

# School Board Brief

St. Anthony  New Brighton  
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 282

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## Board Director Laura Oksnevad claims seat on all-state school board

School Board Director Laura Oksnevad is now a member of the MSBA's 2024 All-State School Board. Honored by the Minnesota School Board Association (MSBA), the awards committee selects up to seven individual board members, out of nearly 2,400 board members in Minnesota, to the All-State School Board.

"When people ask me why I serve on the School Board I often tell them that when I close my eyes I can see the vision of our district: our commitment to the success of all learners."

Laura was also elected to the Association of Metropolitan School Districts (AMSD) board as Vice Chair.



## Did you know?

One third of the St. Anthony - New Brighton School Board is being recognized or has served in a statewide capacity to support the needs of public education. In addition to Laura's awards, Board Chair Ben Phillip was awarded the Rising Star Award by MSBA in 2023. Way to go!



## Welcome, Laurel Hood!

The School Board's newest Director Laurel Hood was welcomed at the January 9 board meeting.

"I ran for school board because I believe in the importance of public education. Both my parents were educators, so I grew up seeing first-hand the importance of a public education and what a difference it can make."

"I encourage people who don't know what happens at school board meetings to attend a working session, which is always public, and gives a first-hand view of the process before we even get to a vote."



# Nurturing BRILLIANCE

The Official Newsletter of ISD282

Our St. Anthony - New Brighton School District Van Drivers work tirelessly to safely transport each student to and from school every day. We appreciate their dedication to our district!

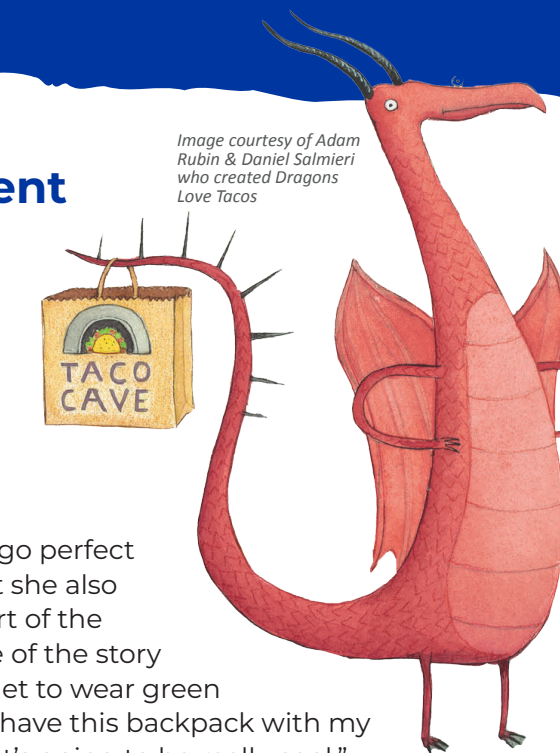
Winter 2024

# Ever WE ARE BRIGHTER.



## Wilshire Park student Indigo takes flight as Shishito the Dragon in Dragons Love Tacos

Image courtesy of Adam Rubin & Daniel Salmieri who created Dragons Love Tacos



The shine in her eye, the excitement as she gets ready for the interview. Indigo Houlberg, better known as Shishito in Dragons Love Tacos: The Musical, couldn't have landed a more perfect part to launch her acting career.

Dragons Love Tacos is a newer children's book loved for its quirky humor, disdain for spicy salsa and the best thing ever: taco parties! Indigo, who plays Shishito, a dragon in the wild imagination of a young child named Robbie, has only recently gotten into performance art.

"Even if it's just a small thing like a book report, just being out there and doing the performances is all I want to do!" Indigo, a 5th grade student at Wilshire Park Elementary, said.

It takes a lot of courage to stand in front of a large group of people and be someone else, but Indigo truly loves it. She says it's like putting a mask on and stepping outside of reality for a moment.

