

Dialogue

Neenah Joint School District Community Newsletter

Summer 2018



A NEEDED UPGRADE

Neenah Schools Seek to Enhance Facilities

Upgrading District facilities has been a focus for the Neenah Joint School District for nearly two years. The District embarked on a facilities study with Bray Architects in November 2016 and began holding public meetings in February of 2018. Seven meetings have been held and some key priorities have emerged.

Future Meeting

Wednesday, September 5
5 p.m. - NJSD Administration
Building Board Room

Making sure all buildings have increased safety and security quickly became the primary focus. The Board has also identified needs at the middle school level as Shattuck Middle School

was built in 1928 and has undergone five previous renovations. The District also hopes to put fifth and sixth grade students in the same building to provide an enhanced teaching and learning environment resulting in a more enriched educational experience for those students. This change in grade configuration would also result in all

students coming together in fifth grade with two years in the same building. Additionally, taking fifth graders out of the elementary schools will free up needed space in those buildings.

A survey will be mailed to all District households in late September or early October. Residents are encouraged to fill out the survey and indicate their views on what the District should be prioritizing and the specific project they are willing to support. Many questions also surround the high school with upgrades to Pickard Auditorium, building a new indoor athletic turf facility and creating a technology center.

In addition to the survey, the public is welcome to add comments to a form on the District website. A link is available on the main page under "Facilities Study Information." The next meeting is set for September 5 at 5 p.m. in the Board room at the Administration Building. Additional meetings will be scheduled after results from the survey are tabulated.

Bemis Provides \$100,000 Project Lead the Way Grant to Neenah Schools

A grant from Bemis Company, Inc. will provide \$100,000 to help every elementary student in Neenah learn Project Lead the Way activities in their school curriculum.

The grant follows a \$75,000 grant from Bemis two years ago that started the program. This year, Neenah students have been learning basics of engineering in their classes. The additional grant money will assist in adding computer science and biomedical modules to the curriculum.

The grant will be divided equally among 10 schools with each receiving \$10,000 over a two-year period. Project Lead the Way is a Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) curriculum that develops students as innovators, team members, problem solvers, designers and creative thinkers.

"This program empowers students to adopt a design-thinking mindset through compelling activities, projects and problems that build upon each other," said Neenah STEM coordinator Curtis Bartlett. "We are grateful to Bemis in helping our students become creative, collaborative problem solvers ready to take on any challenge."

At least one lead teacher from each school is trained in the program and then trains staff members at his or her school. Bartlett expects the grant to help with providing equipment and participation fees among other expenses.



Bemis has been a close partner with the Neenah Joint School District with Project Lead the Way activities at all grade levels. Bemis is a multinational company based in Neenah and a major supplier of flexible packaging used by leading food, consumer products, health-care and industrial companies worldwide. With more than 50 facilities in 10 countries, Bemis serves customers around the globe.

Words From the Superintendent



Everyone in a community benefits from great schools.

Even if you've never had children or grandchildren attend our schools and even if you've never even been to one of our schools, they've had an impact on you.

Great schools make communities a desirable place to live. They raise property values, decrease crime and provide a strong labor force that's attractive to businesses within our area.

We're fortunate to have great schools in Neenah. Our staff is superior, our students thrive and our curriculum and technology are cutting edge. Staff and students at all levels are giving back to our community in so many ways and examples of that are scattered throughout this newsletter.

But our schools are out-of-date and in great need of renovation.

People who have been in any of our buildings have seen makeshift classrooms in hallways, closets being used for instruction, the need for additional security and facilities that are just simply subpar for our children in the 21st century.

Consider that our newest building is Washington School at 51 years old! We haven't done a major construction project since the link was added at the high school over 20 years ago. Shattuck Middle School is about to start its 91st year this fall and has undergone five renovations.

Our staff and students have continued to make it work and our financial situation is excellent with the lowest tax rate in the Fox Valley and no long-term debt.

We haven't asked for help in over a decade, but it's finally time.

As you're probably aware, the District has undergone a facilities study to review the needs at all of our buildings. The needs are overwhelming and we need your feedback with a potential referendum at stake.

In the coming weeks, you'll receive a survey in the mail from School Perceptions. We urge you to take the time to fill out the survey, either by mail or online. Let us know how much you value our schools and where you see the priorities. Whether you're a current, former or future parent or someone with no personal connection to the schools whatsoever, we want to hear from you.

I ask that you consider engaging and supporting our ambition because everyone in a community benefits from great schools.

