

Pilot School News

November 7, 2025 | Volume #5



UPCOMING EVENTS >>>

November 13, 2025

Murray PTO Meeting
6:00pm – 7:15pm

November 17, 2025

Famous Dave's Fundraiser
12:00pm – 8:00pm

November 20, 2025

7th Grade Family Meeting for
Washington DC
5:00pm – 6:00pm

November 20-26, 2025

Spirit Week

November 27-28, 2025

No School – Thanksgiving Break

December 1, 2025

Murray PACT Meeting
5:00pm – 6:30pm

December 3, 2025

Barnes & Noble Bookfair
6:00pm – 8:00pm

December 8, 2025

Murray PTO Meeting
6:00pm – 7:15pm

December 16, 2025

Winter Band/Orchestra Concert
6:30pm

Dec. 22, 2025-Jan. 2, 2026

No School – Winter Break

We start our journey to our dreams by wanting, but we arrive by focusing, planning and learning. **Christina Wodtke**

Quarter 2 is now upon us! Ownership of academic success involves goal setting, reflecting on progress, self-advocacy, increased organizational skills and a feeling of accomplishment. As our Murray vision states, we are preparing our Murray Pilots for success in High School and beyond. One of the very important systems we have built to support this vision is that we have academic review days incorporated into our Foundations classes every week. We want to continue to move our young scholars from being dependent learners to independent learners. Ask your students how they are taking advantage of our reassessment process, what goals are they setting for themselves and what steps are they taking to achieve those goals? Student success is a partnership between families, teachers and students. Middle school is the transition period where our young learners need to begin *owning* their success and the path they take to get there. We are all here to guide them with that path.

Quarter 2, here we go!

Celebrations:

[#Pilotprops](#) of the week! Mr. Altringer would like to celebrate Thiffany Rivas Talavera. Thiffany is a very kind and helpful student. Often offering to share her ideas, read out loud, and offer assistance to her peers. Thiffany also puts in a lot of effort to try to learn the science skills, she is not afraid to make a mistake but sees it as an opportunity to grow as a learner and doer of science. Props to you!

[#Pilotprops](#) of the week! Ms. Dooley would like to celebrate Nicole Dyer for consistent high-level work, great teamwork, and asking and responding to complex questions.

Your Co-Pilot,

Jamin McKenzie
Principal, Murray Middle School

NJHS

This group has been busy! Congrats to Joey E-President, Mariya A-Vice President, and Harmon L-Secretary. Many have volunteered outside of school events and helped out here at Murray for Back-to School nights giving tours and directions to new families. This group also hosted Dr. Stanley on her visit to Murray and did an amazing job of repping this school. They also spent time making Holiday Cards for Heroes on Sunday, November 2-the creativity is amazing!

Sixth Grade

English Language Arts with Ms. Williams and Ms. Carter:

Sixth-grade Readers Workshop students are wrapping up the quarter by analyzing the psychological setting of our books and how they affect the mood and our characters.

Writers Workshop finds us wrapping up Essay Boot Camp! We learned all about the basic structures of a five-paragraph essay. Some students created opinion and argument essays, while other students were ready for literary analysis essays. Well done, sixth grade!

Science with Ms. Crowley:

In science we completed our light unit and ended with how our eyes help us see things. We learned the structures and functions of the eye and dissected a sheep eyeball. Ask your child about this experience.



The 6th grade science class is starting a unit called, How can containers keep stuff from warming up or cooling down? as part of the OpenSciEd middle school curriculum. This unit develops science ideas about temperature, heat, and thermal energy. Students build from prior learning about states of matter, energy, and energy transfer from 3-5th grade science. For example, water is made of matter, which can be a solid, a liquid, or a gas. In science, we represent matter, like water, as "too small to see" objects called particles. Finally, we recognize that when objects are at different temperatures, they can change state, (eg. ice melting or water freezing). Students examine these ideas first with a familiar but puzzling phenomenon: two iced drinks in two different kinds of cups.

The Thermal Energy or Cup Design unit introduces students to wonder how a regular single wall plastic cup is different from a special double-wall plastic cup. Students will observe that the drink in the regular cup warms up faster than the drink in the special cup. This makes students wonder about how features of the cup (i.e. the material, the lid, the straw) causes stuff to get warmer faster or keeps drinks from warming. Students are encouraged to draw a model to help explain the difference in warming rates.

