon-3 p.m. weekdays. Our Board of Education/Central Office will be open throughout the summer, Mondays through Thursdays from 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. and Fridays from 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m. beginning the week of June 22nd through the week of August 3rd.

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• Summer Connections Summer School program is June 19, 2015 for elementary, middle and high school students. Summer Connections programs offer students the opportunity to review skills, explore areas of interest, recover credits, and/or earn additional credits during the summer. All in-class courses will take place at Hillside Middle School, with high school and middle school classes beginning Monday, June 22, 2015, and all elementary school classes beginning Monday, July 6, 2015. Online courses also are available for high school students. For more information or to register your student, visit the Summer Connections webpage at http://www.northvilleschools.org/node/551.

Bicyclists from novice to expert will enjoy the Rotary Club of Northville’s second annual Tour de Ville bicycle tour on Sunday, September 20, 2015. Riders can choose from three courses – 10 miles, 30 miles or 75 miles. All routes begin and end in beautiful downtown Northville and wind along historic Hines Drive and throughout the Wayne County Parks system. The rider entry fee is $40 and all pre-registered riders and $45 for day-of-the-ride registrants. Registered riders will receive a t-shirt, a light breakfast and a hearty lunch. All routes will be clearly marked with direction indicators at essential corners and route maps are provided in the registration packets. Following the Tour de Ville, riders are encouraged to stay on and visit the Victorian Festival taking place that same weekend in downtown Northville.

One-hundred percent of the proceeds from the Tour de Ville will go to charities including the Rotary Foundation (which provides support for world eradication of polio and clean water projects in Third World countries, along with other efforts) and the Rotary Club of Northville (which supports the community’s local food bank, provides scholarships, and supports local exchange student programs, among other initiatives). Part of the proceeds also will benefit Kids Against Hunger. Each year, students from all six Northville Public Schools elementary schools join forces with inner-city Detroit students to learn more about world hunger and, more importantly, do something about it through the Kids Against Hunger food packaging events. For more information about the Tour de Ville, visit www.tourdeville.org.

Points of Pride from Across the District!

• Northville High School once again made the U.S. News & World Report list of Best High Schools for 2015, receiving a silver award and ranking 567th in the nation and 12th in Michigan. The U.S. News rankings include data on more than 19,400 public high schools in 50 states and the District of Columbia. Schools are awarded gold, silver or bronze medals based on their performance on state assessments and how well they prepare students for college.

• All six of the district’s elementary schools, along with Northville High School, have been recognized by the Wayne County Regional Educational Service Agency as “Green Schools” for their environmental leadership in encouraging students, staff and parents to improve energy conservation and become environmental stewards. Northville High School earned “Green” status in its first year;
Moraine Elementary School earned “Emerald” status; and Amerman, Ridge Wood, Silver Springs, Thornton Creek and Winchester elementary schools earned “Evergreen” status.

- Congratulations to the players and coaches of the Northville High School Girls Tennis Team which recently won the Michigan High School Athletic Association State Championship! That makes it three state championships in three years for Northville High School with the Girls Cross Country Team earning the honor in fall 2013 and the Girls Soccer Team becoming State Champs in spring 2014. Go Mustangs!

- Hillside math teacher Jennifer Lawson was recently honored as the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) Detroit Chapter Educator of the Year. NCTM is the world’s largest mathematics education organization, with 80,000 members and more than 230 affiliates throughout the United States and Canada. It is the public voice of mathematics education, supporting teachers to ensure equitable mathematics learning of the highest quality for all students through vision, leadership, professional development, and research. Much-deserved Jennifer!

- Some 70 Northville students recently participated in the National French Exam, known as the “Le Grand Concours,” sponsored by the American Association of Teachers of French, with a number of students achieving excellent results. The following students received medals in their respective levels: Alex Jund, Gold Medal, Level 2; Shunhe Wang, Silver Medal; Level 5; Daniel Lee, Silver Medal, Level 3; Madison Wickett; Silver Medal, Level 3; Katherine Robertson, Silver Medal, Level 3; Clara Kim, Bronze Medal, Level 5; and Stephen Freeman, Bronze Medal, Level 3. Other students receiving Honorable Mention in their respective levels include: Emma Canedo, Derek Glaser, Taran Deshpande, Sofia Ferrabue, Soumya Kulkarni, Lola Valion; Nabiha Biviji, Monica Jianette, Shazeen Biviji, Lauren Fane, Jun-sok (Felix) Lee, Catherine Butler, Osmanse Imalele, and Jack Maibach.

- As a follow up to the Points of Pride in the May 2015 issue of my newsletter, The Northville High School Science Olympiad came in 12th overall in the country out of 60 teams in the National Science Olympiad competition in Lincoln, Nebraska. The team improved on its position of 17th last year and earned medals in three events including First Place in Wright Stuff (Austin Xie and William Ding); Second Place in Anatomy and Physiology (Sahil Tolia and Nirek Sharma); and Fifth Place in Scrambler (Jared Tao and Eric Tao). This impressive showing at nationals follow the team’s first ever State Championship. Also performing well at nationals was Meads Mill Middle Schools’ State Champion Science Olympiad Team which finished 9th overall.

We have so much to be proud of as we continue to advance our Tradition of Excellence to open A World of Possibilities for all students. Thank you to our teachers, students, staff, families and community members who make this possible.

Sincerely,

Mary K. Gallagher
Superintendent