

C Laker CONNECTIONS



A Publication of Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools • August, 2023



Changes to school meals

NEW!

Grades K-8 and Bridges Area Learning Center

Beginning in the 2023-24 school year, all students in grades K-8 and Bridges Area Learning Center in our district will receive breakfast and lunch on school days at no cost. No application is needed.

This includes a healthy meal for breakfast and a complete meal for lunch - including a fruit and vegetable. If a student wants something extra, like another entree or a bottle of water, they'll need to pay for those items.

Even with this change, we are still encouraging families who may have applied for free and reduced-price meals to continue to do so. Submitting an application helps benefit families with much more than just meals.

To apply, complete the Application for Educational Benefits in the SchoolCafé app or our website or ask for one at your child's school. A new application must be submitted each year. All families are strongly encouraged to complete an application for their household.

Grades 9-12 Prior Lake High School

Prior Lake High School is not on the National School Meal Program. As a result, school meals are priced as follows, below.

Free or Reduced-Price Meal applications are available and families are encouraged to apply. To apply, complete the Application for Educational Benefits in the SchoolCafé app or our website at www.plsas.org/meals or ask for one at your child's school. Applications must be filled out for each school year the assistance is needed. For questions, call Linda Roach, Child Nutrition Specialist at 952-226-0009.

- Breakfast: Free grab-and-go breakfast option
- Lunch: \$3.25, second entrée: \$2.50
- Milk: \$.75

Free or Reduced-Price Meal applications
www.plsas.org/meals or scan the code



This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

New payment feature in Infinite Campus

NEW!

PLSAS is pleased to announce a new payment feature in Infinite Campus. Families can now register and pay for: field trips, graduation fees, high school parking, student fees, transcript fees and Laker Corner for school gear. Parents and Guardians can use their existing login credentials to access the new payment feature.

Families will still be able to access bus stop schedules, official grades, grades 6-12 class schedules, attendance, contact information and health information in Infinite Campus.

Affinity remains the online tool for families to register and pay for sports and activities fees for grades 6-12.

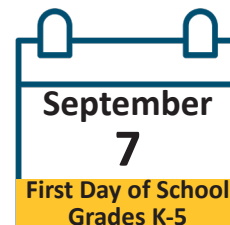
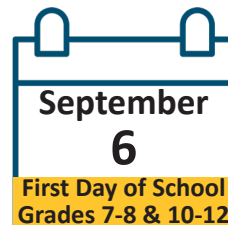
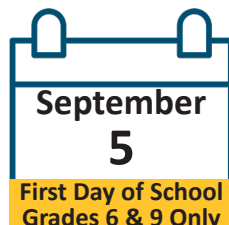
If you have questions about the payment feature, or if you have never logged in to Infinite Campus, please contact the IT HelpDesk at 952-226-0048 or ithelpdesk@plsas.org

Infinite Campus and all of our online tools can be accessed in the Family Portal. Scan the code or visit www.plsas.org/families



