INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

728 HAPPENINGS

Our mission is to educate, inspire & empower

With schools in Elk River, Otsego, Rogers & Zimmerman

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Winter/Spring 2022

Despite Uncertainty, 2021-2022 Has Been a Year of Partnerships, Growth

ISD 728 is proud to continue to be an educational partner and leader for nearly 14,000 students and their families throughout our Elk River, Zimmerman, Rogers, Otsego and surrounding communities. Together, we have partnered to ensure our children are well fed, cared for, and have access to amazing educational opportunities and facilities throughout ISD 728. In addition to the day-to-day happenings involved with school and in 2022, we will:

- Work to ensure no child goes hungry or worries about having a safe place to sleep.
- Increase opportunities for students to gain career and college readiness skills.
- Enhance collaboration with local businesses, city, and county partners in the areas of athletics/activities, facilities, programming, and strategic planning.
- Provide additional learning opportunities for students who prefer to learn in person, online or in a system that provides a combination of both (i.e. blended learning). This will include expanding the program for students in all grade levels, Kindergarten through Grade 12.
- Increase mental health support for our students and families to ensure each and every school building has dedicated personnel.
- Fulfill promises made related to construction and maintenance of school buildings (i.e. learning space renovations, parking lots, heating/cooling, new school in Otsego, stadiums, etc.).
- Continue to partner with the Department of Health, Department of Education, and local health officials on all pandemic-related events.
- Demonstrate leadership throughout our communities by facilitating conversations, increasing awareness, and identifying ways to best support ALL students regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, etc.
- Communicate and remain transparent with everything we do.
- Increase efforts to attract quality candidates and retain employees in all positions throughout the school district.
- Increase student voice when making decisions related to ISD 728.
- Prioritize relationships and stay true to our core values, mission and vision statements.
- Work tirelessly to keep students and staff supported, on-site, and engaged.



This is the third school year impacted by the pandemic. We have learned so much, and continue to modify and adjust practices on a daily basis to support our students, families and staff. While we pride ourselves on being proactive, having a dynamic strategic plan, and working collaboratively with our stakeholders, we expect to continue to struggle with labor shortages, the pandemic, and both rumors and inaccurate information on social media. We also anticipate that the needs of our students will become even more intense.

This school year and beyond, we will continue to learn with and from others, work diligently to bring people together, even when they disagree, serve as a place where all students and families feel welcomed, and commit to sorting through the distractions so we can focus our energy on doing good things for our students, families and communities. We remain grateful for each other, having a committed school board willing to lead and set an example for others to follow, staff and administration that go above and beyond at all hours of the day, and for the wonderful things happening in each and every ISD 728 school and program. We serve all people, regardless of age, need, or situation and we remain committed to doing it well!

We are hopeful that within 2022 the pandemic will become more manageable, and that all people will commit to kindness, seek to understand before responding, and that we can all continue to look for ways to meaningfully partner for the good of all.

ISD 728 remains a fabulous place to learn and work, and I am extremely grateful to serve in this role with each and every one of you. I know these last few years have not been easy for anyone, but recognize that we will use the lessons we have learned and relationships we have built to ensure a bright future for all.

Thank you for being part of ISD 728, and for all that you do to make our world a better place.

Superintendent Dr. Dan Bittman

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Twin Lakes Elementary Earns National Blue Ribbon School Award



U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona, announced Tuesday, September 21, 2021, Twin Lakes Elementary School (TLES) in Elk River had been named a 2021 National Blue Ribbon School. TLES is one of only three (3) Minnesota elementary schools earning this prestigious, nationwide recognition.

"This is a testament to the work you do, to the dedication of our families, students and staff and to the incredible community that is TLES," said Assistant Superintendent William Campbell. "With Parker Elementary earning the Blue Ribbon recognition in 2016, ISD 728 has had two schools honored in just five years. This is an incredible achievement."

Schools are nominated for the award by the state department of education, and then the school completes a comprehensive application for consideration. Schools may apply for status as Exemplary High Performing—among the top schools in a state—or Exemplary Achievement Gap Closing—schools making the fastest progress in their state in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups.

