

Update from the Superintendent
Dr. Kristine Flesher

February 13, 2026

Dear Families and Staff,

As we begin the second semester, this time of year offers an important opportunity to reflect on our progress and renew our focus on supporting every student's growth and success. I am continually grateful for the dedication of our staff and the partnership we share with our families as we move through the second half of the school year together.

While students will not have school on Monday due to Presidents Day and our scheduled Professional Day, our staff will be engaged in meaningful professional learning. Much of the day will focus on strengthening our systems of support, creating welcoming and engaging classroom environments, and enhancing the conditions that help all students thrive.

In the afternoon, teams will collaborate on implementation strategies, share effective practices, and engage in grade-level and content-area planning designed to translate learning into impactful classroom experiences for students.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership in this important work. We wish you a safe and enjoyable Presidents Day weekend and look forward to a strong and successful second semester.

Sincerely,
Kristine Flesher, Ed.D.
Superintendent

Scholastic Art Awards

Congratulations to our high school students recognized through Scholastic Art Awards, the longest-

running, most prestigious art recognition program for creative teenagers. Submitted works are judged blindly–with no knowledge of the artists themselves–on originality and craftsmanship. We are delighted that five works were recognized this year. Congratulations to:

- **Gold Key**
  - Ava Dahl, "Good Morning New York"
- **Silver Key**
  - Ava Dahl, "Fruity Diabetes"
  - Ava Dahl, "Take Me Back"
  - Lydia Richardson, "I Was Supposed to be There, Too"
- **Honorable Mention**
  - Jordan Flesher, "Peace and Beauty"

Students, we proudly celebrate your creativity, talent, and achievement. We also extend our gratitude to our entire art staff, including Dr. Shelagh Gamble at OHS, for inspiring students and nurturing an appreciation for the lifelong impact of fine arts.





Ava Dahl, '26
"Fruity Diabetes"
Silver Key



Ava Dahl '26
"Take Me Back"
Silver Key



Lydia Richardson '27
"I Was Supposed to be There, Too"
Silver Key



Jordan Flesher '27
"Peace and Beauty"
Honorable Mention



Thank you, Officer McCoy!

February 15 is School Resource Officer Appreciation Day

We are pleased to recognize Officer Jay McCoy whose partnership, professionalism, and steady presence help ensure safe and supportive learning environments for our students and staff. We appreciate Officer McCoy's commitment to our schools and the broader Orono community. Thank you!

Music Listening Team Earns 8th Place at Nationals!

Congratulations to three members of the Orono Music Listening team—Annalisa Tedlund, Kaia Erickson, and Mel Kingsley—for placing 8th in the nation out of 240 teams!

Music Listening is an academic music competition that challenges students to identify and analyze pieces of music by ear. Students study composers, historical periods, musical styles, and specific works, then compete by listening to short excerpts and identifying details such as the composer, title, time period, instrumentation, and key musical elements. It combines deep music knowledge, careful listening skills, and quick recall—truly a test of both musicianship and scholarship. Congratulations to all and to advisor and band director, Mr. Tim Arnold.



Spring Sports Info Meeting

March 2, 2026 | 7 p.m. OHS Gym

Activities Update: Winter Season Results

Follow "Orono Spartans" on Instagram or Facebook!

Orono Spartans social media managed by AD Paul Brunner

Alpine Ski

Congratulations to senior **Danny Kinzer** on his outstanding fourth-place finish at the Alpine Ski State Championship on February 10 at Giants Ridge in Biwabik, MN. Great season, Danny! #OronoPride

Boys Hockey

Boys Hockey's regular season is winding down. The boys are now 9-11-4. The last regular season game is away against Chanhassen on Saturday, February 14. Good luck!

Girls Hockey

The Girls Hockey season has come to an end with a Section Semifinal loss on Saturday against Westonka. Congratulations to the girls on their 13-13-1 season! The girls tied for first place in their Metro West Conference standings this year. Great job to all, as well as head coach Paul Antonenko.

Nordic Ski

Congratulations to Boys Nordic Ski on qualifying for the MSHSL State Meet with a second-place team finish at Sections. This marks the **first time in school history** that the boys qualified as a team for the State meet. The team competed at State on February 11 & 12 at Giants Ridge Ski Resort with **outstanding news—second place at State!** A well-earned accomplishment for our Spartans! Congratulations to our boys, Head Coach Brian (Speedy) McCollar, and Assistant Coaches Dennis Curran, John Ohman, and Drew Huotari.

Boys Swim & Dive

Boys Swim & Dive finished the regular season with a 5-1 dual record and as conference runners-up. They also finished 2nd at True Team State. The team will compete in the Section meet on February 19-21 at St. Catherine University. We will be rooting for you, boys!

Dance Team

In Dance, the Spartans are sending both Jazz and Kick teams to State on February 13 & 14 after each captured yet ***another*** Section Championship! An incredible accomplishment for the dancers and coaches. Congratulations, girls! We know you are giving it your all!

Girls Basketball

Girls Basketball continues their outstanding season with a 19-3 record on the season following their win over New Prague this week. Their next match-up is home against Chaska **tonight!**

Boys Basketball

Boys Basketball is 12-8 on the season following wins against New Prague and Bloomington-Jefferson. The team will hit the road to Chaska **tonight** for their next game. Good luck!

Wrestling

The Wrestling team finished the regular season with 12 wins, which is the second-most wins in school history. The team competed against St. Peter in the team Section tournament on February 12. The individual Section tournament is February 20 & 21. Congratulations to **Brett Kiecker** who completed an undefeated regular season with a perfect 38-0 individual match record. Brett is currently the No. 1 ranked 114-pound wrestler in the state. Amazing season... with more to go!

Go, Spartans!



Boys Nordic Ski - State 2nd Place and first appearance as a team!







Brett Kiecker, Wrestling; Girls Hockey; Danny Kinzer, Alpine Skiing



Important Dates

February 16 - Presidents Day/E-12 Professional Day (No School E-12)
March 5-12 - Spring Conferences; various dates, times, formats (info coming soon from your school)
March 23-27 - Spring Break

Please see the Calendars webpage for more information including the 2025-26 and 2026-27* academic calendars.
*Note that school begins before Labor Day in fall 2026.

Orono School Board Meeting Highlights

Monday, January 26, 2026 | Agenda

- Superintendent's Report on Excellence | Watch the Presentation
- Board Members Questions & Comments | Watch the Presentation
- Orono Action Legislative Platform | Watch the Presentation
- Orono High School Registration Guide & Report | Watch the Presentation

Monday, February 9, 2026 | Agenda

- Superintendent's Report on Excellence | Watch the Presentation
- Board Members Questions & Comments | Watch the Presentation
- Creating Conditions for Success: Strengthening MTSS through The Science of the Positive | Watch the Presentation
- Approve Construction Bid for 2026 Window & Door Repairs | Watch the Presentation

The next meeting of the Orono School Board is scheduled for Monday, February 23, 2026, at 7 p.m. in the District Office Assembly Room. A Coffee & Conversation session will precede the Board meeting from 6:30-7:00 p.m. in the Assembly Room. This is an informal way to meet with a few Board members and district administration. All are welcome and registration is not required.



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