

FORWARD THINKING

Technology Continues to Grow in Schools

All Neenah Joint School District students in grades 3-12 are using their own personal computing device beginning in the 2015-16 school year.

Students in grades 3-5 have been assigned 32GB iPad-Air tablets for use in school every day. Sixth grade students at Horace Mann Middle School will be using Chromebook notebook computers this year after using iPads last year. Students in grades 7-12 at Shattuck Middle School and Neenah High School will be provided Chromebooks to use both in school and away from school on evenings and weekends.

Primary computer labs in the Horace Mann and Shattuck library media centers will continue to be available to be reserved for projects and applications that require a more robust environment than that offered by a Chromebook. Similarly, desktop computers at Neenah High School will remain in the library and in other content areas such as Technology Education, Art and Special Education. In elementary buildings, aging desktop computers were upgraded last year to Apple MacBook Air laptops as the primary computer lab in each building.



Each kindergarten classroom has been assigned six iPad tablets and each first and second grade classroom has been assigned 10 iPad tablets for the second straight year. Each four-year-old kindergarten classroom will also have five iPads.

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Students Aid South Carolina Flood Victims

A "Flood the Truck" event was held on Oct. 12 at Horace Mann Middle School and local residents filled a 53-foot semitrailer with supplies that were given to victims of the flooding in South Carolina. A pair of fifth graders, Rachel Frank (pictured, left) and Josephine Fisher, organized the entire project.

The truck left the following day for Leaphart Elementary School in Columbia, S.C. The items benefitted students and families in the Lexington-Richland School District Five. Students from Chapin High School even held a video chat with the Neenah students thanking them for their support.

The truck and driver for the project were provided by N&M Transfer, a regional trucking company based in Neenah. The two girls made a cold call to N&M Transfer seeking assistance with the project. They also recruited volunteers to staff the truck and help load and package the donations.



Neenah ACT Scores Rank High Again

Neenah High School seniors outscored fellow graduates in all Fox Valley area public school districts by posting their highest ACT scores since 2011 with a 24.2 composite score.

The score was significantly better than the state average of 22.2 and the national average of 21.0. Neenah students had scored a 24.1 on the test each of the past three years. Neenah had 312 seniors take the ACT test in 2014-15.

Neenah's reading score was its highest ever at 24.9, which was an improvement over its score of 24.6 in 2014. The English and math scores also improved as English was up two-tenths to 23.5 and math raised one-tenth to 23.7. The science score remained at 24.1 for the third straight year.

Words From the Superintendent



Among the many great things about public education is its intent to cater to every type of student of all skill levels. This is certainly true in Neenah and we are incredibly proud of all our District has to offer.

We have magnet programs for grades 4-7 that appeal to the gifted and talented and we offer loads of advanced placement offerings at the high school level. Our Velocity program at Shattuck Middle School and alternative programs at the high school help get struggling students back on track, while our downtown campus gives students additional options.

Our curriculum has a tremendous variety within music, art, family and consumer science, world languages, wellness and STEM (science, technology, math and engineering) courses. Our school board recently approved 17 new courses, including three in welding and computer programming and a career exploration course.

There are also many opportunities for students with special education needs. Incredibly talented special education teachers and educational assistants throughout our District provide additional classroom support and one-on-one attention with students. Our Transitional Education Center (TEC) helps some of these students land jobs and perform everyday activities within our community.

Our offerings extend far beyond the classroom as well with tremendous opportunities for students to be involved in clubs, activities, music and fine arts and athletics. Even in summertime there are plenty of options with a vast array of summer remedial and enrichment courses that aim to serve every student.

Students of all grades benefit from the depth and variety of what Neenah has to offer. You will read about many more opportunities in this issue of the Dialogue and we invite you to explore our website to learn even more.

Dr. Mary Pfeiffer
Superintendent of Schools

A New Approach

Arete Incorporates All Four Subjects

How many students have sat in a class and wondered “how does this apply to anything in everyday life?”