Neenah With Pride!
Dr. Mary Pfeiffer
Superintendent

A Path to Success

Neenah High School Academies Prepare Students for Careers

Arete Academy Project-Based Learning

It's 21st century learning at its best where students learn through hands-on, creative experiences that give back to their community. Personal skills and passions come alive every day in a program designed for all learning abilities.

Students take challenging classroom/laboratory courses in basic automotive technology, collision repair and refinishing or diesel technology. Students complete a 320-hour internship with a trained and qualified Master Technician mentor.

Automotive Youth Ed. Systems Academy



Neenah High School Academies such as the Automotive Youth Systems Academy provide a comprehensive education toward a specific career field through deeper coursework and business and college partnerships.

Business Academy

An emphasis is placed on giving students the opportunity to operate their own business or to work in the local community in a variety of business functions through job shadows, community service, coursework and on-the-job experiences.

A program developed as a partnership with local health care facilities and the Fox Valley Health Care Alliance, students gain an opportunity to discover and foster interests in clinical and non-clinical health care careers.

Health Careers Academy

Hospitality & Culinary Arts Academy

Designed for students with an interest in learning about or pursuing careers in the culinary arts or hospitality field, the program partners with Fox Valley Technical College and several other U.S. colleges.

Local business and industry partners provide educational opportunities that promote, encourage and support STEM development. Academy students will gain industry exposure, knowledge and enrichment opportunities.

Manufacturing & Engineering Academy

Visual Arts Academy

The academy develops a student's technical abilities and personal vision through the study of a variety of traditional art media. The academy creates valued partnerships with local business and higher education institutes.

STAYING SAFE

Neenah Receives \$267,079 Safety Grant

Neenah Joint School District buildings will see a significant upgrade in safety and security through a grant provided by the Wisconsin Department of Justice School Safety Grant program.

Neenah received all of the funding it requested, getting \$267,079 for safety improvements. In total, Wisconsin schools and districts will receive \$100 million for school safety upgrades.

Grant funds may only be used in specific areas and the District's application highlighted five areas of need. Grant dollars are divided into primary grants that focus on baseline improvements to schools and advanced grants that may be used on specific upgrades for schools already meeting the minimum thresholds.

"The grant will cover needs that had been previously addressed in our District and are significant items we had been considering," said District Director of Facilities/Engineer Adam Krieger, who was responsible for writing the proposal. "We are appreciative of the Department of Justice providing these grant dollars to enhance security in our buildings while saving on our budgets."

2018-19 Safety Upgrades

Neenah Joint School District buildings will see the following upgrades following the application of a Wisconsin Department of Justice School Safety Grant:

- ◆ Shatter-resistant film will be added to windows near the main entrance of all buildings. The film will also be added to eligible windows in other areas of the schools.
- ◆ Public address systems will be upgraded at all schools through software added to a recently-installed voice-over IP phone system.
- ◆ Raptor ID systems will be installed at all schools to provide background checks and keep a digital log on all visitors.
- ◆ Radios will be purchased that can be used between buildings to improve District-wide communication.
- ◆ More security cameras will be added, primarily at elementary buildings.



A group of 15 Neenah High School art students enjoyed a tremendous educational experience this summer with a trip to France and Spain. Students visited museums, gardens, architecture and a perfume factory while taking in a variety of live performances.

Neenah Art Students Bring Life to Street Corner Electrical Boxes

The corner of Wisconsin Avenue and Commercial Street in downtown Neenah now has a historical flair as Neenah High School art students partnered with the Neenah Historical Society to paint an electrical control box.

The box features some of the unique locations and people from Neenah such as Doty Cabin, the lighthouse at Kimberly Point, the Equitable Reserve Building, Riverside Park, the Octagon House, the Neenah Public Library, Babcock House, the ERA Building, the Council Tree and Clock Tower. Individuals featured are Theda Clark Peters, Charles Clark, Helen Kimberly Stuart and Clara Shattuck.



Students in the beginning art classes taught by Lisa Dorschner and Emma Santiago worked on the project. Neenah alum Sean Keepers provided graphic design assistance. The City of Neenah Landmarks Commission sponsored the project.

A similar box dedicated to the history of Neenah's police department is at the corner of Commercial and Cecil Streets. The students are also working with the fire department to complete another box.

Arnold Receives State's Top Youth High School Volunteer Award



Neenah High School senior Evan Arnold has been named the state's top youth high school volunteer by the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards.

Arnold received \$1,000, an engraved medalion and an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C. Arnold started a foundation in 2009 that has delivered more than \$50,000 worth of

baseball equipment to children in need in 38 countries and organized one-day baseball clinics for orphans and the children of incarcerated parents in Arizona.

