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Setting a new precedent

While the word “unprecedented” is used less often these days, the pandemic continues to set askew any pattern of normality. In White Bear Lake Area Schools, we are seeking to turn challenges into opportunities to set a new, better precedent.

We began the school year with a way of learning new to all of us. Families chose for their students a hybrid model experience, with students going to school two days a week and having at-home learning the other days, or full distance learning delivered online. In November, all of our students K-12 transitioned to full distance learning. More recently, we’ve received new guidance from Governor Walz that allows us to bring our elementary students back for in-person learning.

As details are ironed out with changing guidance and circumstances, I am proud of the flexibility and resilience shown as we are living and learning lessons that will help all of us to be nimble and find community when facing challenges.

The pandemic has provided opportunities to engage innovatively. Our teachers and students are finding new ways to maintain classroom connections. The way this looks for each teacher is different, but examples include musical sketches, shared on-screen activities, and new apps used for creative learning. Guardians are getting into the mix too, attending virtual conferences.

The Community Services Department is offering more virtual opportunities for lifelong learners of all ages.

Continued on District News page IX

Translations:

Para Español por favor llame al 651-407-7625

Xav tau ntauv Hmoob hu rau 651-407-7623

Flip book to see
Community Services &
Recreation Catalog



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STUDENT GROWTH & PROFICIENCY

Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA)

Student proficiency is measured by the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) tests, Minnesota's state requirement for testing under the Federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, MCA tests were not administered in the Spring of 2020.

In previous years when the MCA test was administered, White Bear Lake Area Schools students have shown a higher rate of proficiency in reading and mathematics than students across the state of Minnesota.

Early Childhood

More than 700 students are nurtured and develop a love of learning through our WBLAS Early Childhood programs. All of the District's preschools have a Parent Aware rating of four stars, the highest possible rating. Teachers assess the growth of children and take appropriate measures to ensure they are kindergarten-ready.

Elementary

Students at our nine elementary schools are assessed by teachers using a range of grade-appropriate assessments in reading, math and science to measure progress toward local and state standards. Student proficiency is measured using MCA assessments.* Instructional support is personalized so students who test below grade level receive extra intervention and support, and students who already exceed standards are challenged through our comprehensive Gifted and Talented program.

Middle School

Students at Central and Sunrise Park Middle Schools take the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA).* Teachers and counselors use these assessments along with other data to help students select courses. Intervention support is provided for students who test below grade level. Accelerated and enriched class options ensure each student is challenged.

High School

High school teachers assess students through common assessments in each subject. Nationally-normed assessments include the PreACT offered to tenth graders in the fall and the PSAT and ACT offered to eleventh graders. Counselors and teachers use these data, along with an understanding of student motivation and goals, to help students select from more than 250 course offerings, including 50 college-level courses and seven career pathways areas.

** Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, MCA tests were not administered in the Spring of 2020.*



HIGH EXPECTATIONS & ENRICHMENT

WBLAS continues to be a recognized leader for developing Career Pathways aligned to workforce needs.

Launched in 2015, our pathway programs allow students to take one or two courses, or a series of courses. They also allow students opportunities for job shadowing, industry site visits, and credentials or certifications recognized in the field.

Career PATHWAYS at ISD 624

Pathways Currently Offered

-  Automotive
-  Business
-  Construction Skilled Trades
-  Education
-  Healthcare & Wellness
-  Information Technology
-  Manufacturing & Engineering

50

Colleges and Universities on campus

During the 2019-20 school year, 50 college level courses were offered at White Bear Lake Area High School: 21 Advanced Placement (AP) classes, 25 College in the School (CIS/CitHS) courses, and 4 Project Lead the Way (PLTW) courses. Students also took advantage of Post-Secondary Enrollment Options (PSEO).

More than half of the 10th-12th grade students at White Bear Lake Area High School enrolled in potentially college credit-bearing courses in the 2019-20 academic year.

