North Tonawanda City Schools



Mission

To provide an excellent education to all that encompasses developing confident, creative, competitive and caring students.

Vision

To develop a nationally recognized school system focused on: A collaborative environment that fosters the academic, emotional and social growth of each student through quality and purposeful educational experiences. Students becoming independent, productive and globally competitive citizens. Instilling the belief that each student is invaluable.

Core Beliefs

North Tonawanda Lumberjacks are:

- Lifelong learners
- Understanding
- · Motivated
- Brave
- Empowered
- Respectful
- Just
- · Academically sound
- Caring
- Knowledgeable
- Strong

Being Thankful This Fall Season!

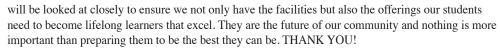
From the typical fall events like Veteran's Day and Thanksgiving to everyday acts of kindness we all have a lot to be thankful for. We owe everything we tend to take for granted as our everyday way of life to the sacrifices made by those who have served and those who serve today. THANK YOU!



Thanksgiving is a time where we celebrate family, faith, and friends. We take time to again be thankful for those who came before us to start a new way of life that we all enjoy today! THANK YOU!

I hope all students and families, employees and educational partners have a wonderful fall season that is full of gratitude for all we have. We all work together to make the schools and community one in providing the best we can for the students in our city. It takes all of us to provide the best for future generations. THANK YOU!

We also recently passed the next capital improvement project for the schools in this community. We are very thankful for the voters' approval on this and are excited to begin finalizing the plans on a grade level configuration that will take us into the future of education for North Tonawanda. Curriculum



The hectic fun of winter is just around the corner and I want to wish all of you a happy and healthy winter season as well. This season can also be very stressful. Remember to take time to be thankful for what we have and find strength and peace in your friends and family.

THANK YOU for allowing us to be a part of the community, your family, and your children's future. Sincerely,

Gregory J. Woytila Superintendent of North Tonawanda City Schools

Early Release Drill Scheduled for November 25th

Each year school districts across New York State are required to complete an early release drill. North Tonawanda will be conducting theirs on Wednesday, November 25th.

All release times will be 15 minutes early. Children, who have afterschool activities, will be directed to a secure location for 15 minutes before resuming normal activity.



NT Schools Seeks to Appoint Blue Ribbon Community Panel to Provide Input on Capital Project

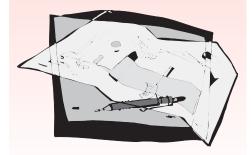
The North Tonawanda City School District wishes to appoint a Blue Ribbon Capital Project Committee of community members and staff to provide insight and suggestions throughout the \$38 million dollar Capital Project. The District recognizes the need for assistance from the school and community to guide the scope of work for the approved project.

The Superintendent's Blue Ribbon Capital Improvement Project Committee will be established with committee members representing the various components of the North Tonawanda City School District. Committee members will represent: taxpayers, parents, students, teachers, support staff, administrators, businesses, and senior citizens. The individuals on the committee will be selected based on recommendations from the Home School Associations, Board of Education members, the Superintendent and others.

The committee will be asked to make a recommendation to the Superintendent as we update them as to the progress of the capital project. A two-year commitment is expected.

Although the committee members will represent different constituencies, it will work as a team in recommending what they view to be in the best interest for the school district as a whole. The committee will meet as many times as they deem necessary to achieve their charge.

Please contact the Superintendent's office, 807-3500, or a Board of Education member if you are interested in serving on the committee. Board contact information is available at www.ntschools.org.



Delayed School Start



a delayed school start might look like if it were determined that such a plan might be needed. On days that begin with bitter cold but warm up as the sun begins to shine a delayed start might be a preferable option to closing for the whole day and using a snow day.

The goal is always to put student and staff safety first, while preserving instructional time to the greatest possibility. A delayed start would not become the new normal but would be an option to use. If we have bad winters this will help us so we won't have to make up days by taking days from other planned holiday time such as the spring break if we find we ran out of snow days.

In the event of a delayed start, notification would come from the Districts automated telephone broadcast system, just like a snow day.

The start times would be as follows:

- NT High School 9:50 a.m. 2:35 p.m.
- NT Middle School 9:20 a.m. 2:20 p.m.
- Meadow and Spruce 10:50 a.m. 3:15 p.m.
- Drake and Ohio 11:25 a.m. 3:45 p.m.

