

Update from the Superintendent
Dr. Kristine Flesher

November 7, 2025

Dear Families and Staff,

November brings a full and festive season in our schools—with student activities, recognition events, student performances, and the many traditions that make this time of year special. It's also a great time for reflection and connection. As we hold fall conferences, I encourage all parents and guardians to take advantage of this opportunity to celebrate what's going well, discuss growth areas, and set goals for the rest of the semester.

Please see the invitation, below, to attend the community Veterans Day celebration as we honor those who have served. I'll be in touch again before the Thanksgiving holiday, but for now, I hope you enjoy this busy and meaningful month in our schools.

Sincerely,
Kristine Flesher, Ed.D.
Superintendent



Invitation to Veterans Day Program

Orono Schools is privileged to partner with the Orono Rotary Club on the annual Veterans Day program. I encourage our community members to attend **Tuesday, November 11 at 8:45 a.m. in the Orono High School gym**. It is always a memorable experience! We will welcome the Paul Stinson American Legion Post 514 color guard led by Commander Jim Meyer. The keynote speaker is Army Veteran and Orono School Board Vice-Chair, Todd Madson. Music by the OHS Choir directed by Ms. Nichole Brenna. Special thanks to Maple Plain Mayor and Rotarian Julie Maas-

Kusske for leading this effort year after year. We're also grateful to Orono High School and Dr. Amy Steiner, head principal, for hosting this event and always prioritizing our veterans.



Great Seats Available!
Performances Begin November 14
oronohs.booktix.com



Congratulations to Grace Nohner!

We're thrilled to celebrate **Grace Nohner**, English Teacher, Student Life Coordinator, and Student Senate Adviser at Orono High School, who has been named a Regional **Earl Reum Award** winner! In addition to her work at Orono, Grace serves as the State Advisor for the Minnesota Association of Student Leaders, where she helps strengthen student leadership across Minnesota.

This award honors those who "train the trainers"—the mentors, advisors, and educators who help student leadership thrive across the nation. Grace embodies that spirit every day through her guidance, encouragement, and dedication to empowering both students and colleagues. Her energy, professionalism, and heart for service make her an inspiration to all who work with her.

We're so proud to see Grace recognized for the incredible impact she makes in our schools and beyond!

Balancing Safety and a Warm Welcome - New Main Entry Procedures

The district is continuing to enhance safety measures while keeping our schools as welcoming as possible. At the end of this month, intercom systems will be installed in the main entry vestibules of our main campus buildings.

When you visit, you'll simply step into the vestibule and speak with a staff member through the intercom before being buzzed in to the main office. This added step helps us personally greet every visitor while ensuring our schools remain safe and secure for students and staff.

Thank you for your partnership, understanding, and support as we make this improvement. You can expect more information from your building principal by the end of the month.

2026-27 School Year Calendar & Enrollment



It's true… we're already looking ahead to the 2026–27 school year!
We want families to know that, with new state allowance and School Board approval, our school year calendar will begin **before Labor Day next year**. Grades 1–12 will start on Tuesday, September 1, and Kindergarten will begin on Wednesday, September 2. Because Labor Day falls so late in 2026, this adjustment allows us to wrap up the school year on a more typical timeline. The full 2026–27 calendar is now available on our website.

Also, if you are an open-enrolled family *with a child beginning Kindergarten in fall 2026*, be sure to submit your open enrollment application for that child by January 15, 2026 (the state deadline). A separate application must be submitted for each child.

Fall Athletics Wrap-Up

Special shout-out to all our fall athletes who have completed their seasons. Well done! And best wishes to our teams who continue to compete in the post season!

- **Football** won the state quarterfinal game vs. Fergus Falls to advance to the Class AAAA State Semifinals at U.S. Bank Stadium! Spartans are set for a rematch against Marshall on Thursday, Nov. 13 at 10:30 a.m. MSHSL ticket sales should begin after all quarterfinal games are played.
- **Boys Cross Country** Congratulations to Boys Cross Country on an outstanding 3rd Place finish at the 2025 Class AA State Championship! All-State performances by Gabe Hallen (2nd place) and Cooper Munsch (13th place).
- **Girls Cross County** earned 5th place at State! Congratulations to all our girls on an impressive finish at the State Championship meet.
- **Girls Swim & Dive** performed well at Section prelims. All four divers made it back to finals, all relays are top seed going into finals, and 29 of 32 individual swims are back for finals. Spartans return to action for the Section 3A Finals on Saturday, November 8, at 1:00 p.m. at Willmar High School. Good luck, girls!

Winter Sports | Check out the Athletics Calendar of Events

Football heads to “The Bank” November 13!



Girls Swim & Dive = In it to Win It!







FALL CONFERENCES

Important Dates

November 11 - Veterans Day Program (public) | 8:45 a.m. | OHS Gym
November 14 - "Tuck Everlasting" fall musical opening night | Tickets
Fall Conferences | Visit the Website for Sign-up Information
- November 24-28 - No ECFE or Preschool; Preschool conferences Nov. 24-25
- November 24 - K-12 School in Session - Evening Conferences
- November 25 - No School - Parent/Teacher Conferences

November 26-28 - Thanksgiving Break

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, October 27, 2025 | Agenda

- Superintendent's "Report on Excellence" | Watch the Presentation
- Board Members' Questions and Comments | Watch the Presentation
- Middle School Staff Summer Learnings: Building Character, Connections, and Positive Behavior | Watch the Presentation
- Resolution to Support the Application to the MSHSL Foundation for a Form A Grant to Offset Student Activity Fees | Watch the Presentation

The next meeting of the Orono School Board is scheduled for Monday, November 10, 2025, at 7 p.m. in the District Office Assembly Room. Registration for the public comment portion of the meeting is open through Monday, November 10 at 12 p.m. (noon).
