



A Message from the SUPERINTENDENT

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IMPORTANT DATES

May and June Board of Education Meetings

Tuesday, May 28, 2013
7:30 p.m.

Amerman Elementary School

Tuesday, June 11, 2013
7:30 p.m.

Cooke School

Tuesday, June 25, 2013
7:30 p.m.

Hillside Middle School Forum

NHS Class of 2013 Commencement Ceremony

Sunday June 2, 2013
6:00 p.m.

Compuware Arena, Plymouth

Last Day of School (Half-Day)

Thursday, June 13, 2013

DEAR NORTHVILLE SCHOOL FAMILIES, STAFF AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

As spring finally makes an appearance, I would like to take this opportunity to share updates in a number of areas, draw your attention to some of the great things

happening in our schools, and keep you informed as we prepare for the 2013-14 school year.

BUDGET PLANNING UNDERWAY

School district leaders, together with the Board of Education, have begun the planning process for the 2013-14 school year, including enrollment forecasts and ongoing evaluation of school funding proposals at the state level.

As many of you are aware, Northville Public Schools continues to be challenged by Michigan's current economic climate. Over the past several years, we have had to make some difficult decisions — with sacrifices made by our staff, as well as parents and families — in order to live within this new reality. Doing this has enabled us to improve the overall fiscal health of the district in measureable ways over the past two years. I am pleased to share that on one widely respected independent measure of fiscal stability that rates the level of risk from 1 (low) to 10 (high), Northville Public Schools' rating has improved from a 3 to a 2 over the past two years. This is significant given state funding challenges. You can view this report at <http://www.munetrix.com/Michigan/Schools/GDR/Wayne-RESA/District/Northville-Public-Schools#>.

Still, we cannot sustain further loses in funding without impacting the quality of education that exemplifies Northville. We are deeply concerned that Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder's current budget proposal brings even fewer dollars into our classrooms next year, with the proposals from the House and Senate further impacting school funding.

While the proposals seek to reduce the impact of what would otherwise be significantly higher increases in mandatory district contributions to retirement costs, the School Aid budget proposals result in fewer dollars into our classrooms for operating costs other than mandatory retirement contributions. Even more alarming is the potential for legislation currently under discussion in the House that proposes a transportation funding plan that shifts sales tax revenue from fuel sales to pay for road repairs and construction. The House Fiscal Agency estimates that this will reduce **School Aid Fund revenue by approximately \$800 million each year.**

We continue as a district and community to work with our legislators to better understand the impact of legislation on our schools and to encourage them to consider what may be unintended consequences of attempting to correct one problem while creating others. We are also mindful of the impact increases in class size and class configuration have already had on our students, staff and parents and remain grateful for the support of our families, businesses and community organizations who donate incredible time, talent and funding that makes it possible for Northville Public Schools to continue to provide an excellent educational experience for all students. Look for updates on the district's and the state's budget planning processes throughout the spring via LISTSERV, Northville Council of PTAs Legislative Action Network action alerts, and the district website at www.northville.k12.mi.us.

DISTRICT READIES FOR TECHNOLOGY BOND PROJECTS

I am pleased to share that preparation is underway across the school district for a multitude of the Technology Bond projects approved by voters in the November 2012 election that are a key piece of the puzzle in the district's vision for 21st Century learning. With the lion's share of the work slated to take place over the summer, the district is looking forward to welcoming students, teachers and staff this fall to technology equipped classrooms and school buildings that offer the flexibility for students to access the tools they need to be successful, and a stronger, more adaptable tool-set for teachers to address individual learning needs.

The Northville Board of Education recently awarded contracts for much of the classroom technology — to be installed over the summer months at Northville High School and the district's two middle schools and throughout the fall at the elementary schools — including new desktop and laptop computers, classroom audiovisual systems, document cameras, instructional carts and interactive whiteboards. Contracts also have been awarded for replacement and upgrade of the district's server and storage area network, along with installation of new voice communication (phone) systems.



