

The Storm Report

OAKES TORNADOES UPDATES

March 27th, 2026



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Tornado Baseball Adjusting After Co-Op Change

By: Kalyn Haafke

The Oakes High School baseball program will look different this spring after the long-standing co-op with Sargent County schools came to an end. While the change presents challenges heading into the season, school leaders and coaches remain optimistic about the future of Tornado baseball.

Oakes Activities Director Robin Paul said the most immediate impact will be roster numbers as the team works to replace players who previously came from the co-op schools. "It's definitely going to be a numbers game," Paul said. "We'll need to recruit more of our own student athletes to play baseball in order to field a team." Because of the smaller roster, the Tornadoes will likely not have a full junior varsity team this season. However, Paul said there has already been encouraging interest from Oakes students.

Assistant coach Peyton Sell said the news that the co-op would be ending so close to the season was difficult for both coaches and players. "It was a very gut-wrenching feeling," Sell said. Sell added that while he understands the opportunity for Sargent County to form its own team, the timing of the decision made the situation more challenging for the Tornado program. "If we had known at the beginning of the school year or even during the summer, it would not have been such a big issue," Sell said.

With the co-op ending, the team will now need players to step into new roles. "We lost some key positions, and we are going to have to fill those," Sell said. "Kids are going to have to play out of their comfort level and learn new positions in order for us to be successful."

Despite the uncertainty, Sell said the message to players has been to stay focused and continue working toward their goals. "I have a lot of players who come up to me and ask, 'What are we going to do?'" Sell said. "I tell them we are going to stay focused on us and not worry about others. If we stick to our plans and do the little things right, we won't have to worry."

Sell also encouraged students who may be considering joining the team to take advantage of the opportunity. "There are no set-in-stone positions yet," Sell said. "Everyone plays a key role in a program, whether you are a starter, a courtesy runner, or a pinch hitter. Opportunities and positions are earned through hard work."

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Despite the changes, Paul believes there is a strong interest in baseball at Oakes and that the program can continue to grow. “We’ve consistently had a strong number of boys participating in baseball, and we believe that trend will continue,” Paul said. “The program has seen success in the past, and the future looks bright for Tornado baseball.”

Paul also emphasized that Oakes did not have a role in the decision to dissolve the previous co-op. “The school boards of the Sargent County schools determined this was the appropriate time to form their own team,” Paul said. “We wish them the best and thank North Sargent and Sargent Central for many years of a successful and positive co-op.”

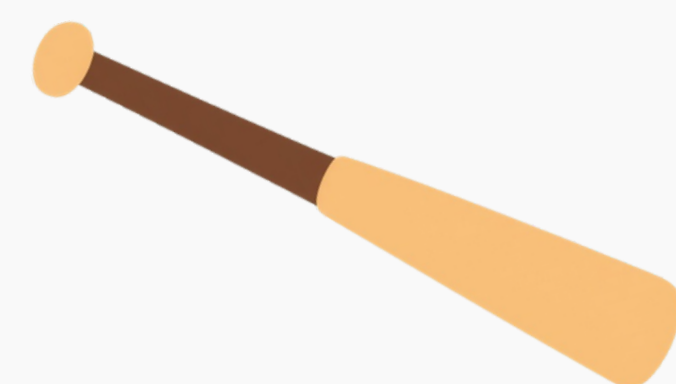
Sargent County leaders say the decision was largely driven by growing interest in baseball within their schools. According to Sargent County School Board Vice President Brandon Hanson, a survey of students and parents showed there was enough interest to support a high school team. North Sargent already has a regulation-sized baseball field, and the three Sargent County schools (Sargent Central, North Sargent, and Milnor) already co-op in several other sports, making baseball a natural addition.

All three Sargent County school boards approved the new baseball co-op before December 20 to ensure the team could begin play in the spring of 2026. Hanson said the move is intended to build camaraderie within Sargent County and create a competitive rivalry with neighboring programs like Oakes.

Community members in Sargent County have also expressed appreciation for the years of cooperation between the schools. A North Sargent parent shared that families valued the relationships built through the baseball co-op with Oakes, including friendships between players, coaches, and parents. While there is excitement about bringing baseball back to Sargent County and enough local athletes to field a team, there is also recognition of the impact the change may have on the Oakes program. Many hope the strong relationships built over the years will continue moving forward.

As the Tornadoes prepare for the upcoming season, the focus now turns to building the roster and continuing the tradition of baseball in Oakes. With a new season ahead and new opportunities for players to step up, the message is simple for Tornado baseball this spring.

The Tornadoes will open their home schedule at Cummings Field on March 31 at 5 p.m. when they host Sargent County in what is sure to be an exciting start to the season. Let’s play ball.



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A Walk Down Memory Lane: Our School's Story

By: Breann Young

Oakes Public School has a long and interesting history that goes all the way back to the late 1800s. Over time, the school has changed a lot, but it has always been an important part of the community.

The school district was officially organized in 1888, just two years after the town of Oakes was planned out and even before North Dakota became a state. However, learning in Oakes started earlier. In 1887, the very first school was held in the back of a grocery store, and the first teacher was Miss Mary O'Niel. That same year, the first school building was built. A few years later, in 1892, the first class graduated.

