



Orono Schools

Where Excellence is a Tradition and a Goal

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District News • October 6, 2023



From the Superintendent

Kristine Flesher, Ed.D.

Orono Homecoming!

It has been a great week in Orono Schools as we celebrate our annual Homecoming with royalty, activities, parade, tailgate party, and -- TONIGHT at 7 p.m. -- [the Homecoming football game](#) against the Providence Academy Lions. If you can't attend in person, you can view the [livestream broadcast](#). It is so wonderful to see the school spirit across our district. You can view more parade photos on our [district Facebook page](#). **Go, Spartans!**

Thank you and enjoy this special weekend!



CONGRATULATIONS to our National Merit Commended Scholars!

We are thrilled to announce our five National Merit Commended Scholars from the Class of 2024. These students are among 34,000 seniors nationwide who will be receiving a Letter of Commendation from National Merit in recognition of their outstanding academic promise. National Merit Scholarship Corporation shares, "Commended Scholars have demonstrated outstanding potential for academic success. We hope this recognition will help broaden their educational opportunities and encourage them as they continue their pursuit of academic success." We are so proud of all of you!



Congratulations to the Class of 2024 National Merit Commended Scholars (l-r): Leah Barry, Dexter Benson, Spencer Bowe, Alexander Engle, and Joseph Mariani.

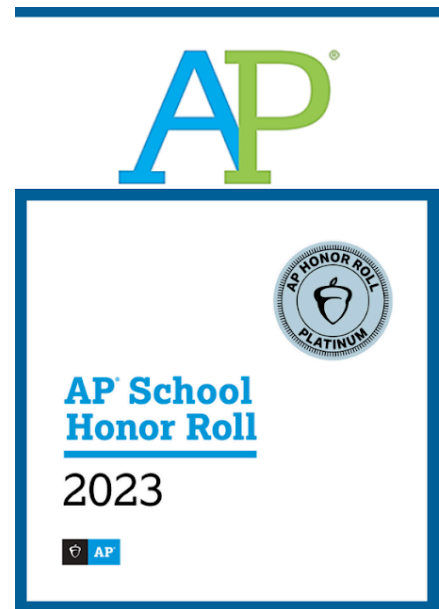
AP School Honor Roll - Platinum Level

Last Monday, we received news that Orono High School has earned a place on the Advanced Placement (AP) School Honor Roll at the **Platinum Level** based on student achievement during the 2022-23 school year. The AP School Honor Roll recognizes schools that have done outstanding work to welcome more students into AP courses and support them on their path to college success. The Honor Roll offers four levels of distinction, with Platinum being the highest.

Orono High School met or exceeded the Platinum threshold for all three evaluation criteria:

- **college culture:** percent of students in the graduating class who took an AP exam any time in high school. For OHS, this figure is 80% with a Platinum threshold of 80%.
- **college credit:** percent of students who scored 3 or higher on any AP exam. For OHS, this figure is 66% with a Platinum threshold of 50%.
- **college optimization:** percent of students who took 5 or more AP exams in high school, where at least one exam was taken in 9th or 10th grade. For OHS, this figure is 36% with a threshold of 15%.

AP coursework provides early exposure to college-level work and contributes to a college-going school culture. We are so proud of our teachers, staff and students for their commitment to reaching higher and keeping their goals in sight!



Orono Partnership for Youth Coalition

We are excited to share that the Orono Partnership for Youth (OPY) Coalition, in conjunction with our district, has been awarded the federal Drug-Free Communities Grant through the Office of National Drug Control Policy. This has been a project several years in the making and we are thrilled to be able to focus on preventing youth substance use and increasing mental wellness in our learning community.

We are also delighted to welcome **Ali Chorley** as the program director and Gina Byers as the Coordinator. Ali is a 2004 Orono graduate with extensive experience in this area and personal knowledge of our community. She comes to us following a 10-year directorship with Wayzata Schools' "Partners in Prevention" program.

A hallmark of this program is the focus on building positive childhood experiences (PCEs) through the school environment that so greatly impact child development. For example, one PCE is **connectedness** and **pride** in your high school. Another is being able to talk to a **caring adult** about your feelings. These are all things we work hard to incorporate in our interactions with students. The goals of the OPY Coalition fit so well with our Character work and our focus on protective factors to promote student well-being.

I am really excited to get this work underway! Welcome, Ali and Gina.



Orono School Board Meeting Highlights

Monday, September 25, 2023 | [Agenda](#)

- Superintendent's Report on Excellence | [Watch the Presentation](#)

- Board Member Reports | [Watch the Presentation](#)
- Policy 506 Review | [Watch the Presentation](#)
- Preliminary Levy Certification | [Watch the Presentation](#)

The next meeting of the [Orono School Board](#) is scheduled for Monday, October 9, 2023 at 7 p.m. in the District Office Assembly Room. The public is invited to register for [Public Comment](#) at the beginning of this Board meeting.

Upcoming Events

See the [Calendars page](#) on the Orono Schools website for more.

- **October 9**, School Board Meeting 7 p.m.
 - **October 18**, Unity Day - wear orange!
 - **October 19-20**, State Teacher Convention, No School
 - **October 23**, School Board Meeting, 7 p.m.
 - **November 3**, Professional Day, No School K-12
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