Leaving a Legacy

Berven Retires After 48 Seasons as Neenah Boys Tennis Coach

After 48 illustrious seasons as the Neenah High School varsity boys tennis coach, Tom Berven has finally decided to call it a career.

Berven, 77, retires as one of the state's most accomplished coaches, posting a 454-54-1 career record in dual matches along with five state team championships and seven runner-up finishes. He led his team to its 41st conference championship this spring and retires having won his last 121 Fox Valley Association dual matches.

Kyle Falk has been hired as the new coach. Falk has spent the past 10 summers assisting Berven with the Neenah Park and Recreation summer program and has coached varsity teams at La Crosse Central and Stevens Point High Schools.

In all, Neenah has had just two head boys tennis coaches since 1930 as Ivy Williams coached 36 seasons before Berven took over



in 1971 (there were four seasons of an interim coach from 1943-46 when Williams served in the Air Force). The Rockets have won 10 state titles in school history and Berven and Williams combined for 65 conference championships.

Berven came to Neenah as a 23-year-old social studies teacher in 1964, teaching courses in psychology, modern problems and U.S. history. He has coached in Neenah since 1965 when he began a 16-year run as junior varsity boys basketball coach. He was named junior varsity boys tennis coach in

1967 and coached four seasons before taking over the varsity program. In addition, Berven has run the Park and Recreation summer program for the past 51 years with over 300,000 participants. Berven coached 10 individual state champions and took players to state every year during his coaching career.

Yineman Captures State Wrestling Title; Enz Wins State Track Crown

Neenah High School senior Beau Yineman became the school's eighth state individual wrestling champion in dramatic fashion on Feb. 24 in Madison.



Yineman (*pictured, left*) used a three-point near fall in the closing seconds for a 7-4 win over Jack Trautman of Waterford in the 195-pound Division 1 championship match. The winning move came moments after Yineman had been called for stalling for the second time in the match with 16 seconds left to even the score at 4-4.

Yineman is Neenah's first state wrestling champion since Sam Engelland in 2008. Yineman finished the season 45-0 and is the fifth undefeated state champion in Neenah history.

Senior Colin Enz (*pictured, right*) became the school's first boys track and field individual state champion in 20 years by capturing the 400-meter dash on June 2 in La Crosse.

Enz posted a time of 49.03 seconds to edge Pewaukee's David Young by 0.08 seconds. Enz had the best qualifying time in the event at 49.00 seconds. Enz also anchored the Rockets' 1600-meter relay team that was runner-up in 3:21.94. He was joined by Sam Jung, Jack VanDyke and Ethan Blaney.

He is the Rockets' first individual state champion since Joe Fahrenkrug won the 800-meter run in 1998. The 3200-meter relay team also won the state title that year.



Neenah captured its first Wisconsin Interscholastic Fishing Association state championship on Feb. 18-19 in Minocqua, dethroning three-time defending champion Wisconsin Rapids. Over 90 schools have fishing teams around the state and a total of 61 teams recorded catches at the meet. Neenah's 10 members caught 269.75 inches.

Powerlifting Wins Two Team and Four Individual National Titles

Neenah captured national titles in the girls equipped division and the combined raw division at the high school national powerlifting championships in Appleton in March.

Additionally, four individuals earned national titles in their divisions. Those winning varsity titles were Jonas Kasten in the boys 66 kilogram raw division, Courtney Corrente in the girls 63 kilogram equipped division and Dallas Cavegn in the girls 84 kilogram equipped division.



Neenah High School juniors David Xiao (left) and Jackson Vendola both earned perfect scores of 36 on the ACT college prep exam. In 2017, a total of 0.14 percent of test takers nationwide scored a perfect score. The national average is a 21.0.

Neenah Students Team With Local Businesses for Entrepreneur Class

Neenah High School students have been involved in a unique INCubator class this school year that is similar to the TV show "SharkTank." The class is a real-life entrepreneurial experience. Students create a product idea and then actually manufacture the product and get it out into the marketplace. They are paired with mentors from the local business community for assistance. Students pitched their products to potential investors and a panel of judges from the local community in May in Pickard Auditorium.

The winning product of the eight pitched was called "CordClip," which is a protective device for the end of a smartphone charger (they can be ordered online at xicordclip.com for \$10.99) and received \$2,500 in private money. Winning students were Luke Meyer (pictured below, left) and Jordan Setterstrom.

Second place was "Pinpoint Tracking," which is a small tracking device that can be attached to anything (pinpointtracking.com). They received \$1,500. The third place product is called "Get Right," which is an acne prevention pad specifically for athletes in contact sports. They received \$500.