As the town grew, the school buildings also had to grow. The first official school building was made of wood, but by 1904, a larger brick building was built to fit more students. This was mainly because more families were moving to Oakes due to the railroad. One of the biggest changes came in 1924 when a three-story high school was built. It was a big and expensive project, and stories say it was built floor by floor as money became available.

More changes happened over time. The elementary school was built in the 1960s and expanded in the 1980s. In 1982, the high school added the north gym, and in 2008, the south gym and lobby were completed. More recently, in 2016, a central office and library addition was finished. These updates show how the school has continued to grow and improve over the years.

There have also been major events that shaped the school's history. The construction of the high school in 1924 showed how much the community believed in its future. During the Great Depression, the school became a place of stability, offering meals and a safe place for people during tough times. Later, from the 1960s to the 1990s, school consolidation brought in students from nearby towns like Guelph and Ludden, turning Oakes into a regional school.

Today, students are part of history. The high school building turned 100 years old in 2023, which is rare since few schools still use buildings that old every day. Oakes itself was also carefully planned by railroad engineers in 1886 and was named after Thomas Lawson Oakes, the president of the Northern Pacific Railroad.

Oakes School has also produced some successful alumni. Phil Hansen played in the NFL and went to three Super Bowls with the Buffalo Bills. Stuart Munsch became a four-star admiral in the U.S. Navy. Sarala Nagala became a U.S. District Judge, showing that students from Oakes can achieve big goals.

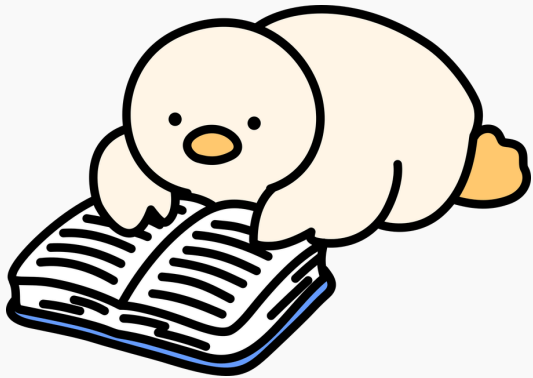
Overall, the history of Oakes Public School shows how much the community values education. From a small classroom in a grocery store to a school that has lasted over 100 years, Oakes has continued to grow while staying an important part of the town.



The Storm Report

The Fate of Study Hall

By: Isaac Bjornstad



Many of us appreciate the free time our study hall gives us. Whether it's to help us catch up on our work or just give us a well-needed breather. However, things will be changing with study hall next year. So, to get some information about that, I talked to Mr. Lynch to check on the future of our study halls, as well as interviewing a high school student to check on the current state of study hall.

For the student in question, we talked to Weston Sorum about his study hall. We asked him if he's been able to effectively use his study hall time with his peers, to which he responded, "Some days, but sometimes we NEED to do something, I still use my time wisely though." Next, asking him if he thinks his classmates are using it effectively, he responded, "It's a 50/50. Some days they do, some they do not." So, it seems some people are having a harder time focusing during their study hall.

Now, to cover the changes in our study hall. As you may have heard, it's going to change in how it's used next year. In an interview with Mr. Lynch, he said that "students enrolled in online or dual credit classes will still have a dedicated period for those classes, which will not change. However, the traditional study hall period will be phased out." This change, he says, is meant to help students with their elective classes and academic periods, while providing new incentives to upperclassmen.

Now, where does that leave other students? Many students rely on study halls to catch up on projects or homework. This does leave us with room to try out new classes that they might not have been otherwise interested in. So even though it only starts next year, make sure to use your study halls wisely.

Twister Twirl

Dance the afternoon away at the Twister Twirl! The Twister Twirl is for any kid in Grade 6 or below. Come and bust a move on Sunday, April 19th from 2- 3:30 p.m. Cost is \$20 per couple to attend the dance. So, parents, bring your kids. High school students (Breann, we are talking to you), bring your siblings for an afternoon of fun. Come watch the grand march at 2 (cost is \$1 to watch).



OAKES EDUCATION ASSOCIATION PRESENTS

The Twister Twirl



Any girls or boys 6th grade or younger (Ages 0-6th grade) are invited to a magical afternoon!

\$20 per couple
(THREE children maximum accompanied by an adult)

When: Sunday, April 19th
2:00 pm-3:30 pm
Where: Oakes South Gym

Grand march begins at 2:00 with dance to follow. (Dance is only for Twister Twirl participants).
The gym will open at 1:30. Please arrive by 1:45!
\$1.00 admission to view Grand March

Proceeds will go to support Oakes Education Association and the local Dolly Parton Imagination Library

Any questions: Contact Becca Roberts -Becca.Roberts@k12.nd.us

Please return this portion of the registration form to your homeroom teacher or the Central Office along with payment by **April 15th**. Please make checks payable to **Oakes Education Association**.

Adult name (\$20): _____ Child(ren) name: _____

Adult name (\$20): _____ Child(ren) name: _____

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St. patricks Day

By: Ava Thompson



Every year on March 17th, people celebrate St. Patrick's Day. This holiday honors Saint Patrick, who was the patron saint (Protector of the country) of Ireland. It is celebrated on this day because he died on March 17th, 461 A.D.

