

# Dialogue

Neenah Joint School District Community Newsletter

Summer 2017



## A REASON FOR HOPE

### *Elementary Schools Take on Mental Health*

Elementary school students in the Neenah Joint School District will benefit from a school-based mental health program with a \$300,000 grant through the Basic Needs Giving Partnership of the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region.

Neenah students in kindergarten through fifth grade will have access to mental health services at school over the next three years in a program titled HOPE (Healthy Outcomes through Positive Engagement). Collaborators with the District include Catalpa Health, NAMI Fox Valley and Samaritan Counseling.

The HOPE program has three components: therapy, screening and advocacy. Each elementary school will have a mental health therapist from Catalpa Health for one day per week. Samaritan Counseling will provide a mental health screening to be filled out by the caregivers of every elementary child in the District and NAMI Fox Valley will have a peer specialist that can help advocate

for families who are seeking out mental health resources. Neenah is already one of a small number of school districts in the state where every staff member has undergone trauma informed care training.

“The HOPE program will provide a significant impact for our children and our community,” said superintendent Dr. Mary Pfeiffer. “There are so many added challenges on our youth and reaching our students early may help address some of the issues as they get older.”



The Basic Needs Giving Partnership is supported by the U.S. Venture Fund for Basic Needs within the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region with the proceeds of the annual U.S. Venture Open golf outing. Additional funding is provided by the J.J. Keller Foundation and other community partners.

The grant is over a three-year period and the Board of Education has made a commitment to gradually increase funding until it is 100 percent District funded after the third year.



*The history of Doty Island was on display for its residents on April 26 at Roosevelt and Alliance Schools as the students showed off their extensive work on the history of the island and the community in an event titled, “History in the Halls.” The event included a living museum, a model of what downtown Neenah looked like in the early 20th century and research of island homes and names. Displays also showed the changes in the school since its opening in 1923.*

### **21st Century Learning Takes Hold in New Neenah High School Class**

A class at Neenah High School next fall will look a bit like the ABC television show “Shark Tank” as Neenah students become the first in the state to participate in the INCubatoredu program.

INCubatoredu offers students an authentic entrepreneurship experience. In the year-long course, students have the opportunity to create and fully develop their own product or service. Real entrepreneurs and business experts from the community serve as volunteer coaches and mentors. Student teams work through the processes of developing hypotheses about a business concept, testing those hypotheses, adapting and continually learning and improving. This cycle of experimentation is combined with foundational business content such as marketing and finance.

“This program is 21st century learning at its best,” said principal Brian Wunderlich. “It’s all about problem solving, creativity and adaptability. We are so excited to bring the INCubatoredu to Neenah.”

Students demonstrate their learning through explanation, interpretation and application of content to their team’s real business idea. The class is already full for 2017-18 and will conclude with students pitching their ideas to the community.

**Words From the Superintendent**



One of the best parts of summer vacation is taking a moment to reflect upon another great school year. The recent 2016-17 school year was certainly no exception.

Our District exceeded expectations on the state report card and seven of our schools significantly exceeded expectations. We did this while coming in under budget with no long-term debt. Our District continues to have the lowest mill rate in the Fox Valley and the smallest class sizes in the area averaging 21.5 students per teacher at the elementary level.

Students at all levels have thrived. Four-year-old kindergarten has flourished in its first two years, elementary and middle school students have experienced all kinds of exceptional learning opportunities and our high school ACT scores continue to rank among the best in the area. Furthermore, our graduating class earned 1,761 post-secondary credits while attending Neenah High School, saving our families over \$425,000.

Eleven of our schools received Wisconsin School Health Awards for their emphasis on wellness and we have continued to increase science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) offerings through grants and community partnerships.

Outside of the classroom, our extracurricular activities are second to none. The music and drama productions at our middle and high schools are magnificent and our athletic teams continue to achieve high levels. We also have more clubs and activities offered than ever before.

You'll read about even more accomplishments in this issue of the *Dialogue*, including a \$300,000 grant to expand mental health services in the elementary schools. There is so much to be proud of in Neenah and it's exciting to see what lies ahead in the future!

Have a great summer!

Dr. Mary Pfeiffer  
Superintendent of Schools

# A Leg Up

## Students Amass College Credits in High School

Neenah High School students are not only graduating armed with knowledge and preparation for college, they are also amassing loads of college credits. This results in a major financial savings as students not only save tuition costs, but also finish college or technical college sooner. Students are able to earn credits through a variety of different ways.