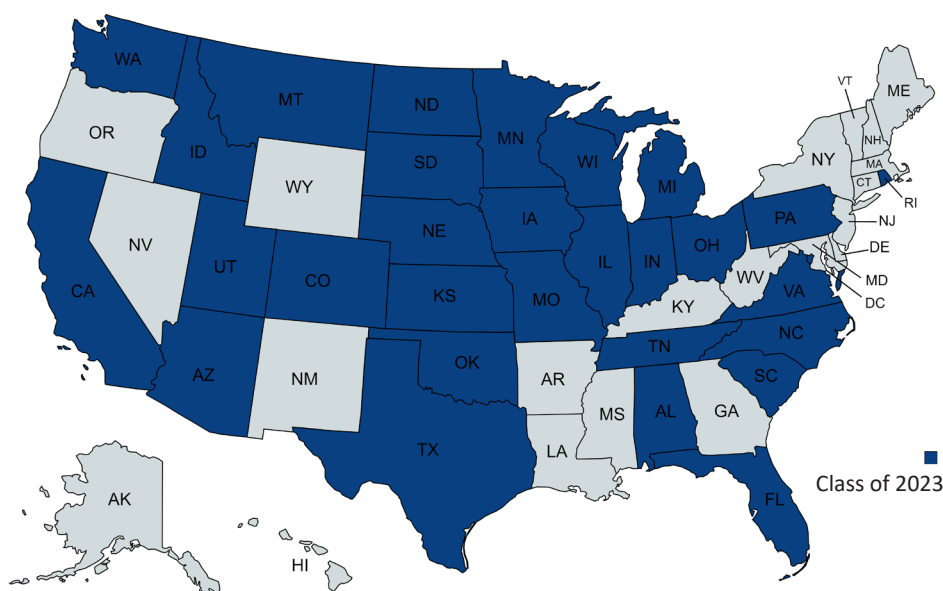
Welcome to the 2023-24 school year

We can't wait to welcome back our Laker learners in September!



Class of 2023: where they're heading

The class of 2023 is getting ready to embark on its next journey! 86% of 2023 graduates plan to attend 2 or 4-year colleges/universities, 6% plan to enter the workforce and 1% are joining the military. In the following graphic, the states in blue represent where our Lakers will be attending colleges/universities in the fall.



PLSAS debuts financial dashboard

NEW!

Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools has launched a new Financial Dashboard, offering real-time data surrounding the financial health of the district.

The Financial Dashboard allows stakeholders to view high-level data displayed in financial charts as well as more detailed reports for the district, its schools and programs.

The dashboard data includes the PLSAS General Fund which is the primary operating fund for PLSAS, as well as the Food Service Fund and Community Education Fund.

Budgets are updated monthly during the school year. For questions or feedback about the Financial Dashboard, please email us at input@plsas.org

Financial Dashboard
www.plsas.org/financials or scan the code



Connect with your local schools

Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools is pleased to offer free activity passes to residents in the community age 55 and older to attend most home events. Passes for the 2023-24 school year can be picked up at the District Services Center, 4540 Tower Street SE, Prior Lake, Monday through Friday, between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Call 952-226-0000 for more details.



See a show



Enjoy a concert



Go to a sporting event

www.plsas.org

PRIOR LAKE-SAVAGE
AREA SCHOOLS
4540 Tower Street SE
Prior Lake, MN 55372

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Non-Profit Org.
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Prior Lake, MN



Star staff

Each year, Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools' staff are nominated for awards to celebrate their successes in the categories listed below. Congratulations to this year's award winners who were named on June 8th.

Educators of Excellence, Secondary:

Craig Mertens, Hidden Oaks Social Studies Teacher
Janean Mestnik, PLHS Math Teacher

Educator of Excellence, Elementary:

Kevin Humbert, La ola del lago Physical Education Teacher
Vicki Jensen, WestWood 2nd Grade Teacher

Outstanding Service, Secondary:

Dan Friedrick, PLHS Custodian
Greg O'Brien, PLHS Building Engineer

Outstanding Service, Elementary:

Jessica Kroyer, Glendale Head Custodian
Denise Mansfeldt, Jeffers Pond Media Support

Outstanding Service, District:

Steve Monnens, District Delivery & Warehouse

District Leadership Award:

Patrick Glynn, Jeffers Pond Principal

Advisors of the Year Award:

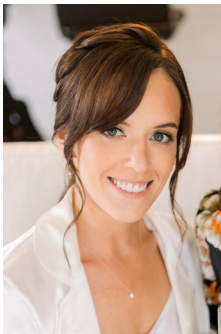
Holly Bartholow and Kim Koepp

Coach of the Year Award:

Joe Bollinger

District Service Awards were also given to retirees, along with individuals who have served the district for five, ten, twenty and thirty years.

Welcome



Kristine McIntyre
Assistant Director of
Child Nutrition Services



Emily Virant
Assistant Director of
Special Education

Laker Pride



Community member Melissa Denman's school bus entry won the Laker Pride Award during the Prior Lake Association's annual Fourth of July Boat Parade this summer. Congratulations! We like your style.



From the Superintendent

Do you work over the summer? It's a question many of us who work throughout Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools get over the summer months. The answer is, yes! While many teachers and staff are off during the summer months, there is still plenty of learning and planning happening.

Many students are participating in our Summer Academy and Extended School Year programming to maintain and sharpen their skills so that they are ready to hit the ground running when school resumes in September.