PLTW	77 students earned 231 credits
Concurrent Enrollment	197 students earned 309 credits
CIS	291 students earned 1424 credits
AP	637 students earned 1914 credits
PLTW	81 students earned 717 credits

\$2.39 million

Total value of credits earned by WBLAHS students in college-level courses during 2019-20.

All tuition calculations except concurrent enrollment based on U of MN tuition rate of \$512.30 per credit. Concurrent enrollment based on Century College tuition rate of \$185.92. PLTW grade cutoff B-, all others C-. Students may be counted more than once if they participated in more than one program. AP credit calculations based on U of MN score acceptance.

ON THE RISE

2019-20,
956 AP EXAMS TAKEN

White Bear Lake Area High School's Advanced Placement (AP) program is serving more students taking more AP exams.

.....

COMPARED TO 867 EXAMS TAKEN IN 2017-18

124
Advanced Placement Scholars

2020 Advanced Placement Scholars

- 62 AP Scholars
- 26 AP Scholars with Honors
- 31 AP Scholars with Distinction
- 5 National AP Scholars

Student Support Services

White Bear Lake Area Schools have high expectations for all students and offer a continuum of specialized instruction for students with special needs. Our programs are individualized and comprehensive.

AVID

WBLAHS began implementation of the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) program in the fall of 2010. The program offers rigorous instruction to students in the academic middle who have the individual determination to prepare for a four year college. In AVID classes, students collaborate, engage in inquiry, and learn college-level reading, writing and study strategies.

International Baccalaureate

Matoska International IB World School, an elementary option for all families since 2010, received re-authorization in 2018.

FINANCE

Financial management

To help the District meet its educational goals, White Bear Lake Area Schools remain committed to fiscal responsibility to ensure that maximum resources reach our classrooms.

Stewardship:

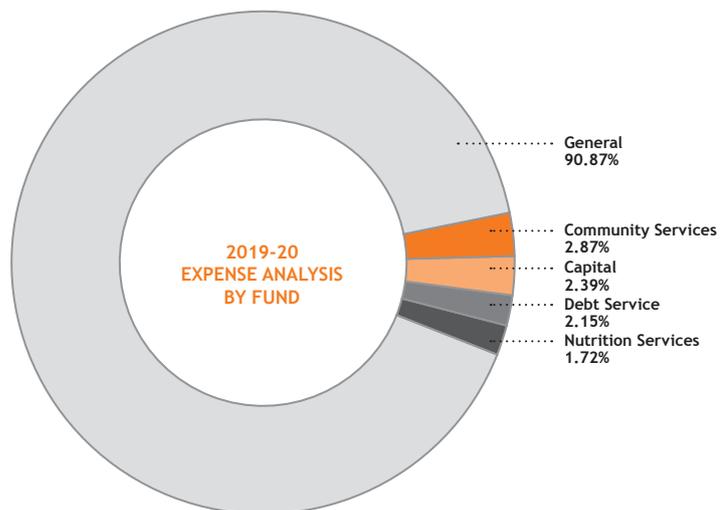
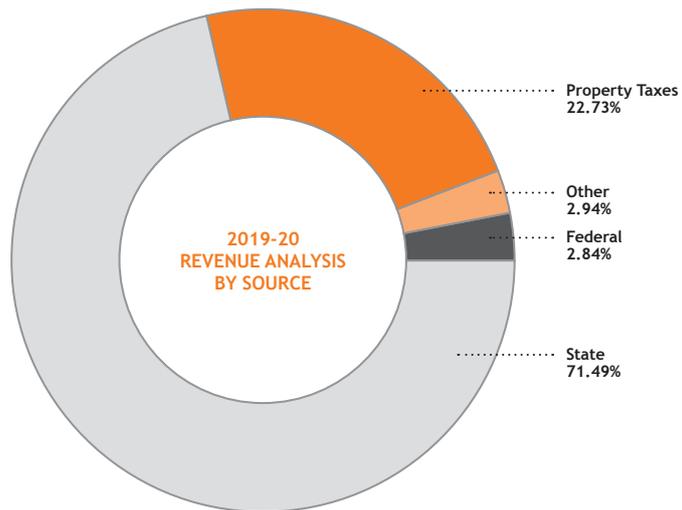
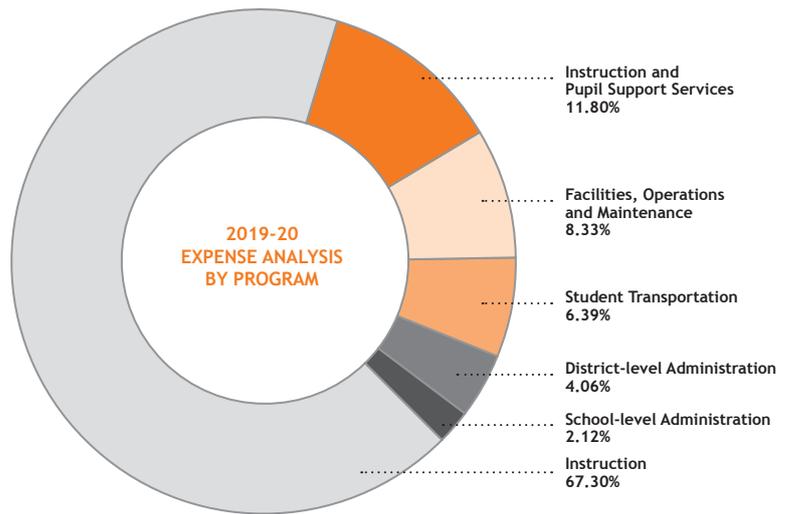
White Bear Lake Area Schools continues to demonstrate strong stewardship to our communities.