Before school activities like YMCA and breakfast would also start 2 hours later.

Likewise if your bus pick up time was 7:10 a.m. it would now be 9:10 a.m.

Out of district bussing would continue at normal times if those schools are open and we are on a delay. If BOCES is open and we are on a delay we will still provide bussing from the high school at the normal time but parents would need to make the decision whether or not to send their students.

Schools will offer a continental type breakfast in the event of a delayed start and lunches will resume at their normal times.

While we are hopeful to have a mild and manageable winter, we are preparing this option in the event of severe weather that seems to just pop up the last few years here in Western New York.

Additional Information:

- Staff will report two hours later than their normal start time.
- Out of district bussing will continue at normal times if those districts are open and our roads are not closed.
- Each building will determine what the remainder of the day will look like. ie: shortened periods or resume normal schedule.
- Before school activities will also be delayed. Elementary before school drop off will operate but be delayed by 2 hours.

NT Students Fuel Up to Play

Several students from the Middle School and High School headed out to Ralph Wilson Stadium to

take part in the wellness program Fuel Up to Play 60. The program is an in-school nutrition and physical activity program launched by the National Dairy Council and NFL in collaboration with the USDA, to help encourage today's youth to lead healthier lives.

Students Nick Enders, Megan Orrange, Giovanna Fortunato, Zack Forkey, Julie Milbrand, Chris Manth, Allie Smyth and Kyle Crooks, along with their health teacher Katie Feldmann were greeted by Buffalo Bills legend Thurman Thomas. Mr. Thomas talked to all the students about the importance of



living a healthy lifestyle. After touring the stadium and fieldhouse students got a workout with the Buffalo Bills strength and conditioning coach. "It was a great opportunity for our students," said Ms. Feldmann. "It is an awesome program."



Coach Sabo Says Goodbye to Lady Jacks



Coach Steve Sabo is stepping down from his position of the Lady Jacks Soccer Coach. He coached his last regular season game this October and then said goodbye to his adopted daughters. "My own children are starting to get into competitive sports and I want to be in that portion of their lives. Just as the parents of the players on my team come to see their kids play, I want to be there for my children's games."

Coach Sabo has coached the team for 17 years and coached the boys JV team before taking on that role. Many thanks go out to him for his dedication and hard work.

Day of the Dead Celebration Ties **Together Common Core and**

Artistic Talents

Day of the Dead is a holiday that is celebrated in central and southern Mexico and at North Tonawanda Schools. Art teacher Melinda Wright drew inspiration from the two-day holiday that occurs on November 1st and 2nd, to tie in Latino culture, artwork and the Common Core. "It is a celebration that honors deceased loved ones, that is very festive. It really fits in well with the fine arts curriculum and common core objectives such as: symmetry, hot colors, pattern, shape, form, organic shapes, fine motor development, ceramics and so



Mrs. Harm's second grade class at Meadow show off their masks.

much more. My students studied the visual impact of the Latino culture on art and we talked about the history of Dia de los Muertos, as it is known in Mexico. Some of the art pieces are deceptively simple like the masks the second graders made. There is a lot of critical thinking and sequential learning and higher level vocabulary that went into each work. High School student, Catherine Winston, made a beautiful quilt to display as well."



Ms. Wright worked with Grade 2-12 students at Spruce, Drake, Meadow, Middle School and the High School on some beautiful pieces that celebrate the rich culture of the Mexican people. The impressive artwork is proudly put on display each year at an exhibition at El Muse Gallery in Buffalo. "The students and their families were so proud of what they created. They have been incredibly supportive of the art program. Careers in art

make up 83% of the workforce, so it is great to give students an opportunity like this and see them get recognition."



Drake and Ohio Elementary music departments prepare to spread some holiday cheer.

Holiday Concert Dates

December 8th -

Middle School 7th Grade Concert @ 6:30pm

Middle School 8th Grade Concert @ 7:30pm

December 9th -

Meadow Elementary Winter Concert at ASAC @ 7:00pm

December 10th -

Drake Elementary Holiday Concert at ASAC

Spruce Elementary Winter Concert @ 7:00pm

December 13th -

High School Candlelight Concert at OLC Church @ 7:00pm

December 14th -

High School Winter Concert at ASAC @ 7:00pm

December 15th -

Middle School 7th Grade Winter Band Concert @ 6:30pm

Middle School 8th Grade Winter Band Concert @ 7:30pm

December 16th -

Ohio Elementary Holiday Concert at ASAC @ 7:00pm

Winter Recess -

December 23 - January 1st

Happy Holidays!