"I performed at Toddler Day, which is where we can perform in front of students at the mall, and I was so worried. I worried about not knowing what to do, but then I realized I get to be a different person when I play characters," Indigo said. "Then my fear just goes away!"

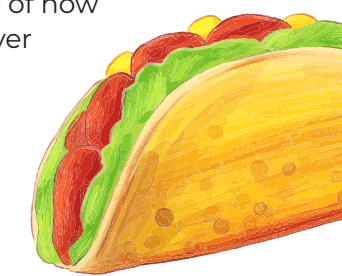
Not only is Indigo perfect for the role, but she also gets to be a part of the world premiere of the story adaptation. "I get to wear green converse and I have this backpack with my head over me. It's going to be really cool," Indigo said.

Her friends all rave back in the classroom about her awesome sweatshirt, which sports the Dragons Love Tacos logo on the front, and are quick to remind everyone that Indigo is "so awesome."

"I really just go with the flow. Whatever just goes my way I take it!"

Indigo's 5th grade teacher, Nicole Boxer, nurtures Indigo's spirit and brilliance in the classroom. It's evident that she grants the space for her students to engage with others at heart level and let their unique creativity shine through. We're so proud of Indigo's hard work and dedication that she puts into her work – a perfect example of how our students and staff are truly Ever Brighter.

Dragons Love Tacos: The Musical premiered on Friday, January 26 at the Hopkins Center for the Arts.





# SHOWCASING BRILLIANCE

in our classrooms

## St. Anthony Middle School debuts Best Buddies



Best Buddies is an international organization that focuses on creating opportunities and friendships for people with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities. Members of the club can choose to request to be in a 1-1 match pair or to just attend events! St. Anthony Middle School (SAMS) will have monthly events for all members to attend such as karaoke night, game night, attending a district sporting event and more!

## Glow Day fun at Wilshire Park Elementary



Mikayla Stonebraker's second grade class Second dove into the glow-tastic world of math during Glow Day! From glow ring toss to glowing Jenga, Cup of Glow, and Tic Tac Glow, second graders immersed themselves in mastering 2-digit addition and subtraction, explored fun fluorescent light and learned facts about glowing animals. Very fun Mikayla! Thank you for bringing our students an Ever Brighter experience in the classroom!

## Community Services teachers and staff empower their students through use of learning targets



One of the ways Community Services staff are engaging students is through the use of student-friendly learning targets, which guide students through their learning. They are expectations around what a student should know, understand and be able to do by the end of the unit.

Our brilliant Community Services team, comprising of dedicated preschool educators, Early Childhood Education Family Education (ECFE), and Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE), are coming together to do amazing work for our youngest students!

## St. Anthony Village High School Earns Gold + Access on the AP School Honor Roll



St. Anthony Village High School (SAVHS) has been recognized on the 2023 AP School Honor Roll, earning the prestigious Gold + Access designation. Out of 199 eligible schools in Minnesota, an impressive 37% secured a spot. Even more remarkable, SAVHS is part of the top 5% eligible for the gold award – a testament to our commitment to providing an exceptional education to our students.

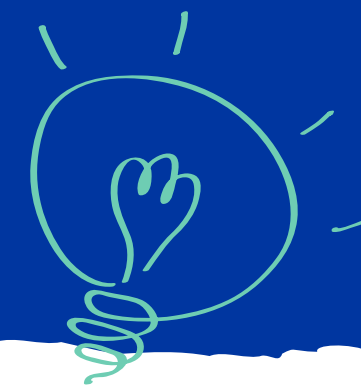
The AP School Honor Roll recognizes schools that not only deliver exceptional results in Advanced Placement (AP) programs but also prioritize broadening access to advanced coursework. The Gold + Access designation reflects our school's success in three critical areas:

- **College Culture:** Over 40% of our graduating cohort took at least one AP Exam during high school.
- **College Credit:** More than 25% of our graduating cohort scored a 3 or higher on at least one AP Exam during high school.
- **College Optimization:** At least 2% of our graduating cohort took five or more AP Exams during high school, spreading their AP experience across grades.