You also may be aware that Northville Public Schools recently moved to a new Google-based e-mail system that offers more flexibility and greater storage. While this means new e-mail addresses for all Northville Public Schools employees, rest assured that old e-mail addresses will continue to work for the foreseeable future, with messages sent to an old e-mail address (@northville.k12.mi.us) automatically forwarded to that individual's new e-mail address (@northvilleschools.org). The same will be true for the district and individual school website addresses, which will transition over the summer to "www.northvilleschools.org," but will still be able to be accessed for the foreseeable future using the old "www.northville.k12.mi.us" format.

While the result will be improved classroom and communication technology across the district, as with any effort of this magnitude there will be challenges and glitches along the way as the district transitions from old to new technology. We truly appreciate the support, cooperation and patience on the part of all our stakeholders — students, teachers, staff, families and community members — as we work to bring this initiative to its successful completion for the benefit of all students. Look for additional updates on the district's technology initiative throughout the spring and summer months via LISTSERV and by visiting the district website at www.northville.k12.mi.us.

DISTRICT ON TRACK FOR INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE AUTHORIZATION

The district's administrators, teachers, staff and students continue the deep work necessary in the multi-year process of becoming authorized as an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School. Northville Public Schools is slated to offer both the Diploma (DP) Program for highly motivated 11th and 12th grade students and the Middle Years Program (MYP) for *all* students in grades 6-10.

The work toward authorization includes a rigorous course of professional development for teachers at the middle and high school levels that is strengthening their skill set as educators as they develop IB units of study and begin sharing them with students. To date, 76 teachers have received Level I/II training in content and program specific courses, through the generous funding support of the Northville Educational Foundation. Additionally, all secondary teachers have taken part in IB training on the Learner Profile, Unit Design, Areas of Interaction and Assessment. Work continues on planning and aligning instruction between course content areas during district professional development days. This August, Northville Public Schools will host Lou Marchesano, one of the nation's leading trainers in IB assessment strategies, as part of a professional development program for middle and high school

educators. Earlier this spring, the district's IB-assigned Diploma Program consultant visited Northville High School, meeting with teachers, administrators, students and parents to assess the district's readiness for the application process and DP team authorization visit, which will likely take place in the fall. If all goes as expected, this year's current freshmen will have the opportunity to complete the Diploma Program during their 11th and 12th grade years. Our IB-assigned MYP consultant will visit the district's two middle schools and the high school May 20 - 22 to meet with teachers, administrators, students and parents to begin the next steps in the district's training and program implementation prior to our MYP team authorization visit slated for winter 2013-14.

The district also continues to host a number of IB information sessions for both students and parents, including the most recent session on May 6, 2013 which offered parents the opportunity to learn more about how the IB Middle Years Program will benefit all of the district's middle and early high school students. For more information about the IB Middle Years and Diploma programs, as well as the status of the district's authorization process, visit the district's website at: <http://www.northville.k12.mi.us/node/1165>.

MORAINÉ ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NAMED *THE LEADER IN ME* LIGHTHOUSE SCHOOL

Moraine Elementary School has earned "Lighthouse School" status as part of the transformational *The Leader in Me* model for schools based on Stephen Covey's *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*® and designed to teach leadership to students. Of the more than 1,100 *The Leader in Me* schools worldwide, Moraine is only the 46th to achieve Lighthouse School status. There are currently 40 Lighthouse Schools in the United States and just three in Michigan, including Moraine.

The Leader in Me is an innovative, school-wide model that emphasizes a culture of student empowerment that helps unleash each child's full potential. Applying *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*®, teachers and students internalize timeless leadership principles that nurture the skills students need for success in the 21st Century.

We applaud the entire Moraine community for achieving the distinction as a Lighthouse School in their *The Leader in Me* journey. This is powerful work that brings students, teachers, parents, and families together with a collective focus on learning in a way that lets loose the leadership capacity and potential within each learner. We are thrilled to have four of our elementary schools that have adopted *The Leader in Me* framework for their school improvement work as of this point in time. Silver Springs Elementary School is currently on the



Lighthouse pathway, and is slated for the final step in the review process this fall, while both Ridge Wood and Winchester elementary schools have begun the formalized *The Leader in Me* process. To have one of only three Lighthouse schools in Michigan is an incredible achievement — to have the potential for several schools to achieve this distinction is remarkable.



