



A Message from the SUPERINTENDENT

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AT A GLANCE

NHS Celebrates 150 Years –
Join in the Fun

New Elementary Principals and Cooke
Assistant Supervisor on Board

Increase in Student Enrollment
Expected for 2015-16

Northville Board of Education Appoints
Sarah Prescott to 16-Month Term

Traveling Back in Time at the
Victorian Festival

Rotary Club's Tour de Ville Benefits
NPS Kids Against Hunger Initiative

Points of Pride from
Across the District

IMPORTANT DATES

Upcoming

Board of Education Meetings

Tuesday, September 29, 2015
7:00 p.m.

Moraine Elementary School

Tuesday, October 13, 2015
7:00 p.m.

Hillside Middle School (Forum)

Tuesday, October 27, 2015
7:00 p.m.

Silver Springs Elementary School

Tuesday, November 10, 2015
7:00 p.m.

Hillside Middle School (Forum)

Tuesday, November 17, 2015
7:00 p.m.

Northville High School

Homecoming

Friday & Saturday,
September 25 & 26, 2015

Election Day (No School)

Tuesday, November 3, 2015

DEAR NORTHVILLE SCHOOL FAMILIES, STAFF AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Welcome to the 2015-16 school year! With the first week and a half of school under our belt, we are off to a great start. Our sincere thanks to our students, teachers, staff and families for your patience and support as we have worked through the few minor glitches that often come with the start of a new school year.

As I have had the opportunity to visit our schools over this past week or so and to hear back from our principals and staff as they welcome back familiar faces and greet new families, students and staff, I can't help but be energized by the promise of what the new school year will bring. School is a place where our young people learn the skills and dispositions that will make them successful throughout their lives. It also is a place where they make friends, form lasting relationships, and have experiences and opportunities that will make them better people. At Northville Public Schools, we are committed to deepening our comprehensive curriculum, while continuing to educate the whole child – intellectually, physically, socially and emotionally – through initiatives such as *The Leader in Me* at our elementary schools and the International Baccalaureate Middle Years and Diploma Programs at our middle and high schools, along with a host of athletic, artistic and extracurricular endeavors. As a school district, we are truly advancing our **Tradition of Excellence** and opening a **World of Possibilities**, as we work collectively to ensure each and every student is prepared to succeed in a global workplace.

With this in mind, our team of teachers, administrators and support staff gathered for an **All Staff Welcome Back** celebration on Wednesday, September 2, 2015, at Northville High School that was poignant, inspiring and just plain fun! The morning began with super star treatment for our teachers and staff as they walked the red carpet into the high school auditorium, all the while being cheered by their adoring fans, including students from across the school system from this year's seniors in the Class of 2016 to the youngest learners in our preschool program in the Class of 2029. Once in the auditorium, I had the honor of hosting a



mock broadcast live from "WNPS" with co-anchors **Hillside Middle School seventh grader Andreanna Fekaris** and **Silver Springs Elementary School fifth grader Karson Brown** where we honored each of our school communities, along with our staff – both those who bring the wisdom that comes with many years of experience, as well as our newest teachers and staff who come with new perspectives for our learning communities. We also took this opportunity to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Northville High School, as we heard from numerous alumni via video (many interviewed by our own students) about those Northville teachers and staff who opened a "World of Possibilities" in their lives. The celebration culminated with a rousing, surprise performance from the more than 200-member Mustang Marching Band that had us all on our feet, as black and orange balloons floated down from auditorium rafters. That same day, as well as the week before, our teachers and ancillary staff took part in professional development workshops generously facilitated by fellow teachers, principals and administrators. All in all a great way to kick off the school year! The entire day was a reminder to us all that there is no greater work than impacting the lives of our students in meaningful ways.

As our school year gets underway, I want to take this opportunity to share updates in a number of areas and draw your attention to some of the great things happening in our schools.





NHS CELEBRATES 150 YEARS – JOIN IN THE FUN!

In honor of Northville High School's sesquicentennial year, Northville Public Schools and Northville Educational Foundation have collaborated with several community and school organizations to bring two weekends of activities for Northville students, staff, families and alumni to enjoy.

This Weekend, September 18-20: Head downtown during the Victorian Festival and catch a glimpse of what life would have been like 150 years ago.