\$

**The 2017 graduating class saved  
\$425,146  
in college tuition costs by taking  
college and technical college credit  
courses while in high school\***

\* - tuition costs for Advanced Placement and CAPP courses are based on UW-Oshkosh tuition costs

\$



*The 2017 graduating class earned 1,761 college credits through Advanced Placement, CAPP (UW System), Fox Valley Technical College and St. Norbert courses.*

*A total of 248 graduates earned post-secondary credits. Of those, 20 students graduated with at least 15 post-secondary credits and 7 students graduated with at least 25 or more credits.*

**Neenah High School Post-Secondary Credit Course Offerings:**

<b>20</b>	▶▶	<b>16</b>	▶▶	<b>18</b>
<b>Advanced Placement® Courses</b>		<b>CAPP Courses</b>		<b>FVTC Courses</b>

AP® and Advanced Placement® are registered trademarks of the College Board. Used with permission.

## Five Individuals Chosen for Induction to NJSD Hall of Fame on Sept. 30

Five prominent alumni and former staff members of the Neenah Joint School District will comprise the District's third annual Hall of Fame class in 2017.

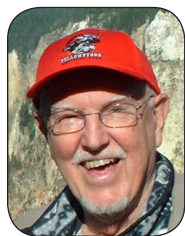
### Know of a Potential Hall of Fame Nominee?

The Neenah Joint School District has already selected 22 prominent alumni and former teachers for its Hall of Fame and is always looking for more nominees.

Nominations for future Hall of Fame classes are accepted through the Neenah Joint School District website. Forms are also available at the District Office. Individuals need to be nominated by November 30 to be considered for the upcoming year. Once an individual is nominated, he or she will be considered every year.

Longtime teacher **Bill Dunwiddie** will be inducted along with graduates **Kathy Hagerstrom**, **Robert Keller**, **David McLaren** and **John Schneller**.

The inductees will be honored at a banquet on Sat., Sept. 30 at 11:30 a.m. at Best Western Premier Bridgewood Resort Hotel and Conference Center. Tickets will go on sale in July.



**Dunwiddie** taught social studies at Neenah High School from 1948-83 and was well known for his community involvement and dedication to the environment. He was the 1963 Wisconsin Teacher of the Year and runner-up for National Teacher of the Year.

**Hagerstrom**, a 1979 graduate, still ranks as Neenah's all-time leading scorer in girls' basketball with 1,219 points. She led the Rockets to the 1978 WIAA state title and was the University of Nebraska's all-time top scorer. She was the women's basketball coach for 18 years at Wellesley College (Mass.).



**Keller**, a 1965 graduate, is the chairman of J.J. Keller and Associates, Inc. and also serves as president of the J.J. Keller Foundation, Inc., which has contributed over \$50 million to local communities and organizations. He also serves on the Board of Directors for several charities.



**McLaren**, a 1989 graduate, was a state champion in the shot put and an all-conference football player. McLaren won two NCAA Division III shot put titles at UW-Oshkosh and has taught and coached track and field for 20 years at Zion-Benton High School (Ill.).



**Schneller**, a 1929 graduate, was a member of the Detroit Lions' 1935 NFL championship team, served as a Navy Lieutenant in World War II and founded Schneller and Associates, one of the world's foremost suppliers and designers of aviation and railway interiors.



Neenah middle school theater students worked with a group called PATH from the Fox Cities Performing Arts Center. The students collaborated with professional performers from different touring acts, culminating with scripts being read by professional actors on stage.

## NJSD Receives Honor as One of "America's Healthiest Companies"

The Neenah Joint School District has been recognized as one of "America's Healthiest Companies" with a prestigious Well Workplace Award from the Wellness Council of America. The Well Workplace Award recognizes an organization for its overall wellness program and commitment to wellness activities. The District also won the award in 2013.

The District achieved the award's gold level, which is the third-highest of its four levels. The gold level is presented to "companies that have successfully built comprehensive worksite wellness initiatives and are demonstrating concrete results." The Neenah Joint School District is one of just 85 companies or organizations statewide which have received the honor and one of just six school districts.



A group of 12 Neenah High School students were among a YouthGo team that worked on six homes for the elderly in rural Kentucky over spring break. Jobs consisted of building ramps for those in wheelchairs as well as replacing windows and doors on homes.

# Taking the Bait

## Neenah Fishing Team Finds Success On and Off the Water

It's not a sport that draws tons of spectators or lots of attention, but fishing has grown in popularity with students at Shattuck Middle School and Neenah High School.

In fact, so much so that Neenah had two of the top three teams at the recent Wisconsin Interscholastic Fishing Association state championships and a student earned an inaugural scholarship from a fishing celebrity.

The season is contested on ice in the winter months and Neenah's two teams finished second and third at the state meet in February on the Red Cedar Chain near Birchwood.