FOUR NORTHVILLE EDUCATORS JOIN GALILEO LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

I also am excited to let you know that four Northville educators were recently accepted into the 2013 Galileo Leadership Academy, a prestigious two-year seminar series designed to develop teacher leaders. They are:

- Matthew Stetson, Northville High School English teacher
- Kary Couchman, Northville High School English teacher
- Lisa Lindsay, Ridge Wood Elementary School second grade teacher
- Brandy Rys, Ridge Wood Elementary School second/third grade teacher

The Leadership Academy is part of the Galileo Leadership Consortium, an innovative leadership development program launched in 1997, which now includes educators from 16 school districts — including Northville Public Schools — three community colleges and three regional educational service agencies in Southeast Michigan.

To date, 50 Northville educators have completed the Galileo Leadership Academy, including the most recent graduates from the 2011-13 cohort — Sue Beth Balash, Ridge Wood; Alice Janke, Ridge Wood; Lorrie Kingsbury, Amerman Elementary School; and Alissa Lowman, Hillside Middle School. The academy's curriculum addresses educational and leadership issues and themes that include collaboration, inquiry, problem solving, reflection, informational systems and technology. The goal of the Galileo program is to foster educational leadership, which results in improved learning for all students. Our Galileo leaders have made significant contributions over the



From left are Galileo leaders Matthew Stetson, Kary Couchman, Lisa Lindsay and Brandy Rys.

years in the area of leadership within our school buildings, as well as across the district, by sharing their experiences, engaging in action research and data-driven instruction, leading professional development opportunities, and serving as springboards for innovative ideas.

NORTHVILLE STUDENTS HAVE OUTSTANDING REFLECTIONS YEAR

Northville students had another outstanding year for participation and the number of winners in the nationally sponsored PTA Reflections program. In total, Northville students from elementary through high school submitted 433 entries with 126 winning at the local level and moving on to the state competition. Twenty-six of those entries earned state level awards, and one of those — by **Northville High School junior Susan Doong** — was selected to go on to the national competition.

Each year, K-12 students from across the country enter the PTA-sponsored art competition. Work can be entered in six categories: literature, music competition, visual arts, photography, dance choreography and video

production. Entries are submitted in four age groups — lower elementary, upper elementary, middle school and high school. As the title of the program implies, entries must “reflect” that year’s theme. This year’s theme was “the Magic of a Moment.” The theme for next year’s Reflections contest is “Believe, Dream, Inspire.”

The Northville Public Schools Reflections Awards Ceremony, sponsored by the Northville Council of PTAs, will take place at the Northville Art House, 215 West Cady Street, later this month, with gallery hours slated for May 22-31, showcasing all of Northville’s state entries. Check the Art House website at www.NorthvilleArtHouse.org for specific gallery hours.

THANK YOU TEACHERS AND STAFF!

On behalf of entire Northville school community, I want to take this opportunity as a follow up to all the Teacher Appreciation Week celebrations across the district last week to recognize our incredible educators for all they do each and every day to ensure our classrooms are challenging and inspiring places for our students to learn and grow. You are the heart and soul of our vision of success for all students and I sincerely thank you for all that you do.

Thank you also to the PTA/PTSAs, parents and families at each of our individual schools for all the special celebrations honoring our teachers during national Teacher Appreciation Week, which took place May 6-10. Although we encourage students, parents, families and community members to show

appreciation for our teachers throughout the year, the special events, treats, flowers, and especially the heartfelt notes of appreciation are truly cherished.