Five Individuals to be Inducted to NJSD Hall of Fame on October 6

Individuals who made their impact as a physician, suffragist, writer, referee and soccer coach comprise the Neenah Joint School District's fourth annual Hall of Fame class in 2018. The group brings the total members of the Hall of Fame to 27.

Graduates **Dr. Omar Atassi**, **Dr. Emma Jaeck**, **Dick Jorgensen** and **Jill (Lieber) Steeg** along with longtime soccer coach **Harry Kelderman** will be inducted on Sat., Oct. 6 at 11:30 a.m. at Best Western Premier Bridgewood Resort Hotel and Conference Center. Tickets are on sale at the Administration Building for \$25 each.

Atassi, a 1982 graduate, is a board-certified urologist and has been practicing in his hometown since 1995. He was a three-sport athlete in soccer, basketball and tennis and has been active in the community, serving on several boards.

Jaeck, a 1892 graduate, was a teacher, professor, published author, poet and songwriter. Jaeck was active in the women's suffrage movement, interviewing senators and representatives. She studied Christmas customs from throughout the world and lectured on them globally.

Jorgensen, a 1952 graduate, was the head referee for the 1990 Super Bowl and also a prolific athlete and noted community member in Champaign, Ill. He was a WIAA state champion in doubles tennis and also runner-up in the pole vault at state track and field. Jorgensen was a National Football League official from 1968-1990.

Lieber, a 1974 graduate, was among the first national female sportswriters and earned multiple awards and three Pulitzer Prize nominations. She was a senior writer at Sports Illustrated from 1981-95 and a senior writer at USA Today where she specialized in cover stories and covered most major world sporting events.

Kelderman has the most wins of any boys soccer coach in Wisconsin high school history while coaching from 1980-2015. In his 36 seasons, he led the Rockets to three state titles, two state runner-up finishes, 28 Fox Valley Association titles and a winning record every season while posting a 603-143-55 career record.



Fourth graders at Lakeview Elementary teamed with Neenah Rotary to plant 40 trees around Castle Oak Park in Neenah. Five students read poems and essays about Arbor Day and Neenah's 34th year as a Tree City USA and then all students assisted with the planting.



The Neenah Joint School District named its 2018 Employees of the Year. (L-R): Francis "Buddy" Diedrich, Robin Grable, Shelley Ropella, Shelley Domer, Rebecca VanDuser, Karen Wagner, Pam Buss and Andrew Thorson. The Team of the Year was the elementary math support team.

Garbe Named Wisconsin ProStart Teacher of the Year

Neenah High School teacher Deb Garbe has been named the Wisconsin ProStart Teacher of the Year by the Wisconsin Restaurant Association Education Foundation.

Garbe, a family and consumer science teacher, has grown the culinary arts and ProStart program at Neenah High School to be one of the strongest in the state. The ProStart program is a curriculum designed to teach high school students the skills needed for a career in the restaurant and food service industry. Students also have the opportunity to participate in paid jobs where industry managers mentor them.



Garbe works with local restaurant industry professionals from Fox Valley Technical College, Zuppa's Cafe and Catering and Lambeau Field to give her students practical experiences with the food service industry. She also oversees the school's 200-member Key Club that has been active in numerous local community activities.

"Hey Alexa" Spring Road Teachers Present at National Tech Conference

Spring Road Elementary School teachers Erin Ermis and Emma Kopitzke presented at the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) conference in Chicago in June about their use of Amazon Echo Dot in the classroom and using "Alexa" in whole-class, small-group and individual settings.



Following their presentation, the two were included in a story about Alexa that was featured in an *Education Week* article. Ermis (pictured, right) teaches fifth grade and Kopitzke (pictured, left) teaches second grade.

Roosevelt Elementary earned its second straight Wisconsin Title I School of Recognition Award by the Department of Public Instruction. Roosevelt was named a High Progress School. Pictured are teacher Betsy Rettler, State Superintendent Tony Evers and teacher Kalina Churness.



Borchardt Receives Neenah Rotary Club Community Service Award

Neenah High School teacher Brian Borchardt was recently recognized for his extensive community service efforts with an award from the Neenah Rotary Club.

Borchardt is the club's recipient of the Jack W. Casper "Service Above Self" community service award. Borchardt has been an active volunteer with the Neenah Boys and Girls Brigade for 22 years. Borchardt has led the "STRIVE" program for at-risk students at Neenah High School.



He also oversees the school's "LAUNCH" program where upperclass students serve as leaders for incoming freshmen. Borchardt has been instrumental with the school's "Runner's High" program and led student service trips to Kentucky, Dominican Republic and China.



