



SCHOOL REPORT



A MESSAGE FROM SUPERINTENDENT DR. ERIN RATHKE

What a moment for our community!

On behalf of our students, staff, and leadership team, thank you to every voter who showed up, engaged in conversation, asked important questions, and ultimately supported the future of our schools. This vote is more than a number; it's a powerful affirmation of the ECCS Difference. Over the past several months, we've been in the community sharing the story of our district. But more importantly, we've been listening to families, students, staff, and community members. You've told us what matters: safe and welcoming schools, academic excellence, responsive supports, and learning environments that reflect the needs of every child. That listening doesn't end now. It's ongoing, and it will continue to shape our direction moving forward.

PASSING THIS REFERENDUM IS NOT THE END OF SOMETHING; IT'S THE BEGINNING. IT OPENS THE DOOR TO STRATEGIC, STUDENT-CENTERED INVESTMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN CAREFULLY PLANNED AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE SHAPED THROUGH MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT WITH OUR STAKEHOLDERS.

We take seriously the responsibility of stewarding this investment, and we are committed to ensuring every dollar reflects our shared priorities, values, and vision.

This is a win for kids. This is a win for our future.

Thank you for standing with us. Thank you for your trust. And thank you for being part of the difference.

Together, we are building something powerful.

VOTERS APPROVE REFERENDUM



On November 4, voters approved the district referendum for Eastern Carver County Schools. The question, a \$742 per pupil increase in the operating levy, was approved by 62 percent of voters.

“The district’s residents have spoken and we are grateful for their support,” Superintendent Dr. Erin Rathke said “This investment in our students and staff will allow us to continue to offer the exceptional education our community expects and deserves. We are excited to begin planning for what’s next for our programming and will be sharing that work over the months ahead.”

Approval of the referendum question maintains the district’s commitment to providing students with access to high quality academics as well as other programming to support student development and success.

The priorities that the additional funding will provide include:

- **Stable funding** for a strong future and priorities identified in the district’s strategic plan
- **Sustaining academic opportunities and support for all learners** through strong classroom instruction, targeted resources, and meaningful enrichment
- **Enhancing gifted and talented programming** at the elementary level, protect the investment in and growth of advanced academics at the middle level
- Investing in **additional counseling** support at the high school level to address mental health needs and career and college pathways

NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY EDUCATION



Eastern Carver County Schools is excited to announce that Dr. Alicia Fischer has been selected as the next Executive Director of Community Education, beginning December 2. She will step into the role following the retirement of Sue Harberts, who has served ECCS with deep dedication and care. We are incredibly grateful for Sue's leadership and years of service to our community.

Dr. Fischer brings more than 25 years of leadership experience across PreK-12 education. She currently serves as the principal at Chaska Middle School West, and previously served as principal at Apollo High School and the McKinley Area Learning Center in St. Cloud. Her career also includes experience as an assistant principal, instructional coach, and teacher. She has worked across settings and systems—bringing both depth and breadth to her leadership.

Dr. Fischer's career reflects a strong commitment to academic and extracurricular excellence, family engagement, and lifelong learning. Her ability to lead complex systems, build strong teams, and focus on the needs of all learners makes her an ideal fit for this role. We are excited to welcome Alicia into Community Education and know she will continue the tradition of strong, community-centered programming that supports learners of all ages.

Please join us in congratulating Dr. Alicia Fischer and welcoming her to this new role.

BLUFF CREEK ELEMENTARY CELEBRATES THIRTY YEARS

Bluff Creek Elementary welcomed back nearly 30 alumni staff to help celebrate its 30th anniversary at an all-school assembly last month. Many wonderful memories were shared, including from former principals Cathy Gallagher (1995-2005) and Joan MacDonald (2005-2021). Special thanks to teacher Stacy Godwin-Lemke for the awesome presentation and trip down memory lane.

Did you know?

- Bluff Creek's original mascot was the Eagles, but later changed to the Lions.
- The school colors were originally purple and teal, but later became navy blue and gold to reflect Chanhassen High School's colors.
- Multiple ECCS principals once worked at Bluff Creek Elementary including current leaders Jill VeLure (Victoria) and Nate Slinde (Clover Ridge) along with retired principal June Johnson (Clover Ridge and Carver).



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ENROLL FOR THE 2026-2027 SCHOOL YEAR

KINDERGARTEN ENROLLMENT



If you have a child who will be five years old by September 1, 2026, it's time to get ready for kindergarten. ECCS offers three outstanding kindergarten options for families to choose from to best meet their child's needs:

Neighborhood boundary schools offer an outstanding kindergarten program focused on academic, social, and emotional development. Students are introduced to reading skills, writing, problem-solving, and are provided personalized instruction and support.

La Academia Spanish Immersion is our two-way dual immersion program. A typical day looks very similar to other kindergarten classes, but the curriculum is taught in Spanish.

Kinder Academy is a kindergarten option for young five-year-olds. The program follows ECCS kindergarten curriculum. Students ready to move on to first grade after one year will do so. Students who would benefit from an additional year of kindergarten will stay in the program.



Learn more about kindergarten and enroll today: eccs.mn/enroll

Kindergarten is when children meet friends, gain healthy independence, and learn fundamental lessons that they will carry throughout their lives. It is Eastern Carver County Schools' promise to provide a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment for each child. We know that each child comes to us with a unique set of talents and needs. We value those differences, and we're eager to make kindergarten an exciting and positive learning experience.