Senior Bradley Gumtow was recognized as one of 69 Bassmaster All-American high school anglers. Gumtow was one of only two Wisconsin high school anglers honored with the award. The students were selected for the honor based on their success in bass tournament competition, academic achievement and leadership in



conservation and community service. Students from 40 states were selected for the All-American award.

Gumtow was the runner-up for the Wisconsin Interscholastic Fishing Association Master Angler of the Year competition. The award is presented to the student angler able to catch a quality fish from the greatest number of categories.

Gumtow also was one of five inaugural recipients of a \$1,500 national scholarship for success in fishing from the Ike Foundation. The foundation is supported by pro bass fisherman and national television personality Mike Iaconelli.

Neenah's team is coached by Shattuck teacher Chris Jones and members receive lessons on water safety and conservation. The students also extended those lessons to elementary students across the District and participated in an Arrowhead Park cleanup project.

## Special Olympics Team Wins Second State Basketball Title in Three Years

Neenah's Special Olympics basketball team won its second state championship in three years as the White team won the Division 8 title with a dramatic last second victory. The Rockets trailed Racine Unified by six entering the fourth quarter and was down by one with 12 seconds left when the Rockets stole the ball and Dominic Doucette scored a contested layup for a 27-26 win.

The Red team placed second in Division 6, falling to Kenosha 28-16 to finish with the silver medal. Both teams had to advance through a sectional tournament and a semifinal game to reach the finals.

Several Neenah students also earned individual awards in track and field with Corey Ehr Gott winning in the mini-javelin state title.



The Neenah boys tennis team finished as WIAA state runner-up this spring for the third time in the past five years with all three losses coming to Milwaukee Marquette. The Rockets also captured their 37th Fox Valley Association title in the past 39 years and extended their conference winning streak to a record 113 straight matches.



**HOMECOMING  
2017**

**September 29-30**



Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker experienced some of Neenah's art and music talent and spoke to a group of students about his proposed increased spending for public education during a visit to Neenah High School on April 13. It was Gov. Walker's first visit to Neenah High School since taking office.

## Mory and Kemppainen Receive Kohl Educational Foundation Awards



Neenah teacher Andra Mory and student Kim Kemppainen were both honored with awards from the Herb Kohl Educational Foundation. Mory (*pictured, left*) received a Teacher Fellowship Award and Kemppainen earned an Excellence Scholarship.



Each Teacher Fellowship Award winner receives \$3,000 individually and \$3,000 for the school. The Excellence Scholarships are worth \$5,000 each. In total, 100 teachers and 207 graduating high school seniors were honored across the state.

Mory began her teaching career in Neenah in 1988 and works as a math specialist at Lakeview, Roosevelt and Alliance Charter Elementary Schools. Kemppainen was the president of student council and a member of Key Club and National Honor Society, while qualifying for state in debate and forensics.

# BUILDING PARTNERS

## *NJSD and Local Companies Hold Summit*

Every year nearly 500 Neenah High School graduates head off to college or the workforce. Just how prepared are they for their futures?

That question was one of the intentions of the inaugural Business/Education Summit held this spring at Neenah High School.

Business leaders, District staff members and students met in small groups and focused their conversation on a range of education and workforce topics, discussing how schools and local companies can work together. Discussion centered around what skills and degrees companies are looking for from high school and college graduates and how companies can assist local educators in preparing the future workforce.

The event was held in cooperation with the Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce and Fox Valley Technical College.



## Shattuck Students Win Wisconsin Crystal Competition

Shattuck Middle School students Brooklyn Anderson and Nick Bentley were winners of the Wisconsin Crystal Growing Contest through the UW-Madison Department of Chemistry.

Bentley was also chosen for the opportunity for his crystals to grow aboard the International Space Station U.S. National Lab through a partnership with the Center for the Advancement of Science in Space (CASIS) and their Space Station Explorers education program. He will spend a week in Florida the week before the launch.

The objective of the competition is to grow the biggest and highest quality single crystal. Students from throughout Wisconsin compete to grow the best crystals, as judged by scientists who are experts in crystallography.

For 2017, the material for the middle school crystal growing competition was cupric sulfate,  $\text{CuSO}_4 \cdot 5\text{H}_2\text{O}$ . This material is chosen because it produces large beautiful blue crystals, which are neither too easy nor too difficult to grow.

Anderson and Bentley were awarded their honor on May 19 in Madison. They worked on their project under the guidance of teacher Dean Doersch.

## Heidl-Knobloch and Rockweit Earn CAPP Adjunct of the Year Awards



Neenah High School English teachers Jennifer Heidl-Knobloch (pictured, left) and Tara Rockweit have been selected as winners of the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh Cooperative Academic Partnership Program (CAPP) Adjunct of the Year award.