"We are excited and proud of the TLES staff, our students and our families for making this recognition possible," said Superintendent Dr. Dan Bittman. "We know that ISD 728 is a remarkable place to live, to learn and to work, and this is just one more reminder of why. TLES embodies our mission and our core values each and every day. After navigating through what we have been facing since 2020 and the pandemic - this is such a wonderful honor. We are very thankful to the Secretary and the U.S. Department of Education for this award."

School Representatives represented TLES at a two-day award ceremony in Washington, D.C. last November to celebrate their hard-won achievement.

"This is just a very special place," said Principal Dan Collins of the award-winning school. "I'm proud to have been here since we started, and we've been through so much together. Growing, navigating the pandemic – we've always found a way to have that Otter Pride and just a great community here."

The National Blue Ribbon Schools Program recognizes public and private elementary, middle, and high schools based on their overall academic excellence or their progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups. Every year the U. S. Department of Education seeks out and celebrates great American schools demonstrating that all students can achieve to high levels. The National Blue Ribbon School award affirms the hard work of students, educators, families, and communities in creating safe and welcoming schools where students master challenging content. The National Blue Ribbon School flag gracing an entry or flying overhead is a widely recognized symbol of exemplary teaching and learning.

"Over the past several years, TLES has been a shining example of our mission," said Holly Thompson, ISD 728 Board Chair. "The effort to make TLES a special community for our students and families – a place where we inspire and empower our kids – has been noticed locally with our district year-end awards. It has been noticed on a state level, with recognition from the Minnesota Department of Education as a Reward School. And now, the rest of the Country knows what we know – TLES is a very special place and a National Blue Ribbon Award School."

Exemplary High Performing Schools are among their state's highest performing schools as measured by state assessments or nationally normed tests. Exemplary Achievement Gap Closing Schools are among their state's highest performing schools in closing achievement gaps between a school's subgroups and all students over the past five years.

A Minnesota Reward School, TLES falls into the second category – Exemplary Achievement Gap Closing School. The elementary school ranks in the top 20% in the state in reading and in the Top 10% in math, based on the results of the 2019 Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments and Minnesota Test of Academic Skills.

Additional Minnesota winners this year (school/district) were Barnesville Elementary (Barnesville), McKinley Elementary in Ham Lake (Anoka-Hennepin), Minnetonka West Middle School in Chanhassen (Minnetonka), Roosevelt Middle School in Blaine (Anoka-Hennepin) and St. Croix Preparatory Academy (St. Croix Prep).

Meadowvale Elementary Celebrates Elk River Olympian



Nick Perbix, a 'graduate' of Meadowvale Elementary School and first-time Olympian, was honored by the Mustang family the first week of February as Nick took off to Beijing with the United States Men's Hockey Team.

Perbix becomes the first Olympian from Elk River - he's currently a college standout and Hobey Baker Award finalist for the St. Cloud State Huskies - the first since Elk River High Hall of Famer Paul Martin.

Perbix and the US Men skated in China throughout February - getting the chance to become Olympians after the National Hockey League prohibited players from going to this year's Winter Games. Perbix has been drafted by an NHL franchise, but is finishing out his collegiate career and is eligible to compete with the amateurs.





The ISD 728 community will have a close eye on Nick throughout the spring!

ISD 728 Board Member Sara Weis Earns the MSBA Rising Star Award



For several years, Rogers resident and ISD 728 School Board Member Sara Weis has been following her passion for all things schools. From parent advisory groups to the Rogers Youth Football Association, hockey to the PTO, Weis has found joy and fulfillment from being involved in her community and schools.

"I think it's something I found out I had a passion for early on. And when people see that in you, they ask you to be a part of things," Weis said. "I think, for me, it's a way to show support for my family, for my kids and for my community. I really do enjoy it."