Rylie Myers interacts with Jill.

Lumberjacks Welcome Jack and Jill to School

Students in the North Tonawanda School District have some unique new classmates this year, two NAO humanoid robots appropriately named Jack and Jill.

Thanks to a technology grant, the 23 inch tall robots are helping students with their STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) skills. The robots have enhanced audio and visual capabilities and are equipped with camera and microphone sensors so that they can recognize objects, faces and voices. They are also charming classes with their soccer, yoga and karate skills.

Drake Elementary teacher Kristie Keidel has been assigned Jill for the first eight weeks of school where she teaches students a robot curriculum and computer programing. "It is remarkable what we can do with her and the students love engaging with her. We control her with a Linux-based operating system and use the software suite that includes a drag and drop programming tool called Choregraphe. The students have a virtual robot on their computer screens and once they learn the concepts, I let them take turns sending Jill commands."

Jill's eyes light up when Mrs. Keidel or one of the students talk to her. She will answer questions and ask the students questions in return. She definitely creates a buzz with the students, who all vie for the chance to work with her. "She is a great resource to have in a class," says Mrs. Keidel. "The students are begging to be taught instead of being forced to. It's great to have this kind of technology and new learning opportunities in our schools. I only wish I got to keep her longer."

Open House is Huge Success

Drake Elementary opened its doors to students, their families and community members on September 30th to show off all the great work the students and staff have been doing since school started.

Principal Patricia Adler stood at the door and welcomed each person that walked through with a friendly greeting and took a moment to chat with all the visitors. Students introduced their teachers to their families, showed off their class work and gave them a tour of the school. After the tour, shopping at the book sale and talking to several community agencies that were set up in the hallways, families were treated to a Drake Elementary PTA sponsored ice cream sundae social in the cafeteria.

"I thought the open house exemplifies Drake School," said Principal Adler. "It was warm, friendly and busy! Families were enjoying conversations with one another, the teachers and



Principal Patricia Adler, Ms. Sarah Morath-Lent with her children E'Lonnah and O'Livieyah Morath.



Parents Brian and Lori Shaffer with their children Savannah and Jordan enjoying the Drake PTA Ice Cream Social.

the community agency representatives and the free ice cream sundae sponsored by our PTA. The teachers were so happy to have such a wonderful show of support from the parents!"

Shea's Grant Brings "Matilda" to Life for Drake Classroom



Jennifer Fitzery works with students Sienna Janik, Charles Maier and Christopher as they act out characters from "Matilda".

Annette Beutel's class at Drake Elementary is the proud recipient of a performing arts workshop thanks to one of three grants from Shea's Performing Arts Center. "This is an amazing opportunity for my students," says Mrs. Beutel. "Not only does it include time with a teacher from Shea's for theatrical performance and a writing teacher, but Shea's is providing bussing and tickets to go see the Broadway musical "Matilda" at their theater. It is an actual evening out for all my students and they are very excited."

Mrs. Beutel and her teaching partner Becky Simpson have been reading the book "Matilda" by Roald Dahl

with the classes. The story is about a young girl who is ill-treated by her parents and who likes to pull pranks. She develops a close friendship with her teacher Miss Honey and uses her new found telekinetic powers to help her change her life's circumstances.

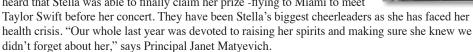
Jennifer Fitzery, Senior Education Associate at Shea's, teaches one of the workshops for the students. "I work with the students on interactive theatre activities involving voice and movement and by examining the text of "Matilda" for clues regarding the thoughts and feelings of the characters." The students had a chance to play the different characters in the book in front of classmates to enhance the story of "Matilda". "My goal is to show them they are more creative than they think they are. I encourage them to use their bodies and their faces to show what the characters are thinking."

"It is a great learning opportunity for the students," says Mrs. Beutel. "We have four visits from each of the teachers and it has been helping them with reading and writing skills. I am very grateful to Shea's for this grant."

