A Message from the SUPERINTENDENT

May 14, 2015

Volume 3 • Issue 3

Mary K. Gallagher
Superintendent

Northville Public Schools
501 West Main Street
Northville, Michigan 48167
248.344.3500

GallagMa@northvilleschools.org

AT A GLANCE

District Gets Praise, Recommendations from National Accreditation Team

STEAM Fair Excites Student Learning

Search Underway for New Thornton Creek Principal

Thank You Teachers, Staff and School Nurses!

Registration Open for Summer Connections Summer Classes

Honoring More Than 400 Years of Service

The Wall That Heals Comes to Northville High School

Points of Pride from Across the District

IMPORTANT DATES

Upcoming Board of Education Meetings
Tuesday, May 26, 2015
7:30 p.m.
Cooke School

Tuesday, June 9, 2015
7:30 p.m.
Hillside Middle School (Forum)

Tuesday, June 23, 2015
7:30 p.m.
Hillside Middle School (Forum)

***The Wall That Heals* Exhibit**
May 14-16, 2015
Northville High School East Wing Lawn

Class of 2015 Commencement Ceremony
Sunday, May 31, 2015
6 p.m.
Compuware Arena, Plymouth

Last Day of School (Half-Day)
Thursday, June 11, 2015

DEAR NORTHVILLE SCHOOL FAMILIES, STAFF AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

It is hard to believe that we are almost at the end of another school year. Across the school district this year, I have had the honor of observing the deep and thoughtful learning taking place in our classrooms, on our fields of play, in the arts, and out in our community. I couldn't be prouder of our students, teachers, staff and families!

Northville Public Schools is also fortunate to be part of a tremendous community that supports the education of its young people in both its words and its actions. The most recent example of this is the overwhelming passage of the district's Building Site and Sinking Fund millage renewal on Tuesday, May 5, 2015.

We are truly grateful for the support of the Northville school community in this effort to protect our community's investment in our school buildings and facilities, and at the same time safeguard the learning taking place in our classrooms. While approval of this 0.9978-mill five-year renewal will not solve all of the budget challenges facing Northville Public Schools as a result of severe cuts in school funding over the past 10 years, it will allow the district to address the most critical needs, while preserving the district's General Fund dollars to accomplish its core mission of instruction and student learning.

Our sincere thanks also goes out to the many volunteer members of the Citizens Committee for Northville Schools Campaign Committee, as well as the many school families, staff and community members who worked tirelessly in support of this

effort. Strong schools are the foundation of a strong community! We are thankful for the incredible support of our families and community members who recognize the link between exemplary schools and strong property values, and who make the education of our young people a priority.

Funds from Sinking Fund renewal -- which will provide approximately $2.5 million in each of the next five years -- will be available for much-needed repairs and upgrades across the district beginning with the 2016 tax levy. In the meantime, several projects are planned for this spring and summer under the original Sinking Fund millage passed by voters in 2011 and set to expire on December 31, 2015. These projects include additional storm water site drainage at Silver Springs Elementary School; parking lot resurfacing at Northville High School and Cooke School; and roof hatch and ladder replacement at Hillside Middle School. For a detailed list of anticipated projects under the Sinking Fund renewal visit the district website at www.northvilleschools.org and click on "Millage Election (5-5-15)."

DISTRICT GETS PRAISE, RECOMMENDATIONS FROM NATIONAL ACCREDITATON TEAM

I am pleased to share that the external review team from the prestigious AdvancED Accreditation Commission is recommending Northville Public Schools receive district accreditation. This means the district is recognized worldwide as a quality school system. Northville Public Schools first received district accreditation in 2010.

From April 26-29, 2015, the school district hosted the six-member external review team from AdvancED, the national organization that confers the district accreditation seal. Over the three days, the team of trained professionals from across the state and nation reviewed district documents and performance data; interviewed some 175 district, school and community stakeholders including district and school

administrators, Board of Education members, teachers, students, school parents, and business and community leaders and conducted site visits at six of the district's school buildings. Before departing, the review team shared an overview of its findings – including strengths and areas for improvement – with district leaders and school board members and announced that it will be recommending Northville Public Schools for district accreditation. The recommendation will be reviewed and acted upon by the national AdvancED Accreditation Commission when it meets later this spring. Once approved, the district's accreditation will be for another five-year term, with regular monitoring of progress and reporting occurring during the term.