Heidl-Knobloch and Rockweit were among seven winners of the award out of over 250 adjunct teachers in the CAPP program. The program delivers a rigorous curriculum to high school students interested in earning concurrent high school and college credit. Adjuncts were nominated by their on-campus liaison.

Heidl-Knobloch has been teaching in Neenah since 2000. Rockweit has been teaching in Neenah since 1993 and was the high school Teacher of the Year in 2014.



The Neenah Joint School District honored its 2017 Employees and Team of the Year on May 10. Those honored were: Julie Lennon, Cheryl Prosek, Sara Roblee, Beth Altekruise, Michaela Neitzel, Lori Harness, Jane Bahr, Tim Wichman and the District Technology Team.



A total of 15 NJSD veterans were honored on May 3 as Quarter Century Club inductees. Front (L to R): Deborah Gauthier, Pamela Olson, Jane Bahr, Amy Sacs, Karen Wagner, Susan Mallmann, Kim Swanson, Susan Michlig. Back: Steven Prosek, Kathleen Hans, Dianne Calcaterra, David Dunning, Margaret Konz and Bryan VonDeylen. Not pictured: Catherine Augsburger.

## Missall Named Family Engagement Liaison for Special Education



Danyell Missall will serve as the District's Family Engagement Liaison for Special Education for the 2017-18 school year.

The position is part of a network of liaisons established by the Department of Public Instruction. The liaisons are parents of special needs children in their respective districts and receive specialized training so they can serve as informational resources to both parents and district staff when it comes to problem-solving issues related to special education.

Missall may be reached at: danyel.missall@neenah.k12.wi.us.

## Murnane Selected as Activities Director and Associate Principal

A four-year veteran Activities Director and Associate Principal, Josh Murnane has been selected for the same position within the Neenah Joint School District.

Murnane comes to Neenah from Green Bay West High School where he taught social studies for six years before moving into his administrative position. He was also the school's head wrestling coach for the past 10 years.

Murnane is a 2006 graduate of UW-Oshkosh and competed on the wrestling team in college. He also completed a Master's Degree and Principal licensure at UW-Oshkosh. The East Troy native taught social studies for one year at St. John's Northwestern Military Academy in Delafield prior to his tenure in Green Bay.



## Roosevelt and Taft Earn State Title I School of Recognition Awards

Roosevelt and Taft Elementary Schools were chosen as 2016-17 Wisconsin Title I School of Recognition Award recipients by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

Roosevelt was selected as a High-Progress School, which honors schools that fall within the top 10 percent of schools experiencing student growth in reading and mathematics and have achievement gaps that are less than three percentage points between student groups. Roosevelt was one of 178 schools to earn recognition.

Taft was recognized as a Beating-the-Odds Schools, which commends schools among the top 25 percent of high-poverty schools in the state that have above average student achievement in reading and mathematics when compared to schools from similarly-sized districts, schools, grade configurations and poverty levels. Taft was among 116 schools in the Beating-the-Odds category.



Neenah High School biology teacher Dianne Pacolt was selected as an Outstanding Teacher of High School Biology by the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point Biology Department. Pacolt recently completed her 17th year in the science department after teaching 13 years in Nekoosa. She was honored at UW-Stevens Point's 45th annual biology awards night on May 5. Pacolt was Neenah High School's 2015 Teacher of the Year and teaches advanced biology.



The Shattuck Velocity program was one of only two schools in Wisconsin and one of 32 nationwide to receive an Ascend Gold Medal for its implementation of an online math intervention program. The award was established in 2010 to honor schools or districts that best demonstrate a dedication to ensuring that all students become successful at math. Shattuck has been using Ascend Math, an intensive online math intervention program to assist struggling students.



Horace Mann students raised \$707.30 in their annual walk-a-thon on May 19. The proceeds will be divided evenly between Children's Hospital and the Neenah Animal Shelter. Students walked a one-mile route to Shattuck Middle School for their annual orientation activities.



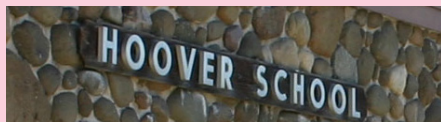
Former Alliance and Roosevelt students who graduated from high school this year returned to their school on May 31 to receive a welcome back from current students. The graduates shared their experiences from their school careers and their future plans.



Clayton second grade students participated in a Book Tasting at their very own "Clayton Cafe." Complete with decorated tables, special lights, trays of books and menus which students completed, everyone had the opportunity to "taste" different genres of books they may not have otherwise tried.