I also want to take this opportunity on the heels of Teacher Appreciation Week to thank the Northville Educational Foundation and Mothers’ Club of Northville for once again teaming up to offer the Thank-A-Staff Program to benefit Northville students. Thank-A-Staff





is a unique way for parents, family members and community members to donate to these two fundraising groups by recognizing a special teacher, principal, counselor, coach, staff member or other individual who has made their child's or family's experience an exceptional one. During the last week of school, all recipients receive a personalized certificate with the name of the

family or student who donated in their honor. Both NEF and Mothers' Club award teacher grants annually for academic and enriching programs within Northville schools. For more information about Thank-A-Staff visit the NEF website at www.NorthvilleEdFoundation.org or the Mothers' Club website at www.MothersClubofNorthville.org.

REGISTRATION BEGINS FOR SUMMER CONNECTIONS SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAM

A reminder to Northville school families that registration is now open for the district's Summer Connections Summer School program through June 20, 2013 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 Meads Mill Middle School with middle and high school classes beginning on June 24, 2013 and all elementary classes beginning on July 8, 2013. For more information or to register you student on-line visit the Summer Connections webpage on the district website at <http://northville.k12.mi.us/node/551>.

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 students and teachers from across Northville Public Schools give us much to celebrate. Here are just a few recent highlights:

- **Northville's Academic Games Teams**, comprised of fifth and sixth grade students, recently brought home state championships in the state Super Tournament competition in advanced versions of the "Equations" and "On Sets" games, as well as "Wff 'N Proof," a game of symbolic logic. As a result of these outstanding performances, more than 20 of these Academic Games Team members advanced to the national tournament in Charlotte, North Carolina in April, where the Northville teams swept the national championship titles in all three math games and one of the sixth grade teams, "Lightening Cats", came in second overall in the tournament.
- Four of the district's elementary schools 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. The schools include, Amerman Elementary School, which has been a Green School for six years earning "Evergreen" status; Moraine Elementary School, which has been a Green School for four years earning "Evergreen" status; Silver Springs Elementary School, which has been a Green School for two years earning "Emerald" status; and Winchester Elementary School, which has been a Green School for three years earning "Green" status.
- A team of talented students from Meads Mill Middle School will be one of two middle schools representing Michigan in the **29th Annual Science Olympiad National Tournament** May 17-18, 2013 at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio. This is the second consecutive year the Meads Mill Science Olympiad Team will compete in nationals. This year's Meads Mill Team placed first in the Wayne-Monroe Regional Competition in March and first in the Michigan Science Olympiad State Tournament in April to get to the national competition.
- **Northville High School DECA**, a first year student organization at NHS, qualified two students for the International Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA) Competition in Anaheim, California in April, an incredible accomplishment. **Senior Carolyn Zhang** represented the chapter in

Principals of Marketing Division while **Junior Aillen You** represented the Principals of Business Management Division. Competing alongside 16,000 DECA members from around the world, **Aileen You** won first place in her division! The competition requires students to take a 100-question exam, as well as review and prepare a presentation on a business scenario within in a 10-30 minute timeframe. Congratulations to both students, along with NHS DECA advisor Jean Calabrese on this incredible accomplishment.

- Northville High School has once again been recognized in the Newsweek magazine **America's Best High Schools** list. The list recognizes the nation's top 2,000 high schools as those that have proven to be the most effective in turning out college-ready graduates based on indicators including graduation rates, participation in college-level classes via Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs, and acceptance into two- and four-year college programs.
- Four individual vocalists and one vocal ensemble group represented the Northville High School choir program at the **51st Annual Michigan Youth Arts Festival** on May 9, 2013 in Kalamazoo. Individual NHS vocalists senior **Michael Dause**, senior **Ashley Hart**, senior **Lauren Wickett** and junior **Annelie Herrmann** have been named Michigan Youth Arts Distinguished Scholars and were selected as members of the 125-voice All-State Choir. In addition, NHS's male vocal ensemble group **Back Beat** was selected from among hundreds of groups at the State Solo and Ensemble Festival as one of 13 finalist groups. Collectively, these 13 ensembles represent the very best high school singing groups throughout Michigan.

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
Superintendent