In preparation for the on-site visit, a team of Northville educators and administrators from across the district spent several months completing a Standard Assessment Report, designed to serve as a tool for the school system to prepare for the external review. The report and on-site visit document performance on a set of standards, which serve as the foundation for the accreditation process. In order to maintain accreditation, school districts must meet these standards, engage in a process of continuous improvement, and demonstrate quality assurance through internal and external review.

District accreditation supports our school district's ongoing mission of instruction and student learning and provides a nationally-recognized mark of quality for our district and all the schools within our district. Our students and families are the ultimate beneficiaries of this rigorous process. When an entire school community is aligned and focused on a shared vision for learning, students thrive. The enthusiasm with which our teachers and staff embraced the accreditation process as an opportunity to learn and grow as educators is a demonstration of their unwavering commitment to ensure every student succeeds.

STEAM Fair Excites Learning

If you had a chance to attend the district's first STEAM Fair: Education and Energy Powering Our Future on April 22, 2015, then you undoubtedly felt the incredible enthusiasm and thirst for learning that drove the day as more than 1,000 Northville students experienced first-hand how Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics are part of our everyday lives. During the STEAM Fair, which took place at Hillside Middle School, fourth and eighth grade students took part in more than 30 activities designed and led by Northville High School students. They learned how to computer code, make a milk shake using pedal power, how to create a fuel cell, and much more. The fair also featured a Detroit Grand Prix car and a drone from Michigan State University, as well as exhibits from local companies and sponsors. In the evening, more than 700 parents, students and community members toured the fair and participated in the activities as part of a community open house. The goal of STEAM Fair is to encourage and inspire students to pursue STEAM degrees and careers.

The STEAM Fair was made possible through a generous donation from the Northville Educational Foundation, along with the support of sponsors including Fiat Chrysler Automobiles, Aisin Group, Advanced Disposal, SoulBrain, Oakland University, the Detroit Belle Isle Grand Prix, St. John Providence, The Green Panel and World Robotic Olympiad - Lawrence Technological University. On behalf the entire school district, I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to the teachers, students, staff, local businesses and sponsors who made this awesome day possible. Can't wait for next year!

Search Underway for New Principal at Thornton Creek Elementary School

As a result of Ms. Alison Epler's decision to transfer from her current position, the district has posted the position of Thornton Creek Principal. Ms. Epler's depth of knowledge in curriculum alignment, instructional practice and intervention are among the strengths that she will bring to her work with students in a classroom setting.

We appreciate the ample notice Ms. Epler has provided regarding her request for transfer, as it allows for a thorough search and selection process and a thoughtful transition in leadership at Thornton Creek. Ms. Epler will continue to serve as Principal of Thornton Creek through the end of the 2014-15 school year, and will also be available this summer to support the transition process.

We consider the process of selecting a building leader to be critically important, and value the input of staff, parents and students. The timeline and process for posting, interviewing, and hiring a new principal for Thornton Creek is available at www.northvilleschools.org. Updates will be provided as information becomes available, including dates and times for opportunities for student, staff and parent input into this process.

Thank You Teachers, Staff and School Nurses!

On behalf of the entire Northville school community, I want to take this opportunity following Teacher Appreciation Week and School Nurse Day (May 6, 2015) to recognize our incredible educators and health care providers for all that they do each and every day to ensure our schools and our classrooms are challenging, inspiring and healthy places for our students to learn and grow.

Thanks also goes out to our PTA/PTSAs, parents and families at each of our individual schools for all the special celebrations honoring our teachers during Teacher Appreciation Week, which took place May 4-8, 2015. Although we

encourage students, parents and community members to show appreciation for our teachers throughout the school year, these special events, treats, flowers, and especially the heartfelt notes of appreciation are truly cherished.