A long time ago, St. Patrick's Day started as a church holiday. Today, it is a fun day where people celebrate Irish Culture. If you didn't know, Ireland is also known as the "Emerald Isle," which is why the color green is so important. People celebrate by wearing green and decorating with shamrocks. (Clovers)

Symbol & Tradition

There are a few things people think of on St. Patrick's Day. One big tradition is wearing green. Most people go all out, wearing fun and crazy green. Some people joke that if you don't wear green, you might get pinched.

Shamrocks are also a big symbol. Leprechauns are another fun part of the holiday. They are small, sneaky characters from Irish stories. People also joke about redheads because Ireland is known for having many men and women with red hair.

How Schools Celebrate

Many schools celebrate St. Patrick's Day in fun ways. Students and teachers wear green and do activities about Ireland. Some classes make crafts, learn facts, or have special snacks. It makes learning more fun and helps students learn about other cultures.

What Our Teachers Did

At many schools, St. Patrick's Day is a fun holiday where people learn, celebrate, and enjoy various activities together! At our school, many teachers planned exciting things for their students.

In the **Elementary gym**, Mr. Kouragjian had students play a game called "Pot of Gold," where teams competed to win gold.

In **Kindergarten**, Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Weber did lots of fun activities like learning about the holiday, making rainbow crafts, building leprechaun traps, and even doing science experiments to make a rainbow. When students came back the next day, their classrooms were leafy like a leprechaun had visited, with green footprints, notes, and special surprises like gold coins. Some students even use lucky charms for snacks and graphing.

In the **First Grade**, Mrs. Roberts had students make leprechaun hats using cups that shrank overnight, and the next day they found their tiny hats along with gold and a treat from the leprechaun