Stella Gets To Shake It Off With Taylor Swift

Our very own Stella Usiak recently had a dream come true to meet her idol Taylor Swift. Stella won a Scholastic Reading Club essay contest called "This is How I Shake It Off", which asked participants to write about getting through life's tough obstacles, something Stella knows all too well.

Stella has been battling Leukemia since 2011 when she was seven years old. Her former schoolmates, from Meadow Elementary, celebrated when they heard that Stella was able to finally claim her prize -flying to Miami to meet



Stella wrote on her Facebook page, "Even though I only talked to her for a minute, Taylor told me I was very brave. I told her my entire story just before I had to go. That was one of the best hugs I ever got! I will remember that night forever."

Meadow Book Swap Encourages Love of Reading

Meadow Elementary School recently held it's first-ever book swap. Principal Janet Matyevich and

Assistant Principal Katie Smith thought it would be a great way for students to find a new book to read, allow them to recycle books they have already finished and to encourage them to read for pleasure. The idea came from the school's STEM decision making team.

Teacher Jodi Minor says the concept is very simple. "We asked each student, who wanted to participate, to bring in two gently used books and we gave them a "book buck" for each of them. It was a huge success; we had over 100 students participate. Fortunately we had student and parent volunteers who helped us organize the donations on tables so



4th Grade Student helpers (LtoR) Aaron Bille, Derrick Baughman, and Julia Kennedy.

it was easy for them to look through them. Students were brought into the library in groups by Mrs. Matyevich and were allowed to trade their book bucks for books that interested them."

David Battista, a parent who volunteered his time to cash out the students, said he loved the idea. "This is such a great school and I think it is a good way to get books in the hands of students. Knowledge is power and it is a great way to develop a lifelong love of reading."

Therapy Dog Provides Support to Meadow Students

Teacher Judy Hagan remembers seeing a beautiful golden retriever walk out of Carol Utzig's class at Meadow Elementary. "I remember asking her who that was and she told me it was her sister Debby and her therapy dog Tyler. I begged her to come visit my class. I knew my students would love him."

Tyler did not start out his career being a therapy dog. He was a show dog and a Canadian champion. When it was time for him to retire his owner, Debby Zeeb, remembers a friend of hers had a therapy dog and thought it would be a great job for Tyler. Tyler was tested and joined Therapy Dogs International. Tyler has been visiting nursing care Jasileen Morales-Salgado gets ready facilities since 2009 and recently started visiting Meadow Elementary. to read a story she wrote to Tyler. "He really loves children and I love watching the students interact with him."



Tyler has been visiting Mrs. Hagan's class every other week since school has started. She says it has proven to be a big incentive for the students to do their work and behave if they think they might miss out visiting with Tyler. "They are so excited when they see him. The students take turns reading to him. They really struggle with reading and Tyler is the perfect listener. He is a non-judgmental! Deb has commented she has seen progress in their reading since Tyler has started visiting us."

Meadow Elementary Welcomes New **Assistant Principal**

A warm welcome to Katie Smith. the new Assistant Principal at Meadow Elementary School!

Ms. Smith joins us from the Lancaster Central School District and has a bachelor's degree in Childhood Education, a master's degree as a literacy specialist and Educational Leadership.

Ms. Smith says it is a pleasure to be working with Principal Janet Matyevich and that she is looking forward to working with the dedicated staff and community to help provide the best educational experience for the students.

Meadow Students Sing with the BPO

The 5th and 6th grade Chorus, from Meadow Elementary School, recently took part in a special concert with the Buffalo Philharmonic Chorus for Veteran's Day at the Riviera Theatre. The Chorus, under the direction of Virginia Hendra, was asked to help in the sing-a-long section of the concert. "My husband works for the BPO and mentioned that they were looking for a choral group to help out for the November 11th concert," says Mrs. Hendra. "I laughed when he mentioned it because obviously, that is something I can help with! We have 82 students in the chorus and even though there was no school that day, I had 60 students volunteer to perform. I am so proud of them!"

The concert was free of charge and paid tribute to all of those who fought for our country. Even North Tonawanda Mayor, Arthur G. Pappas, took part by narrating during Copland's "Lincoln Portrait".



Mrs. Hendra and her chorus rehearsing for the concert at the Riviera Theatre.

Ohio has Spirit!