A group of 22 Neenah Joint School District staff members with a total of 507 years of experience retired following the 2017-18 school year. The group consists of 15 certified teaching staff members and seven non-certified employees.



Members of the Neenah High School fishing club joined members of the community for an expedition on the dock outside the Neenah Public Library as part of a recent Memory Cafe event.

Students enjoyed sharing their talents with their elders and engaging in conversation. Memory Cafes are for those experiencing early stage dementia, mild memory loss or cognitive impairment and for family and friends of those affected.



Students in the Shattuck Velocity program were honored as a group finalist for the Volunteer Center of East Central Wisconsin's Youth Alliance Awards. Over the last two years Velocity students have built, delivered, filled and planted over 45 raised garden beds for food for needy people in the Fox Valley area.

The awards are presented to any youth or youth group who has demonstrated a commitment to helping others and has succeeded in positively impacting the lives of others.



Horace Mann students Emma Bottensek, Carly Keesler, Luke Keller, Brady Hildreth and Ethan Meylink attended a Fuel Up to Play 60 student summit at Lambeau Field. Students learned ideas about active lifestyles to share with their classmates. Keller was one of about 150 students nationwide chosen to attend a national Summit in Atlanta in July.



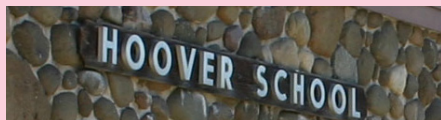
Alliance and Roosevelt students dedicated a "Buddy Bench" in memory of Erika Otto, an Alliance parent who passed away last January. The bench will be put on the playground and students looking for someone to play with can sit on the bench so that others know to include them.



Clayton students filled their parking lots with chalk drawings that promoted kindness as part of a "Chalkabstractions" activity. Fifth graders led the younger grades in creating inspiring messages about kindness. The entire school used chalk to draw, write and represent what it means to be kind.



Coolidge students had an opportunity to learn the basics of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math through a STEAM event funded by the school PTO. Each classroom took turns coming down to the gym as students were able to experiment with a variety of different STEAM-related activities.



Hoover fifth graders had a visit from Neenah High School Arete Academy students on May 24 and learned about sustainability. Among the activities, students planted seeds in recycled milk cartons in learning about ways to save the planet.



Lakeview's student council held a spirit week in early May with dress up days to build school spirit. The classes also held a penny war that raised \$3,500 for classroom instructional equipment and a new piece of playground equipment.



Students at Roosevelt/Alliance raised \$2,200 for pediatric cancer in honor of a classmate and finished second in the Wagon Warrior campaign for Colton's Cure. Students from several Northeast Wisconsin schools decorated wagons that were on display at Associated Bank branches. Overall, the project raised \$8,969 for pediatric cancer research.



Spring Road students had the opportunity to learn about a variety of different experiences on May 4 at the school's annual Career and Hobby Day. Among those careers and hobbies represented were Mayor Kaufert, police officer, dentist, pilot, musician, karate, healthy cooking, quilting and fishing.



Taft second graders tested the library's new Dash robots. Students worked through the Path app tutorials which taught them how to code the robot. Additional Dash robots were purchased as a result of the Taft Tech Club trying them out and recommending them for purchase.



Tullar fifth graders teamed with their first grade buddies on Earth Day to learn more about continents and oceans. They created an Earth project and also did several Language Arts activities.



Four-year-old kindergarten students concluded their first year in Neenah schools and held their year-end concert on May 17 at Riverside Park. The Washington PTO also provided funds for four-year-old kindergarten students to receive a book at the end of the year to celebrate moving on to kindergarten.



Wilson second graders held a makerspace challenge of building a roller coaster out of plastic straws. The activity was designed to build teamwork, problem solving, perseverance and creativity.



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POSTAL PATRON

Key 2018-19 Dates

September

- 4.....First Day of School
- 28.....No School - All Levels (Professional Learning Day)

October

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

November

- 2.....Early Dismissal, Grades 6-8 (End of Quarter)
- 6.....No School - All Levels (Professional Learning Day)
- 21-23No School - All Levels (Thanksgiving Break)

December

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

January

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

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

March

- 22.....Early Dismissal, Grades 6-8 (End of Quarter)
- 25-29No School - All Levels (Spring Break)

April

- 19-22No School - All Levels

May

- 24.....No School - All Levels (Professional Learning Day)
- 29.....NHS Graduation

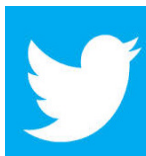
June

- 4.....Last Day of School - 4K and Early Childhood
- 5.....Last Day of School (Early Dismissal) - Grades K-11



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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)