September 25-26: Take Homecoming weekend to a whole new level with additional Homecoming activities both Friday evening and Saturday including:

- A 5th Quarter Celebration at Brick's of Northville following Friday's parade and football game
- A Pancake Breakfast Saturday morning at NHS
- Tours of NHS and Hillside Middle School (formerly NHS)
- Alumni/Teacher Ice Cream Social Saturday afternoon at Old Village School
- Mustang Round-Up special shopping/dining day in downtown Northville

Visit www.nhs150.com for all the details and to read more about NHS's 150 year history.

NEW ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS AND COOKE ASSISTANT SUPERVISOR ON BOARD

Please join me in welcoming two new principals at Silver Springs and Thornton Creek elementary schools and a new assistant supervisor at our Cooke School Special Education Center Program. Previously the principal at Hamilton Elementary School in Wayne-Westland Community Schools, **Katie Booth** has joined Silver Springs, succeeding Melissa Hunt, who moved with her husband who was transferred to Washington, D.C., by his employer. In addition, **Jennifer Bennett**, formally the principal at Custer Elementary School in Monroe Public Schools, is the new principal at Thornton Creek. Jennifer succeeds Alison Epler, who accepted a position with Ann Arbor Public Schools.

Christine (Tina) Jeter, most recently a speech and language pathologist in Livonia Public Schools, has been named assistant supervisor for Cooke School. Financed through the Wayne County Regional Educational Service Agency and staffed by Northville educators, the Cooke program serves severely cognitively and multiply impaired students from preschool through age 26 from school districts across western Wayne County.

In addition to these administrative appointments, I also am pleased to share that **more than 30 new professional staff members** have joined the Northville team for the 2015-16 school year. These individuals fill existing positions left open due to



Katie Booth



Jennifer Bennett



Tina Jeter

retirement or by those who have left the district to pursue other job opportunities, as well as new positions to address class size and new enrollment at individual school buildings. (See student enrollment item below.) Among our new staff members are two social workers, one school psychologist, eight elementary school teachers, five middle school teachers, and 14 high school teachers. All of these individuals – administrators and professional staff alike – will serve important roles on our educational team as we move forward in our vision of success for all students.

INCREASE IN STUDENT ENROLLMENT EXPECTED FOR 2015-16

I am very pleased to report that we are anticipating an increase in enrollment across the district of approximately 150 students for the 2015-16 school year, after initial projections forecasted an enrollment decline of approximately 40 students as we were finalizing the district budget in June. Total enrollment for the school district is estimated to be 7,250 students for this school year, compared to 7,095 for 2014-15. Actual enrollment as calculated for purposes of per pupil allocation of state funding is not finalized until after the fall student count date. While this growth in enrollment is good news for Northville Public Schools, and the entire Northville community, student enrollment will continue to be a significant watch point, as projections for our school

district, and school districts across the state, continue to call for an enrollment decline over the next five years, largely attributed to a decline in the birth rate that began in 2003-04 with the softening in the state's economy, and continued until 2013. We continue to attract new families as a result of the outstanding reputation of our school district and our community, which is very positive particularly given the degree to which school funding is provided on a per-pupil basis. Our watch point remains the degree to which we are able to make up the difference in the larger exiting senior classes versus the number of incoming kindergarten students.

NORTHVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION APPOINTS SARAH PRESCOTT TO 16-MONTH TERM

A resident of the Northville school district for nine years, Sarah Prescott has been appointed by the Northville Board of Education to serve a 16-month term vacated by Board Trustee Scott Craig at the end of August. Prescott was selected by the Board of Education from among 10 Northville school district residents who submitted applications indicating their interest in being considered for appointment to the Board. The Board conducted interviews with all of the candidates at a Regular Meeting of the Board of Education on Tuesday, September 8, 2015. A second round of interviews was conducted with the



top two candidates during a Special Call Board Meeting on Tuesday, September 15, 2015, and Prescott was selected by the Board to fill the position that same evening. Prescott will assume her duties beginning at the Board of Education meeting on Tuesday, September 29, 2015, and will serve through December 31, 2016. She also may choose to run for election to the open four-year term – beginning in January 2017 – in the next regular school election on Tuesday, November 8, 2016.

