



Excellence, Equity, Empowerment
Every Student, Every Day

MANKATO AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

AUGUST 2024

NEWSLETTER

MESSAGE FROM SUPERINTENDENT PETERSON

Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year! I am thrilled to extend a warm greeting to all our students, families, and staff as we embark on another year together. Over the summer, our dedicated team has been working hard to ensure that schools are ready to go. Their commitment has laid a strong foundation for a successful year, and I am deeply appreciative of their efforts.

We are excited to introduce our new Strategic Roadmap, which will guide MAPS' efforts and initiatives. At its core is our mission statement: Excellence, Equity, Empowerment. Every Student, Every Day. This mission underscores our commitment to providing high-quality education, ensuring equitable opportunities for all students, and empowering each student to reach their fullest potential. By striving for excellence in all we do, we create an inclusive and innovative learning environment that supports every student's school journey. I am very proud that we have assembled a MAPS staff dedicated to continuous improvement and to practices and policies that reflect our commitment to welcoming and including all students and families.

Throughout the school year, we will be sharing information on the innovative changes coming to MAPS elementary schools in 2025. Magnet schools will provide students and families with unique curriculum and instructional choices at Rosa Parks Elementary School, Jefferson Elementary School and Bridges Community School, and there will be plenty of opportunities for input by parents, staff, community members and students.

Also, keep a look out for updates on the progress of our bond construction projects. Thanks to the support from our community and the successful passage of the November 2023 referendum, we are making significant strides in enhancing our school facilities. Some projects are wrapping up just in time for the 2024-2025 school year, and others are entering the final planning phase. Once again, we extend a heartfelt thanks to the voters of our district for their investment in the future of our public schools.

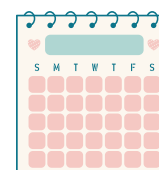
Along with our traditional print materials like this newsletter, be sure to check out MAPS' social media (Facebook and Instagram) and website (isd77.org) for news and stories that highlight the great accomplishments of students and staff.

Thank you for your continued support—let's make this our best year yet!



CALENDAR REMINDERS

- Monday, September 2nd Labor Day - No School
- Tuesday, September 3rd - First Day of School - 9th grade
- Wednesday, September 4th - First Day of School - 10th - 12th grade
- Thursday, September 5th - First Day of School - K - 8th grade
- Friday, September 27th - Homecoming
 - East Homecoming Game @ East High School 7pm vs. Waconia
 - West Homecoming Game @ West High School 7pm vs. Chanhassen



See school calendars [here](https://www.isd77.org)



www.isd77.org



Paul Peterson, Ed.D.,
Superintendent

ADDRESS/POSTAGE
HERE

THIS ISSUE

Construction Updates
Choice Schools
Fall Sports
Geometry in Motion
Enroll Now!
New Strategic Road Map
Homecoming

MESSAGE FROM CHAIR SINNING



Shannon Sinning
Board Chair

Embracing the Future of Public Education in Our Community

In January 2023, the MAPS School Board, consisting of seven dedicated members, embarked on a journey towards what we believe will improve the future for our youngest community members. The Classroom to Boardroom strategic planning process involved school board members engaging with students, teachers, parents, staff, district leadership, community members, and businesses. We set out to listen to all voices to prepare our district for the next phase of public education in our great communities.

As technology rapidly transforms the landscape for our young people, so too does our understanding of our community's workforce needs and best practices in education. We know that public education must adapt. Change can be difficult and sometimes uncomfortable. The MAPS School Board recognizes that some will be excited and energized by changes to the educational landscape, while others may be concerned that we are changing too much or too fast. The Board has challenged district leaders, school principals and ourselves to forge new opportunities, much like any well-run organization. New endeavors sometimes come with growing pains, and that's okay. However, maintaining the status quo poses the biggest risk of all.

MAPS has a long history of success, in part because the school community recognizes that continuous improvement requires preparing students for their future, not our past. The greater Mankato community possesses the unique qualities that allow businesses to thrive, families to prosper, and neighbors to support one another. Our vision for the future of MAPS will inspire other school districts to look to us and ask, "How can we replicate what's happening in MAPS?" That is the question our Board aims to provoke within the next 3-5 years.