That passion and drive for the Rogers community led to an involvement in ISD 728 advisory boards for both the 2014 and 2019 referendums, and, eventually, a run for the ISD 728 School Board, in which she was successful in 2018. Her leadership throughout the construction phase of that 2019 bond campaign – including classroom space, a new school in Otsego and multiple upgrades to activity facilities and gyms – has made her an instant leader on the Board, said Superintendent Dr. Dan Bittman.

"Sara is committed to delivering on our promises and doing what is right, even in the face of opposition," Superintendent Dr. Dan Bittman said. "She's been an outstanding member of our Project Oversight Committee, which is ensuring the District delivers on all of the promises made throughout the 2019 referendum process. These efforts have required time, patience, understanding and holding people – including leadership here in ISD 728 – accountable."

For that leadership, drive and dedication to students and families, Weis was honored with the 2021 Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA) "Rising Star Award," which honors a School Board Member in their first term on their respective Board. The award is bestowed in honor of Tiffany Rodning, late Deputy Director of MSBA.

"MSBA observed that the tenures of our school board members was getting shorter – fewer members serving their communities for longer periods or running through multiple elections," said Kirk Schneidawind, Executive Director of MSBA. "We had met many new, first-term Board members who were making an impact early. And we wanted some way to recognize them for their drive, energy and passion – something we witnessed everyday with Tiffany. That's where the idea of the Rising Star Award came from."

While she doesn't feel like a "Star" in her work on the ISD 728 School Board, Weis acknowledged that she's working hard to learn "on the job" and continue to advocate for families and students in this, yes, unprecedented time.

"There are amazing people doing incredible things across the state on our school boards and in our school districts, so this is definitely an honor," Weis said. "From the first day, soon after we moved [to Rogers], I signed up for Community Education emails because I knew that's how you found out what was going on in our area. I was involved early and often, and I wouldn't change that. It's been a great journey."

Leadership and a clear, unified message have been two big reasons for ISD 728's success throughout the past five years, Weis said. Credit for that goes to Superintendent Dr. Dan Bittman and her fellow Board members.

"We've found a way to have hard conversations, and to do what's right for our kids and families. It hasn't always been easy. No one could have expected these last two years and all the social issues around schools and in our communities. But I feel like we've done a great job for our communities," she said.

Weis accepted her award with fellow Board members at the MSBA Conference, which was held on January 13, 2022.

"Sara has been an outstanding addition to our Board and really came at a time when we needed her voice, her perspective and her leadership," Chair Holly Thompson said. "She is all about making quality opportunities available for both students and staff. And we've seen those opportunities just change and evolve over the last three years. She asks thoughtful questions and wants the Board to be a source of support for others. That's a unique quality."

ISD 728 Launches Stopfinder App for Students/Families

stopfinder

As we began a new calendar year in combination with the return of winter weather, ISD 728 Transportation was excited to begin implementing Stopfinder, a transportation parent app, for most families that attend ISD 728 schools and are transported by Vision Transportation.

Families were notified by the District of the rollout throughout January and February.

The Stopfinder app is meant to be used as an additional tool to notify a family that their bus is nearby. ISD 728 still expects students to arrive at the bus stop five minutes before their scheduled pick-up time.

"Stopfinder" is an easy to use, all-in-one app that allows parents/families to have the most accurate information about a student's bus schedule at any time, from anywhere. "GeoAlerts" can also be created, which will notify a user when the bus has arrived in, or departed from, any location on a student's route, including an assigned bus stop and school. GeoAlert "Alert Zones" are created for individual students allowing the user to customize the Alert Zone based on a specific bus route.

Stopfinder can be downloaded for free from the "App Store" or "Google Play" and requires an invite and registration through the district prior to accessing a student's transportation schedule.

The District used a phased roll-out schedule, with Zimmerman families joining the app first, then Rogers, Otsego and finally, Elk River.

*Stopfinder is not available for families of Northwest Suburban Integration District (NWSISD), non-public and charter school students at this time.

Parent assistance and troubleshooting options are available, similar to all other parent apps within ISD 728. Website resources can be found via the Transportation section on the ISD728.org website. Or, please contact Kari Schugel at x1274 or kari.schugel@isd728.org if you have any questions, or would like more information.

