Back to School! • Welcome New Staff • Orono Expertise Shared at National Conferences • Facility Improvements



Update from the Superintendent
Dr. Kristine Flesher

August 29, 2025

Dear Families and Staff,

Welcome to the 2025–26 school year! I hope you and your family enjoyed a summer filled with rest and meaningful moments together. It was wonderful to see so many of you yesterday on campus during our Open House events. As we opened our doors this week to all families and staff, I was reminded of the energy and promise that comes with a new school year.

This year, we will continue to sharpen our focus on connection with every student. Through our Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), we are committed to ensuring that each student receives the right level of academic, social, and emotional support to thrive. Whether it is through classroom instruction, small-group learning, or individualized interventions, our goal is clear: every student is known, supported, and challenged to reach their full potential.

We are also proud to celebrate the expertise of our dedicated staff. This summer and fall, members of our team have been invited to present at national conferences, a reflection of the innovative practices and continuous improvement happening right here in Orono. Their leadership in their respective fields—and their daily dedication to our students—exemplify the high standards that define our schools.

With the energy of our staff, the clarity of our goals, and the strong partnership we share with families, we are ready to make this a wonderful year of engagement and success for every learner. Thank you for entrusting us with your children. Together, we will ensure that each student is inspired, supported, and connected.

We look forward to welcoming you back and beginning another remarkable school year.

Warm regards,

Kristine Flesher, Ed.D.
Superintendent



Welcome, New Staff!

We are excited to welcome a wonderful group of new educators and staff to Orono Schools this year. Joining us are Dr. Nicole Daly, Sara Drezdzon, Ladisbel Jimenez Vergara, Adara Kamarainen, Jennifer Kremers, Mary Madsen, Margo Mattei, Kristan Nalezny, Bryce Pettit, Brandon Richardson, Norman Smith, Nicholas Stoterau, Jane Ward, Sarah Williams, and Sydney Wood. We're grateful to have such talented and dedicated individuals joining our schools. Welcome to all!



Orono Staff Recognized Nationally for Expertise

Our teachers and staff are not only leaders in our classrooms, but also recognized voices in their fields, invited to present at major national conferences. This summer, Orono staff shined bright on the national stage, sharing their knowledge and expertise with educators across the country.

- **Paul Ivers, Jen Ivers, Sean Beaverson and Bailey Nett** presented a session on “Closing the Feedback Loop” at the International Society of Technology in Education (ISTE) conference. **Bailey Nett** & **Laura Young** also presented at ISTE on "Igniting STEM Learning."
- **Ali Chorley** was invited to speak at the Utah State Board of Education conference.
- **Grace Nohner** shared her expertise at the National Conference on Student Activities in Michigan.
- This fall, **Kendra Eichstadt** and **Paul Hamilton** will present at the National Science Teachers Association conference.
- **Nick Taintor**, Director of Business Services, will also represent Orono at ASBO International, the national school business association.

It is inspiring to see the breadth of expertise in Orono staff being recognized and celebrated nationwide. Families can be confident that our students are learning from educators who are not only passionate, but also leaders shaping the future of education. Thank you to the Orono Foundation for Education and the Educator Excellence fund for supporting these outstanding teaching and learning experiences.



Orono Community Education Summer Update

Orono Community Education had another fun and exciting summer! More than 7,600 enrollments were recorded across 560 different camps and classes, offering opportunities for learners of all ages. From art and science to cooking, technology, theater, and fitness, there was something for everyone.

A special highlight was “Ready Set Kindergarten”, where 120 of our newest Spartans practiced early math and literacy, learned school routines, and even got their first experience riding the bus. It was also inspiring to see older Orono students and alumni return as staff, helping lead activities and making the

summer memorable for younger kids.

We’re grateful for our Community Education team and summer staff for creating such meaningful experiences and for their continued dedication to serving the Orono community.











Campus Improvements Underway

We’re continuing to make exciting updates across our schools. The Intermediate School entry is being refreshed with new paint and carpet. The OHS College & Career Center is nearing completion with special thanks to Richard and Jennie Goelz for their generous donation to fund this important project. The high school auditorium has new lighting to improve the performing arts experience. At OMS, a new glass panel in the lobby enhances safety, improves visibility, and adds natural light to the main office. Our softball and baseball fields have been upgraded this spring and summer, and all teams will return to campus for competitions next spring. Looking ahead, the old child care center next to the middle school will be removed in late fall, with the space repurposed into new courts and fields. In the meantime, first responders will use the area for training purposes. As we look forward to the summer of 2026, we will be renovating several parking lots as part of our long-term facilities maintenance.



Orono High School
College & Career Center
will open with the new
school year.





Orono Middle School
Main Office
Safety & Visibility





Field improvements will serve our students, athletes & community



Parent Associations Launch New Year with Communication Opt-In & Directory

Our parent associations and Foundation—PTO, OMSPA, SPA, and the Orono Foundation for Education—are off to a strong start this school year, bringing families together and supporting our schools through fundraising, events, volunteer opportunities, and community-building efforts.

For the first time ever, the Orono Foundation for Education and our parent associations are partnering on one streamlined communication opt-in process and a free online parent directory. By registering, families will be automatically opted in to receive updates from their school's parent association (you'll only receive messages relevant to your student's school) as well as the Foundation. The online directory will also make it easier than ever for families to connect with each other across our school community. Please take a moment to opt-in today!

Opt-In for Parent Association Communication Today!

Important Dates

- September 1 - Labor Day, No School E-12
- September 2 - First day of school (Grades 1-12)
- September 3 - First day of school (Kindergarten)
- September 3 - Deadline to order Homecoming t-shirts
- September 8 -First day of Preschool
- September 15 -First day of ECFE
- September 15-20 - Homecoming Week
- September 29 - Professional day (No school E-12)

Please see the Calendars page on the Orono Schools website for more information including the 2025-26 academic calendar.

Orono School Board Meeting Highlights
Monday, August 18, 2025 | Agenda

- Superintendent's "Report on Excellence" | Watch the Presentation
- Board Members' Questions and Comments | Watch the Presentation
- Construction Projects Update | Watch the Presentation
- Annual Summer Technology Update | Watch the Presentation

The next meeting of the Orono School Board is scheduled for Monday, September 8, 2025, at 7 p.m. in the District Office Assembly Room. Public comment begins at 7 p.m. To register, please visit the School Board Public Comment webpage.