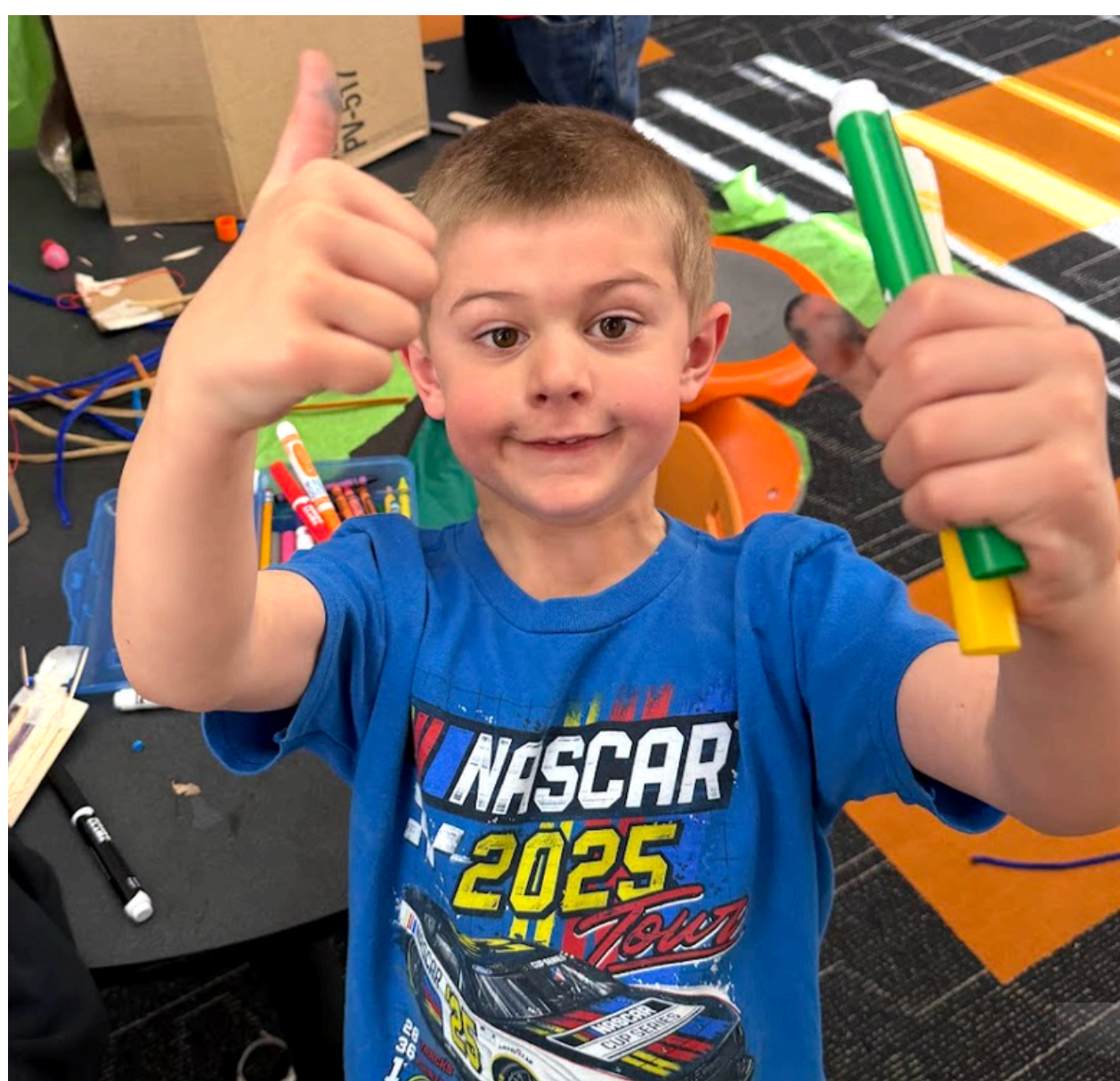
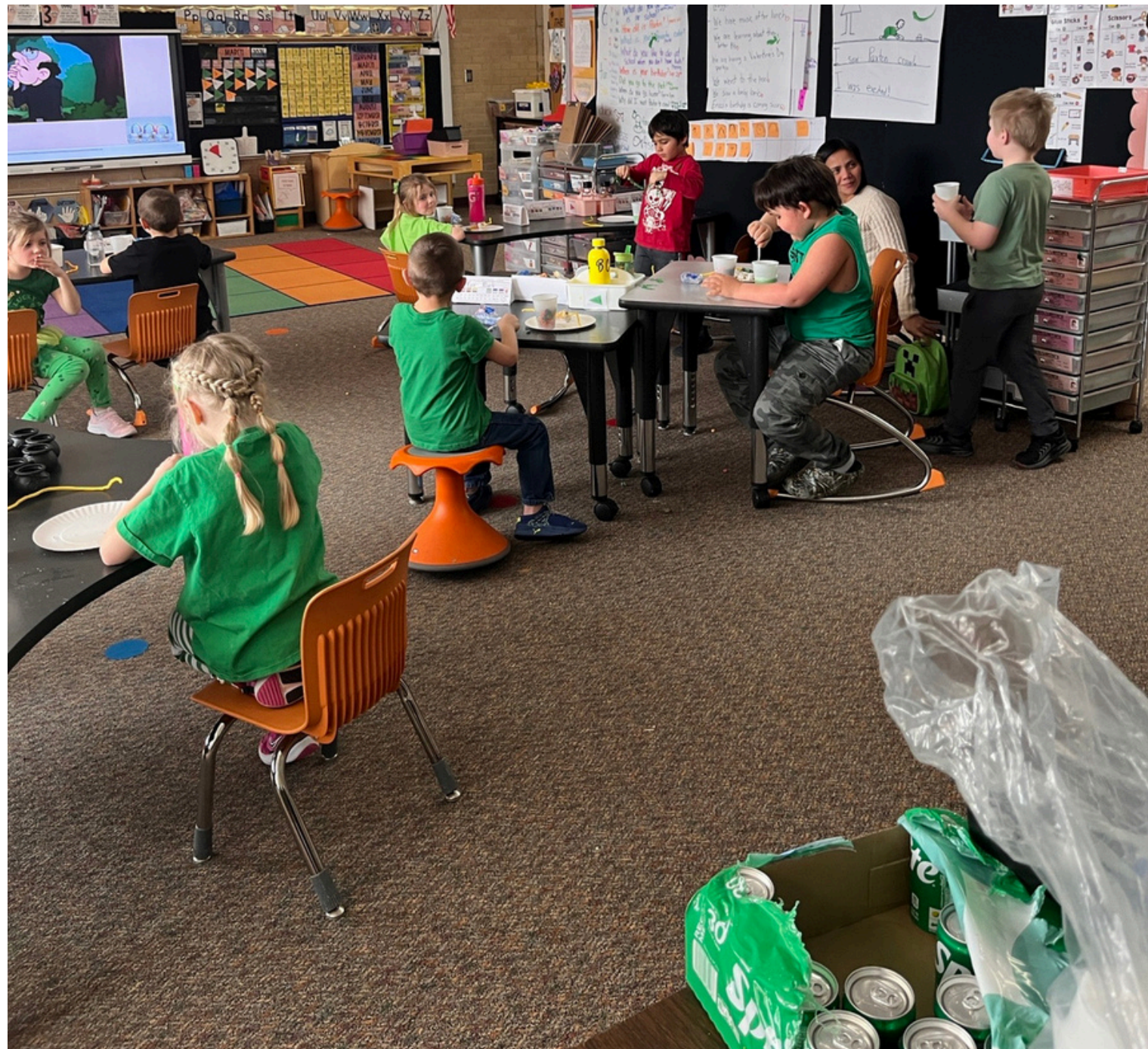
In the **Third Grade**, Mrs. Miller taught students about the history of St. Patrick's Day and had her students help the Kindergarteners build leprechaun traps.

Overall, it was a fun and exiting day for everyone. Pictures to follow on the next page!

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St. patricks Day

By: Ava Thompson



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Upcoming Boys Golf Season.

By: Jyles Meier

The Oakes varsity golf team is heading into the 2026 season with a lot of confidence and high expectations. With a mix of returning players and new players' talent, this could be a big year for the team.

Head coach Schieler said, "The main goal this season is to make it to the state tournament." She also wants each player to improve individually by setting a new personal record at a meet and lowering their average scores compared to last year.

The team already has a lot of skill. Schieler explained that the team is strong in different areas, from powerful drivers to excellent putters. The team has what it takes physically to compete with top teams. However, one of the biggest things they need to work on is their mental game. Golf meets can last five to six hours, and players have to stay focused without a coach right next to them. Staying calm, forgetting bad shots, and focusing on the next one can make a huge difference in their scores.