- » We have been recognized for excellence in financial reporting by the Association of School Business Officials and Government Finance Officers Association for 20 consecutive years.
- » The district refunded four outstanding debt issues during 2020, which will save district taxpayers a total of \$1,102,093 over the next nine years. The outstanding debt was related to the 2004 construction of Oneka Elementary School and the 2013 and 2014 gymnasium additions at Lakeaires, Matoska, and Willow Lane Elementary Schools.
- » In November of 2019, area residents voted on the District's \$326 million bond referendum, with 57.4% in support of the question.

We have been recognized for excellence in financial reporting for 20 consecutive years

by the Association of School Business Officials and Government Finance Officers Association.

The District refunded debt issue *saving taxpayers a total of \$1,102,093, over the next 9 years.*



Partnerships

The district has many innovative partnerships with the White Bear Center for the Arts, White Bear Area YMCA, MacPhail Center for Music, Tamarack Nature Center and many others.

2020-21 DISTRICT PROFILE

The White Bear Lake Area School District serves all or parts of Birchwood, Gem Lake, Hugo, Lino Lakes, Little Canada, Maplewood, North Oaks, Vadnais Heights, White Bear Lake and White Bear Township.

Core Values

The White Bear Lake Area School District builds quality lives and strong communities through compassion, integrity, respect, responsibility and service.

Equity Commitment

To nurture the whole student, we disrupt systemic inequities by recognizing, honoring, and embracing all cultures with humility and respect.

District Mission

The mission of the White Bear Lake Area School District, the community at the forefront of educational excellence, honoring our legacy and courageously building the future, is to ensure each student realizes their unique talents and abilities, and makes meaningful contributions with local and global impact through a vital system distinguished by:

- Students who design and create their own future
- A culture that respects diverse people and ideas
- Safe, nurturing, and inspiring experiences
- Exceptional staff and families committed to student success
- Abundant and engaged community partners

STUDENT ENROLLMENT 2020-21	
Pre-K <i>Pre-K includes all District programs including preschool, early childhood, and Bear Fundamentals at all District locations.</i>	718
Elementary (Grades K-5)	3913
Middle School (Grades 6-8)	2065
High School (Grades 9-12)	2453
Transition Plus (Special Ed - ages 18-24)	47
DISTRICT TOTAL K-T+	8478
DISTRICT TOTAL BIRTH-T+	9196

