



MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

It is hard to believe that the holidays will soon be upon us. It has been a busy start to the school year and I wanted to take a minute to update all of you on some of the happenings here in the district.

Changes from New York State Education Department (SED): The SED has implemented new scoring standards for the 3-8 English Language Arts and Math tests. This action raised the proficiency bar for students in grades 3-8. In a July announcement, the SED said that the state exams had become too easy, too predictable and therefore, ineffective in forecasting

Average of all the 3's and 4's in NT

	ELA	MATH
Statewide	53%	61%
North Tonawanda	54%	60%

Difference in cut scores that the State adopted

Level 2 Range Changes: ELA

Grade	2009	2010
8	602	627
7	600	642
6	598	644
5	608	647
4	612	637
3	616	643

Level 2 Range Changes: MATH

Grade	2009	2010
8	616	639
7	611	639
6	616	640
5	619	640
4	622	636
3	624	661

success beyond high school. "Proficiency on our exams has to mean something real; no purpose is ever served when we say that a child is proficient when that child is not," said Regents Chancellor Merryl Tisch. According to state officials, the new higher proficiency scores for the state assessments are a more accurate indicator of college-ready performance.

Here in North Tonawanda, like in all other districts across the state, our scores dropped with the new cut scores sent out by the state. Before the change in scores, North Tonawanda continued to show steady growth and was ahead of goals set in the district to foster steady growth. The new scores set us back, but we are working to turn this around and are setting new goals that will not only meet the state's new standards but surpass them.

Currently there are four score ranges that students can attain: A score of "1" is considered to be at risk, "2" is below proficiency while a score of "3" is at proficiency and a "4" is above proficiency.

Goal Planning for Success!

I have begun the process of setting goals with the Board of Education. I have developed a steering committee made up of district employees and community members that will give input on what goals the District and Board of Education should adopt. This process will include continued academic growth by our students so we can surpass the baseline goals set by the state. We hope to have a draft of the goals posted on our website by January.

In addition to in-house planning that is a continuous process, we are excited to open the e-school parent access link on the District's website in January as well. This will allow parents to view attendance and grades for their students in a live web-based site. This access will provide families with up to the minute progress for their student in grades 7-12. Keep checking the web site for more information and updates. www.ntschoools.org.



Superintendent
Gregory J. Woytila



Ohio Elementary School

Family Math Night

On October 28, Ohio Elementary School hosted its first ever Family Math Night for grades K-2.

Students, parents and teachers played math games and learned the math curriculum at each level.

Thank you to the Math Committee, all the teachers and staff members who volunteered, and all the parents who made this night such a success.



Pictured is Lucas Matyevich

Gilmore Student Nominated for Junior Young Scholar

Wesley Payne, a sixth grader at Gilmore Elementary, was nominated by his teacher, Tony Ruffolo, to become a Junior Young Scholar. He was chosen to represent Gilmore Elementary School and the State of New York at the Junior National Young Leaders Conference based on his academic excellence and strong leadership skills. Wesley will be attending the Conference in Washington, D.C. in March. Tony Ruffolo and all the teachers at Gilmore are so proud of Wesley, as are his parents Brian and Diana Payne. We wish Wesley the best of luck in both his academic and fund-raising efforts for his trip. Great job, Wesley!



Student Wesley Payne with teacher, Tony Ruffolo

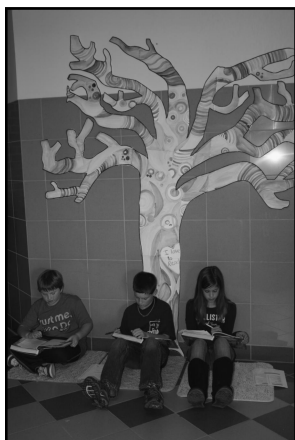
Meadow Elementary School

Branching out with a Book

The reading incentive program at Meadow School this year is for all students to read 25 books by June 1st. We are calling this "Branching out with a Book."

When you walk around Meadow School you will see various unique trees. Many of our students enjoy sitting under a tree to read.

If the students reach their goal of 14,500 books read by June 1st, Mrs. Adler has agreed to the students' request to use roller blades for one day. Good luck to the Meadow students.



Matter, Matter Everywhere!

Mrs. Regan's 3rd grade classroom students at Meadow School are learning to use their five senses to describe the properties of all types of **matter** (anything that takes up space). Students will be hearing, smelling, tasting, feeling and seeing all sorts of matter at our hands-on "**mystery matter**" stations, where they will use only one sense to describe and guess what the object in question is.

