



Orono Schools

Where Excellence is a Tradition and a Goal

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District News • February 14, 2025



Update from the Superintendent Dr. Kristine Flesher



Happy Valentine's Day! ❤️

Today is a wonderful reminder of the power of kindness and support we give one another every day. In our schools, love isn't just about hearts and candy—although we appreciate those, too!—it's about the way we lift each other up, show compassion, and work together to create a welcoming and supportive community for all.

Last night we welcomed families with incoming Kindergarten students for 2025-26. These events always fill my bucket! I am grateful for the kindness that our staff and community members showed to our visitors. It was also heartwarming to see friends and neighbors connect with smiles, handshakes, and hugs as we view our campus as a "hub" for families and the broader community.

So thank you to our entire community for the care and dedication you show. Each of you plays a role in our goal of creating an environment where everyone feels valued and connected. Let's continue to spread kindness—not just today, but every day!

Wishing you a Valentine's Day filled with joy, hearts, and candy!

Warmly,
Dr. Kristine Flesher
Superintendent

**No Preschool
No School K-12**

February 17 | Presidents Day
Professional Day

Middle School Speech Takes 2nd Place

Students in grades 7-12 can participate in **Speech**, an activity that builds confidence, encourages creativity, and improves communication skills. Our middle school team, made up of 11 students in grades 7-9, recently took 2nd place overall at a tournament in South St. Paul! **First-place** honors went to Audrey Robbins, Drama; Britta Olson, Extemporaneous Reading; Hannah Stegemann, Discussion; and Maggie Kubista, Serious Prose. Earning **second place** were Makayla Ressler, Informative category; Valerie Kottemann, Great Speeches; and Zoey Johnson, Extemporaneous Reading. **Third place** went to Caitlin Dahlberg, Extemporaneous Reading; Olivia Kottemann, Great Speeches; and Rose Lahti, Informative category. Adelyn Logelin earned **5th place** in Great Speeches. Congratulations on a great tournament!



Tremendous Honors for the Orono Band Program

Congratulations to the Orono Symphonic Band and Wind Ensemble for earning **Superior** ratings at the MSHSL Large Group Contest February 10. This year, Orono Wind Ensemble was selected from ensembles and high schools across the state to perform today at the Minnesota Music Educators

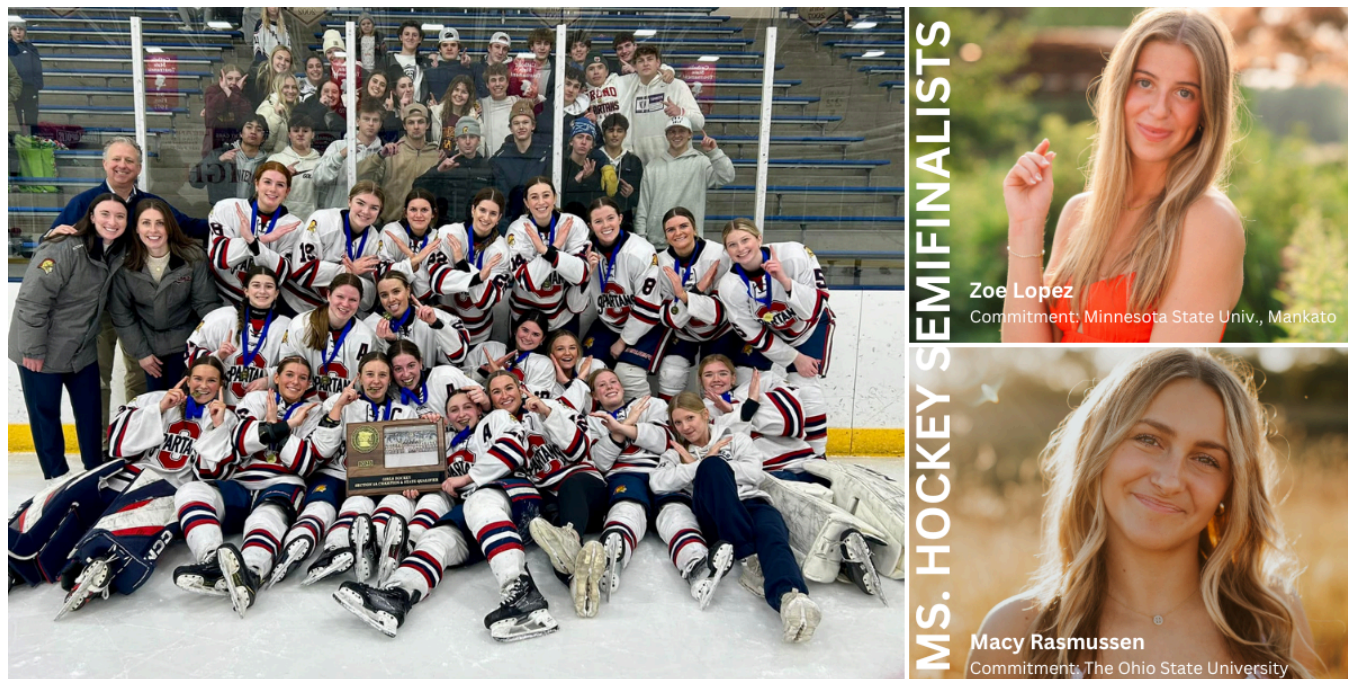
Association (MMEA) Mid-Winter Clinic. We are so proud of our musicians who pour their heart and soul into every piece. In the photos, below, students practice in the warm-up room in Minneapolis and take their bows after an outstanding performance. In Orono band starts in 5th grade.



