

Update from the Superintendent
Dr. Kristine Flesher

November 25, 2025

Dear Families and Staff,

Thank you to all who participated in this year's fall conferences. We hope this was a time to affirm your child's progress and discuss goals for the coming weeks and months. As always, Orono staff are available to discuss any concerns or ideas you might have to help your student reach their personal level of excellence. I would also like to thank our parent associations and community members who go above and beyond during this busy week to provide a meal for our teachers during conference time. Our teachers and staff are grateful for the generous contributions and ability to take a break during two very busy days!

This Thanksgiving, I want to share my sincere appreciation for our entire Orono community. I'm grateful for our dedicated staff, our supportive families, and most especially our students who are the inspiration behind all we strive to achieve. We are so pleased with the progress we've made this year with student engagement in academics, arts, and athletics. From excitement about the K-5 literacy curriculum, to the fall musical, to state championships, Orono students are shining on every stage!

I wish you and your loved ones a holiday filled with rest, good food, fun, friends, and family. If you plan to travel, please be careful! We look forward to seeing you all back on Monday, December 1. **Happy Thanksgiving!**

Sincerely,
Kristine Flesher, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Orono Hosts Community Safety Summit

This month, Orono leaders welcomed representatives from local police, fire, and emergency response agencies for a districtwide Safety Summit. The gathering provided an important opportunity for the teams who support our schools to renew familiarity and strengthen the relationships that help ensure a swift, coordinated response when it matters most.

Thank you to our guests:

- Orono Police Department: Chief Correy Farniok, Deputy Chief Tony Witke, and Officer Jay McCoy. Medina Police Department, Chief Jay Nelson
- West Hennepin Police Department: Chief Matt DuRose
- Wayzata Police Department: Deputy Chief Brad Schoenherr
- Long Lake Fire: Chief Mike Heiland and Deputy Chief Cody Farley
- Maple Plain Fire: Chief Rick Dennison
- West Suburban Fire: Deputy Chief Tim Ryan

During the summit we discussed current safety practices and identified ways to improve our partnership. We set a future date to once again engage in tabletop scenarios.

We are grateful for these strong partnerships and for the ongoing collaboration that helps us maintain safe, welcoming learning environments for all Orono students and staff. If you see these dedicated professionals in our community, please join us in thanking them for their shared commitment to school safety.

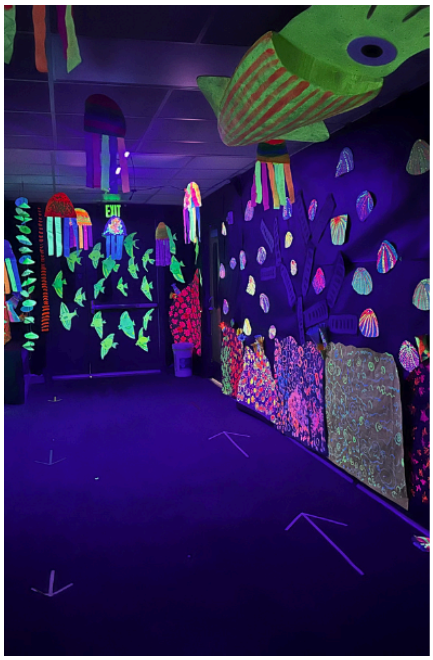


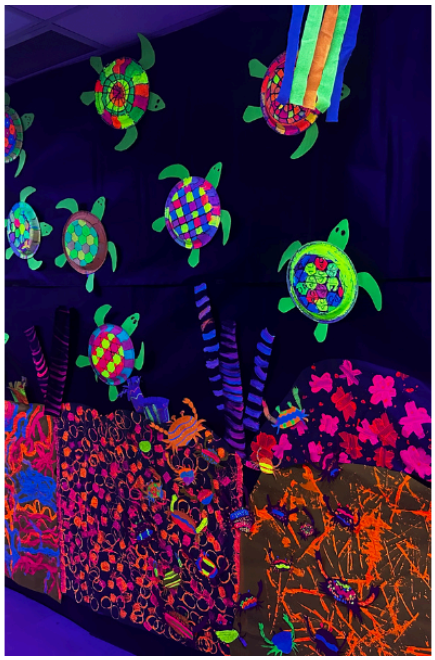
Third Graders Dive “Under the Sea” in Arts & Letters

I hope that many visitors to the Intermediate School during conferences were able to experience the impressive “Under the Sea” installation near the IS main office. This is an outstanding immersive display that celebrated the culmination of this year's first third-grade Arts & Letters module. Throughout the unit, students explored the essential question, *How do people explore the sea?* They read a variety of texts, learned to identify main ideas, and showcased their understanding on the cards displayed in the hallway.

Each third-grade class contributed different elements to the underwater “world”: sea turtles, fish, glowing sea shapes, hanging squids—even a student-made hammerhead shark. Under the direction of teacher Lindsay Lallas, and with creative coordination by parent artist Jamie Jeska, the hallway transformed into a glowing ocean scene. The project was made possible through the generosity of Mr. Todd Moitz and hands-on help of many parent volunteers.

