INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

728 HAPPENINGS

Our mission is to educate, inspire & empower

With schools in Elk River, Otsego, Rogers & Zimmerman

www.isd728.org

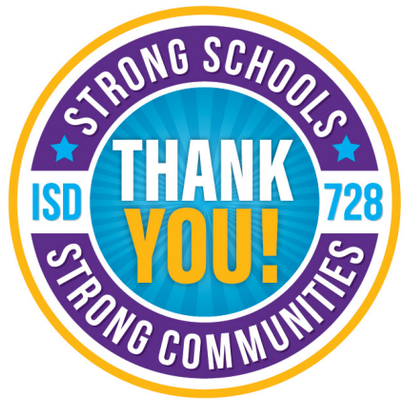
Winter 2020

ISD 728 Poised to Enter 2020, Beyond...Thank YOU!

As a new decade of learning begins across ISD 728 communities, including Rogers, Otsego, Elk River and Zimmerman, the District's mission remains the same: ISD 728 will continue to educate, inspire and empower our diverse learners, to shape their futures, to accomplish their dreams and contribute positively to our local and global communities well into the 21st Century. The ISD 728 Communications Team and District Administration have teamed up for a new website dedicated to tracking the progress of multiple projects approved by voters via the November 2019 Referendum, **www.isd728.org/728Strong-Projects**.

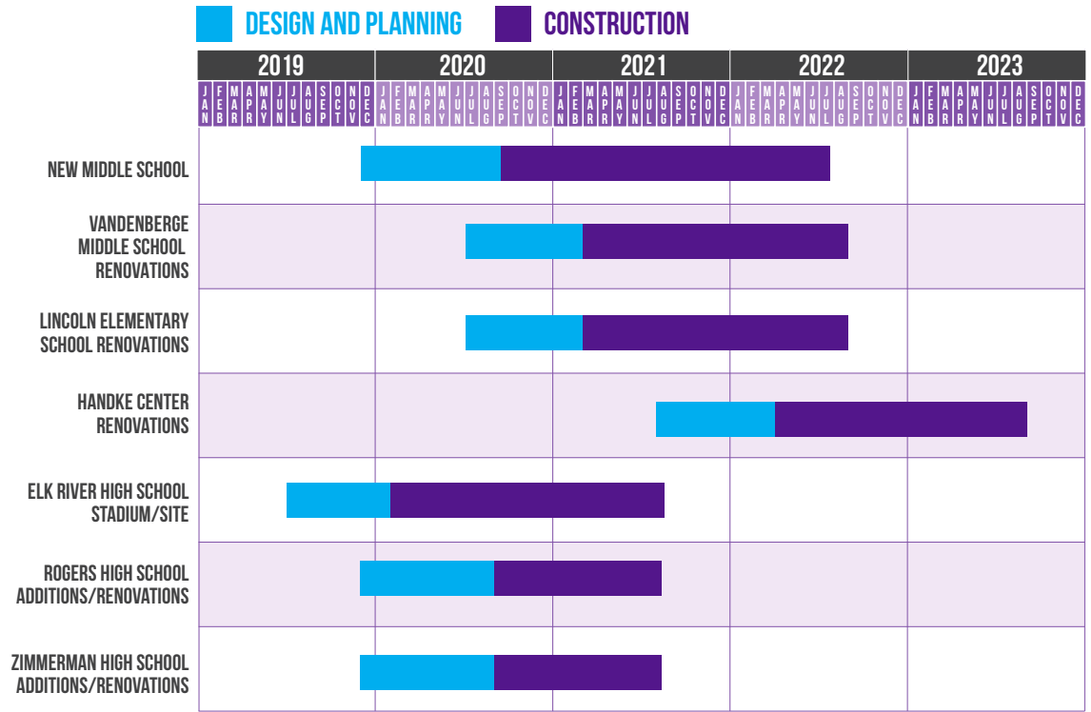
The recent and successful referendum will provide funding for seven major building projects, which include:

- Construction of a new middle school near Prairie View Elementary / Middle School in Otsego
- Renovations at Lincoln Elementary School in Elk River
- Renovations at VandenBerge Middle School in Elk River
- Renovations at Handke Center in Elk River
- Additions and renovations of activity spaces at Zimmerman Middle/High School
- Additions and renovations of activity spaces at Elk River High School
- Additions and renovations of activity spaces at Rogers High School
- Due to funding sources and state statute, each of the seven projects must be completed by January of 2025.