Students will also be participating in a classroom experiment, which will require them to make daily observations of a sugar and water mixture that will sit in the sun for a period of nine days.

This type of inquiry-based learning helps to build a solid foundation of those observational skills needed in Science labs, state tests, school, and beyond. It also shows our children that Science can be fun.



Jaxon Hummel & Chase Stauffer



Gilmore Elementary

Election Day Fun

There was a lot of excitement buzzing around Gilmore School on Election Day this year! Gilmore School students experienced the voting process by participating in Zoo Vote 2010.

In early October, Gilmore met the "candidates" at an assembly presented by the Buffalo Zoo. The students learned about three different animals – Andy the Chinchilla, Fred the Python, and Olivia the Owl. After learning about each animal, the students were able to decide which "candidate" they would like to support for their school to adopt.



Mayor Ortt talks to students at Gilmore about the importance of voting

Olympian Comes to Gilmore

Matt DePeters is a 23-year old, high-flying aerial skier from Hamburg, who is realizing that a long held dream of his, since the age of 2, is finally coming true. Matt had been gearing up, with high hopes, for the 2014 Winter Olympics, but it was during an Olympic qualifying event that he landed one extremely difficult jump. The jump ended up turning the heads of coaches of the Olympic Ski Team, convincing them to take a chance on Matt and give him the fourth and final spot on the U.S. Olympic freestyle aerial team. Matt placed 17th in the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver, and shortly after followed with his first U.S. title at the U.S. Championship in Squaw Valley.

On Nov. 12, 2010 Matt paid a visit to the fifth and sixth graders at Gilmore Elementary School. Matt's dream of making the Olympic Team had come true 4 years sooner than he had hoped. He spoke with the students about the amazing things that could happen to them if they, too, followed their dreams. A motivating speech and the sharing of memorabilia such as the jacket Matt wore at the Olympics was enough to give the students a glimpse of the possibilities that are out there for all of them. It's just unbelievable that Matt came from a small little ski area like the Buffalo Ski Club and now he's at the top of the world. It just goes to show that you don't need a big mountain to get to the top. All you need is a dream and a goal!

Throughout the month of October, students prepared for the election by researching their favorite candidate, writing persuasive essays on why to vote for their candidate, and making posters to help their campaign.



Pictured from left are: Destiny Harris, Jessica Simone, Kyle Lee, Bradley Empson, Dakota Fancher

During the last week of the month, Gilmore School participated in a "campaign week" where students made speeches and talked about the candidate they are supporting on our school wide video channel. Gilmore even had a visit from North Tonawanda's Mayor, Robert Ortt, the Thursday before the election to talk with the students about the importance of voting.

Finally, on Election Day, each student voted for their favorite animal candidate using the Classroom Performance System.

Votes were tallied throughout the day, and at 3:00 p.m. the announcement was made that Andy the Chinchilla had won as Gilmore's favorite animal with 166 votes out of the 330 students that participated.

As a result of the election, Gilmore School is now making a donation to the Buffalo Zoo to help take care of Andy the Chinchilla. All of the students at Gilmore really enjoyed this unique experience and therefore were very enthusiastic about learning the voting process!

Spruce Elementary School

Learning About the Job of an Electrician

Ms. Dutchess, a student teacher in the kindergarten class, recently had the privilege of listening to Michael Valenti from Weydman Construction talk about his job. Mr. Valenti has been busy working on Spruce School for the past couple months on the electricity. He told the



Pictured from left to right in the front row are Jaedon Zalewski, Nicholas Milewski and Lucas Heim. In the second row is Paige Spatorio and Mr. Valenti.

children about his hours, how he learned his job, what his job is all about and had the chance to show off his tools.

Children's Author Kimberly Thompson Visits Spruce Elementary

Kimberly Thompson, author of *Toulouse on the Loose* joined children, parents, faculty, and staff at Spruce Elementary for Bring Your Own Pumpkin Night on October 25th. Thompson is a native of Cheektowaga, who now lives outside of Chicago. This is her first book of a series about an eccentric wild turkey from France. The children enjoyed "getting to know" the main character, Toulouse. Ms. Thompson read her book aloud to the audience, discussed her journey of becoming an author, and even had French food tastings and fun activities for the families...Her enthusiasm for literacy was contagious! This was an extremely valuable and exciting experience for the children of Spruce Elementary.



Students Celebrate With Grandparents

Children in Mrs. Dexheimer's Kindergarten class recently invited a Grandparent to school. The students welcomed their guests with songs and demonstrated some of their morning routine practices. The children listened and joined in the story of *The Old Lady That Swallowed The Fly* by Simms Taback only to be interrupted by the Old Lady herself! The Old Lady explained that the story was truly a fantasy story and, with the assistance of the students, they retold the pretend story. After the visit, the grandparents worked on constructing an Old Lady along with all the creatures she supposedly swallowed.