The “Under the Sea” project not only celebrates student learning, but also reflects the strong partnership between staff and families—bringing creativity, curiosity, and community to life in our halls. Thank you! Outstanding work!






Fall Athletic Seasons End with Outstanding Performances

Congratulations to our athletes, coaches, managers, and families for a **wonderful** fall season. We hope you will enjoy an upcoming winter sports competition: Alpine Ski, Boys & Girls Basketball, Winter Dance Team, Boys & Girls Hockey, Nordic Ski, Boys Swimming & Diving and Wrestling. Our athletes are so grateful to be cheered from the stands and the sidelines!

Check out the Winter Sports Athletics Calendar of Events

Girls Swimming & Diving

Congratulations to Girls Swimming & Diving for capturing the **True Team State Championship** for the third consecutive year. We are so proud of our athletes, Coach Mark Seguin, and assistant coaches for leading our team through another amazing season. On November 13-15, our girls had a wonderful showing and an impressive **3rd Place finish at the Class A State Meet.** This season also marks the team's third straight trip to the State Finals!

Throughout the season, the team set numerous school and pool records, finished with an undefeated conference record, and earned titles as Metro West Conference Champions, True Team Section Champions, True Team State Champions, MSHSL Section Champions, and MSHSL State third place.

This team has been an outstanding example of what it means to represent Orono with pride. They bring an impressive work ethic every day and support each other in a way that creates a positive and uplifting team environment. Their connection, character, and care for one another have been every bit

as meaningful as the success they earned throughout the season. Congratulations, Spartans! We are proud of you!

State Meet Final Results:

200 Free
2nd Place - Graycin Andreen - New School Record!
5th Place - Lola Schottler
12th Place - Ainsley Francis

200 IM
6th Place - Sophie Berg

100 Fly
2nd Place - Graycin Andreen
7th Place - Sophie Berg
13th Place - Ileana Berg

100 Free
11th Place - Audrey Crawford

500 Free
6th Place - Lola Schottler

200 Free Relay
2nd Place - Ileana Berg, Celia Howard, Lola Schottler, Graycin Andreen

100 Back
8th Place - Ainsley Francis

400 Free Relay - New School Record!
2nd Place - Audrey Crawford, Ainsley Francis, Lola Schottler, Graycin Andreen



Girls Swim & Dive - State 3rd Place & True Team State Champions!

Football

On November 21 at U.S. Bank Stadium, Orono Football won the **Class AAAA State Championship**, defeating Kasson-Montorville 21-14. The Spartans knocked off higher seeds in three consecutive games en route to earning the **first Football state title in school history**. Congratulations to our players, Head Coach Joe McPherson, and all our assistant coaches on a memorable and record-setting season! The team has earned numerous awards, including:

- Academic All-State (Team) – ***GOLD Award***
- Academic All-State: **Adrian Licursi**

- Honorable Mention All-District Players: **Dane Kanwischer, Hudson Hirt, Rory Kvern, Lucas LaBelle, Grant Eslinger, Harrison Schleeter, Sam Hultmann & Tate Kracht**
- All-District Players: **Griffin Mauer, Simon Vinton, Adrian Licursi, Bennett Halverson, Lincoln Stinar & Wes McLean**
- Skyway Green District Awards:
    - Most Valuable “Why We Play”: **Ethan Tulkki**
    - Most Valuable Defensive Lineman of the Year: **Simon Vinton**
    - Most Valuable Linebacker of the Year: **Adrian Licursi**
    - Most Valuable Offensive Lineman of the Year: **Wes McLean**
    - Most Valuable Quarterback of the Year: **Griffin Mauer**
- Vikings Senior All-Star Game: **Simon Vinton**
- Strib Varsity 2025 Prep Bowl All-Tournament Team: **Adrian Licursi**

Congratulations, again, on an amazing season and victory!



Download the FirstView 1.0 Bus-Tracking App

Recently, we reviewed the percentage of families who have downloaded the new FirstView 1.0 bus tracking app. We are currently at 40% and have been hearing good things about the tracking and notifications. ***With winter weather on the way, we would love to see 100% participation!***

Parents, students, and caregivers are all welcome to use the app to stay informed. **Visit the Transportation website** for details. Let's get to 100%!

As a reminder, our district Inclement Weather Plan is on the website for your review.

Important Dates

November 25-28 - No ECFE or Preschool; Preschool conferences Nov. 24-25
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, November 10, 2025 | Agenda

- Superintendent's "Report on Excellence" | Watch the Presentation
- Board Members' Questions and Comments | Watch the Presentation
- Audit Report
- Literacy Curriculum Implementation Update: Arts & Letters, UFLI

The next meeting of the Orono School Board is scheduled for Monday, December 8, 2025, at 6 p.m. in the District Office Assembly Room. Registration for the public comment portion of the meeting is open Friday, December 5 through Monday, December 8 at 12 p.m. (noon).