It’s a common question and students are finding answers to it through a unique project-based learning style called the “Arete” (pronounced ARE-uh-tay) Academy at Neenah High School. About 110 students are enrolled in the program, which is in its second year and incorporates all four primary subject areas (English, math, science and social studies) into one unique class.



This year about 60 sophomores and 50 freshmen are involved. The class is taught by English teacher Greg Goers, math teacher Tara Meinke, science teacher Lynn Heyn and social studies teacher Suzy Weisgerber.

The concept isn’t entirely new as some charter schools are based on teaching this style. However, it’s fairly groundbreaking for a public school with the challenges of fitting it into a standardized curriculum, a regular school day and typical graduation requirements for a school of nearly 2,000 students.

So how does it work? In one example, the students focused on the middle ages. Social studies classes will discuss some of the history of what took place during that era, while science classes will be learning about different inventions and innovations from that time and how they impacted history. Math classes will deal with complex numbers (which were developed in the 16th century) and English classes might have students do a paper or presentation on various topics from that time. The science and math classes are held back-to-back and sometimes held together over two class periods. Social studies and English are done the same way.

The class has also gotten involved with the community, studying sustainability this fall and showing their findings at a public booth at the Neenah Farmers’ Market on Oct. 17.

Spring Road Elementary earned a \$1,000 gift card from School Specialty for winning the Fox Cities Marathon school challenge for the second straight year. The award is for student, staff and family participation in the weekend events. About 23 students trained all summer for the 5K.



BEAMING WITH PRIDE

Equine Therapy Assists Neenah Students

Special needs students in the Neenah Joint School District have benefited from a relationship with Beaming, Inc. over the past six years. Located just south of Neenah, Beaming, Inc. provides equine therapy for the students, giving them the opportunity to engage in adaptive riding activities from April through October.

“Beaming Inc. has been providing NJSD students with disabilities an authentic farm experience,” said David Farin, who teaches specially designed physical education at Taft Elementary. “During our visits, our students gain confidence through their horseback riding, pride through the grooming and chores, care taking for the horses and positive relationships with the students from UW Oshkosh College of Nursing and Marian University Nursing Program as well as community volunteers.”



Farin Honored

David Farin, who teaches specially designed physical education at Taft Elementary, recently was awarded the UW-Oshkosh College of Education and Human Services “Professor for a Day” award. Farin is just the 61st recipient of the honor since 1973. It is awarded to alumni who have made significant contributions to their profession.

Farin has taught in Neenah for 16 years and also works closely with students on the autism spectrum.

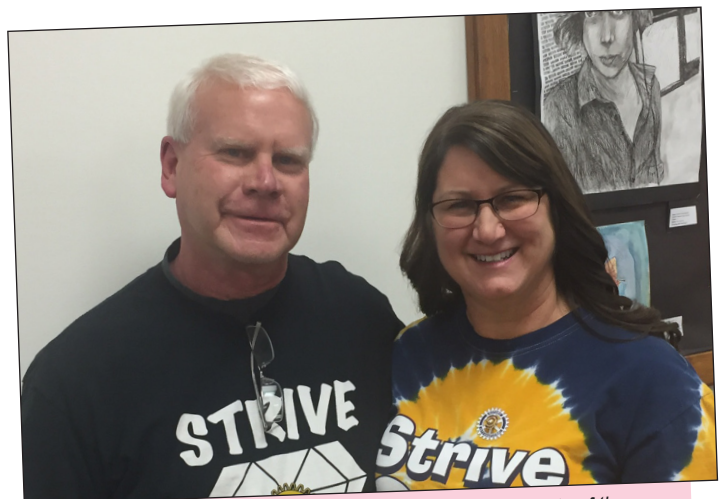
For individuals with learning or mental disabilities, therapeutic riding compels them to increase concentration, patience and discipline. If a psychological or emotional disability is present, the unique relationship formed with a horse can help improve interpersonal relationships as well. Riding a horse can stimulate the muscles a person uses to walk that otherwise would not have been stimulated and many people with disabilities are not able to sit up straight because of imbalance, but horses are able to tolerate this and alter their gait to balance the rider. Beaming, Inc. also provides more than just equine therapy as students also take part in reading and other activities with the staff and volunteers.