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Natalie Thompson of Elk River High School named Chef of the Year



Elk River High School (ERHS) junior Natalie Thompson has become the first junior in the ERHS ProStart program to be named American Culinary Federation Chef of the Year in Minnesota.

Thompson, a member of the school's Hallway Cafe crew and ProStart competition team, earned her White Coat and Blue Ribbon/Medal for her work both in the kitchen and via volunteering through various food organizations in and around the Twin Cities area.

"I've always really liked being able to give back through our program," she said. "Finding those opportunities and learning from other people, that's important to me."

Thompson and her ProStart Team are now focused on the State Competition, which ERHS has won multiple times. However, COVID shortened the 2020 season and the 2021 season was conducted virtually, so this meet will be much different for most of the team as the Elks look to get back to their dominating ways in the kitchen.

ISD 728 will have updates throughout the spring on the team's successes. "We're excited to compete again," Thompson said.

New Hassan Elementary Leader Focuses on Making Connections



LaTonya Cruthird is all about making connections. You can see it daily as she walks the halls and playground areas at Hassan Elementary School (HES) – her new home away from home. There is an easiness and friendliness that makes the school's new principal a friendly face to students from all grades.

"The school year came up very quickly," Cruthird, who started in July, said. "Before we knew it we were kind of up and running. And with all of the things going on – from trying to get back to whatever our new 'normal' is to meeting parents and families to getting to know my staff – a month was gone before I knew it."

The new principal has some big shoes to fill – now leading the school that had only known Heidi Adamson-Baer as its principal. She said she's working to use her own style of leadership and connection to pick up where Heidi left off.

"I've let everyone know – I'm not her. And that's not a bad thing. She was a great leader and she will always be a part of HES. There's no doubt about that. And I couldn't have asked for a much better situation. This is a fantastic school with great people."

One of the ways she's making it her own is connecting with HES families. Cruthird said she's doing everything from 1-on-1 meetings to group gatherings to chatting up moms and dads in the pick-up line.

She's also connecting with kids. In the hallways, out on the playground, she's asking kids about their day, how they're doing – and what comes next.

"I think some of our students who are Black or are people of color really light up when they see me because they see someone that looks like they do, and they just are drawn to that. So I'll get some big hugs – it's nice to hug again!"

Which brings up the follow-up question – how different is it to have students in the building this year from Day One? "Well, we were lucky to have kids at our school in California for just a bit – so I was kind of back into the groove with that. But to have a somewhat normal – whatever our new normal is – start to the year has been so great. I think there have been some families who were unsure or uneasy about how all of it would go – but the kids were so ready to connect and see their friends and see their teachers in person. You can't put it into words, really. It's just a great feeling, and the kids are so happy to be here. And so am I."

Elk River High School Students Earn Honors at NWSC Visual Arts Day

The Northwest Suburban Conference Visual Arts Day consists of hands-on visual arts workshops for our highly interested high school art students. The event was held at the Minnetonka Center for the Arts Friday, October 8, 2021. Elk River High School (ERHS) Senior Etta Sether describes the day, "NWSC Visual arts day was an incredible experience for me, it was a fun day full of learning about new mediums and first hand experiences led by professionals. It was an awesome experience and I'm very glad I was able to be a part of it."

Students from the NWSC high schools learn from instructors who are professional artists working in the areas of Weaving Explorations, Raku Firing, Art Journaling, Monoprinting, Mixed-Media Sculpture, Reverse Acrylic Painting, Origami Art, Glass Mosaics and Low-Relief Ceramic Tile.



Abby Berg, Emma Gangl, Karen Balabon, Cerina Chang, Etta Sether, Elle Cotton, Caroline Nelson, Levi Donat, Ella Ovall, Maddie Christian

Positive outcomes include learning and working with new artists, having longer hands-on work sessions and creating artworks along-side students also passionate about visual arts. ERHS students taking part in the conference event include junior Karen Balabon, and seniors Abby Berg, Cerina Chang, Maddie Christian, Elle Cotton, Levi Donat, Emma Gangl, Caroline Nelson, Ella Ovall and Etta Sether.