SAVHS was also honored with the AP Access Award for our commitment to ensuring that underrepresented minority and low-income students have equal access to advanced coursework opportunities. This achievement is an indication of the hard work and dedication of our exceptional educators and the excitement of our talented students. It showcases our shared commitment to fostering a culture of academic excellence while ensuring that every student has the opportunity to be Ever Brighter.

# Bright Happenings

within St. Anthony - New Brighton Schools



## More students are eating at school

Free universal meals have increased our district's daily meal participation substantially. For example, the number of breakfasts served are up 60% and lunch counts are up 45%, almost double of what Wilshire expected this year. In total, the school is serving over 1,000 meals a day (breakfast and lunch). At the high school and middle school, breakfast is up over 100% and lunch is seeing a 37% increase.

Minnesota Thursdays have been very popular amongst students, with meals including sambusas, plant-based tacos, mandarin orange chicken, cheesy enchilada soup, and butter chicken. The school district wishes to continue with this unique integrated program to source food from local farms (farm to table), with the hope that our students feel represented in the foods they eat at school.



## Wellness Cohort elevates well-being at St. Anthony - New Brighton Schools

Last June, the School Board approved the Wellness Committee proposed changes to the district's Wellness Policy that would align it with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) Model. The WSCC Model includes 10 components for student health:

- Physical Education and Physical Activity
- Health Services
- Nutrition Environment and services
- Counseling-Psychological-Social Services
- Health Education
- Employee Wellness
- Social and Emotional climate
- Community Involvement
- Physical Environment
- Family Engagement

Employee wellness is one of the district's top priorities. The Employee Wellness Cohort, new to 2023, is being led by our award-winning District Wellness Coordinator, Lori Watzl-King RN. This diverse cohort consists of 14 staff members from all schools (PreK-12) and meets monthly as a group and individually for support and resources to meet their goals. We're excited to have this opportunity readily available for staff and we hope to continue expanding our offerings!

# KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

is now available for the 2024-2025 school year

St. Anthony - New Brighton Schools is a community and district united as a family, and we believe in the brilliance of each student, from our youngest to our oldest! Come discover Wilshire Park Elementary, our elementary school now accepting Kindergarten student registration for the 2024-2025 school year.

If you have a child who will be in kindergarten at Wilshire Park for the upcoming school year, please email Helen Siggelkow, Wilshire Park Administrative Assistant, at [hsiggelkow@isd282.org](mailto:hsiggelkow@isd282.org) with your child's:

- Name
- Date of birth
- Parent(s) name
- Address
- Phone number
- Email address

Families will begin receiving information in early March regarding registration in April.



## Calendar of Events

**February 28**  
9th Grade Orientation  
6-8 p.m.  
SAVHS Auditorium

**March 2**  
You Lucky Dog (speech meet)  
8 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
SAMS/SAVHS

**March 4**  
No School  
Jazz Band and Concert Band  
6:30 p.m.  
SAVHS Auditorium

9th Grade Band and Symphonic Band  
8 p.m.  
SAVHS Auditorium

**March 5**  
Wilshire Park Elementary Teacher-Requested Spring Conferences  
3:45-7:45 p.m.

**March 5**  
School Board Regular Meeting  
6:30 p.m.

**March 7**  
7th and 8th Grade Bands  
7 p.m.  
SAVHS Auditorium

**March 11**  
High School Choirs  
7 p.m.  
Silverwood Park

**March 14**  
3rd Grade Music Concert  
6-7 p.m.  
Wilshire Park West Gym

**March 18**  
SAVHS Parent Meeting  
5:30-6:30 p.m.  
Media Center

**March 19**  
School Board Work Session  
7 p.m.

**March 20**  
American Indian Parent Advisory Council (AIPAC) Meeting  
5:30-7 p.m.

**March 25-29**  
Spring Break  
No School