Community Education is terrific at offering classes that have high interest for youth in our community. This summer more than 3,000 students are participating in everything from cooking and theater classes to band lessons and driver's education.

Our schools are also bustling with nearly 500 students enrolled in our Kids' Company child care program. Students have been participating in fun, hands-on activities, taking care of school gardens and going on field trips.

More than 100 adults in our community have also taken advantage of classes from health and wellness to gardening and sharpening computer skills.

Our schools are often seen as the heart of neighborhoods, which is why we have a deep commitment to engaging with our community, and summer offers the perfect time to participate in local gatherings from Dan Patch Days and Prior Lake Days to Night to Unite celebrations.

While we certainly enjoy summer time, we can't wait to welcome back our nearly 9,000 students when school resumes in September. The rest of our summer will be spent planning for their return and the excitement that a new school year brings. See you soon Lakers!



Student information update

We are gearing up for a successful start to the school year! Part of that planned success depends on great communication and we need your help to make that happen.

We are asking all parents of current students to complete the Annual Update in Infinite Campus for each student before the first day of school.

If this will be your student's first school year at PLSAS, you do not need to complete the update this year unless your student's information has changed since completing the initial enrollment.

For returning students, it is important to confirm or update your information so we can communicate with you about important events including emergencies and school closures. You will also be asked to review the Parent/Student Handbook that contains important district policy information.

To start, visit our website at www.plsas.org and login to Infinite Campus in the Families portal. Then click on "More," then "Online Registration" and follow the prompts. For assistance, contact the IT HelpDesk at 952-226-0048 or ithelpdesk@plsas.org.

PLSAS earns national awards

Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools recently earned two awards from the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA). An Award of Excellence was issued for a staff recruitment video, featuring PLSAS staff and students. In addition, the district received an Award of Merit for distinguished achievement in the website category.

Each year, NSPRA recognizes and honors those whose efforts and expertise have had a positive and lasting impact on school public relations and education as well as honors the best work in school communication.



- To view our award-winning video, scan the code or visit <https://youtu.be/xyirsqyNg-Y>
- To view our award-winning website, visit www.plsas.org

Hidden Oaks Middle School eighth-grader takes first place in international student video competition



Pictured left to right: Inga Craig, Klarissa Harris, Jasmine Dang and Eera Deshpande

Eera Deshpande earned a first place finish in an international video competition that gets students to think critically about global challenges related to population.

World of 8 Billion Video Contest is a project of Population Education, a non-profit program based in Washington D.C. The contest encourages students to share what they think we should do to fix global population issues through a 60-second video.

Deshpande's video was titled "Earth's Fate on Your Plate" and addressed the climate impacts of a more plant-focused diet.

Three other Hidden Oaks students were finalists in the World Competition, including Jasmine Dang for her video, "Sanitation Problems Due to Waste."

Inga Craig and Klarissa Harris were also finalists for their video, "The Gender Wage Gap" - Gender Equality Category.

Thousands of videos are submitted each year from around the world and only a first and second place winner is chosen at the middle school level.

PLSAS students received Laker Pride certificates and were recognized by the School Board during its June 12th meeting.

Middle School students create mural for downtown Prior Lake



Hidden Oaks Middle School students took center stage in downtown Prior Lake July 29th when their mural was revealed during a dedication ceremony.

Under the direction of art teacher Julie Pyle, eighth grade artists Abby Johnson, Inga Craig, Teagan Trice, Alex Huttner-Strot and Stasia Stanton created the mural which depicts lake life in Prior Lake along with the natural wildlife of the area.

Special thanks to the City of Prior Lake for commissioning the project, Nuvera for providing the space, Prior Lake-Savage Education Association for funding and supplies, and Highmark Builders for construction materials and installation of the mural. The mural is displayed on the Nuvera building in downtown Prior Lake for all to see.

Night to Unite



Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools teamed up with area city leaders, police and fire crews to celebrate Night to Unite on August 1st.

Superintendent, Dr. Michael Thomas, along with School Board members, principals and other administrators hopped on buses to visit neighborhoods throughout Prior Lake, Savage and Credit River.