There are also some challenges that come with the season. It can be tough for players to stay focused during practices, especially when they would rather just play full rounds instead of working on their drills. On top of that, balancing school and golf can be stressful. Some weeks, players miss school for their golf meets and have to make up homework later. Because of this, the team sometimes has shorter practices so players can keep up with their schoolwork.

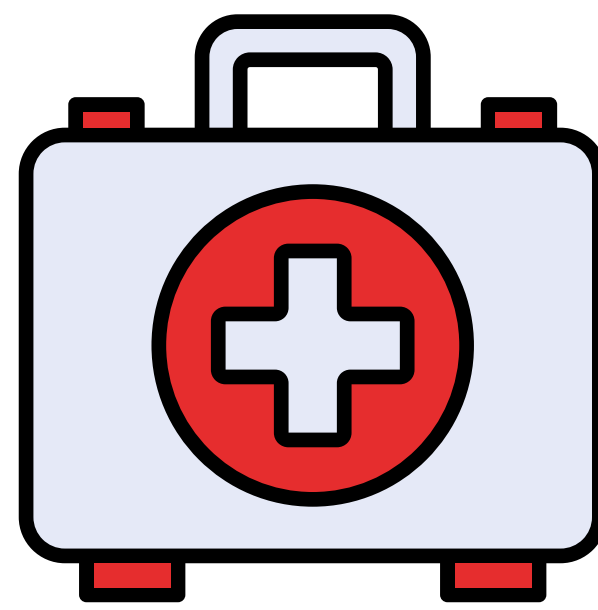
Schieler said she is excited to see how the new players perform and how the returning players improve. She also feels confident that the team can have strong results this season and show their new region what they're capable of. Overall, the Oakes boys' golf team is ready for the challenge and looking forward to a successful season.



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State HOSA

By: Nadysen McKay



Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) is a student organization that helps high school students explore and prepare for careers in the healthcare field. It gives students the chance to learn more about medical topics while also building important skills like leadership, teamwork, and communication. Through activities like competitions, community service, and meetings, HOSA members get real-world experience that can help them in the future. Overall, HOSA is a great way for students to get involved, meet others with similar interests, and start working toward a healthcare career.

Rebecca's personal goal for State HOSA 2026 is to qualify for the International Competition in at least one of her events and to be elected as a State HOSA Officer. She is most excited to spend time with her friends in the hotel room and at the pool, making the experience more enjoyable. Her main event is the EMT competition, which includes a written test on pre-hospital procedures and basic medical terminology, as well as a Mock first-in EMT scenario with a partner. To prepare, Rebecca has been studying her EMT book, completing Quizlets, taking practice tests, and practicing mock scenarios with her partner to build her skills and confidence.

Marley's main goal for this year's State HOSA conference is to earn a state officer position again, since she enjoyed the role and wants to continue. She also hopes to do well in her Medical Reading event and see how she places. As a state officer, she helped plan much of the conference and is excited to see everything come together. She is competing in Medical Reading, which tests reading comprehension and memory. To prepare, Marley read five books throughout the year and completed an online test with about 50 questions and an essay in January. She chose this event because it fits her schedule and recommends it for its flexibility.

I interviewed Rebecca about her experience at State HOSA, and she said her favorite part was the awards ceremony. She shared that she and her partner got first place in the EMT competition again and will be going to internationals in Indianapolis this June, which she's really excited about. Rebecca said the hardest part of the competition is memorizing all the skills and knowing how to do them correctly. This year, their scenario was a motor vehicle accident where they had to do a rapid trauma assessment and manage shock. She also advised future participants to study early, go through the ND HOSA materials, use Quizlet, and practice active recall.

Overall, Rebecca and Marley's experiences show how much hard work and commitment it takes to be successful in HOSA. From studying, practicing, and preparing all year, to actually competing at State, they both put in a lot of effort to reach their goals. At the same time, they also show that HOSA isn't just about competing; it's about making memories, spending time with friends, and enjoying the experience. Whether it's winning an event, becoming a state officer, or just doing their best, Rebecca and Marley demonstrate how HOSA helps students grow, gain confidence, and take steps toward a future career in healthcare.

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get
**more
math!**

Get More Math Madness

By: Addie Umbreit



March Madness is upon us, brackets are being made, and teams are going head-to-head in competitions. However, these basketball games aren't the only tournaments going on. To tie in some of the excitement, math teacher Mr. Schneider has students participating in a math-involved competition. This allows the student to not forget the things they have learned in the past by continually practicing them throughout the school year, while also practicing the math they are currently learning.

Mr. Schneider has three classes involved in the “madness”: Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II. These classes use a program called Get More Math, which allows them to go through old, assigned skills. Mr. Schneider explained that Get More Math Madness is a tournament lasting about five weeks to complete all rounds. The competition goes week by week, Monday through Friday, so if you lose one week, then you're eliminated from the rest of the tournament. Some students will even get a bye from one week to the next.

How does this tournament work? Each question can vary depending on the difficulty. If the students get a question correct on the first try, they receive a point. However, if they get it incorrect, they are allowed another attempt but won't be awarded a point. To earn more points than their opponent, the students will want to try to get the question on the first try.