“Each challenge presented is attainable and our students come back to school excited to tell their peers, teachers and parents about their experiences,” Farin said. “For some families, it has been a point of pride in their children’s accomplishments that many of us take for granted while our children achieve milestones.”

For more information on Beaming, Inc., visit: www.beaminginc.org.



The inaugural NJSD Hall of Fame banquet was held Oct. 3 at Bridgewood Resort. Pictured Front, from left: Wally Bergstrom (representing George Edwin Bergstrom), Dr. Theresa Cheng, James Keating, Jr. (representing James Keating). Back: John Whittlinger, Wayne Kreklow, Sr. (representing Wayne Kreklow), William Braun (representing Joe Braun), Ron Einerson and Laura Coenen Ryan.



Dave and Dana Kohlmeyer were the 11th recipients of the Neenah Board of Education Passion for Excellence Award. The Kohlmeyers received their award in recognition of their work with Shattuck’s STRIVE 2B program. Under their assistance, the program that teaches service and leadership inside and outside of school has grown from a once-a-year program to a once-a-month program.

Girls Tennis Squad Captures First WIAA State Team Title

Neenah's girls tennis team captured its first WIAA state team title with a 4-3 win over Brookfield East on Oct. 24 in Madison.

The Rockets swept all three doubles matches in the victory to become the first Fox Valley Association school to win a girls tennis state championship. It was the first state championship in any sport for the Rockets since boys soccer won the 2007 state title. The title is the school's 31st overall in 13 different sports. Neenah had been runner-up in girls tennis four previous times with silver trophies in 1984, 1986, 2000 and 2014.

Neenah finished the season with an 18-1 record in dual meets after finishing 17-1 in its runner-up season in 2014. The team is coached by Kelly Van Handel, a 2008 graduate of Neenah High School, who was named the state Division 1 Coach of the Year.



Neenah's Special Olympics basketball team teamed up with the varsity girls and boys basketball teams for a skills competition followed by a game between the Special Olympics team and high school staff members on Nov. 19. The event, titled "Phase 2.3" was held in conjunction with the boys basketball team's Meet the Rockets event.

Homecoming Events Collect \$9,500 for Make-A-Wish

Homecoming week took on an added meaning for the third straight year with a full week of family activities benefitting the Make-A-Wish Foundation. The events raised \$9,500.

Activities included a drive-in movie, powder puff football, a parent's night out and a tailgate party prior to the football game. Donations were accepted at all of the events and numerous community businesses donated a portion of their profits on various nights throughout the week. Businesses also donated food for students attending the events.

In 2013, homecoming events raised money for a student battling a bacterial brain infection and in 2014 they benefitted the school's Special Olympics program.

Kelderman Retires as State's Winningest Boys Soccer Coach

With more wins than any boys soccer coach in Wisconsin high school history, Harry Kelderman has announced his retirement after 36 seasons as head coach at Neenah High School.



Kelderman, 71, led the Rockets to 28 Fox Valley Association championships and had a winning record every season. He has coached in more WIAA state soccer tournaments than any other coach with 16 appearances. Kelderman led the Rockets to three state championships in 1985, 1986 and 2007. He also coached Neenah to runner-up finishes in 1983 and 1991.

Kelderman's career record with the boys program is 603-143-55 for a .787 career winning percentage. He also coached one season as the interim girls soccer coach at Neenah in 2010, posting a 22-5-1 record and leading the Rockets to the WIAA state semifinals. Kelderman was inducted into the Wisconsin Soccer Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2011.

Activities Director Nate Werner, who previously coached Xavier and Appleton North, has been selected as the new head coach.