Emma Gangl enjoyed the experience stating, "I had a really good time! The hands-on workshops and demonstrations were great and definitely something I learned from to take into my future projects in clay! It was super interesting to see the process of how they did a clay firing vs. what I have done here at the high school!" Senior Ella Ovall shared, "It was a good opportunity to try new materials that I may not have used otherwise. Now I can broaden the possibilities of what I can do with my art."

Northern Tool Visits Rogers High Tech Program, Gifts $5,000

Neighbors often help and pitch in where needed. In the Rogers business community, that assistance has often been given to Rogers schools.

"We're always so appreciative of that support and engagement," said Superintendent Dr. Dan Bittman. "It's one of the things that makes ISD 728 such a special place for our students to learn."

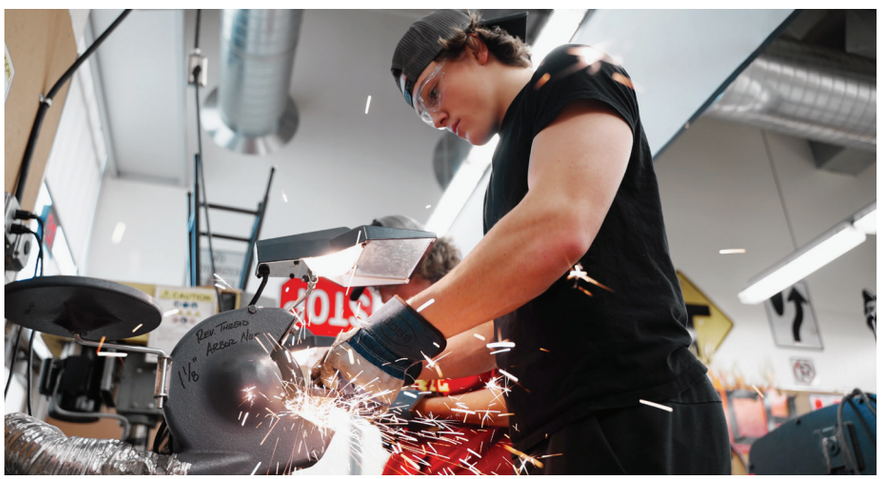
This year, Rogers Northern Tool and Equipment, a premier dealer for trades professionals in the Upper Midwest, marked its 40th anniversary with a special gift to Rogers High School (RHS) – to the tune of $5,000. The company is based in Burnsville and has more than 120 stores in 23 states.

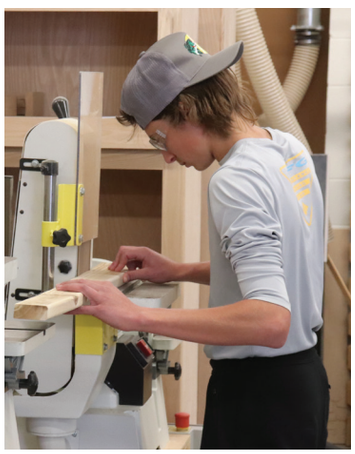
The gift includes tools, gift cards for students, materials and much more.

"We're definitely appreciative of the partnership and support Northern Tool has given not just this year but each year to our department," said Dirk Udee, teacher and coach at RHS. "They've just been a great neighbor for us."

Northern Tool Marketing guru Todd Allard said the company is proud to be a part of the Rogers community and supporter for students learning trades at RHS.

"We want to encourage and empower students who are looking for a career in skilled trades," he said. "You're so fortunate to have these resources here at RHS, and we also feel fortunate to be a part of that."







ISD 728 Elementary, Middle Schools among Minnesota's Best

U.S. News and World Report, long known for its rankings of America's top high schools, has expanded their repertoire in 2021 and started to evaluate the nation's top elementary and middle schools, releasing their inaugural ranking this December.