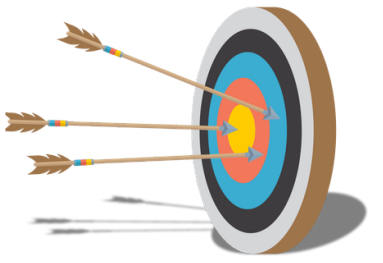
Moving forward, to win, you must earn more points than your competitor for the week. They can do this by having determination and commitment to gaining many points. Mr. Schneider says, “There is a daily leader board that a student can keep track of their opponents' daily points; otherwise, there is no way to know how many points your opponent has for the week.” He explains further, “For example, they could withhold how many points they actually have or exaggerate how many points they have to play mind games with their opponent.” In addition, while competing, there is to be no use of AI for your work.

Overall, this competition is an engaging, unique way for the math students to challenge themselves and their peers. Not only are the students challenged competitively, but they are also working on applying past knowledge to answer a variety of questions. This activity is a perfect way to tie in with March Madness while still being educational.

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Archery Wrap Up

By: Lila Iverson



Oakes's archery season has come to a near end. Throughout the season, archers have set new personal records and made it into the top three at tournaments. From Friday, March 20-21, they competed in state up in Minot. Everyone shot to their highest potential, with six archers having the choice to move along and go to nationals, along with one All-State shooter in the middle school division.

Overall, they have had a good season. They have had some new faces come and shoot, not to mention excelling at the tournaments. Even with the added faces, they will miss the seniors leaving them: Max and Miranda. Having many big moments across all divisions and placing in various local tournaments is a high point for our team. Different challenges arise during a season, but many overcame them and helped make those accomplishments happen. This included the team captains, fellow archers, and finally, the coaches, who were an amazing help to fly through the season.

Some memorable achievements include teammates shooting new personal records or hitting/surpassing their overall goals. Miranda has been shooting for eight years, and her highest achievement was "just improvement." Elizabeth's proudest moment was shooting a 287 in bullseye. Max is most proud of his 281 and getting second place. Any goal is a great one because you need to put your all in; that is what matters in this game. Although sometimes, you do need to change your aiming point to get there. There is no 'I' in team; we are just one huge group. The team is one big player." Miranda said, "It has truly been a great environment." Max said, "I am grateful for all the support from coaches, allowing me to come back with only two tournaments completed and still letting me attend state. I am also thankful for how much help and criticism I have received." Every day at the 3:30 practice, everyone helps bring out the targets and change faces. Then, at the 7 o'clock practice, archers take everything down. Everyone has a part, with team captains at the head of it. They assist the coaches and make everything run more smoothly.

Leadership is one of the many things that shape the team. Even though the competition is tough, your mindset is the key to success. Words of advice from the upperclassmen: "My message is to not focus solely on scores and try to have a good relationship with your teammates," said Elizabeth. Miranda said, "Do not worry about what score you get; just focus on having fun." Max's advice to younger archers is "just to keep at it and keep getting better because there are a lot of benefits you can gain from this sport." Overall, just maintaining a positive mindset will take you far. Just do not put too much pressure on yourself for the perfect 300, or it will not happen. My favorite piece of advice was from Coach Mat at state: "Only tears have pressure."

In the end, they all shot to their highest point, and hopefully, they will be on the flight next year.

National Qualifiers.

Bulseye High School- Brody Moore. Middle school- Elizabeth Larson. Elementary- Autumn Handt

3d

High school- Brody Moore. Middle school- Elizabeth Larson, Emilee Buro. Elementary school- Owen Jordahl, Bryella McKown