I also want to take this opportunity, on the heels of Teacher Appreciation Week, to thank the **Northville Educational Foundation** and **Mothers' Club of Northville** for once again teaming up to offer the **Thank-A-Staff program to benefit Northville students**. Thank-A-Staff is a unique way for parents, family members and community members to donate to these two fundraising groups by recognizing a special teacher, principal, counselor, coach, staff member or other individual who has made their child's or family's experience an inspirational one. During the last week of school, all recipients will receive a hand-delivered, personalized certificate with the name of the family or student who donated in their honor. Both the Foundation and Mothers' Club award teacher grants annually for academic and enriching programs within Northville Public Schools. 2014-15 Thank-A-Staff orders are due by May 19, 2015. For more information about Thank-A-Staff, visit the Foundation website at www.NorthvilleEdFoundation.org or the Mothers' Club website at www.MothersClubofNorthville.org.

Registration Open for Summer Connections Summer School Program

A reminder to Northville school families that **registration is now open for the district's Summer Connections Summer School program through June 19**, 2015 for elementary, middle and high school students. Summer Connections programs offer students the opportunity to review skills, explore areas of interest, recover credits, and/or earn additional credits during the summer. All in-class courses will take place at Hillside Middle School, with high school and middle school classes beginning Monday, June 22, 2015, and all elementary school classes beginning Monday, July 6, 2015. Online courses also are available for high school students. For more information or to register your student, visit the Summer Connections webpage at http://www.northvilleschools.org/node/551.

Honoring More Than 400 Years of Service!

At its June 9, 2015, meeting, the Northville Board of Education, will have the honor of recognizing 19 retiring Northville Public Schools staff members including 14 educators, two paraprofessionals, an administrative assistant, a social worker, a member of our Operations team, and a speech pathologist. A reception will take place before the Board meeting for the retirees and their families and colleagues.

Collectively, the following individuals have served our students, families and community for more than 400 years:

Marianne Barry
Carolyn Davis
Douglas Dent
David Elliott
Sherry Hanovich
Valerie Kaplansky
Kurt Kinde
Kimberly Lockwood
Terri Marquardt
Debra McGinnis
Kathleen Montmorency
Elisa Morrison
Mary Parent
Paul Sklut
Bonnie Styles
Kimberly Taylor-Papp
Valerie Troschinetz
Janet Weicksel
Angela Zecman

I want to take this opportunity to sincerely thank each of these individuals for the important contributions they have made over their years of service in furthering the excellence that exemplifies Northville schools and acknowledge that they take with them a great deal of wisdom and experience. We thank each of them for the opportunity to learn from and with them as colleagues, students, parents, and community members and we wish them well as they take on this new adventure in life!

The Wall That Heals Comes to Northville High School

In partnership with the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund and the Freedom Center, *The Wall That Heals*, a half-size replica of the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C., has arrived at Northville High School in conjunction with our **Varsity Boys Baseball Team's annual Armed Forces Day tradition** that includes a doubleheader honoring our troops and a collection drive of goods to ship to troops who are deployed overseas. Located in the lawn outside of the high school's east wing, *The Wall* will be open to the public from 9 a.m. today, Thursday, May 14, 2015, through 9 p.m., Saturday, May 16, 2015. An opening ceremony will take place at 4 p.m. today and the closing ceremony will be at 10 a.m. on Sunday, May 17, 2015. Volunteers will be on hand to answer questions and provide information during *The Wall's* public hours.

The Wall That Heals is a national touring exhibition created by the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund to travel to communities across the United States. Featuring a half-scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., it is also accompanied by a mobile Education Center that tells the story of the Vietnam War era and *The Wall*. The exhibition will bring the experience of Vietnam to our community and will provide an opportunity for our students and community to gain a heightened awareness of the impact and legacy of the Vietnam War. I encourage each of you to take advantage of this awe-inspiring, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to both honor and recognize the sacrifices made by our veterans.