Because the successful referendum will provide funds to complete each of the seven projects listed above, long term facilities maintenance funds can now be utilized to complete projects identified on the building specific project list documents, which were communicated throughout the campaign and are currently available at **www.isd728.org/728Strong-ProjectFlyers**. These projects are expected to be completed within 10 years, and will be scheduled as it makes sense from a fiscal, project management, and workforce availability standpoint. We appreciate your cooperation in making ISD 728 a better place to live, work and learn into 2020 and beyond!

THE 7 REFERENDUM PROJECTS TIMELINE



Project Notes:

- Construction of the new middle school must begin immediately to meet growing enrollment needs in the southern region, and is expected to be open at the start of the 2022-2023 school year.
- The new middle school project will be coordinated by a construction manager, as was done with Prairie View, who will also assist with the additional learning spaces at Rogers and Zimmerman High Schools, which are meant to address capacity restraints.
- These three projects will not significantly impact student programming and can begin immediately.
- Projects identified at Handke, Lincoln and VandenBerge will require much coordination, thoughtful scheduling, and extensive investigation of current, existing structures in order to be completed. Discussions will begin immediately and schedules will be coordinated between site, district, and construction officials.
- When completing projects on existing buildings, District officials and construction crews will work tirelessly to schedule and complete as much work as possible outside of the regular school day, during student and staff breaks, and throughout the summer months.
- It is the District's intent to include building and District staff, as well as community members, in the building process from initial design to project completion.

Four ISD 728 Teachers Among More Than 130 Nominated for 2020 MN Teacher of the Year

Four ISD 728 teachers are among more than 130 nominees named for the 2020 Minnesota Teacher of the Year, presented by Education Minnesota. They are:



Lisa Becker
3rd Grade Teacher
Lincoln Elementary School



Scott Lillestrand
Math Teacher
Salk Middle School



Deb Colborn
2nd Grade Teacher
Zimmerman Elementary School



Natasha Goudy
Special Education Teacher
Salk Middle School

The four candidates have accepted their nomination and are completing an informative packet that will be at the center of the Minnesota Teacher of the Year selection process.

This year's program will name the state's 56th Teacher of the Year. ISD 728 has put forth multiple finalists, including several over the past five years from Otsego Elementary, Prairie View Elementary, Zimmerman Middle/High School, Salk Middle School and the COMPASS program.

"It's a really interesting process for any teacher, because you get to share ideas and what motivates you with other incredible teachers from around this state," said finalist Scott Glew, who was nominated in the 2017-2018 school year. "You learn a ton."

The 2020 Minnesota Teacher of the Year will be announced in May at the St. Paul River Center. A 25-member panel will begin the process of narrowing down the field of 134 candidates to a group of semifinalists.

District Receives $80K in Youth Skills Training Grant

ISD 728 is one of 17 partnerships to share and receive $1.5 million in Youth Skills Training (YST) grants from the state of Minnesota, with an aim to develop and implement paid-learning opportunities for students 16 years of age and older.

"Youth Skills Training grants provide students with hands-on workforce training in high-demand, high-growth fields," said Gov. Tim Walz. "Employers across the state are facing workforce shortages, and these innovative partnerships connect schools with local business to create career pathways for younger Minnesotans."

ISD 728 was awarded their second YST@DLI grant in January for $80,000 for Students in Transportation, which will complement last year's grant for $100,000 for Students in Manufacturing.

ISD 728 will use the grant to expand partnerships with local businesses. The CTE Internship program will allow students to explore these industries, gain valuable skills and earn certifications before high school graduation. The internships will be coordinated by Amy Lord, the District's CTE Coordinator, and made available at all three traditional high schools in ISD 728.

The grants are part of a Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (YST@DLI) program, which was signed into law in 2017 with bipartisan support, to create and provide employment training for student learners ages 16 and older in high-growth, high-demand occupations.

"These grants allow high schools, businesses and community organizations to work together to train students and create skilled workers for their communities," said Nancy Leppink, DLI commissioner.

YST@DLI grants will be awarded to the following partnerships, who represent over 50 school districts and more than 100 employer partners in advanced manufacturing, agriculture, automotive, health care and information technology.

Twenty-five local partnerships throughout the state applied for this third round of grants. These partnerships involve more than 75 school districts and more than 130 employers in five different industries. A fourth round of grant applications will open in fall 2020.

To learn more about CTE Internships at Elk River, Rogers and Zimmerman High Schools visit **www.isd728.org/CTE** or contact ISD 728 CTE Coordinator, Amy Lord (763) 241-3400 x 5016 or **amy.lord@isd728.org**.

ABOUT YST@DLI

The YST@DLI program develops partnerships between schools, employers and community organizations to provide safe, healthy and meaningful paid work experience to students 16 and older. These locally developed partnerships provide exposure to industry, related classroom instruction, safety training, industry-recognized credentials and paid work experience.