Neenah High School's one-act play "Bubble Boy" earned numerous awards at the State Theatre Festival in Whitewater. The play won the Critic's Choice and Ensemble Awards. Austin Mikoulskii, Jack Murphy and Thomas Hugo all earned Acting Awards and Sully Cary, Keating Schultz and Mrs. Jane Dix received the Directing Award. The Technical Crew defended its first place trophy in the Tech Olympics.

Technology a Major Focus in 2015-16

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Staff professional development in 2015-16 is focusing on depth of understanding and implementation of the major tools available. District staff participated in a full day of technology training this summer.

“Technology is no longer an initiative in Neenah, but rather an integral component of who we are as a District,” said Superintendent Dr. Mary Pfeiffer. “We also are aware that technology is only a tool and it is imperative we maximize the learning that can be done with such incredible resources.”

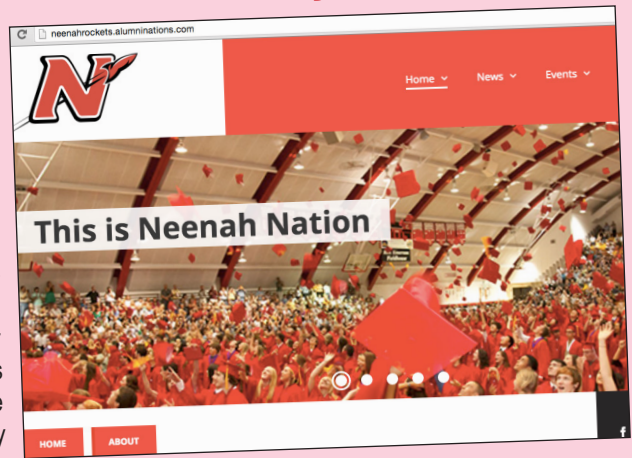
In addition to the personal devices, each elementary classroom has its own Smart Board, which is an interactive whiteboard. Students at all levels are also using the Schoology Learning Management System to provide a “virtual extension” of the classroom. Teachers create announcements, calendars, learning resources and links to web-based resources. They can also make themselves available through discussions for students either in class or away from school. Parents are able to access assignments and grades for their students in classes using the software.

Neenah Nation Offers Alumni and Community Members a Way to Connect

Individuals wanting to become more connected to the Neenah Joint School District will have that opportunity through the establishment of the “Neenah Nation.”

The Neenah Nation will provide a newsletter, information about events and reunions and offers for Neenah spirit wear. It is designed as a place where alumni and community members can connect with

each other and engage with our School District. It will be the perfect spot to advertise and learn about class reunions as well as other events happening in the District.



**Learn More About the Neenah Nation at:
neenahrockets.alumnations.com**

what prospective Neenah Nation members would like from the Neenah Nation website and what can be done to more fully engage them in the District. More information will continue to be announced through the District and Neenah Nation websites.

A survey was released in early December to gather feedback on specifically

Smart Girls Rock

Inaugural STEM Event Links Students With Female Professionals



Over 70 Neenah High School freshman and sophomore girls teamed up with female professionals from throughout the Fox Valley in the inaugural “Smart Girls Rock” event on Oct. 20.

The event aimed at showing young girls the career options available in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) by giving them opportunities to meet established mentors in the field. Among the objectives were to give girls the ability to learn from role models and understand what careers in STEM are about. Neenah was the pilot school for the event.

The girls heard a variety of speakers before taking part in an interview session where they rotated meeting with a different mentor every five minutes. Girls asked the mentors questions such as how they became involved in their current careers and what advice they can provide.

Miller Electric organized the event with the help of Talent Collaborative, the Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce and the Neenah High School career center and counseling office. Employees from numerous local companies served as mentors. The event took place throughout the morning and then the mentors and students had lunch together for more informal conversation.

STAYING FIT

Wellness Hour Catching on with Staff

It might be a volleyball match, a yoga session, a financial discussion or a cooking class. No matter what the activity, Neenah Joint School District staff have had a unique opportunity during the 2015-16 school year with a one-hour wellness session during their full day Professional Learning Days.