All-state shooter, middle school, Elizabeth Larson

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The World Baseball Classic

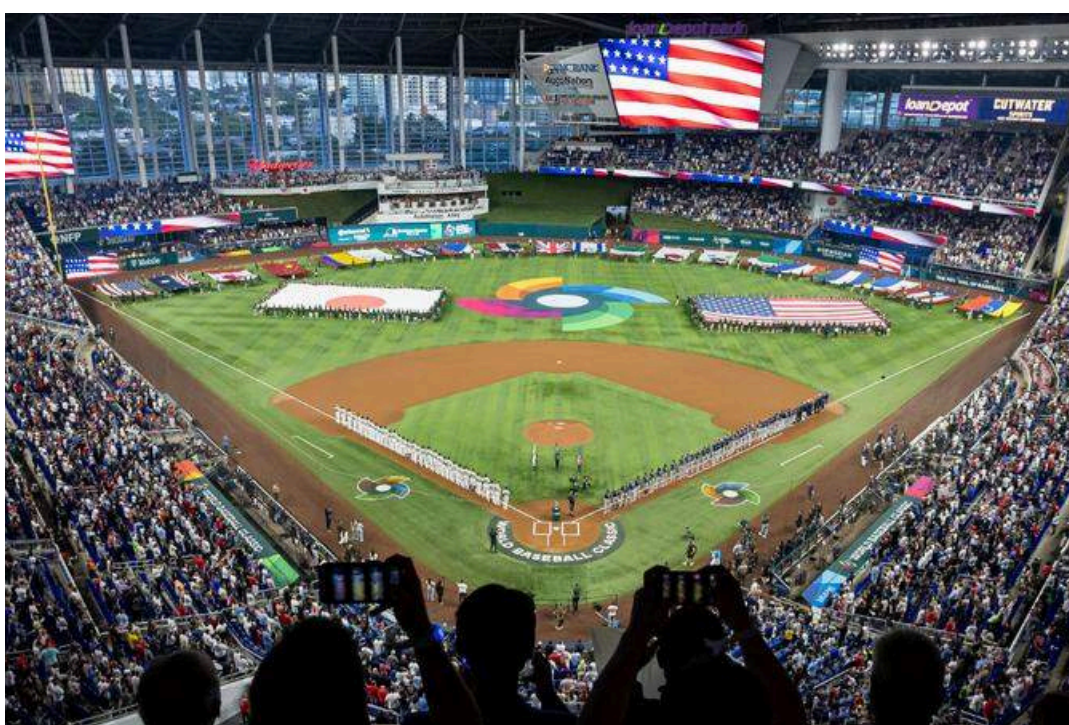
By: Dylan Quandt

The World Baseball Classic started on March 4th this year. The WBC is an international tournament, and only 20 nations can compete. 16 countries get into pool play automatically for finishing in the top four in their pool in the previous tournament. The other four come from qualifier rounds. Then the countries split into four pools of five. Every team plays every other team in their pool. Then the two teams with the best record in each pool move on to the quarterfinals.

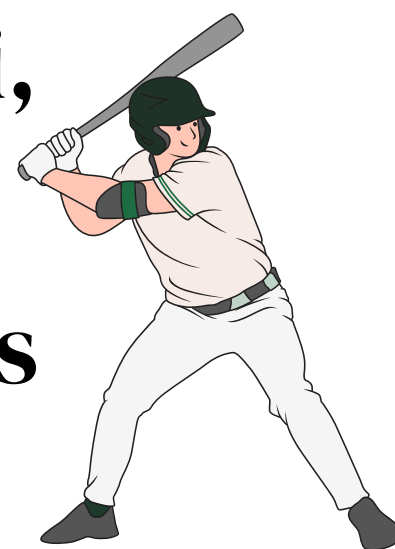
The 2026 WBC pool play was full of upsets. Most notably, Italy's win over the USA in the last pool play game. After the pool play was over, Korea, Dominican Republic, USA, Canada, Puerto Rico, Italy, Venezuela, and Japan advanced to the quarterfinals, where it became single elimination. In the first round, the Dominican Republic dominated Korea 10-0, USA barely beat Canada 5-3 after being up 5-0 in the sixth inning, Puerto Rico lost a close one to Italy, and Venezuela beat star-studded Japan.

The semifinals were razor close, with Venezuela taking out Italy 4-2, and the USA narrowly defeating the Dominican Republic 2-1. The Championship was set: USA vs Venezuela, one game to decide the Classic Final. After the first five innings, Venezuela took a 2-0 lead. During the eighth inning, Bryce Harper hits a two-run home run, which ties the game 2-2. In the top of the ninth, Eugenio Suarez from Venezuela hit an RBI double to take the lead. Going into the bottom of the ninth, Venezuela was going to rely on their bullpen against USA. Venezuela held the USA team scoreless and won the Final.

Though the baseball in the WBC is super high level, the nation's passion and the atmosphere are special things about it. So, when I heard my good friend Mr. P was going to watch a game at the WBC, I had to email him about it. He said things like "It truly was a sight to see," "People like Bryce Harper and Pete Crow-Armstrong making jaw-dropping plays and watching heavy hitters like Kyle Schwarber smashing balls is an honor if anything." He also talked about the truly special atmosphere and passion, "The atmosphere was electric, though I am true to my US citizenship, the Latin American fans were wild. I really felt the freedom in the air, and it filled me with passion, and I am grateful to live in the USA."



**LoanDepot
park in Miami,
where the
WBC Final was
played**





Business Spotlight

By: McKenna Allston

This business spotlight goes to Praskas Hardware. Jerry and Jonda Praska have owned their business for nearly 23 years. Jonda said that the best part for her is helping customers. She said, “There’s nothing better than helping someone fix a problem, help them pick a paint color, or help them celebrate a life event.”

When asked how their store has evolved over the years, Jonda said, “We have always tried to add new things that our customers want and need. We always keep the basics of what people need at the hardware store, but also branch out with seasonal decor, kitchen equipment, and hunting and fishing needs.”

My next question was, “How does your business connect with and support our community?” Jonda responded with, “ We really try to support our community however we can. It is so important to give back to our community because they have supported us all these years. We love supporting students in academics, the arts, and sports, especially through their clubs and projects.” She said that all of the programs are important to keep our community strong and a place where people want to live. Jerry and Jonda support community members who need extra help, whether that is for health needs, a needed part after hours, or other support.

One thing that might surprise people about their business is that they’ve had many past and present OHS students work for them. Jonda said, “We hope to help them be hard-working, respectful employees, but most of all good humans. When they work for us, they get extra parents too.”

The Praskas want to thank their customers so much for supporting them for the last 22 years. Jonda said, “We would not be able to do it without them. Oakes has always been and will continue to be home for our family. We can’t wait to see what the future holds for our community!” We may overlook it, but we are very lucky to have a store like Praska’s Hardware in our community!