Elk River schools led the way for ISD 728, with Salk Middle School in earning a silver status nationally as one of the top middle schools in the country. Likewise, Parker Elementary school was in the top percentile of elementary buildings in Minnesota and also may fly the "Best Elementary Schools" banner courtesy of the magazine.

"We are proud of the work we do throughout our extraordinary District," said Superintendent Dr. Dan Bittman, Superintendent of ISD 728. "We appreciate the recognition from U.S. News and know that their criteria examines how we educate our students and, additionally, how ISD 728 supports our communities. This success is the result of teamwork shared by students, staff and families. It's an honor for our schools to be recognized in this manner and we know it is just the beginning. There is incredible work happening at each and every one of our schools, and I am grateful to be part of it."

Hassan Elementary, Rogers Elementary, Twin Lakes, Otsego, Westwood, Prairie View, Meadowvale and Lincoln also earned rankings from the periodical.

"Our elementary school principals, teachers, and staff have really answered the call over the past couple of years, in particular, to keep our kids safe, to keep achievement at a high level and to rebuild our school community after so much was interrupted in 2020," said Mr. William Campbell, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Educational Services. "This is a testament to them and the work of all of our elementary students, staff and families."

A complete look at statewide elementary school rankings can be found here: usnews.com/education/k12/elementary-schools/minnesota

Rogers Middle School, Zimmerman Middle School, and VandenBerge Middle School were also honored and received a positive ranking.

"This is a special place to learn, to work and to live," said Dr. Kari Rock, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Educational Services. "These accolades are just the result of ISD 728 continuing to deliver on its mission and goals for staff, families and students. We appreciate their work."

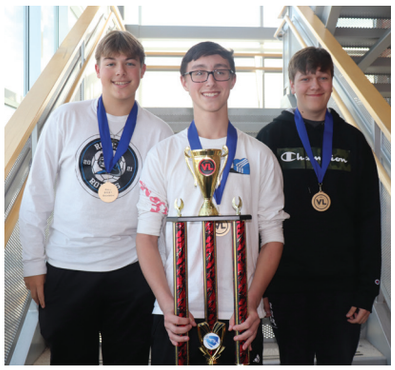
A complete look at statewide middle school rankings can be found here: https://www.usnews.com/education/k12/middle-schools/minnesota

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Rogers High School E-Sports Team Captures State Championship



As E-Sports continues to make its sweep across the country, Minnesota has fully embraced the new gaming trend and technology with team E-Sports leagues held by Minnesota Varsity League (MNVL) with Fall, Winter and Spring seasons.

Rogers High School (RHS) created its first E-Sport squads this fall, and, amazingly, rolled to the Fall Season State Championship in "Rocket League" - a popular online game supported by Xbox and PlayStation platforms, as well as PC, among others - which resembles a game of hot rod cars playing soccer.

For high school E-Sports teams, the game format was 3 vs. 3, and RHS soared early from "relatively unknown" squad to a conference contender and, eventually, a state champion thanks to the trio of Eli Olson, Tyler Esterberg and Drew Fiske. Advisor and teacher Jon Emerson led the group of young men.

"I think last spring there was some conversation about a Rocket League team," Olson said, "and these guys and I had kind of been playing together. So we were on that right away. But it's really different playing in leagues online vs. playing other schools. The levels are different. It's intense."

The game is a natural fit for Esterberg, who plays goalkeeper for the RHS junior varsity and varsity soccer teams. Esterberg and his teammates - Fiske and Olson - actually started playing Rocket League together more than four years ago, with Fiske really coming on full time with the group just last year.

The season started in October - three divisions with seven teams each - and RHS quickly made a name for itself, defeating 2020-2021 power Spring Lake Park and also taking out Minnetonka during the regular season.

"Overall I think they won 18 of 20 games and they really kind of came together," Emerson said. The team format made the trio closer - especially as a "school sport."

"We held each other accountable," Olson said. "There were grade checks, so we had to keep our GPA up. We'd check in on assignments and stuff like that. We really do work as a team, especially during the season."