These models inspire students to think of other fancy cups or containers and how they are similar and different (e.g., metal vacuum sealed cups, styrofoam cups). Finally students pose their own questions about the cup features, the air and light around the cups, and how they relate to keeping substances hot or cold longer.

Later in the unit, students will engage in engineering and design thinking. They will apply different science ideas to develop, test, and iterate on a cup design challenge. They will try to design a cup to compete against the special cup from the start of the unit.

Don't be surprised if your child starts noticing the different cups you or others might be drinking out of! Feel free to encourage their curiosity and ask them to share their thoughts about the cups or other similar objects (e.g., coolers, lunch boxes).

Seventh Grade

Science with Ms. Dooley and Mr. Altringer:

Students have just wrapped up their unit on chemical reactions. Next up: The healing unit, where we learn how a student's body systems work together to heal his foot after he dropped a weight on it. We'll study this from medical reports, dissections, and examining how cells work with microscopes.

Eighth Grade

Global Studies with Ms. Croone:

We have just finished our unit about what tools a geographer uses. Students took the tools to create their own country complete with a political map with surrounding countries, a physical features map and then a latitude and longitude map showing where their country is located with absolute and relative location plus what hemispheres they were in. Next will be the 5 Themes of Geography-Movement, Human Environment Interaction, Region, Location and Place. We have just learned about Location and how relative and absolute location can be used.

Check in with your child to see where in the world they created their country!

Math with Mr. Hayden:

In Algebra 1, students closed out the first semester by beginning our foray into solving equations, which is a skill that gets re-visited multiple times throughout the year. We started with one step equations, but expanded to multi-step equations and ones with variables on both sides. At the start of Quarter 2, we will extend our knowledge even deeper to include special equations that have infinitely many or no solutions, absolute value equations, and solving for a variable in expressions with multiple, different variables.

In Integrated Math, we just completed our review of different forms of linear equations- such as slope-intercept, point-slope and standard. We also discovered the unique relationships that exist between the slopes of parallel and perpendicular lines. Next, we will dive into linear functions. Review what specifically makes something a function, evaluate functions using function notation, and see the different types of transformations of linear functions including horizontal and vertical stretches and compressions.

Science with Ms. Atkinson and Ms. Dooley:

Students are getting ready to wrap up the Contact Forces unit by designing protective equipment. They just finished investigating best materials to prevent damage, and are now engineering a solution to the problem of head injuries. Next up: applying what we know about collisions to sound.



Athletics

Winter Sports: Boys' Basketball,
Girls' Basketball & Wrestling!!

Practice: Monday – Thursday
3:15 – 4:45

Please register on Arbiter:

<https://students.arbitersports.com/st-paul-murray-middle-school>

A number of Murray athletes competed in the St. Paul City Conference Championships for the Como Park girls swim team.

Evelyn Amman Steger- 13th in the 100 free

Lucia Barnes- 13th in the 50 free, 11th in the 100 back, and on the 6th place 400 free relay team

Emine Cakir- 11th in the 500 free, 9th in the 100 back and on the 6th place 200 medley relay team

Carter Matlock- 12th in the 200 IM

Vala Matlock- 13th in the 200 IM

Lexie Walton- 10th in the 200 free, 10th in the 100 back, and on the 6th place 400 free relay team

Piper Williamson- 12th place in the 100 breast

Extended Day Learning

[Murray EDL Registration Form](#)

EDL Cooking Class

EDL would love to start a cooking class if anyone is interested in helping.

[Donor's Choose link for Murray EDL Cooking class](#)

Picture Day

School Pictures are Ready!

View and order at

<https://shop.jostenspix.com/login>

- MURRAY MIDDLE SCHOOL
- Event Code: FE33325

Spirit Wear

<https://www.threadartmn.com/showrooms.htm>

Spirit Week

Nov. 20 – Crazy Hat/Clothes Day

Nov. 21 – Twin Day

Nov. 24 – Pajama Day

Nov. 25 – Jersey Day

Nov. 26 – Western Day

Nov. 26 – Dance

[**Murray Middle Dance 2025 - Class Registration v3.0 - Saint Paul Public Schools**](#)



Yearbook

Yearbook Photo Share

Share photos from activities, events, clubs, etc.