The events have been wide-ranging with sessions spanning from mindfulness to de-cluttering to CPR refreshers. A three-kilometer walk was also held around the high school hallways and Memorial Park. Every District staff member may choose a one-hour session that best fits them during each of the District's seven Professional Learning Days. So far, two have been held on Sept. 25 and Nov. 13 and the response has been positive. Many of the sessions will repeat and staff members are encouraged to participate in as many different sessions as possible.

"Taking a one-hour break from a day full of meetings and sitting has been well-received," said Superintendent Dr. Mary Pfeiffer. "Engaging our staff in a variety of activities and emphasizing their personal well-being is as important in professional development as learning new curriculum or technology ideas."

Wellness Coordinator Kelly Kelderman schedules the sessions and the instructors, who come from both inside and outside of the District. An art class creating clay medallions filled quickly during the last session, which also featured talks by a podiatrist, a financial advisor, a nutritionist and an obstetrician.



Neenah High School Art Students Create Veterans Memorial Display



Art students at Neenah High School partnered with students in the technology education department to create a unique display honoring our nation's veterans that was unveiled on Veterans Day.

The project was the idea of art teacher Lisa Dorschner and includes sketches by the art students in pencil, graphite and charcoal of various military scenes.

The sketches were etched onto aluminum plates by technology education students and placed in a shadow box display case in the high school hallway.

Many of the photos were selected by students in history classes and represent wars from the Revolutionary War to the present time. Art students chose to draw photos that resonated with them. Some students drew pictures with personal touches in memory of a family member or other loved one. The display sits near the cafeteria just outside of Pickard Auditorium and the fieldhouse, making it easy for viewing for the community attending events at the high school.



Students at Roosevelt Elementary decorated pumpkins during art class and delivered them to patients at Theda Clark Medical Center and Children's Hospital in Neenah.



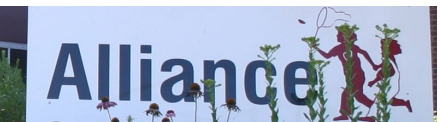
Neenah High School's Art 4 and Drawing and Painting 2 students won first place in the High School Art Cards contest at the Outlet Shoppes of Oshkosh. The cards were on display at the Shoppes through the holiday season. Special congratulations to Abigail Helwig, April Daniels, Desiree Johnson, Joseph Mui and Makenna Orth for their work on the project. Neenah's winning submission featured a polar bear with gifts in front of a Christmas tree.



Students representing Shattuck's Fuel Up to Play 60 group had the opportunity to attend a broadcast of Packers Live at Lambeau Field and meet Packers' fullback John Kuhn. Students attending were: Steve Marhefke, Gabi Feavel, Davis Greene, Miriam Ducommun, Jordan Hildebrandt, Olivia Haygood and Campbell Ebben.



The Horace Mann student council sponsored a food drive during the week of Nov. 16-20. Each homeroom had a box and all food collected was donated to the Salvation Army. In addition, the Girls on Track Club held a community service project called "Knotz 4 Totz" and raised money to make blankets for hospitalized children battling cancer or other diseases.



Alliance held an inaugural Glow Run 5K or one mile run/walk this fall. Numerous Alliance families participated in the nighttime event to help raise money for the school. Also, Alliance is again collecting old or broken holiday lights and extension cords to raise money for the school and keep them out of the landfill. The items may be placed in a box at the school through Jan. 17.



Clayton held a "Giving Thanks for Clayton Families" night on Nov. 19. The event featured an art project, a "read-in" in the gymnasium and fall refreshments. Families also brought non-perishable food items that were donated to a local food pantry.



Coolidge hosted a family fun night on Nov. 18 with a "Candy Land" theme. Families were invited to spend time with each other by participating in a variety of activities. Around 100 families attended the event. In addition to the problem-solving and art activities, the event tied in many of the wellness initiatives.



