



Orono Schools

Where Excellence is a Tradition and a Goal

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District News • February 17, 2024



From the Superintendent

Kristine Flesher, Ed.D.

As we approach the Presidents Day weekend, I wanted to take a moment to provide an update on the excellence happening in Orono schools and to wish you all a great weekend.

Our upcoming Professional Day is Tuesday, February 20. I'm excited to share that our morning program will focus on reinforcing and furthering our commitment to creating an educational environment of belonging and positive experiences for all. Our keynote speaker is Ms. Ali Chorley Dzieveczynski, Director of The Orono Coalition (please learn more, below). She will be speaking on the "Power of Positive" in childhood and adult experiences. Staff will then have the choice of morning breakout sessions that further support our work in this area.

Well-being is also a key topic in the district and our Well-being Committee is excited to bring new resources to the community through the [Well-being Resources](#) website. To support the tagline, "Balance. Belong. Be Well." you'll find an abundance of materials, links, and videos that will help you address work-life-family balance, find a sense of belonging and take steps toward overall well-being. The district is proud to provide support staff at each building to help you and your child(ren) navigate challenges. You can find contact information on the [Support webpage](#).

Our goals and values are at the heart of everything we do to achieve excellence in Orono Schools! Thank you for your partnership.

Warm regards,

Kristine Flesher, Ed.D.
Superintendent

The Orono Coalition

Back in early October, we announced that our district had been awarded the federal Drug-Free Communities Grant through the Office of National Drug Control Policy. Thank you to Director Ali Chorley Dzieweczynski and Coordinator Gina Byers for developing the structure of **The Orono Coalition** so quickly! The Coalition is a wonderful collection of talented individuals representing diverse perspectives from many local community sectors. We are delighted with representation from parents, students, law enforcement, city leaders, faith leaders, and Orono Schools staff. The Orono Coalition is focused on preventing youth substance use and increasing mental wellness in our learning community. Thank you to all who answered the call to participate.



DECA State Qualifiers

Get ready to read a long list of names, because Orono DECA has qualified **86 students** for the DECA Minnesota State Career Development Conference March 10-12, 2024. When the state qualifiers were announced at the regional awards ceremony, our DECA student leaders honored **Mr. Keith Jurek**, recognizing his outstanding efforts for more than 30 years supporting high school students and the DECA program. This is Mr. Jurek's final DECA season as he will be retiring at the end of this school year. Thank you, Mr. Jurek, for inspiring hundreds and hundreds of students over the years.

Congratulations, DECA state qualifiers! Veronica Anderson, Drew Anderson, Nicolas Andrade, Lexi Arnold, Owen Barkley, Milana Berger, Grace Bickett, Alfie Bolgar, Christopher Byrnes, Nate Chavez, Lisle Cherwien, Dominick Cline, Natalie Close, Abby Daugherty, Ellery Denzin, Riley Ecker, Cayden Effertz, John Engebretson, Brooks Fegers, Lennart Felbers, Maddie Forsyth, Billy Foster, Isaac Fritz, Jordan Hansen, Brek Hovland, Henry Jackson, Nolan Jensen, Will Johnson, Grace Johnson, Matthew Kasbohm, Mitchell Kauch, Kaavya Kokate, Jade Kolbe, Evie Kompelien, Maddy Kullberg, Trey Landa, Anna Lang, Preston Lasser, Carson Lewis, Vincent Litchfield, Zoe Lopez, Alex Loveless, Leyla Lyu, Katie Mahoney, Grace Mandy, Joseph Mariani, Quinn Martini, Reagan Mieras, Joey Mugaas, Lily Nick, Alex Paulsen, Rae Pearce, Devin Pearce, Danielle Pearson, Ryan Perman, Jacob Pfeifer, Alexandra Pleimann, Will Riley, Ellery Rohrer, Easton Sankey, Logan Schleeter, Chase Schlobohm, Kali Schmidt, Jaid Schultz, Ben Setnicker, Sam Setnicker, Tyler Shannon, Owen Skanse, Johnny Skoog, Lila Solie, Ellie Sowieja, Sophia Staloch, Gabi Stephens, Adele Stommen, Trevor

Stundahl, Delilah Tate, Robert Teele, Izzy Torve, Eli Trongard, Luke Tufvander, Elliott Tysdal, Luke Wendling, Ellie Wheaton, Eliana Will, Cullen Winter, and Kyle Zinn.