Source: Minnesota Department of Education and District data

K-T+ STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS 2020-21	
Free/Reduced Price Lunch	21.41%
English Language Learner	3.99%
Special Education	15.27%
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.40%
Asian	7.18%
Black/African American	6.38%
Hispanic/Latino	7.78%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.11%
Two or more races	6.46%
White	71.64%

Source: Minnesota Department of Education

In addition to English, students in our district



- Afaan/Oromo/Oromi
- Afrikaans
- Akan
- Amharic
- Anauk
- Arabic
- Azerbaijani
- Bengali
- Bosnian
- Burmese
- Cambodian
- Chinese, Mandarin
- Cree
- Czech
- English Creolized
- Fanti
- Farsi
- French
- German
- Gujarati
- Harari
- Hiligaynon, Illogo
- Hindi
- Hmong
- Igbo
- Japanese
- Karen
- Kiswahili, Swahili
- Kom
- Lao, Laotian
- Lithuanian
- Luganda, Ganda
- Mandar
- Marathi
- Nepali
- Pilipino, Tagalog
- Portuguese
- Punjabi
- Romanian
- Russian
- Sign Language, ASL
- Somali
- Spanish
- Tamil
- Telugu
- Thai
- Tigrinya
- Turkman
- Twi
- Ukrainian
- Urdu
- Vietnamese
- Yoruba

2020-21 District 624 School Board



SCOTT ARCAND
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 Term expires 12/31/23



DEB BELOYED
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 Term expires 12/31/21



KIM CHAPMAN
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 Term expires 12/31/21



JESSICA ELLISON
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 Term expires 12/31/21



DON MULLIN
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 Term expires 12/31/21



MARGE NEWMASER
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 Term expires 12/31/23



ANGELA THOMPSON
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 Term expires 12/31/23

Specific Board positions for the 2021 calendar year will be voted upon at the January Regular School Board meeting.

GENERAL SCHOOL BOARD EMAIL ADDRESS:
schoolboard@isd624.org

2019-20 STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES:

- Jennifer Adams, Gr 12, WBLAHS-South, Representative
- Bemnet Tessema, Gr 11, WBLAHS-South, Alternate Representative

School Board Meetings

- Jan 11.....Regular Mtng
- Jan 25.....Work Session
- Feb 8.....Regular Mtng
- Feb 22.....Work Session
- Mar 1.....Regular Mtng
- Mar 22.....Work Session
- Apr 12.....Regular Mtng

- » All Board meetings through the remainder of the 2020-21 academic year will begin at 5:30 p.m. and will be viewable via electronic means. Find login information on the district's online calendar at isd624.org.
- » Agendas, Board Packets, Minutes, Highlights and Video links are posted on the District's website as they become available.
- » Regular School Board meetings are re-broadcast on Cable Channel 20 in the local viewing area the week of a regular business meeting:
 - Wed at 7 p.m. & 11 p.m.
 - Thurs at 10 a.m.

Building Our Future Updates

Principals, Board liaisons, district leaders and construction partners gathered recently to celebrate groundbreakings at construction sites currently underway throughout the district.

The projects, approved by district residents in the 2019 Bond Referendum, represent the first phase of a construction plan that is anticipated to take place in phases until the 2024-25 school year.

The projects include an additional gymnasium at the current White Bear Lake Area High School - South Campus; additions at Lincoln, Matoska International, Vadnais Heights and Willow Lane Elementary Schools; and a brand new Transportation Building.

Additional information about the district's facilities projects, including details about individual projects and presentations that have been shared at School Board meetings, can be found on the Building Our Future page of the district website.

isd624.org/BuildingOurFuture.