Children delighted in talking with staff about their summer, getting ready for back-to-school celebrations, as well as taking a close look at our school buses, along with police cars, fire trucks and other city vehicles.

Communities across the Twin Cities participate in this nation-wide program to strengthen neighborhood and community partnerships and help prevent crime.

This year, some neighborhoods even collected school supply donations for our district. Thank you Prior Lake-Savage area community for your support!

PLHS students earn Gold Seal of Biliteracy



In June the School Board recognized ten students for attaining the Seal of Biliteracy from the Minnesota Department of Education.

Daryna Kruk, Srushti Vaidyanathan, Victor Safonov, Amaya Rodriguez, Jose Aguilera, Elina Charria, Andrew Gatti, Andrea Garcia-Carlos, Sofia Gomez White and Thien Le were awarded with certificates for attaining proficiency in two or more languages by their high school graduation.

Students each took a test of the language in speaking, writing, reading and listening. The Seal of Biliteracy also earns them college credits.

Kids' Company students have green thumbs



Mackenzie Varpness, Eva Nelson and Kip Kruggel help water the school gardens

Kids' Company students are getting some hands-on learning about what it takes to maintain a garden.

This summer students in PLSAS' child care program have been maintaining the WestWood Elementary butterfly garden. At Redtail Ridge Elementary, students make daily trips to the garden beds to oversee the many crops that were planted by their peers last spring.

Redtail Ridge held a planting day last May where students in grades K-5 planted petunias, marigolds, a pollinator garden, pumpkins, herbs, carrots, radishes, peppers and more.

Now Kids' Company students in grades 3-5 have been watering and weeding the raised beds and can even tell you all about the importance of "deadheading" faded flowers to promote new growth and re-flowering.

Students are also reaping the benefits of their labor by estimating when the produce will be ripe for picking and then harvesting veggies for snacks.

Students will continue to help with the garden in hopes the miniature pumpkins will be visible by the time their peers return to school in September.



Community Education offers a variety of classes and events for all ages. Registration for Fall classes and events is open at www.priorlakesavagece.com. The Community Education catalog will be delivered to your mailbox mid-August.

Community Education
Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools
www.priorlakesavagece.com
952-226-0310

Family Catalog
Classes For All Ages
September to December 2023

www.PriorLakeSavageCE.com

ADULT CLASSES
EARLY CHILDHOOD FAMILY EDUCATION
YOUTH CLASSES

[f](#) [i](#) [t](#)
@PLSASCommEd

KIDS' COMPANY 2023-2024

LAKERS PRESCHOOL CHILD CARE
in partnership with Circle of Friends

★ Before & After Circle of Friends Preschool Class

new! LAKER 3s PROGRAM
Edgewood | MON - FRI | 6:30 AM - 6:00 PM

Registration Open Until Filled

★ Full-time, all-day child care for our youngest learners
★ Extended hours to meet the needs of working families
★ Flexibility with a dependable 5-day schedule

THE fun STARTS HERE

KIDS' COMPANY 2023-2024

Before and After School Child Care
6:30 AM - School Start | School End - 6:00 PM

new! Drop-In Care for registered families

2, 3, 4, & 5-day Schedule Options
Located in all elementary schools
Kindergarten - 5th Grade

Registration Open Until Filled

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS 2023-2024

PRESCHOOL
BECOME A SUPER FRIEND

NOW REGISTERING 3 & 4 YEAR OLDS

4-STAR PARENT AWARE RATED
FULLY LICENSED EDUCATORS
NATURE BASED OPTIONS

952-226-0950 EW.PLSAS.ORG

THE FIRST 5 YEARS OF YOUR CHILD'S LIFE ARE IMPORTANT. LEARN HOW ECCE CAN HELP

Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) works to support you as a parent/caregiver and to strengthen and empower families

EDGEWOOD SCHOOL
5304 Westwood Dr SE
Prior Lake, MN 55372
952-226-0950

Early Childhood Screening is a free program that checks how a child is developing and growing and promotes positive developmental outcomes

Prior Lake High School announces

Laker Hall of Fame candidates

The Laker Hall of Fame Committee is pleased to announce the selection of the following slate of candidates to be inducted into the Laker Hall of Fame Class of 2023.