Buying and Merchandising Operations Research Event... and Mr. Jurek!



Business Growth Qualifiers



Business Services Roleplay



Five Teams Advance in the International Business Plan Event



Sports Marketing Qualifiers

Music Listening Achievements

Congratulations to the Orono High School Music Listening team of Jorja Kenworthy ('25), Ella Johnson ('24) and Claire Erb ('24) for scoring in the top 10% nationwide in the 2024 Music Listening contest. All three Spartans are members of the OHS Wind Ensemble and have an amazing passion for music. Thank you to Coach Tim Arnold for supporting our students through this activity!

In music listening, students develop skills in active listening and critical analysis by learning to identify composers, cultures, periods, and styles. The nationwide contest is open to high school students in grades 9-12. This year, 68 teams from Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Utah competed. The top two teams, as well as those that score in the top 10% of all teams, are invited to the finals. Learn more about the [music listening contest](#).



Music Listening Team: Jorja Kenworthy, Ella Johnson, and Claire Erb



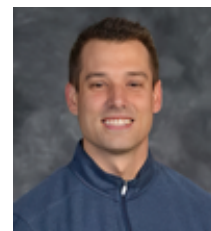
SPRING ACTIVITIES INFORMATION

February 19, 2024 | Registration opens in MyPaymentsPlus

February 29, 2024 | **ALL SPORT MEETING**
7:00 p.m. Orono High School Competition

Winter Sports Update

Don't miss AD Paul Brunner's [presentation to the Orono School Board on February 12 >>](#)



Congratulations to our athletes who are having an inspiring winter season!

- **Alpine Ski - State Championship Results**
 - Jack Shideman, 3rd Place; Fletcher Stoen, 7th Place; Jonathan Burns, 16th Place
- **Nordic Ski - State Championship Results**
 - Sprint Relay: Walter Holmes & Johnny DiPrima, 3rd Place
 - Individual state competitors: Erica Kazin, 6th Place; Drew Huotari, 25th Place; Sindri Bonner, 42nd Place
- **Dance Team - Section and State Results**
 - Varsity Dance Team Jazz *and* Kick Section Champions
 - Varsity Jazz - Class AA State Runner-Up
- **Boys Basketball**
 - Currently 13-9-0 and facing Bloomington Jefferson on 2-20-2024 at Bloomington
 - Nolan Groves recently set a new boys basketball single-game scoring record with his 50-point performance!
- **Girls Basketball**
 - Currently 14-10-0 and facing Bloomington Jefferson on 2-20-2024 at Orono
 - Sophomore Maya Moore recently scored her 1,000th career point!
- **Boys Hockey**
 - Currently 16-8-0 and facing Chaska 2-17-2024 at Chaska
- **Girls Hockey**
 - Section Champions; state quarterfinal round Wednesday (2/21) at Xcel Energy Center
- **Boys Swimming & Diving**
 - has wrapped up its regular season and will participate in upcoming team and individual section tournaments

- **Wrestling**
 - has concluded its regular season



Dance Team - Jazz



Alpine



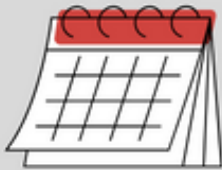
Nordic

Orono School Board Meeting Highlights

Monday, February 12, 2024 | [Agenda](#)

- Student Recognition: Macy Rasmussen | [Watch the Presentation](#)
- Superintendent's Report on Excellence | [Watch the Presentation](#)
- Board Reports & Comments | [Watch the Presentation](#)
- Policy Action - Policies from the 700 Series | [Watch the Presentation](#)
- Presentation by Activities Director Paul Brunner | [Watch the Presentation](#)

The next meeting of the [Orono School Board](#) is scheduled for Monday, February 26, 2024 at 7 p.m. in the District Office Assembly Room. Preceding the meeting, the public is invited to participate in a [Coffee & Conversation session](#) at 6:30 p.m. Registration is not required.



February 19 ● No School K-12, Presidents Day
February 20 ● No School K-12, Professional Day

Upcoming Events

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

- **February 19** | No School K-12, Presidents Day
- **February 20** | No School K-12, Professional Day
- **March 1** | Parent-Teacher Conferences, No School K-8
- **March 4** | Kick Off to College Planning Night for Grades 10, 11 and Parents/Guardians 6-8 p.m. at OHS
- **March 25-29** | Spring Break



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