MAPS continues to lead the way in public education, and just a few months after committing to our new roadmap, we are already seeing results. As MAPS staff embarks on the extensive learning work that will underpin our new strategic plan, so too will the School Board. In the coming months, you will see the Board take action on a new structure for our meetings that will engage members in key governance and policy questions associated with our district's new direction.

The Board will continue to be transparent in our work and deliberate in inviting all invested partners to engage with our public schools. Your involvement is crucial. Together, we can deliver the future-focused education our children deserve.

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE



Washington

This summer has been incredibly busy for our district as we continue work on five Shovel Ready Bond Projects. Significant progress has been made on construction and remodeling to create new secure entrances. As we enter the final weeks of construction, all sites are bustling with activity, finalizing the secure entrances/offices and remodeled spaces for use in the 2024-2025 school year.



Bridges

Additionally, the construction schedule included the completion of the Center for Learning, which houses most of the district's preschool and early childhood family education programs. If you drive by Dakota Meadows, you will see the walls of the new gym/storm shelter and pool being raised, with the building beginning to take shape. At Roosevelt, a new kindergarten classroom has been added, along with a new flexible learning space. Washington Elementary and Bridges Community School's new secure entrances, office spaces, and remodeled spaces for Special Education programming are also coming along nicely.



Roosevelt

We are excited about these improvements and look forward to welcoming everyone to the enhanced facilities soon.



Center for Learning



Dakota Meadows Middle School



NEW WEST ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR

We are pleased to announce that Eric Dahlman has been selected as the new Activities Director at Mankato West High School. Mr. Dahlman was selected from a talented candidate pool in a competitive process that included input and participation from Mankato West High School representatives.

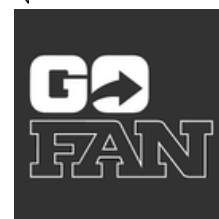
Welcome to MAPS Mr. Dahlman and family!!



DIGITAL EVENT TICKETS



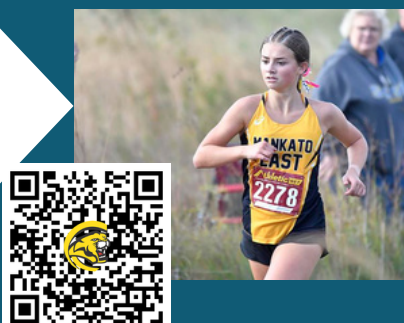
In an effort to streamline operations and enhance convenience for guests, MAPS is transitioning to GoFan, an electronic cashless ticketing system. This initiative, being implemented at all Big 9 conference schools, will modernize the ticketing process and ensure a secure purchasing experience for event attendees.



Link to app coming soon!!

FALL ACTIVITIES

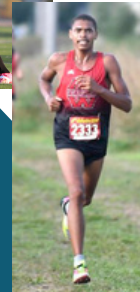
Check out your high schools' activity page. Scroll down and click on "Conference Schedule" to see a full list of activities.



ehs.isd77.org/get-involved/athletics



whs.isd77.org/get-involved/athletics



VIP GOLD CARD

MAPS' VIP Gold Card is exclusively for those 62 years old or older and live within school district #77 boundaries. It is a great way to enjoy no-cost admission* to concerts, home athletic** events, plays, and planetarium shows.

If you would like a VIP Gold Card and fit the criteria above, you can get one by:

- Asking at the ticket gate/booth at regular season events.
- Contacting Mankato Area Public Schools central office at 507-387-1868
- Contacting the activity offices at your local high school during regular business hours.



Experience

Mankato Area Public Schools



www.isd77.org

Activity pass for seniors (Ages 62+) who live within school district #77. Enjoy home athletic events, concerts, academic events, plays and planetarium shows.

Not valid for playoffs and tournaments.

*Some exclusions apply for fundraising events.