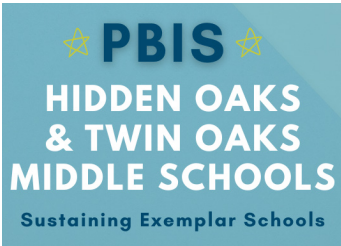
- Dr. Megan Brandeland - Class of 2005
- Tamra Braun (Petzel) - Class of 2003
- Dorothy Nicholas - Retired Staff
- Carol Ottoson - Retired Staff
- John F. Schmidt - Retired Staff
- Dave Thomas - Retired Staff
- Terri Thomas - Retired Staff
- Ben Wartman - Class of 2007
- 2003 Girls' State Basketball Team - Team of Distinction

The Laker Hall of Fame has a tradition of providing recognition for deserving graduates and staff of Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools for their accomplishments within the district or as adults in our world. This slate of distinguished graduates and staff represent high achieving individuals in the areas of activities, athletics or as a distinguished individual with career accomplishments.

This class of inductees will be celebrated during Laker Hall of Fame weekend on September 29th and 30th, 2023. Events for the weekend will include recognition prior to the Homecoming football game on Friday, September 29th at Dan Patch Stadium. The Lakers will host the Edina Hornets with kickoff scheduled for 7:00 p.m.

The formal induction ceremony and dinner will take place on Saturday, September 30th at the Legends Golf Club with a social hour starting at 5:30 and dinner/ceremony at 6:30. For those interested in attending the banquet, please see the following website for additional information, www.lakereducationalfoundation.com under the Hall of Fame tab.

Middle Schools recognized for excellence in positive school climates



Hidden Oaks Middle School and Twin Oaks Middle School were named Sustaining Exemplar Schools for their work using Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) for the 2022-2023 school year.

PBIS is designed to prevent problem behavior, provide instruction and support for positive behaviors, and support social, emotional and behavioral needs for all students. Exemplary schools have ensured that students are at the forefront of decision-making by developing ongoing professional development, including training and coaching, to retain and develop new teachers and staff. Schools have found that the PBIS framework provides individual wellness, safety and social-emotional growth and improves learning outcomes.

This year MDE recognized 33 schools in the Metro Twin Cities Region engaging in sustained PBIS implementation. The schools and districts receiving recognition this year are leaders in improving school climate, involving the community and increasing student achievement. Schools must meet several requirements and sustain these efforts over time to be honored and recognized.

Are you new to the district?



Welcome to Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools!

If you have school-age children, you can enroll them online at www.plsas.org/enroll or visit the District Services Center, 4540 Tower Street SE in Prior Lake.

For more information, call 952-226-0000. We look forward to welcoming your child into our school district as a Laker!

Become a Laker!
Enroll today at www.plsas.org/enroll

Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools hosts second annual Southwest Metro Regional Equity Summit



In June Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools hosted the 2nd annual Southwest Metro Regional Equity Summit in partnership with New Prague Area Schools, Shakopee Public Schools, Lakeville Area Schools, SouthWest Metro Intermediate District 288, and MetroECSU (BrightWorks).

The Summit brought groups of educators and community members together to focus on instructional resources and strategies to increase engagement and achievement for all students. During the event, around 220 participants focused on social-emotional learning, equity and access, high-quality teaching and learning and varied lenses of staff, students, families and community.

Participants heard from keynote speaker WC Jordan, a wide variety of educators from across the metro, faith leaders and community organizations.

It was a great way for local communities to come together to collaborate on how to create a more inclusive future for all students.

Support our students
Support our classrooms

NOW HIRING

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- PARAEDUCATORS
- CUSTODIANS
- ...AND MORE!

Apply today at:
www.plsas.org/employment

Connect with us

To get news, photos, events and more, "Like" us on Facebook and/or follow us on Instagram and Twitter.

facebook.com/PLSAS
instagram.com/isd719
twitter.com/isd719

About this Newsletter

For questions or comments regarding *Laker Connections*, contact Kristi Mussman, Director of Communications, kmussman@plsas.org or 952-226-0014

Our mission is to educate all learners to reach their full potential as contributing and productive members of our ever-changing global community.

2023 Board of Education

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