For the past nine years, Prescott has served as an attorney specializing in employment litigation at Gordon, Laughbaum & Prescott, in Bloomfield Hills, where she also is a partner. Previously, Prescott worked for a law firm in Washington, D.C., specializing in tax and employee benefits. She also served as a judicial law



clerk in California, working with a federal judge. Prescott currently sits on the Michigan Advisory Committee for the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, which is responsible for investigating and reporting to the commission on current civil rights issues. She also serves on the State Planning Committee for the State Bar of Michigan, which coordinates efforts across specialized fields to make legal services more readily available to the poor. Prescott has undergraduate degrees in biology

and psychology from Northwestern University, where she graduated magna cum laude. She has her law degree from Harvard Law School, graduating cum laude, and was editor of the *Harvard Law Review*.

It is heartening to see so many qualified individuals willing to step up and serve the school district and the community. In addition to Prescott's seat, three other Board of Education seats will be up for election in the November 8, 2016 Election.

TRAVELING BACK IN TIME

For the 27th year, Northville third graders will step back in time tomorrow, Friday, September 18, 2015, during the annual Victorian Festival field trip that is the culmination of their study of local history. This year marks the 27th year for downtown Northville's popular weekend-long festival, as well as the unique hands-on learning experience for students. The 500 some students, dressed in Victorian costumes, will tour Northville on that Friday morning before the festival opens to the public, participating in a variety of activities coordinated by Northville Public Schools with support from the Northville Chamber of Commerce, the Northville Educational

Foundation, local businesses and the City of Northville, as well as numerous community volunteers and school district teachers, staff and students. In their travels, students will play Victorian-era children's games, hear stories about our community's past, enjoy



an interactive experience with a musician, listen to Victorian songs sung by Northville High School choirs, and take a guided tour of Mill Race Historical Village, where they will examine Victorian architecture, culture and community. Northville High School National Honor Society students will also don Victorian wear to serve as tour guides at Mill Race, sharing skits depicting life in Northville more than a century ago.

I can't think of a more meaningful experience for our community's third graders from both the public and private schools. The interactive learning experience allows history to come to life in authentic ways for these students. This is our community's opportunity to spark their interest in learning more about their personal heritage and the vibrant history of Northville. I am proud that our entire community unites behind such an outstanding event. I encourage our Northville school students and families to also take advantage of the Victorian Festival weekend activities, including the Friday night parade through downtown Northville.

ROTARY CLUB OF NORTHVILLE'S TOUR DE VILLE TO BENEFIT NPS KIDS AGAINST HUNGER INITIATIVE

Also happening this weekend is the Rotary Club of Northville's second annual **Tour de Ville bicycle tour this 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 for 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 registration packets.

Proceeds from the Tour de Ville will go to the Rotary Foundation (world eradication of polio, clean water projects in Third World countries, etc.) and the Rotary Club of



Northville (local charities, scholarships, local exchange student programs, city beautification, Little Free Libraries, etc.). Part of the proceeds will also benefit the **Kids Against Hunger** initiative, which each year allows Northville Public Schools and inner-city Detroit elementary students to work side-by-side packaging meals for hungry people locally and around the world. For more information about the Tour de Ville, visit www.tourdeville.org.

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

- The Northville High School Class of 2015 recorded a very competitive average ACT composite score of 25.5, with 58 percent of students meeting the "college ready" benchmark across all four content areas tested – a target set by Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder. In comparison, the statewide average ACT composite score for the Class of 2015 was 20.1, with 22 percent of Michigan students "college-ready" across all four content areas tested.

- Northville High School also has made *Newsweek* magazine's list of America's Top High School for 2015, ranking 194th. Fewer than 20 Michigan schools made the list. The *Newsweek* high school rankings assess high schools based on a broad range of data to determine which institutions do the best job of preparing students for college.



- It comes as no surprise, that many of teachers and staff members took time over the summer to experience a number of **professional development opportunities**, including Project Lead the Way training, Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) sessions, Unit Design work and Seminar 2.0 development, among other workshops, book studies and courses. This work strengthens what we have to offer our students.

Best wishes to all our students, teachers, staff and families for an outstanding school year filled with incredible learning experiences and opportunities. I look forward to seeing you at PTA meetings, district or community events, and/or at one of several "coffee chats" scheduled over the course of the school year.

Sincerely,

Mary K. Gallagher

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Superintendent