The yearbook staff will review all photos and determine final yearbook content. We cannot guarantee that all submissions will be used. Please do not use photos with filters, logos, or hand gestures. Please do not use screenshots or watermarked photos.



The easiest way to buy a yearbook is to purchase it online at:

<https://www.jostens.com/yearbooks/high-school-yearbooks.html>

Staff Spotlight



Hi! My name is Erin Dooley and I have been here at Murray Middle School since the fall of 2006, when my older son was a 7th grader here! I did take one year out of the building with a district coaching position, but enjoy being in the science classroom too much to have stayed out longer.

Before teaching at Murray, I taught at a school in the West 7th neighborhood for 7 years and a year each in Minneapolis and Georgetown, KY. Before that, I worked in chemistry labs at a local environmental chemistry company, H.B Fuller, and 3M. Teaching is my second career and I never looked back.

This year I am teaching Life Science 7, Physical Science 8, and Comparative Anatomy elective. I enjoy teaching each of these subjects and the chance to teach so many different areas of science. Each of these classes are challenging for the students, but they continue to amaze me with their questions and insights as we move through the content.

When I'm not teaching, I enjoy camping, traveling, taking my dog Stella for long walks, and cooking/baking. In the past few years, I've been lucky enough to win a few ribbons at the Minnesota State fair for breads and cakes. This past summer, my husband and I walked our second Camino in Spain and Portugal. We walked about 360 miles in three weeks. It was exhausting and amazing; we met so many people from all over the world along the way.

Counselors Corner

Here are a few announcements from our counseling team. As a reminder, here is our contact information:

- Ms. Justine Revermann - justine.revermann@spps.org - 651-243-4663 ext. 744052: Student last names A-L
- Ms. Lisa Engelstad – lisa.engelstad@spps.org - 651-243-4663 ext. 745675: Student last names M-Z

Academic Resources outside of school:

- Homework Centers at the Libraries: List of Locations and Hours found here: <https://sppl.org/homework/>
- Brainfuse HelpNow: Brainfuse App with St. Paul Library Card – go here to download app:
<https://sppl.org/resources/homework-help/>
 - Live Tutoring everyday 1-11:00pm
 - English and Spanish

Coats, Hats, Mittens Donation:

We are always in need of new or gently used/clean jackets, coats, mittens, and hats for our students. If you would like to donate any, please contact one of our social workers or counselors. We greatly appreciate it!

Community Mental Health Resources:

- Ramsey County Children's Mental Health Collaborative: (800) 565-2575
 - En Espanol: <https://www.rccmhc.org/espanol>
- Ramsey County Youth Mental Health Crisis Team: 651-266-7878
- Ramsey County Adult Mental Health Crisis Team: 651-266-7900

Every Meal:

We have a partnership with EveryMeal and students can pick up free food bags to take home. More information and sign up on the link here or QR Code: <https://forms.gle/JYus6pV3yRTN7ByQ6>.



Holiday/Winter Support:

As we are closer to the holiday season, please let Ms. Revermann or Ms. Engelstad know if you could support families who could use a little extra love and care during the holiday season in the form of financial assistance or help getting presents and resources to their children. You can also let us know if you are in need of some extra help over the holidays and we will try our best!

- Ramsey County info: <https://www.ramseycountymn.gov/your-government/volunteer/holiday-sponsorship-program>
- Ramsey County Resource Search Tool: <https://www.rccmhc.org/search-tool>
- United Way "First Call for Help" - Dial 211 to find out about programs in your area, regardless of where you live



Counselors Corner

Schoology:

- Schoology: <https://schoology.spps.org/> (grades, classes, coursework, missing assignments)
- Campus: <https://spps.infinitecampus.org/campus/portal/parents/stpaul.jsp> (schedule, bus, attendance, etc.)

Here is the link to a webpage that has tutorials about how families can access and use Schoology and Campus:
<https://www.spps.org/about/departments/infinite-campus/campus-parent-information>

Direct link to schoology tutorial: <https://youtu.be/f6-FofTJESE?list=TLGGx1ANm6Za9gUzMDA5MjAyNA>

Therapy/Counseling Services with LifeStance:

- If you are interested in your child seeing our school-based Mental health therapist, Ms. Rachel Howard, through our partnership with LifeStance, please contact your child's school counselor. Rachel is at Murray every day and can have therapy appointments during the school day!