Grandma Gloria Doel and Dylan Hebler

This activity was followed with a shared treat. This was an enjoyable time for both the children and grandparents.



Pictured is Mrs. Dexheimer ranting about the story not being true to the students and grandparents

Studying Native Americans

With Thanksgiving right around the corner, children in Mrs. Dexheimer's Kindergarten class have been busy learning about the Native Americans. They have learned about Samoset and Squanto, how they helped the Pilgrims, that "Pow Wow" is the Native American people's way of meeting together, perhaps with dancing, singing and visiting. The children enjoyed a "Pow Wow" as they sat around their classroom teepee and enjoyed some Thanksgiving stories.



Lucas Heim and Gianna Myers



NTHS

Family and Consumer Science Fun

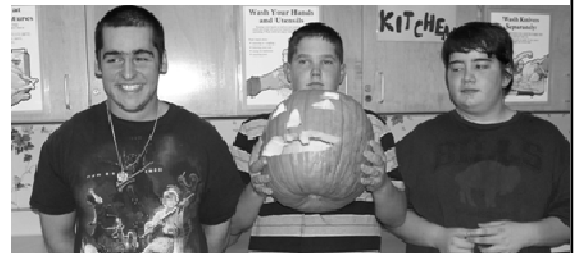


Wall of Thanks

This year will make the third year that the NTHS library is presenting its "Wall of Thanks" to honor all our veterans. Students and staff are asked to bring in a picture of a loved one who has served in the past or is currently serving in our armed forces. We will post the pictures on our starred red, white, and blue wall located in the foyer of the library for all to view. Pictures are accepted anytime during the school year.

The Family & Consumer Sciences classes at NTHS have had a very busy Fall. The classes offered this semester include Clothing & Textiles, Child Development, Child Development Internship, Food & Nutrition, & Adolescent Issues and Parenting. Each class is one semester and worth 1/2 credit.

Food & Nutrition
classes practiced
knife skills while
carving pumpkins



Drake School

We Give Thanks

At Drake, students have been working hard to create displays to honor the holiday of Thanksgiving. After discussing the history and meaning behind the holiday, each student in Mrs. Anson's third grade class thoughtfully wrote a paragraph to tell what he/she was thankful for. The staff and students at Drake have enjoyed reading and viewing these displays outside of many classrooms. Shown here are Chloe Patterson and Isabel Deschamps.



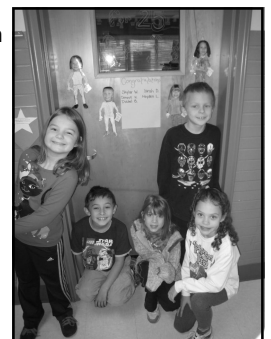
Time To Recycle!

The fifth graders at Drake have pledged to do their part in making a "greener" Drake School! Every Tuesday and Thursday, teams of fifth grade students volunteer to collect recyclable materials from the classrooms and offices. Along with staff mentors, they deposit the materials in the recycling dumpster. They are also working to have Drake recognized for their recycling accomplishments by having every student and staff member sign a recycling pledge card. We are working hard to keep our environment cleaner! Crew members include Samantha McCready, Kaitlynn Kientz, and Bree Rydzewski



Strive For 25!

Drake School is getting excited about reading by participating in a Strive for 25 campaign. Each student is encouraged to read 25 books per school year. When students have completed 25 books, they are encouraged to turn a completed form into the principal, so that they can pick out new books to take home and also receive recognition over morning announcements. They are then eligible to take part in fun activities such as special picnics, student/staff sporting events, and surprise treats. Individual teachers also help by honoring their students as they achieve their reading goals. Shown here in front of Miss Ellis' Strive For 25 display are Sarah DiNardo, Dominik Horrocks, Skylar Williams, Hayden Litten, and Isabel Buckingham.



4th Grade Science Experiment

The 4th graders at Drake School recently took part in a science experiment as part of their science curriculum. They were charged with the task of using weak items (plastic straws and paperclips) and combining them in such a way as to make a structure that would bear weight. After each team created a structure, data was collected as the strength was tested and charted.