Coolidge and Oshkosh Corporation teamed up for an event called "Create a Game Challenge." Students were "Engineers in Training" and tasked with designing a new carnival game that used readily available materials, had rules, was easy to store and could last several years. The games were played at the school carnival.



Hoover partnered with ThedaCare for the "Good to Go" program. ThedaCare employees spent a week educating students about healthy snacks, mindfulness, physical activities and energy breaks. On May 3, they joined the outdoor family game night with health presentations, a healthy food demonstration and games.



Lakeview students have been making regular visits to the Valley VNA Senior Living facility in Neenah. Students show residents some of their recent school projects and simply spend time with the residents.



Roosevelt and Alliance students participated in a Doty Island clean up day with YouthGo on May 6.



Spring Road fourth grade students completed an historical fiction unit where students worked in book clubs on World War II novels. Mrs. Betty Trypuc shared her family's experience during and after the war in Germany, discussing her mother's escape from East Germany to West Germany.



Taft fifth grade students supported cancer research by participating in the Wagon Warriors project for Colton's Cure. Students designed, built and decorated a wagon that was on display at Associated Bank in downtown Neenah during May. Taft's wagon was one of 12 designed by students throughout the region.



The "STEM Shuttle" visited Tullar for a day of hands-on learning and science experiments. The bus travels around the state and is full of interactive exhibits for students to test their skills in science, technology, engineering and math. Students can take part in numerous learning activities involving space and Earth.



Four-year-old kindergarten students from across the District gathered at Riverside Park on May 24 for their year-end concert. Students from all schools took the stage together for the first time and sang several songs celebrating the end of their first year of school. This was the second year of Neenah's 4K program.



Students at Wilson had a surprise visitor on April 19 as Green Bay Packers linebacker Jayrone Elliott appeared at a school assembly. Elliott took questions from staff members and students and shared details about his journey from an undrafted free agent to a three-year career in the NFL.

A Passion for Excellence  
**NEENAH**  
Joint School District  
410 South Commercial St.  
Neenah, WI 54956  
(920) 751-6800  
Website: www.neenah.k12.wi.us

ECRWSS  
Non-Profit  
US Postage  
**PAID**  
Neenah, WI  
Permit NO. 23

## POSTAL PATRON

### Key 2017-18 Dates

#### September

- 1.....First Day of School
- 29.....No School - All Levels (Professional Learning Day)
- 29-30 .....NJSD Homecoming/Hall of Fame

#### October

- 25.....Parent-Teacher Conferences, Grades 4K-5, 4-8 p.m.
- 26.....Early Dismissal - All Levels (Parent-Teacher Conferences)
- 26.....Parent-Teacher Conferences, All Levels, 12:30-8 p.m.
- 27.....No School - All Levels (Parent-Teacher Conferences)
- 27.....Parent-Teacher Conferences, Gr. 6-12, 7:45-11:45 a.m.

#### November

- 3.....Early Dismissal, Grades K-8 (End of Quarter)
- 22.....No School - All Levels (Professional Learning Day)
- 23-24 .....No School - All Levels (Thanksgiving Break)

#### December

- 22-Jan. 1....No School - All Levels (Winter Break)

#### January

- 19.....Early Dismissal - All Levels (End of Semester)

- 22.....No School - All Levels (Professional Learning Day)

#### February

- 21.....Parent-Teacher Conferences, Grades 6-12, 4-8 p.m.
- 22.....Early Dismissal - All Levels (Parent-Teacher Conferences)
- 22.....Parent-Teacher Conferences, All Levels, 12:30-8 p.m.
- 23.....No School - All Levels (Parent-Teacher Conferences)
- 23.....Parent-Teacher Conferences, Gr. 4K-5, 7:45-11:45 a.m.
- 26.....No School - All Levels (Professional Learning Day)

#### March

- 23.....Early Dismissal, Grades K-8 (End of Quarter)
- 26-30 .....No School - All Levels (Spring Break)

#### April

- 2.....No School - All Levels (Professional Learning Day)

#### May

- 25.....No School - All Levels (Professional Learning Day)
- 30.....NHS Graduation, 7 p.m.
- 31.....Last Day of School - 4K and Early Childhood

#### June

- 1.....Last Day of School (Early Dismissal) - Grades K-12



Like us on Facebook-  
**Neenah Joint School District**

Follow us on Twitter-  
**@neenahschools**



**www.neenah.k12.wi.us**

**Board of Education meetings are typically held the first and third Tuesdays of every month at 6 p.m. at the District Administrative Building at 410 S. Commercial St. (Check the NJSD website for complete schedule)**