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ISD 728 Boasts Tech Team of the Year



The ISD 728 Tech Team - including our support staff, eLearning team and leadership - has been named the Sourcewell Technology 2019 Tech Team of the Year for Minnesota. The crew was recognized at a conference in Minneapolis.

The tech team supports all services throughout ISD 728 - from laptops to computer labs, accounting to communications. Meanwhile, the eLearning team has been instrumental in our 1:1 learning programs, implementing online curriculum and eLearning Days. Congrats to the entire team!

Rogers Middle School Assistant Principal Taped Up for a Cause



Each year, students and staff at Rogers Middle School participate in the “Gift of Giving” program, led by teacher Faye Johnson. The program has provided for families throughout the Rogers community, many in various times of need.

Though everyone “wins” through such a charitable program, it’s truly the Rogers Middle School students who get to enjoy the fruits of their labor – particularly thanks to Assistant Principal Bruce Jean. Over the years, Jean has found himself in various predicaments. He’s kissed a pig, held various animals and even done some “light cleaning” around RMS as a result of Mrs. Johnson’s program. This year, Mr. Jean found himself in a particularly sticky situation – he was duct taped to the cafeteria wall.

“It’s all in good fun,” said Jean as he dangled from the RMS logo. “The kids really deserve it.”

“He’s a pretty good sport about it,” said Principal Mark Huss. “It’s really a way to get the kids motivated. But our families are so generous. We really thank them for supporting this program.”

ISD Schools Recognize Vets

ISD 728 schools took time on Friday, November, 8 and Monday, November 11 to recognize Veterans around the District with annual Veterans Day celebrations, parades and concerts.

At Meadowvale, nearly 100 Veterans joined students, representing the U.S. Army, Navy, Marines and Air Force. The family members – many grandparents or even great-grandparents, joined the Meadowvale staff and students for breakfast, a parade through the schools and a musical program led by the MES specialists.

“We are so grateful you are here with us to celebrate and remember this important day,” said Karen Maschler, MES principal. “We honor our Veterans today and every day. Thank you for your service and dedication to keep us free.”

Other celebrations included a parade at Rogers Elementary, music programs at the high schools and special artwork and programs throughout the District.















ISD 728 Holds Annual Cultural Potluck at Rogers High School

In what's become a fall tradition, ISD 728 celebrated its many cultures and our families at a new place Thursday, November 7, 2019. The annual Cultural Pot Luck, celebrating its sixth anniversary, made its way to Rogers High School. The colorful night was a huge success, featuring dozens of ISD 728 students, parents and families.















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CTE Coordinators, Middle Schools Host Career and College Days

Students from ISD 728 Middle Schools have been getting a close-up look at careers and community colleges via the ISD 728 Career Technical Education (CTE) Program and cooperative partners like Anoka-Hennepin Community College and Anoka Technical College.

Each district middle school has spent time talking with college staff - including administrators, teachers and counselors, to get an up-close look at the future of education at the community college level. They've also talked with instructors and professionals at Anoka Tech to learn about trades, arts and other skills they'll need in the working world. The goal, according to the CTE staff, is to put students on the right path in high school, as they use those four years to prepare for life beyond ISD 728.

"It's about starting them on the right path to get to where they want to be," said CTE Coordinator Amy Lord. "They may not have it all figured out now, but getting into high school with some ideas can help put them on that path."











FREE and Reduced Price Meals

Did you know ISD 728 offers free and reduced priced meals for breakfast and lunch to families who are experiencing financial difficulties?

You can apply anytime throughout the school year, every year.

APPLY FOR THE PROGRAM TODAY!

Visit www.isd728.org/FARM.



Megan Heitkamp Named Region VI Teacher of the Year





Salk Middle School science teacher Megan Heitkamp has been named the Magnet Schools of America Region VI Teacher of the Year, as ISD 728's magnet school continues to rack up the accolades.

Salk was recently named an MSA School of Excellence award winner, as well.

Heitkamp will compete with teachers from around the country later this spring – and grab the school's national recognition – at the Magnet Schools of Excellence Award ceremonies, held in Las Vegas this coming April.

"I'm really not a huge fan of individual attention," Heitkamp, who is beloved by her student for her NASA fanaticism and love of all things science, said. "Really, my colleagues are helping me with it. And they help with everything. It's exciting, for sure, but everything at Salk is such a team effort."

The Magnet Schools of America Teacher of the Year Award also focuses on equity and diversity, something Heitkamp takes seriously in her classroom. ISD 728's core values include the statements that "Everyone can learn," and that "All people have value." Those are evidence of a district committed to equity.