Stay Connected

• E-NEWSLETTER

The Community e-Newsletter is sent out each week, with alternating text and video editions. The text editions cover student and staff successes, school and Community Education offerings, and School Board proceedings. Those who wish to be added to the Community e-Newsletter list may contact us at communications@isd624.org.

• STAY SOCIAL

Join White Bear Lake Area Schools' social media circles - Facebook, Twitter and YouTube for daily *624 Fact* posts and *The Week in 62.4 Seconds* video share-outs.

Find links on the District's website.

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Digital Backpack

The Community Services Department distributes electronic flyers on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month. Flyers include announcements from the school district, as well as local organizations that offer opportunities for youth.

Those who wish to request distribution of a flyer should email the files to Director Tim Maurer at tim.maurer@isd624.org.



Dr. Kazmierczak named Minnesota Superintendent of the Year

The Minnesota Association of School Administrators (MASA) named Dr. Wayne Kazmierczak, Superintendent of the White Bear Lake Area Schools (WBLAS), the 2021 Minnesota Superintendent of the Year.

As the Minnesota honoree, Dr. Kazmierczak is a candidate among other state recipients for National Superintendent of the Year, to be announced during the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) National Conference on Education hosted virtually on February 18-19, 2021. Dr. Kazmierczak was selected for this honor by a panel of representatives from a variety of Minnesota education organizations.

Nominees are evaluated on how each candidate demonstrates leadership for learning, communication skills, professionalism, and community involvement.

"Dr. Kazmierczak has quickly become a beacon of leadership and inspiration across the state during his time at White Bear Lake," said MASA Executive Director Dr. Deb Henton. "He has made immediate relationships with his staff and the surrounding community. It is clear under his direction the district is poised to make positive impacts now and into the future. We are proud to have Dr. Kazmierczak represent our administrators as Minnesota's Superintendent of the Year."

Find additional information in a News post on the district's website, isd624.org.

Early Childhood Screening - Screen at 3

Early Childhood Screening is a free and simple check of how your child is growing, developing and learning. Screening at age 3 is preferred, but a child may be screened between ages 3 and the start of kindergarten as required by law.

The White Bear Lake Area School District provides this screening at no charge.

3 REASONS TO SCREEN AT 3:

- Screening can ensure school success
- If health or developmental concerns are identified, educational services are available
- It is fun and provides parents/guardians with valuable information regarding child development

Register online at <https://whitebear.ce.eleyo.com> or 651-653-3100

Early Childhood Screening takes place at Normandy Park Education Center (2482 East County Road F, White Bear Lake, MN 55110).

Find information and a video describing the Importance of Screening at Three at <https://earlychildhood.isd624.org/programs/screenings>



Continued from front page

School Board, committee and neighborhood meetings have begun taking place virtually, allowing presentations to be heard and questions to be asked remotely. While this isn't our usual way of getting together, it has been rewarding to interact in new ways with residents who haven't interacted with us as readily in the past.

We are gathering feedback differently with the use of a new crowdsourcing platform that allows for virtual interactions. Participants provide thoughts, review and provide feedback on others' ideas, and see a snapshot of the conversation. The voices of students, families and staff members were invaluable as we began the year, and they remain an important part of the district's processes with additional community conversations taking place.

When feedback revealed that our families needed additional support, the district added initiatives to help foster physical and mental well-being. The Free Bear Care Health and Wellness Clinic, located at North Campus, offers students of all ages access to preventative and acute care health services. A Mental Wellness Support Line was soon added and provides families with connections to resources for children age birth-21.

The district has always connected students and families with essential services, but it has become even more important. The website's new Support Hub page provides families with important resources and access to information for essential services including crisis response, basic needs, mental health and well-being, physical health, social emotional learning and more. The "one stop shop" for anybody looking for support moves away from a siloed approach.

In the midst of moving parts and discovering new ways to do things, we continue to be committed to providing a high-quality education for all of our students in whatever situation we find ourselves in. The coursework may be delivered differently, but our students' experiences will remain robust and engaging.