The Northville Varsity Baseball team's 6th Annual Armed Forces Day

doubleheader and collection drive will take place on Saturday, May 16, 2015, with each member of the team wearing a jersey bearing the name of a local soldier who is currently serving overseas. Each soldier's family is invited to come and enjoy the double-header, with games slated to begin at 11:00 a.m. and 1 p.m. at Northville High School, 45700 West Six Mile Road. There also will be tables set up in the rear parking lot at the high school with a variety of activities including an obstacle course, a live bald eagle, military memorabilia, a dog tag machine, food, drinks and much more. The main goal of this event in to collect supplies for our troops overseas. All activities and food are free with a donation of supplies or money. Last year, the team collected nearly 250 boxes of requested items for our troops and raised more than $5,800 in cash donations for the Freedom Center. Our sincere appreciation to the NHS Varsity Baseball team, coaches and parents for bringing this incredible piece of history to our community and for your ongoing support of the honorable men and women serving in our military.

POINTS OF PRIDE FROM ACROSS THE DISTRICT

Every day in our classrooms, through the arts, on our fields of play and through extracurricular endeavors, our students and teachers from across Northville Public Schools give us much to celebrate. Here are just a few recent highlights.

- Seventeen Northville seniors have been named National Merit Scholar Finalists, ranking them among the top less than 1 percent of their peers across the country academically. They are: Kavya Adiga, Nabiha Biviji, Pooja Dandamudi, Weiyi Ding, Helen Garby, Urvashi Gupta, Perry Jiang, Samantha Kargilis, Aliya Kahn, Erin Kim, Sree Lanka, Rachel McIlvaine, Nirek Sharma, Tejas Venugopal, Shunhe Wang, Kevin Yu, and Geoffrey Zhu. These students have the opportunity to receive some 8,000 National Merit Scholarships worth more than $35 million.

  One Northville senior, Simran Reddy, is a National Merit Scholar Semifinalist, ranking her among the top 1 percent of her peers academically, and 16 others are National Merit Scholar Commended students, ranking them among the top 5 percent. Those earning Commended honors include: Derek Gan, Alina Haque, Zal Joshi, Una Koh, Nathan Lwo, Jonathan Mitchell, Anika Mukherji, William Peck, Sneha Rathi, Malika Sachdev, Mira Sanghvi, Matthew Schafer, Jacob Sirois, Kevin Yang, Victoria Zaremba, and Katie Zhang.

  During a May 1, 2015 breakfast honoring the National Merit Scholars – generously sponsored by the Northville Educational Foundation -- each student was introduced along with his or her parents, and students had the opportunity to recognize the teacher who has been most influential in their lives during their time with Northville Public Schools. Among those teachers honored were: Sean Turner, Karen Motz, Kathryn Bellows, Christopher Cronin, Hubert Rast, Timothy Ortopan, Lisa Sadikot, Jean Calabrese, Danette Bull, Rachel Besco, Johanne Ray-Hepp, Lisa Rohde, Cathy Ooms, Joseph Schembri, William Kinney, Teryn Chrzanowski, Thomas Silak, Paul Polanski, Brandy Righter, Melanie Korczyk, Joseph LaDuke, Gretchen Varela, Michael Rumbell, Melanie Obrigkeit, Judy Cavanaugh and Emily Correll. Congratulations to these students, teachers and families on this amazing accomplishment!

- It has been a big couple of weeks at Meads Mill Middle School. Its Science Olympiad Team recently won the State Championship and will represent Michigan in the National Tournament this weekend at the University of Nebraska. Eighth-graders Saaz Malhotra and Timothy Wu received perfect scores in the games of Equations and Wff 'N Proof in the Academic Games National Tournament in Orlando, Florida, making them among the best players in the nation, and eighth-grader Tim Wu won an individual playoff to take home the National Championship in Equations and Individual Sweepstakes, making him THE best player in the nation. Sixth-grader Lauren Atkinson received the national PTA Reflections program "Award of Excellence" for her photograph, ranking her first in the nation! And last but not least, eighth-graders Nick Cemalovic and Disha Satapathy were selected to participate in the Detroit Symphony Orchestra's Middle School Honors Band. Way to go Meads Mill!