Megan said she's "excited" to head to Vegas and represent Salk and the school district this spring.

Otsego Elementary Kindergarteners Visit Elk River Fire Station



Kindergarten students at Otsego Elementary School learned about fire safety from the experts at the Elk River Fire Station. Students received a tour of the facility, learned about fire alarms, good fires vs. bad fires, who to call when there is an emergency and how often parents should check their home fire alarms (every month). At the end of the tour, students even received goodies to bring back home!

Thank you Elk River Fire Department for the continued partnership and for educating our students!

Twin Lakes Elementary's Schulz Named Art Educator of the Year





Leah Schulz, art teacher at Twin Lakes Elementary School in Elk River, has been named the Art Educators of Minnesota (AEM) Teacher of the Year for 2019-2020.

Schulz, who has been with ISD 728 since the early 2000s, joined the Twin Lakes staff when the school opened in 2007. Schulz was nominated by 2017-2018 recipient Nicole Hahn, who teaches at Hassan Elementary in Rogers.

Schulz is a staff and parent favorite, to go along with being beloved by her students. Her colorful classroom features arts from all sorts of media, and her works – as well as student/parent works created in classes under her guidance – can be seen around Twin Lakes Elementary.

"I kind of always knew [I'd be a teacher]," Schulz said. "I'd come home from third or fourth grade and play art teacher in my room. So my mom wasn't surprised at all when that's the path I took."

She received her award in a special ceremony at Minnesota State University-Mankato, November 2, 2019. In March, she'll represent elementary teachers from Minnesota at the National Art Educators Conference in Minneapolis.

Meadowvale Claims District-Wide Geography Bowl Title



Meadowvale Elementary School takes first place at the ISD 728 Annual Geography Bowl. They competed against ISD 728 fourth and fifth graders on Dec. 1 at Elk River High School.

Members of the Meadowvale Mustangs team include Caleb Ostmoe, Rylee Vevle, Braedon Becker and Brecken Digiovanni.

The competition started earlier this year at the building level, where the classes whittled the fourth and fifth grade teams down to one school champion. That champion then advanced to represent the building at this year's district-wide competition. Congrats Mustangs!

Elk River High School Hosts Annual Interview Day

On Tuesday, January 21, the Elk River High School participated in the annual Interview Day. Juniors were given the opportunity to meet and interview with representatives from dozens of area businesses, the Army National Guard, Air National Guard and ISD 728 staff, to name a few.

"The experience is invaluable for students just entering the workforce," said Assistant Principal Bryan Scherr.

"It's a taste of what they'll see once they start exploring the professional world. Some of them are looking for their first jobs, some are actually just looking to move up or move on. But this process gives them some very valuable feedback. We're very grateful for the support of the Elk River business community, which makes this day such a success."









Parker Elementary Gives Back

The Parker Student Council had a busy winter giving back to the community. For one week in November they made a call to action and collected $637.52 to benefit Pennies for Patients (The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society). Then, in December, they set up the Giving Tree and collected gifts and toys to benefit families in need in Sherburne County.





Eight is Great: Salk Middle School Honored as Merit School of Distinction

Salk Middle School has once again been recognized by Magnet Schools of America, after the national association for magnet and theme-based schools named Salk Pre-Engineering Magnet School a National Magnet School of Distinction.

This is the EIGHTH year in a row that Salk has been recognized by Magnet Schools of America as a Merit award-winning school.

Magnet School of Distinction Awards are the second level of awards given to magnet schools that have met all the basic requirements outlined in the merit awards scoring rubric. All schools that apply for merit awards must be current members of Magnet School of America and are required to submit an application that is scored by a panel of educators. To receive a national merit award, members of Magnet Schools of America must submit a detailed application that is scored by a panel of educators. These schools are judged and scored on their demonstrated ability to raise student academic achievement, promote racial and socioeconomic diversity, provide integrated curricula and instruction, and create strong family and community partnerships that enhance the school's magnet theme.

'All Shook Up' at Rogers High Honored by Hennepin Theatre Trust



The Spotlight Education Program, in cooperation with Hennepin Theatre Trust, has awarded several Performance Honors to the cast and crew of "All Shook Up," which took center stage at the Rogers High School Performing Arts Center earlier this year.

The Overall Production of "All Shook Up," featuring the music of Elvis Presley, was given an Outstanding Award from the Spotlight Education program, which is the highest honor a show can achieve in that category.

Actors Lydia Deavel (Natalie) and Kennedy Thomas (Sylvia) were named winners of Outstanding Awards for Leading Role and Supporting Role, respectively.