While the end-of-season Divisional tournament didn't go as planned for the RHS Royals, State saw them get off to a good start with a sweep of Highland Park. In the State Quarterfinals, the squad lost its first game, but rolled to a 3-1 victory to advance to the Final Four.

"I wasn't worried, but we were pretty inconsistent in the second match," Fiske said. "We kind of followed the same pattern in the semis, losing the first game and winning the next three. And that carried over to the final."

Indeed, all told the Royals won five straight games, finishing off Burnsville 3-1 and taking a 2-0 lead in the championship against Spring Lake Park. But SLP roared back, trying the match at 2-2 and forcing Game 5.

In that game a crazy series of events in the final 18 seconds led to the RHS win - a huge goal by Olson, and then a save by Esterberg, included. As the game concluded, the trio started "freaking out." "I don't remember, really, but I just started shouting," Olson said.

The season will roll on this Spring. The trio said more students continue to sign up - with more than 20 E-sports athletes now ready for MNVL play.

"Word is kind of getting around about it," Olson said. "People watch on Twitch and they want to be a part of what we're doing. So it'll be fun to see it grow even into next year."

Multi-Purpose Fields Open at Rogers, Zimmerman as Projects Continue



The Zimmerman and Rogers High School (ZHS/RHS) Stadium Projects were near completion before the seasons changed, which allowed ZHS and RHS activities to host multiple fall sports, including football, this academic year.

The schools are also, as promised to our communities, using the space for physical education activities during the school day. New spaces inside the school, including weight rooms, are also open. Track surfaces are also complete for activities and classes, once the snow melts.

At Elk River High School, the stadium project was a larger undertaking as construction on a new entrance and "welcome" was part of the package. Bleachers have been completely replaced, as well as lights and scoreboard. All spaces were complete prior to the end of the football season - including restrooms, concessions and gathering spaces around the stadium. Storage buildings were also added to the site.

Away from the fields, VandenBerge Middle School opened with new offices, signage and new décor for the 21-22 school year. The school also welcomed new lockers and some new furniture for the halls and common spaces throughout the building.





"We continue to deliver on our promises to voters that gave us approval for these amazing projects back in 2019," said Superintendent Dr. Dan Bittman. "It seems like such a long time ago, but we know this will all help shape our District for many years to come."

Board Members, Leaders Get Tour of New Prairie View Middle School Building

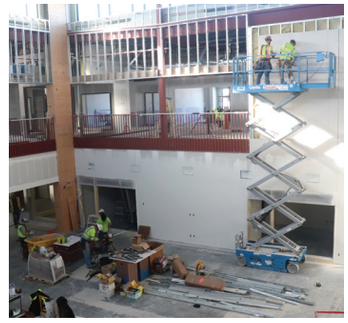
The opening of the centerpiece of the 2019 Referendum is now just months away from opening, as crews work diligently on the interior of the new Prairie View Middle School (PVMS) in Otsego.

The school is state of the art, and meets new legislative codes for community buildings, including storm shelters.

"Without a doubt, this will be one of the nicest middle schools in Minnesota, and we are going to be able to do this on time, within our budget, and during a pandemic when shortages in both supplies and workforce are impacting projects like this all over the country. That's a true testament to our team here," said Superintendent Dr. Dan Bittman. "Our community partners like Stahl Construction, Wold, and along with Manager Tom Baranick (who leads much of the work) they have really come through in tough times to make this a great project. And, in the end, the kids win. They're going to have a great place to learn and call their own."

Longtime Salk STEM Middle School Principal Julie Athman has been named principal of the new PVMS and has already taken the reins as the building begins to add staff - many of whom will come from the current grades at the existing school. Athman will need a team of support staff - including administrative assistants, custodians and media center help - to help open the building.







The building is projected to open this fall with more than 800 students in Grades 5 through 8. The current PVEMS will transition from an early ed - Grade 8 school to E-4.