Our kindergarten program develops children academically, socially, and emotionally. Students are introduced to reading skills, writing, problem-solving, and are provided personalized instruction and support as they progress. We have integrated S.T.E.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) concepts into our rich curriculum, and technology is used in the classroom to enhance learning experiences for students. Students also attend specialist classes such as Physical Education, Music, Media, and Art.

To determine your neighborhood school, visit the school finder at eccs.mn/attendance.

Bluff Creek Elementary
2300 Coulter Boulevard
Chanhassen

Carver Elementary
1717 Ironwood Drive
Carver

Chanhassen Elementary
7600 Laredo Drive
Chanhassen

Clover Ridge Elementary
114000 Hundertmark Road
Chaska

Jonathan Elementary
110300 Pioneer Trail West
Chaska

Victoria Elementary
9300 Red Fox Drive
Victoria

La Academia Spanish Immersion
1800 N. Chestnut Street
Chaska

Kinder Academy
1800 N. Chestnut Street
Chaska

2026-27 ENROLLMENT OPEN FOR ALL GRADES

Now is a great time for families who are new to Eastern Carver County or who have previously made other enrollment choices for their children in the past to plan for next school year. Enrollment is open for all grades level at eccs.mn/enroll.

You can request a school tour to learn more about the schools, meet building leaders, and ask questions. Complete the online request form at eccs.mn/tour to schedule a tour.



Whether you'll be cheering **Roll Storm** or **Soar Hawks**, we would love to welcome you to one of our outstanding schools.



Enroll online at eccs.mn/enroll or in person at the ECCS Welcome Center located at 11 Peavey Road in Chaska.

Hours: 7:30-4:00
Phone: 952-556-6112

Email: welcomecenter@district112.org

LEARN MORE

ACHIEVEMENTS AND HONORS

Chanhassen High School freshman Miriam Gilbertson claimed first place in the 13-20 age division at the 12th annual Minnesota Sings competition held Oct. 11-12 at the Historic Paramount Theatre in Austin, Minnesota. Gilbertson earned top honors for her performance of “The Wizard and I” from the musical “Wicked.” Her win included a \$5,000 cash prize, an additional \$500 to donate to a charity of her choice, and a recording session at Pachyderm Studios in Cannon Falls. She chose to direct her \$500 donation to Westwood’s Hope House, a local youth shelter.



Miriam Gilbertson
Chanhassen HS

Other recent student accomplishments included:

- Chanhassen seniors **Keagan Van Asten and Lily Christensen** became the school’s first doubles team state qualifiers since 2010, placing second in Section 2AAA. The Storm duo finished with a 2-2 record at state, finishing runner-up in the Class AAA consolation championship.
- Chanhassen and Chaska sent a combined five runners to the Class AAA State Cross Country Meet on Nov. 1. They were: **Chaska: senior Noella Ross, junior Ivan Peterson, sophomore Becca Ross; Chanhassen: sophomores Connor Heltemes and Boston Pyle.**
- Chanhassen High School seniors **Bella Naples and Brynn Jonswold** were recognized with all-state team selections. Bella was an all-state first team selection and Brynn a second-team all-state team selection. Bella was also a Ms. Soccer finalist and was named the Minnesota Girls Soccer Player of the Year by the Minnesota Star Tribune. Chanhassen head coach Katie Clark was also named the Class 3A Coach of the Year.
- The Eastern Carver County School Board welcomed **Boden Brown** as its next student representative at a September meeting. Brown is a junior at Chanhassen High School. He joins senior Norah Cleath from Chaska High School. The Board has a long tradition of inviting high school students to serve as student representatives on the Board. The student reps sit with the Board at all meetings, providing a student perspective on the issues facing the Board. The students are invited to update the Board at each meeting concerning student activities and issues.



Keagan Van Asten
Chanhassen HS



Lily Christensen
Chanhassen HS



Bella Naples
Chanhassen HS



Brynn Jonswold
Chanhassen HS



Samuel Kvam and Kaitlin Schapira from Chaska High School, and Clara Christenson from Chanhassen High School have been named National Merit Semifinalists for 2026, joining an elite group of around 16,000 students nationwide recognized for exceptional academic achievement.



Chanhassen won its third consecutive Section 2AAAAA championship on Halloween night. The Storm defeated rival Chaska 14-0 to reach the state tournament. Chanhassen were state champions in Class 5A in 2023 and a semifinalist in 2024. Check out the Chanhassen High School Facebook page to find out how the Storm did at the state tournament. Roll Storm!

Stay Connected

Bluff Creek Elementary: 952-556-6600

Carver Elementary: 952-556-1900

Chanhassen Elementary: 952-556-6700

Clover Ridge Elementary: 952-556-6900

Jonathan Elementary: 952-556-6500

La Academia: 952-556-6300

Victoria Elementary: 952-556-3000

Chaska Middle School East: 952-556-7600

Chaska Middle School West: 952-556-7400

Pioneer Ridge Middle School: 952-556-7800

Chanhassen High School: 952-556-3500

Chaska High School: 952-556-7100

Integrated Arts Academy: 952-556-6200

STAR: 952-556-6120

Family Learning Center: 952-556-6400

Community Education: 952-556-6400

Welcome Center: 952-556-6100

Transportation: 952-556-6160

Nutrition Services: 952-556-6145



Eastern Carver County Schools' referendum question was approved by 62% of voters on November 4.

Thanks to the strong support of our community, the approval of the \$742 per pupil in the operating levy allows the district to continue its commitment to providing students with access to high quality academics as well as other programming to support student development and success.