Stage Manager Emily Dusosky and Set Designer Alyssa Bachmeier earned Outstanding Awards in their fields, as well. Additional Outstanding Awards were given to the Student Orchestra, the Light and Sound Crew, and the Overall Technical Team, making it the most awarded show for ISD 728 by the Hennepin Theatre Trust.

Honorable Mention Awards included Achievement in Musical Theatre, Overall Performance, Ensemble Performance, Vocal Performance and Run Crew.

Lead actors Grey Cuabo (Chad) and Ethan Nylin (Dennis) were named Honorable Mention winners, as was Supporting Actor Aidan Gordon (Jim). Additionally, Isabella Dickmeyer earned an "Evaluator Shout-Out."

‘Freaky Friday’ Earns Multiple Hennepin Theatre Honors



The Spotlight Education Program, in cooperation with Hennepin Theatre Trust, has awarded several Performance Honors to the cast and crew of “Freaky Friday,” which ran at Zimmerman High School earlier this school year.

Leading the way were Nicole Weekley and Bailey Benner, who each earned Outstanding Performance in a Leading Role honors from the Trust for their roles as Ellie Blake and Katherine Blake in the show.

Joey Kirk (Adam) and Cole Carbert (Mike) each honored Honorable Mention in a Supporting Role recognition.

Tech leaders Melissa Muckenhirn (Deck Captain), Tanner Johnson (Lighting Designer) and Madi Naatz (Set Designer) each earned Honorable Mention in Technical Leadership awards.

Ensemble Honorable Mention Awards went to the cast for Ensemble Performance and Acting Performance; to the Student Orchestra, to the Overall Technical Team and the Light and Sound Crew.

The entire performance also earned an Honorable Mention award. Evaluator shout-outs were given to members Connie Neumiller and Hailee Peterson as well.

Twin Lakes Spreads Kindness with Chalk

The students at Twin Lakes Elementary School took to the sidewalk to create inspirational, colorful messages to their fellow classmates.

“Sometimes all a person needs to hear is something uplifting and positive to get through a rough day!,” said TLES secretary Kelli Duerr. “Our goal was to cover the sidewalks with KIND messages & images of love, peace, hope, acceptance.”





VandenBerge Middle School Students Host College Fair

Students from VandenBerge Middle School took classmates and friends on a “virtual college tour” with a College Fair, held in the school’s media center on Wednesday, January 29.

Students did their own research, created poster boards and/or video presentations on ChromeBooks, and guided fellow students through their choice.

Schools featured included The Ohio State University, UCLA, Bemidji State and even St. Cloud Technical College, to name a few.

Via their presentation, the students shared pertinent information about their school – beyond “just” location – and why they felt that particular college or university might be the perfect fit for them someday.

Examples were students who were fans of making films and short videos showing interest in UCLA’s world-renowned film school.

“Our Gen Z students like to dig in and get information for themselves, or from their peers. They’re going to learn more by ‘doing’ than hearing it from other people. So this is their chance to share all of that research with those around them,” said VMS Principal Dr. Marcia Welch.







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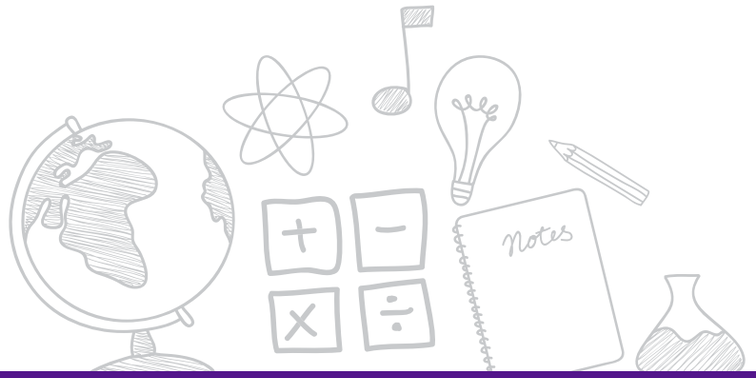
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School is Cool! Photo Gallery



The Zimmerman High School football crew visited Westwood Elementary School to kick off "I Love to Read Month" in February. They visited and read to students in every class!



VandenBerge students enjoyed some outdoor time at an all-school field trip to Powder Ridge in Kimball.



Hassan"s Got Talent! Hassan Elementary School hosted their annual talent show and it received rave reviews!



Dreaming of summer...Meadowvale Elementary School hosts a Beach Day Lunch!



Minnesota Public Radio's Flying Forms visited Parker Elementary School to perform music from the Baroque period.