**Not valid for playoffs and tournaments.

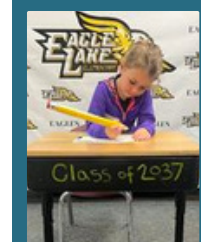
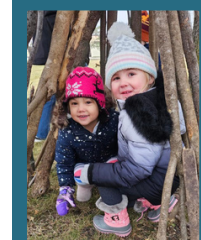
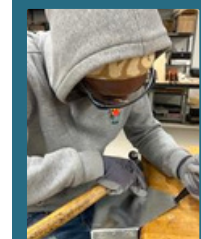
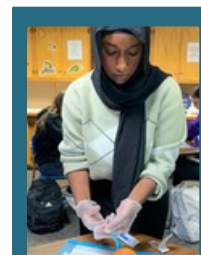
REGISTER ONLINE TODAY!

- 1 Go to: www.isd77.org
- 2 Click ENROLL (top right on the main page)
- 3 Select "Enroll in Kindergarten - Grade 12"
- 4 Click "Start New Registration" link to start the application process
- 5 Select 24-25 (Next Year) Registration
- 6 Have a valid email address ready, as a link will be sent to the email provided to complete the application



Fast Facts:

- Birth certificate, proof of address (i.e. utility bill or home lease agreement), and immunization record can be uploaded to Infinite Campus or emailed to: centralregistration@isd77.org
- No computer or internet? Register at our office: 10 Civic Center Plaza
- All students entering kindergarten need to complete an Early Childhood Screening. Learn more by visiting: www.isd77.org/schools-programs/early-learning



STRATEGIC ROADMAP

In May, Mankato Area School Board adopted a new strategic roadmap for the school district (see below). The vision, mission, core values and strategic priorities included in the roadmap not only reflect the identity of Mankato Area Public Schools, but also casts a vision for what kind of future-focused system we aspire to be.

A key element of our strategic planning process involved engaging with all aspects of our system to identify common expectations about the desired daily experiences for students, staff, families and community members. Information was collected through surveys, focus groups, individual interviews, as well as through data collected through the last several years about people’s experiences in and with our system. We learned a lot. At the risk of overgeneralizing, I think it is fair to say that while we have a lot to be proud of, there is still plenty of room for continuous improvement.

Strategic plans are not effective unless they are operationalized. School and program leaders have been working this August on operational plans that will be developed and implemented during the 2024–2025 school year.

Find the strategic Roadmap on our website. Here:



<https://www.isd77.org/experience/maps-strategic-roadmap>

GEOMETRY IN ACTION

The Geometry in ACTION course allows students to earn high school math credits while bridging the gap between math and real-world skills. It offers students the opportunity to apply geometry to practical career scenarios. By integrating hands-on projects with academic learning, we aim to enhance students' understanding and engagement, preparing them for future success.



This summer, MAPS secondary instructors Jay Seiler, Jon Dierks, Micah Degner, and Jeff Ehmke participated in the Geometry in Construction instructor training. They are excited to bring this innovative learning model to our new Geometry in ACTION courses.

STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Scott Hogen, Shannon Sinning, Kristi Schuck, Kari Pratt, Jason Hiniker, Patrick Baker, Erin Roberts, Chris Kind, Amanda Heilman, and Scott Kaminski

Jason Hiniker was recognized in July by the MAPS School Board as the Staff Spotlight. Mr. Hiniker's commitment to MAPS has been demonstrated by his years of service, along with his growth in his many roles within the District. He is a true leader in our District and is committed to serving others by putting others' needs before his own.

coming Fall 2025

CHOICE SCHOOL OPTIONS

Starting in the 2025–2026 school year, Jefferson Elementary and Rosa Parks Elementary will transition into magnet schools.

What is a magnet/choice school?

Magnet schools are an innovative approach to public education, offering specialized programs focused on themes with a unique curricular emphasis. Magnet schools attract a diverse student body fostering a rich learning environment. They provide students with hands-on, immersive experiences and tailored learning opportunities.