- Congratulations to the Northville High School Robostangs on winning the Michigan FRC State Championship, as well at the Excellence in Engineering Award sponsored by Delphi. The team went on to compete in the national tournament in late-April in St. Louis, Missouri.

- Also, in some late breaking news, good luck to the Northville High School Science Olympiad Team for winning its first ever State Championship. The team will compete in the National Tournament this weekend at the University of Nebraska.

- The Northville Art House is hosting its 16th Annual Student Fine Arts Exhibit, featuring the work of Northville middle and high school students. The exhibit, which runs through May 16, 2015, is a collaboration with Northville educators to promote art appreciation among the community's youth and features an array of exceptional two- and three-dimensional work from Northville's most talented students. For more information about the exhibit and gallery hours, contact the Art House at 248-344-0497. I encourage you to stop by and see this amazing work by our students.

- The Northville High School women's choir, TrebleMakers, was recently selected as one of the top 12 vocal ensembles in the state at the Michigan Solo & Ensemble Festival and had the honor of performing recently at the Michigan Youth Arts Festival at Western Michigan University. The three-day festival featured the top high school dancers, instrumentalists, filmmakers, thespians, writers, singers and visual artists in the state. Also, congratulations to TrebleMakers member Madison Green, who was selected as a top vocal soloist in the state. She also performed at the festival.

- Way to go Silver Springs Elementary School fifth-grader Rebecca Lucksom, who recently made her debut in the Michigan Music Education Association Elementary Honors Choir, at the Presbyterian Church of Okemos. Rebecca was nominated by Silver Springs' music teacher Kristin Kreiss and was selected by audition to perform with this elite group!

- Kudos to Hillside Middle School sixth-grader Sophie Smith who was one of the winners of the local Lions Club International Peace Poster Contest for 11-13 year old students. Working with the art teachers at Hillside and Meads Mill Middle School, the Lions Club asked students to create a poster using this year's theme of "Peace, Love and Understanding." Each first place poster, including Sophie's, then went on to the district level, where Sophie also took first place!

- I am excited to let you know that four Northville educators were recently accepted into the 2015 Galileo Leadership Academy, a prestigious two-year seminar series designed to develop teacher leaders. They are:

    - Pam Schulman, Silver Springs Elementary School Resource Room teacher
    - Regan Cowger, Amerman Elementary School Resource Room teacher
    - Kristi Mauer, Meads Mill Middle School sixth grade teacher
    - Tonya Traylor, Meads Mill Middle School sixth grade teacher

  The Leadership Academy is part of the Galileo Leadership Consortium, an innovative leadership development program launched in 1997, which now includes educators from 26 school districts – including Northville Public Schools – three community colleges and three regional educational service agencies in Southeast Michigan. To date, more than 50 Northville educators have completed the Galileo Leadership Academy including the most recent graduates from the 2013-15 cohort – Lisa Lindsay, Ridge Wood Elementary School; Brandy Rys, Ridge Wood; Kary Couchman, Northville High School; and Matt Stetson, Northville High School.

- The Northville High School DECA team garnered an amazing number of outstanding performances at the DECA International Career Development Conference competition which took place recently in Orlando, Florida. Freshman Casey Fortman placed Top 20 in the Principles of Business exam; junior Allison Chang, was a finalist in Principles in Marketing; senior Weiyi Ding was a finalist and Top 20 in Automotive Services Marketing; and sophomore Lauren Fane, was a finalist and took third place overall in the Financial Consulting event. Congratulations to the entire Northville DECA team, along with NHS DECA advisors Jean Calabrese, Kelly DeWitt, Rebecca Denison, Kaytee Bellows, Melinda Gentz and Karen Besek.

We have so much to be proud of as we continue to advance our *Tradition of Excellence* to open *A World of Possibilities* for all students. Thank you to our teachers, students, staff, families and community members who make this possible.

Sincerely,

Mary K. Gallagher
Superintendent