Ohio students and teachers celebrate Spirit Day once a month to demonstrate school pride and unity. On Sept. 25th, Ohio was visited by three UB Bulls players, including



Quarterback Joe Licata to kick off their first Spirit Day of the year. Students were elated to listen to stories of their lives and the paths that led them to where they are today. The players shared the importance of hard work, team work, respect, discipline and a positive attitude. These are a few of the characteristics that will be taught and reinforced throughout the year at Ohio to ensure each student has the recipe to be the best person they can be. More than 200 students and family members attended the UB football game on Sept. 26 to support the team and show their appreciation for their visit. It was a special week for students. Ohio Elementary is full of spirit as they look forward to many more meaningful Spirit Days!

Ghouls and Goblins Take Over at Ohio **Street Elementary**

Witches, zombies and other things that go bump in the night took over Ohio Street Elementary for their annual Halloween Parade. Students got a chance to show off their creativity with some fantastic costumes and entertain the neighborhood for the festive occasion.

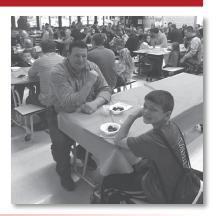


5th graders Natalie Mellenthine and Gianna

Donuts with Dad

Ohio students were smiling from ear to ear on October 16th as the building was filled with Donuts and Dads. This is the second year that Ohio has hosted a breakfast for dads and father figures in their lives. The idea behind this event, similar to "Goodies with Grandparents" and "For the Love of Moms", is to open our school to the community as supportive families and consistent parent involvement is the cornerstone of any successful school.

Pictured here are Mr. James Martineck and his son, Daniel.



SPRUCE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Spruce is Sprouting New Leaders



Brianna Drajem, Gavin Flanders, Isabella Ortiz and Ashton Velzy.

Spruce Elementary Principal Vicki Pohlman and her staff have looked towards Stephen Covey's book "The Leader in Me" for inspiration on developing leadership skills in their students. "Every month we have a habit that we highlight for our students to embrace," says Mrs. Pohlman. "In September it was leadership

and in the month of October it was being proactive." The habits are highlighted on a wall across the main office: a flower with a petal for each of the habits: Be Proactive; Begin With the End In Mind; Put First Things First; Think Win-Win; Seek First to be Understood, Then be Understood; Synergize and Sharpen the Saw.

The staff worked as a team to come up with activities and made binders of suggestions for teachers to inspire their students. "We have tied this into character education with instilling in the students goalsetting, work ethic, conflict management, empathy and problem solving," says Mrs. Pohlman. "I studied Dr. Covey's habits when I was studying at Niagara University and it was very inspiring."

Every month ends with a celebration assembly where two students are selected for recognition that best embody that habit and receive a Lumberjack Leadership Award. "The students love it and it is just a great way to get them to be more responsible and learn skills that will help them throughout their academic careers and life."

Spruce Students Encouraged to Change their Words to Change Their Mindset

In an effort to continue to cultivate a culture of success at Spruce Elementary, Principal Vicki Pohlman and her staff are looking for ways to foster a growth mindset in their students. "I think it is at the forefront of every parent's and teacher's mind what they can do to help a child's academic achievement," says Mrs. Pohlman. "We (LtoR) Emily Odeychuk, Meadow Steele and Jack have been studying Mindset: The New



Orrange in Mrs. Hromowyk's 5th grade class.

Psychology of Success by Dr. Carol S. Dweck and it has been a great inspiration to us as a team. We have bulletin boards up on both levels of the school with statements that a student might make that could be detrimental to their learning and give them an alternative that will help them in their academic progress."

Dr. Dweck's book says that students who believe their intelligence and ability are fixed traits, something that they cannot change, fare worse than their classmates in school. They have a tendency to steer away from challenges because they feel they will fail. If students have a growth mindset they believe they have the ability to grow and are in control of their intelligence and abilities. They are willing to put in the hard work to master those challenges and enjoy the learning environment.

Mrs. Pohlman stated, "I think that if we can change a student's mindset about a particular task or an area of weakness, then we will become more successful in changing the way students think about themselves and their ability to achieve success."