The life lessons we are all learning today, those of innovation and adaptability, will be remembered long after these challenging days are behind us and we've set a new, better precedent.

Dr. Wayne A. Kazmierczak, Superintendent of White Bear Lake Area Schools



SUPPORT HUB

We know that connections and relationships are an important part of our students' educational experiences, and we remain committed to the social emotional well-being of those in our school community.

The District launched a Support Hub last spring in order to provide families with resources to address barriers & enhance well-being.

This comprehensive resource gives families and community members access to information for essential services including crisis response, basic needs, mental health and well-being, physical health, social emotional learning and more.

The button can be found linked on the front page of the White Bear Lake Area School District's website, isd624.org.

Cultural Liaisons

The district's cultural liaisons work with students, families, and staff throughout the district to increase student and parent engagement with various programs and district activities.

The district's Equity and Engagement Department offers supports to students and families through our cultural liaisons, the district's Equity Action Plan, our Equity Commitment, and the district's American Education Program.

Information about all of these programs can be found at the district's website, isd624.org/departments/equity-engagement



MILES WEBB SR.
African American Liaison
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AMY OTTAVIANI
Early Childhood Latino Liaison
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BRIANA SANTOSCOY
K-12 Latino Liaison
Student, Family, Community
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NIRVANA YANG
Hmong & Asian Amer. Liaison
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JORDAN ZICKERMANN
Native American Liaison
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Coffee with Dr. K

Community members are invited to mark their calendars to join Superintendent Kazmierczak for an informal chat over a cup of coffee from 4:30-5:30 p.m. on April 6. Find details on the district's online calendar the week prior to the event.



Send Us Your Bear Wear Pics!

We are looking for photos of little ones in their Bear Wear!

Email photos to communications@isd624.org and you may find your little one(s) featured in a District publication.

The "Born to be a Bear" onesies are sent along with Early Childhood information to all families who live in the district upon the arrival of a little one. "I'm a Bear" t-shirts accompany Screen at 3 information sent to households with toddlers. Incoming kindergartners receive kid-sized "I'm a Bear" t-shirts once they are officially enrolled in the district.



WELCOME TO
**WHITE
BEAR**
JANUARY 2021

Get to know us!

While all are welcome to visit our schools at any time, there will be special opportunities in January for families to learn more about our schools!

www.isd624.org/Welcome

Important Dates

- » **JANUARY**
WELCOME TO WHITE BEAR
www.isd624.org/Welcome
- » **JANUARY 11**
SCHOOL BOARD REGULAR MEETING
5:30 p.m.
- » **JANUARY 25**
SCHOOL BOARD WORK SESSION
5:30 p.m.
- » **FEBRUARY 8**
SCHOOL BOARD REGULAR MEETING
5:30 p.m.
- » **FEBRUARY 22**
SCHOOL BOARD WORK SESSION
5:30 p.m.
- » **MARCH 1**
SCHOOL BOARD REGULAR MEETING
5:30 P.M.
- » **MARCH 8-12**
SPRING BREAK
(No School)
- » **MARCH 22**
SCHOOL BOARD WORK SESSION
5:30 p.m.
- » **APRIL 6**
COFFEE WITH DR. K
(COMMUNITY EVENT)
4:30-5:30 p.m.
- » **APRIL 12**
SCHOOL BOARD REGULAR MEETING
5:30 p.m.
- » **APRIL 26**
SCHOOL BOARD WORK SESSION
5:30 p.m.





White Bear Lake Area Schools

Leading minds to learning, hearts to compassion, and lives to community service.

Serving the communities of Birchwood, Gem Lake, Hugo, Lino Lakes, Little Canada, Maplewood, North Oaks, Vadnais Heights, White Bear Lake, and White Bear Township.



OUR MISSION

The mission of the White Bear Lake Area School District, the community at the forefront of educational excellence, honoring our legacy and courageously building the future, is to ensure each student realizes their unique talents and abilities, and makes meaningful contributions with local and global impact through a vital system distinguished by:

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