ORONO FOUNDATION RED & BLUE BASH
THE SILVER SCREEN
SATURDAY APRIL 26, LAFAYETTE CLUB

Athletics

For many Spartan athletes, winter sports are continuing on an upward trajectory with **state appearances and results!** Visit the [Athletics website](#) for a complete calendar of events and be sure to follow AD Paul Brunner's updates on social media ([Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#)).



Girls Hockey defeated Mound/Westonka to win the Section 5A Championship. Congratulations, players and coaches! Next up, the **2025 MSHSL Class A Girls Hockey State Tournament**. Congratulations to TWO Orono hockey players on being named Ms. Hockey Semifinalists: **Zoe Lopez** and **Macy Rasmussen**. The award will be announced Sunday, February 23, at the annual Ms. Hockey banquet. Both girls are committed to play Division 1 hockey in college next year.



Winter Dance Teams at State! Our outstanding Orono dance teams — both Kick and Jazz — won their Section Championships and are dancing at Target Center this weekend in at State! We just learned that the team has advanced to the Class AA Jazz State Finals! Finals will start at 7:00 p.m. with awards to follow. Good luck to our girls and coaches. We are rooting for all of you!



Outstanding Nordic Run

Congratulations to Walter Holmes and Johnny DiPrima on their **3rd-place finish** in the boys sprint relays at the 2025 MSHSL Nordic Ski Racing State Meet!



Alpine State Results!

Congrats to **Danny Kinzer** and **JT Burns** on a great day of skiing at the Alpine State Championships! Final results: Danny Kinzer, 17th; JT Burns, 35th



Girls Wrestling State Qualifier!

Emery Soukop has punched her ticket to the MSHSL Girls Wrestling State Tournament after her runner-up finish at sections! Emery is in 7th grade and is the first girl in school history to qualify for state wrestling!

The Girls' Wrestling State Tournament will be hosted at Xcel Energy Center on March 1.

Best of luck, Emery!

Orono School Board Meeting Highlights

Monday, January 27, 2025 | [Agenda](#)

- Superintendent's "Report on Excellence" | [Watch the Presentation](#)
- Board Members Questions and Comments | [Watch the Presentation](#)
- Orono High School Registration Guide & Report | [Watch the Presentation](#)

Monday, February 10, 2025 | [Agenda](#)

- Superintendent's "Report on Excellence" | [Watch the Presentation](#)
- Board Members' Questions and Comments | [Watch the Presentation](#)
- Policy 524 Internet, Technology, and Cell Phone Acceptable Use and Safety Policy | [Watch the Presentation](#)
- Orono Action Platform | [Watch the Presentation](#)
- Technology Department Mid-Year Updates | [Watch the Presentation](#)

The next meeting of the Orono School Board is scheduled for Monday, February 24, 2025, at 7 p.m. in the District Office Assembly Room. There will be a Coffee & Conversation session preceding the Board meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Important Dates

- February 17 - Professional Day (No School E-12)
- March 7 - Parent-teacher Conferences (No School K-8)
- March 24-28 - Spring Break (No School K-12)

Please see the [Calendars page](#) on the Orono Schools website for more information.



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