Middle School Assistant and BOE **President Play Fairy Godmother**

Three years ago, Middle School classroom assistant Brenda Hoffman and Cheryl McMahon, Board of Education President, had a thought that every girl deserves to go to their prom. The two fairy godmothers have taken it upon themselves to collect gently used and new prom

gowns, shoes, purses and jewelry to make the district's young ladies' dreams of an enchanted evening come true. "We know that homecoming and senior prom dresses can make quite a dent in the wallet since we both have daughters and we decided to start the NT Prom Boutique," says Mrs. Hoffman. "We know people who had to borrow dresses for their daughters and students who had to decide whether they were buying a prom dress or a graduation cap and gown. We felt strongly that no one should miss out on either one of these rites of passage. So far we have collected 300-400 prom gowns for any student, regardless of their financial status, who wants to go to the homecoming dance or the prom. We are also hoping to get enough caps and gowns for all our graduates as well."

Mrs. Hoffman stresses that the gowns are free of charge to anyone who wants one. "Being mothers to two daughters, we know the costs associated with Senior year and this is why we started the Prom Boutique to help defray the expense when it comes to prom and graduation. I am sure with college and career aspirations the money could be used elsewhere. I think we are a well-kept secret and encourage students or their families to reach out to us if they want to take a look at our inventory," says Mrs. Hoffman. "We have some beautiful items and we would be glad to help these young ladies have a night to remember. For more information you can contact them at NTPromBoutique@aol. com, or Brenda Hoffman at 695-2101 or Cheryl McMahon at 909-3823.

Bringing Books to Life

Eighth grade students at NT Middle School took the opportunity to bring some characters to life in their ELA class. Christina Quinn's students took characters from the beloved novel "The Outsiders" by S.E. Hinton and used them to explore American culture of the early 1960's as part of their novel study. "They studied everything from fashion to music to the language of that time period," said Ms. Quinn. "The students immersed themselves in this unique time period through the eyes of the protagonist, Ponyboy Curtis."



Kaylee Butcher, Brad Williams and Laykin

In addition, the novel also afforded the students the opportunity to explore themes like the effects of social inequity and stereotyping that are relevant today as they were in the 1960's.

NORTH TONAWANDA HIGH SCHOOL

High School Holds Annual College Fair

The NTHS recently held its 21st Annual College Fair Day. Over 100 colleges and universities took part in their year's program. Schools participating included: Keystone College, Kent State, Kettering University, La Roche College and Ohio Northern University.

Approximately 500 senior and junior students attended the fair to help them continue to research college and career goals. Counselors spent two days prior to the event with classroom instruction to prepare students and gave each of the students a comprehensive college planning booklet that they prepared for the students to use as a reference guide through the rest of their high school career.







(LtoR) Kayla Seeley, Austin O'Lay, Isabelle Kogo and High School Principal James Fisher.

High School Students Inducted Into the National Technical Honor Society

Congratulations to North Tonawanda High School seniors Isabelle Kogo, Austin O'Lay and Kayla Seeley for their recent induction into the National Technical Honor Society (NTHS). The students were honored at the Niagara Career and Technical Education Center in front of their teachers, families and district representatives for maintaining 89.5 average in their career and technical education (CTE) programs and 84.5 average at the high school.

Isabelle is in the Early Childhood Education Program and plans on going on to Niagara County Community College for two years and then Buffalo State College so she can become an early childhood special education teacher. Austin takes the Electricity/Electronics Program and plans on attending Alfred State College to become an electrician. Kayla is in the Health Occupations Technician Program and will be attending Niagara University and become a Registered Nurse in pediatrics.

The students were eligible for membership based on their ability to emulate the seven NTHS member attributes – skill, scholarship, honesty, responsibility, service, leadership and citizenship. NTHS honors the achievements of top CTE students, provides scholarships to encourage the pursuit of higher education, and cultivates excellence in today's highly competitive, skilled workforce.



NORTH TONAWANDA CITY SCHOOLS

176 Walck Road North Tonawanda, NY 14120

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Gregory J. Woytila Superintendent of Schools

www.ntschools.org

TNT – We Are Dynamite!

The Tonawanda-North Tonawanda football rivalry played out on the field with exciting results – the Lumberjacks taking the victory with a 53-30 score! It was definitely a highlight of a fun-filled week of decorating the school, various sports events, theme days, pep rally, chowder, car parade and the homecoming dance.











GO LUMBERJACKS!

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