Dan Wrobleski Named Interim Principal at Salk Middle School



Salk S.T.E.M. Middle School and ISD 728 named Dan Wrobleski the interim principal for the remainder of the 2021-2022 school year.

Dan comes to ISD 728 from Columbia Heights Public Schools, where he has been principal at Columbia Heights High School since 2013. Prior to that he was assistant principal at CHHS, and was an AP at Centennial Heights High School from 2007-2010.

He fills the role for Julie Athman, who is heading from Salk to the new Prairie View Middle School. Athman was named the principal of the District's fifth traditional middle school last fall.

With more than 17 years of administrative experience and nearly three decades in education, Dan is a strong leader who will bring a lot to the award-winning Salk Middle School.

"We're excited to have Dan join our ISD 728 team," said Dr. Kari Rock, ISD 728 Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Educational Services. "Dan has done some great things at Columbia Heights during his tenure at the high school. He is a strong decision-maker and works hard toward improving achievement. We think he'll fit in very well at our award-winning Magnet program here in Elk River."

Safe Routes to School Helps Zimmerman Students Find their Way

ISD 728 thanks Zimmerman Public Works and the Safe Routes to School program, along with Sherburne County's SHIP (Statewide Health Improvement Partnership) for their collaboration with ISD 728's Prevention and Safety Team on new signage for our Safe Routes to School pathways throughout Zimmerman.

Walking, biking and rolling trails throughout the Zimmerman community – which are used by many middle and high school students to get to ZHS/ZMS – are newly connected via signs that were funded by the cooperation of these groups.

"We've had these paths that students have been using to get to and from schools throughout the community, but it takes a while to learn where they go," said Marco Voce, Principal at ZHS. "Placing some signage from one section to the next kind of connected things so kids can safely get to and from our buildings."

The most noticeable path runs just south of the ZHS/ZMS Thunder Field, which is the current baseball diamond. The longest path connects the neighborhood just west of the high school to the Westwood neighborhood, cutting through trees and between a couple of ponds before meeting up with Sixth Avenue South. The cost of the signage was just under $800.





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* If you've ever thought "I know someone who would like to join our team!" – OR – "I think ISD 728 would be a great place for (XYZ) to teach!" – NOW is the time to act!

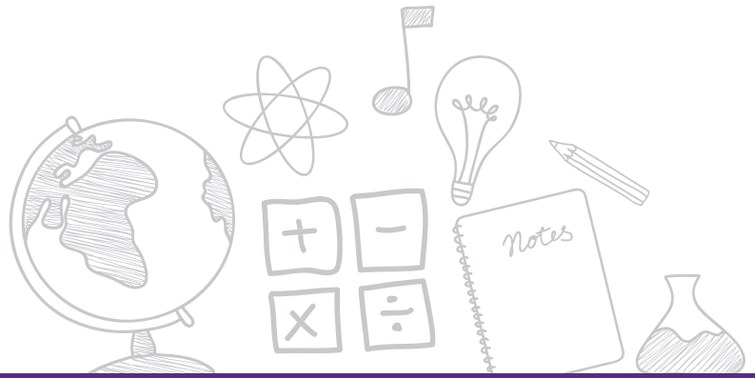
* ISD 728 needs people to #JoinOurTeam and is hiring multiple positions, especially as we look ahead to the 2022-2023 School Year.

* PLEASE pass it on, and find out how you can help others #JoinOurTeam to keep us #728Strong!

isd728.org/joinourteam

ISD 728 INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 728
ELK RIVER | OTSEGO | ROGERS | ZIMMERMAN
11500 193rd Ave. NW, Elk River, MN 55330

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School is Cool! Photo Gallery



Ivan Sand Community High and Junior High students earned multiple awards in Trimester I and were honored at the school.



Students at VandenBerge Middle School utilize some of the new open learning spaces during class.



Elk River and Rogers High DECA Chapters competed at Districts in early 2022.



Rogers Middle School Assistant Principal Bruce Jean takes pies for fundraiser.



Twin Lakes Elementary Students participated in the annual school Sock Hop/50s Dance.