8th Grade families:

The PreK-12 School Choice Fair will be held on Saturday, December 13, 2025 from 9:30am – 2:00pm at the Saint Paul RiverCentre (175 East Kellogg Blvd). Attend the fair to learn more about SPPS schools, programs and services, and ask questions about selecting a school for 2026-27.



Murray W.E.B. HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE

Murray W.E.B. leaders need your support!
We want to collect food and household items to support families
at our school and in our area.

We Are Collecting The Following Items:

-Boxed stuffing	-canned green beans	-disposable baking dishes	-toothpaste
-Pasta	-french fried onions	-tooth brushes	
-Pasta sauce	-butter	-paper plates	-body wash
-Dinner rolls/buns/bread	-pie crust	-plastic silverware	-shampoo
-Canned cranberries	-sugar	-napkins	-conditioner
-Dried mashed potatoes	-cornbread mix	-plastic cups	-hand soap
-Milk	-canned gravy	-pet food	-feminine hygiene products
			-deodorant

Items Will Be Collected

NOVEMBER
3-21

Drop Off Location
Murray Main Office

**FOR MORE
INFORMATION**

megan.steinhoff@spps.org
stefanie.folkema@spps.org



**Murray W.E.B.
Holiday Food Drive
Needs List:**

FOOD:

- Boxed stuffing /dressing
- pasta noodles
- Canned pasta sauce
- Dinner rolls/buns/bread
- Canned cranberries
- Dried mashed potatoes
- Milk
- Canned green beans
- French fried onions
- Canned cream of mushroom soup
- Cornbread mix
- Butter
- Canned pumpkin
- Canned gravy
- Canned yams
- Pie crust
- Canned apples
- Sugar
- Brown sugar
- Flour
- Vegetable oil
- Canned corn
- Rice
- Lunch meat

MISCELLANEOUS:

- aluminum disposable baking dishes
- Paper plates
- Plastic silverware
- Napkins
- Plastic cups
- Pet food

PERSONAL HYGIENE/CARE PRODUCTS:

- Toothpaste
- Tooth brushes
- Body wash
- Shampoo
- Conditioner
- Hand soap
- pads/tampons/feminine hygiene products
- Diapers
- Toilet paper
- razors/shaving items
- Baby wipes
- Deodorant
- Lotion
- Vaseline





WE NEED YOUR LOOSE CHANGE!

MURRAY CHANGE FOR CHANGE

MONDAY NOVEMBER 3RD - FRIDAY NOVEMBER 21ST

BRING YOUR LOOSE CHANGE TO YOUR FOUNDATIONS

TEACHER TO COLLECT!

ALL MONEY COLLECTED WILL BE DONATED TO A
LOCAL FOOD BANK.

THE FOUNDATIONS WITH THE JAR OF COINS THAT
WEIGHS THE MOST WILL **WIN A PRIZE!**
ONE FOR EACH GRADE.



IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO BE A STAR PLAYER!

REGISTER FOR GIRLS BASKETBALL OR WRESTLING NOW!

SEASON STARTS

NOVEMBER 10TH, 2025

PRACTICES & GAMES

MONDAY THROUGH THURSDAY

3:15 – 4:45

REGISTRATION



Roseville!

Eat to support

Murray Parent Teacher Organization



♥ 20% Donated Back

📅 Monday, November 17th / 12:00 PM - 8:00 PM

🎫 RSVP below

Famous Dave's

groupraise.com/events/313157

2131 Snelling Avenue, Roseville

Powered by
GroupRaise

Conozca sus Derechos

Miercoles, 19 de Noviembre 2025

Hora: 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Evento Virtual: Inscribase enviando un
mensaje de texto o WhatsApp a:

- Adriana Ríos Dessalet: (612) 523-2330
- Sara Reyes: (612) 759-6761





ACCELERATED PROGRAMS NIGHT

THURSDAY, NOV. 20, 6:30-7:30 P.M.

What: Como Park High School is hosting their Accelerated Programs Night. This is an opportunity for prospective students and families to learn more about Como's college-level Advanced Placement classes, Post-Secondary Enrollment Option (PSEO) and Concurrent College Enrollment options from Como staff and a student panel. Learn about our successful programs and have all your questions answered! Light refreshments will be provided.

When: Nov. 20, 2025 from 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Where: Como Park Senior High School Library
740 Rose Avenue W, Saint Paul, MN 55117