Hoover students and families participated in the Global Cardboard Challenge, a worldwide celebration of child creativity inspired by the short film, "Caine's Arcade." The participants used teamwork to design and build creations from cardboard, recycled materials and their imaginations.



Fourth grade students in Alisia Myers' class organized a school-wide contest called "Stuff The Turkey" to see which class could donate the most items. As a school, Lakeview donated twice the amount it had in previous years with over 2,800 items, equaling 2,500 pounds donated to Salvation Army.



Students from Roosevelt attended the Veterans Day ceremonies at Shattuck Park on Nov. 11. Students sang songs and shared thanks with the veterans. Students also made cards for the veterans.



Spring Road staff members created short video clips for students showing situations in need of compassion and empathy. Through classroom discussion, students were made aware of hardships and challenges many families face in their every day lives and understand how it may affect their peers at school.



Taft PTO and staff members have been working to improve the school's courtyard. The group received assistance from members of the varsity boys basketball team who volunteered to shovel four yards of dirt from the playground to the inner courtyard. They also removed rose bushes and shrubs.



Third grade students in Amy Schumacher's class have made a close connection with University of Wisconsin women's tennis player Lauren Chyppha as part of the "Flat Bucky" program. Students are tracking Lauren's locations through Instagram and maintain a written journal of Flat Bucky's activities.



Four-year-old kindergarten students at Washington and other schools are bringing home an adventure book bag for one week each month. The bag includes a book and fun activities that families can do together. Students bring them home Friday and return them the following Thursday.



Wilson hallways have been filled with fall-themed artwork. Second grade students drew sunflowers and third graders made ice cream cone paintings. First grade classrooms are filled with ladybug paper collages, while fourth grade students made radial symmetry paper relief sculptures and fifth graders made draped bowls with a personalized message inside.

Upcoming Events



410 South Commercial St.
Neenah, WI 54956
(920) 751-6800
Website: www.neenah.k12.wi.us

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POSTAL PATRON

Upcoming Events

December

24-Jan. 3.... No School - Winter Break

January

8..... Child Find Screening (Washington School)
14..... Horace Mann Choir Concert, 7 p.m. (Gymnasium)
15..... Early Dismissal - All Levels (End of Semester)
15..... No School - 4K and Early Childhood
16..... NHS "Cotton Club" Jazz Dinner 6 p.m. (Cafeteria)
18-23 NHS Winterfest Week
29..... No School - All Levels (Professional Learning Day)

February

4-5 NHS Drama "Anatomy of Gray," 7 p.m. (Pickard)
5..... Child Find Screening (Washington School)
6..... FVA Wrestling Championships, 8 a.m. (NHS Fieldhouse)

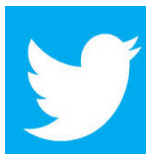
6..... NHS Drama "Anatomy of Gray," 2 & 7 p.m. (Pickard)
12..... WIAA Boys Diving Sectional, 5:30 p.m. (NHS Pool)
13..... WIAA Boys Swimming Sectional, Noon (NHS Pool)
15..... Band-O-Rama, 7 p.m. (NHS Fieldhouse)
18..... District Orchestra Concert, 7 p.m. (Pickard)
19..... No School - All Levels (Professional Learning Day)
23..... NJSD Choral Festival (Grades 6-12), 7 p.m. (Pickard)
24..... Parent-Teacher Conferences, Grades 6-12, 4:30-8:30 p.m.
25..... Early Dismissal - All Levels (Parent-Teacher Conferences)
25..... No School - 4K and Early Childhood
25..... Parent-Teacher Conferences, All Levels, 12:30-8 p.m.
25..... NHS "Coffee House," 7 p.m. (Cafeteria)
26..... No School - All Levels (Parent-Teacher Conferences)
26..... Parent-Teacher Conferences, Grades K-5, 7:45-11:45 a.m.



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Neenah Joint School District

www.neenah.k12.wi.us

Follow us on Twitter-
@neenahschools



**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)**