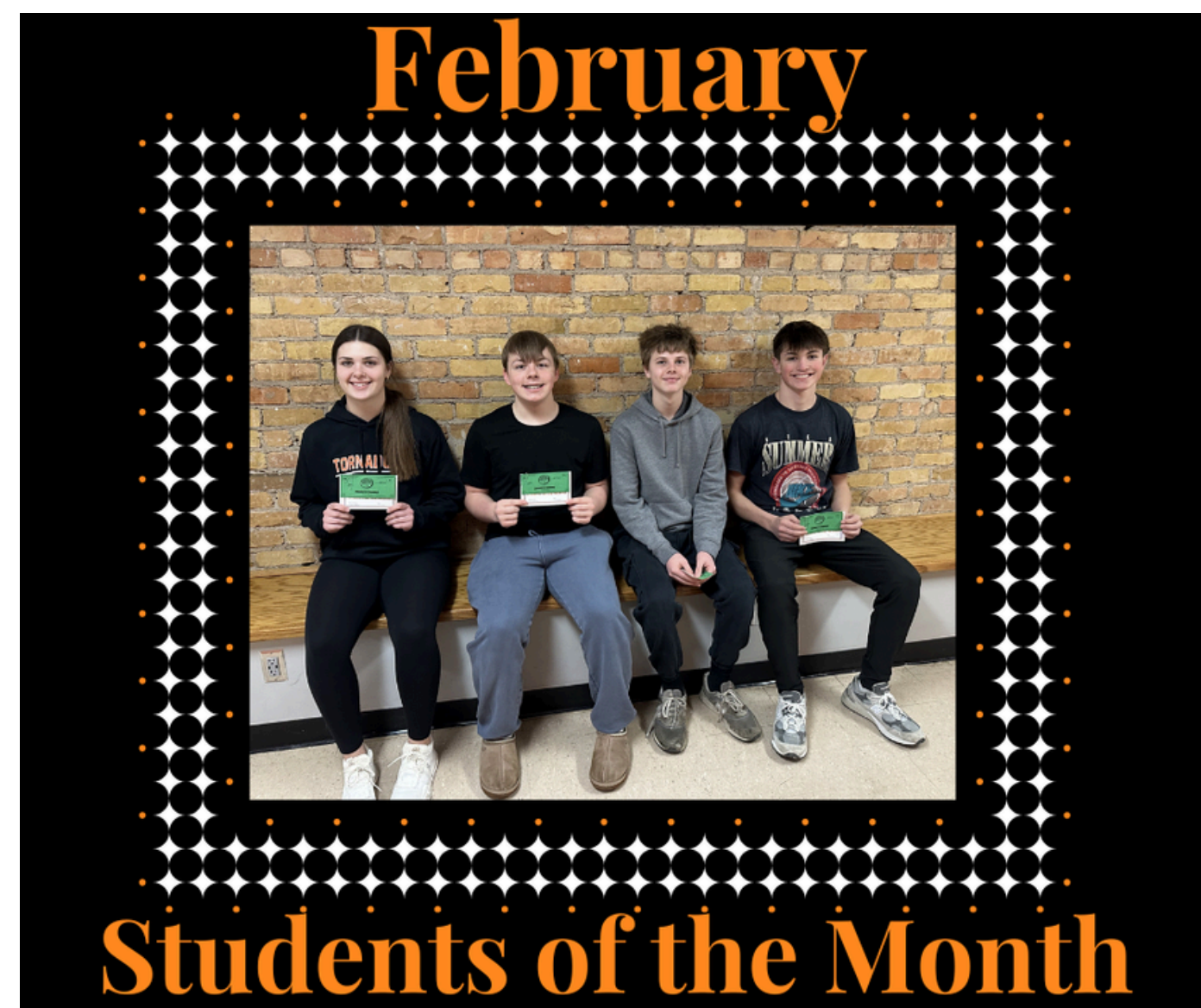




Student of the Month

By: Kalyn Haafke

This month, we are proud to recognize our February Students of the Month for demonstrating Collaboration and a Growth Mindset. These students show flexibility, a willingness to help others, and the ability to work through challenges by finding solutions. We are excited to celebrate their positive contributions to our school community.



Junior

This junior models problem-solving and critical thinking skills by offering ideas or solutions. She collaborates well with peers and encourages others to participate in activities. She demonstrates flexibility with her time by offering to help whenever possible and does so with a smile! She always gives her best effort in her work, and it shows in the final product she creates.

Sophomore

This sophomore has taken on new challenges this year with choir and speech by branching out and trying new things, such as solos and new events. When obstacles arise, he takes them on with a growth mindset and explores a range of ways to tackle them. He continually goes out of his way to help others when he sees them struggling and does it with a smile. At speech meets, he has stepped out of his comfort zone to try an event that specifically tests a student's ability to think flexibly and think on their feet.

Sophomore

This sophomore shows great collaboration and a strong growth mindset in the classroom. He is flexible, helpful, and willing to try new ideas when things get challenging. He often reviews other students' work and gives kind, helpful feedback that helps them improve. He is also willing to think outside the box and come up with creative solutions to problems. His positive attitude and willingness to support others make him very deserving of Student of the Month.

Junior

This Junior is an exemplary student when it comes to entering the classroom with a growth mindset. He is always asking questions to further his learning during educational time, and he is never afraid to respond to a question incorrectly. He is also amazing at collaborating with his peers; he's always willing to offer help and insight to others during worktime. I have seen immense growth and steady maturity in him over the entirety of this school year, and I'm extremely proud of his effort and attentiveness in my classroom!