Pictured are Michael Finn, Kayleigh Schiesser & Mrs. Swartz



Middle School

Patriotic Pride Day

Honoring veterans is second nature for the students at North Tonawanda Middle School. After a successful letter writing campaign last year, the NTMS Student Council and the NTMS Character Education Committee encouraged the students to undertake another project this year. Each academic team and the student council made banners honoring local veterans. The banners were presented to the 914th Air Liftwing out of the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station, the Veterans Hospital in Buffalo, and the Department of Youth, Recreation, Parks, and Senior Citizens for the TNT Veterans Day Breakfast. The students were encouraged to write a message of appreciation or gratitude for the veterans.



Fitness is Fun!

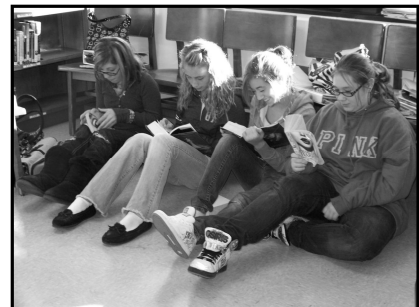
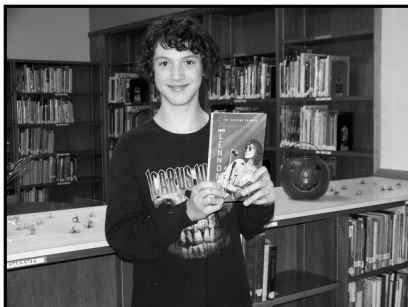
Miss Starr's Adapted Physical Education Class demonstrated their aquatic skills in a fun filled swimming unit. Students learned a variety of swim strokes and demonstrated their courage on the diving board. What great swimmers we have at NTMS. Keep up the good work!

Teen Read Week

NT Middle School Students celebrated Teen Read Week October 17-23, 2010. Teen Read Week is an initiative of the [Young Adult Library Services Association](http://www.yalsa.org) (YALSA). Libraries across the world celebrate Teen Read Week with a variety of special events and programs aimed at encouraging teens to read for pleasure. The students checked out books from the school library and were encouraged to read in their free time. The event ended on Friday with activities and refreshments held in the school library. It is important to promote reading as a choice for entertainment. There are so many additional entertainment options for teens that they need to be reminded that reading is free, fun and can be done anywhere. YALSA is a division of the American Library Association; you can get additional information for encouraging reading on their website at www.ala.org/yalsa.

Media Madness in the Health Classroom

Miss Starr's eighth grade health students proved to be above the influence by creating anti drug, alcohol and tobacco commercials. The students designed and created their media project using Photo Story 3 software. Students then presented their work to one another. Great job NT health students!



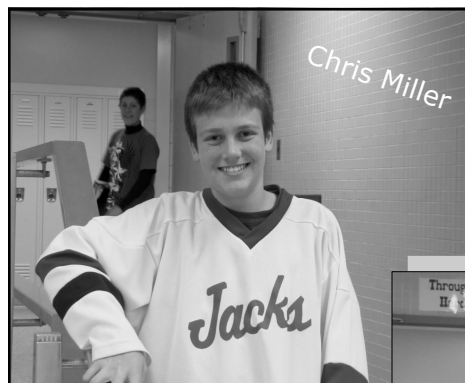


Jessica Robins

CONGRATULATIONS
to
NTMS Student of the Month
Academic and Pride Award
Students



Marissa Mattice



Chris Miller



Arianna Burns



Nathan Proefrock



Megan Himes



Tori Malamas



Reanna Bradt



We Welcome Our New Staff



Pictured below from left to right, Judith Slawinski, Library Media Specialist; Lindsey Starr, Health/Adaptive PE Teacher

Pictured above from left to right, Amanda DePasquale, 6th Grade Teacher; Caitlin Litz, Special Education; Heather Leith, Speech; Karen Scully, Remedial Reading; Melissa Wass, Kindergarten Teacher



Pictured above from left to right, Kim Caligiuri, Family & Consumer Science; Susan Zobrist, Art; Ashley Hewson, Math; Nicole McAuliffe, Social Worker



Pictured above from left to right, Amy Grabau, Special Education; Megan Maisto, Special Education; Amber Schneider, Gifted & Talented at Gilmore & Spruce



Pictured above from left to right, Melissa Breedan, Special Education; Nick Casillo, Physical Education at Drake & Meadow; Trevor Jelowski, Music at Drake & Meadow



Pictured above, Amber Schneider, Gifted & Talented at Spruce & Gilmore; Erinann Osterstrom, Reading Specialist at Spruce & Meadow

Pictured on right from left to right, Sara Schupp, 6th Grade Teacher; Nick Casillo, Physical Education Teacher at Meadow & Drake; Trevor Jelowski, Music at Meadow & Drake; Colleen Schwab Bender, 6th Grade Teacher

