



BACK IN SESSION

Students and Staff Return for 2021-22

NJSD Receives Platinum Level National Well Workplace Award

The Neenah Joint School District's emphasis on employee wellness has resulted in it being named one of five platinum level Well Workplace Award winners nationwide for 2021 by the Wellness Council of America. The platinum level is the highest level bestowed by the organization.



Platinum Level Well Workplaces have distinguished themselves as not only leaders but innovators in workplace health promotion. The Well Workplace Awards initiative is driven by a rigorous set of criteria to a result-oriented Well Workplace. Since its inception in 1991, over 1,000 organizations, ranging

from educational institutions to non-profit and profit sectors have joined the list of "America's Healthiest Companies" by receiving the Well Workplace Award.

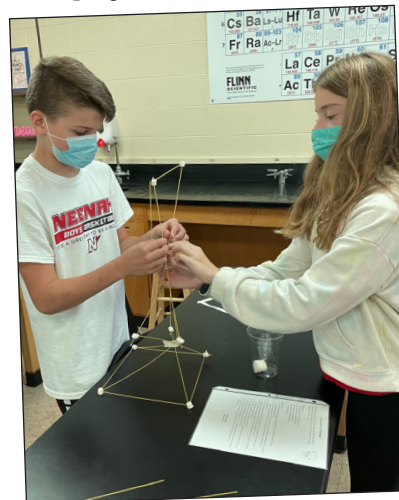
The District's three wellness goals are to foster a healthy organizational culture, ensure a healthy workplace environment and support employee health and wellness. In recent years, the District has offered an on-site health and wellness clinic with on-site flu and COVID vaccinations, wellness hours on Professional Learning Days and employee fitness and health challenges. The District has provided numerous monthly wellness programs and events that focus on both physical and mental stress such as meditations, workout classes, healthy cooking demonstrations and nutrition and financial well-being courses.

The wellness program is led by District Wellness Coordinator Jessica Lehman as well as over 20 volunteer wellness champions spread throughout each building in the District. Neenah was also honored with an award in 2013 at the gold level.

Neenah was the only school district among the five platinum winners. Others were Verve Credit Union in Oshkosh, Exact Sciences Corporation in Madison, Drexel University in Philadelphia and Higginbotham Insurance in Fort Worth, Texas. Wisconsin Rapids School District was a silver level recipient and Neosho School District in Missouri was a bronze level winner.

Over the past four years, 13 Wisconsin organizations have received the platinum designation. Neenah is the only school district among the state's platinum recipients.

Neenah students returned to school for in person learning on Sept. 1. The District adopted a "COVID Recovery Plan" aimed at keeping students in school.



The plan includes COVID testing that is being conducted by an outside company for District students and staff. When students or staff members are showing symptoms or identified as close contacts, they are able to schedule a rapid (antigen) and PCR test at the high school to determine whether they will be able to remain at school.



Future Neenah High School students were the first to put shovels into the ground for their new school on June 10 during the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Neenah High School that will open in the fall of 2023. For more information on the progress of the construction and other referendum projects, see page 5.

From the Superintendent



The value of in-person learning simply can't be overstated!

After a year where about one-fifth of our students were engaged in virtual learning for an entire school year and many others were in and out of school throughout the school year, we are so excited to have every one of our

students back in front of teachers this year. With many of our staff members and even some of our older students now vaccinated, we are hopeful and confident that our schools will remain open throughout the 2021-22 school year.

Prior to opening our doors on September 1, we surveyed our elementary families and as a result, decided not to offer a virtual option. Having interpersonal relationships with peers and adults is a significant part of the educational experience and just can't be replicated virtually. The mental health of our students was also challenged during the past year for those who were unable to interact with their friends and teachers on a daily basis.

We saw that impact firsthand during the final few months of the most recent school year. While we were proud to be able to offer an in-person experience for most of the 2020-21 school year, we had very few incidents of schools or classes moving to virtual learning from March through May. The strides our students made with a consistent in-person environment in academic success and personal relationships were profound.

In order to maintain this in-person learning environment, we have taken some measures to ensure that our students and staff are safe and healthy. We are especially proud to offer on-site daily testing for students and staff as well as the two vaccination clinics we had over the summer. In just the first few weeks of this school year, these testing procedures have already significantly reduced quarantines and missed class time for both students and staff.

School is certainly different than it was just two years ago, but the differences aren't as substantial as many might think. In the end, teachers are with students and children are with their friends. It doesn't get much better than that.

Neenah With Pride!

Dr. Mary Pfeiffer
Superintendent

Nine Schools Honored for Positive Behaviors

Nine Neenah Joint School District schools have been rewarded for their work with developing positive behaviors in schools during 2020-21 by the Wisconsin Response to Intervention Center. All nine schools are receiving the award for the third straight time after they were not presented in 2019-20.

Clayton, Hoover, Lakeview and Wilson Elementary Schools were all honored for the fifth time and earned Silver Level distinction. Shattuck Middle School, Taft and Tullar Elementary Schools were chosen for the fourth straight time and received Bronze Level awards, while Horace Mann Middle School and Spring Road Elementary were selected for the third straight time at the Bronze Level.

The schools received the recognition for their work accomplished through the implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

The Wisconsin Response to Intervention Center is funded by the Department of Public Instruction to provide statewide training and technical assistance to help create equitable and responsive schools and districts.

Silver Level schools had fully implemented programs for at least two years, while Bronze Level schools have had programs implemented for at least one year.

PBIS is a system-wide framework that enables schools to be more effective and responsive to student social-emotional needs

by implementing a multi-level system of support for their behavior. Schools were selected based on an application process that included team and meeting information, implementation and outcome data, a narrative that described the data systems and practices of PBIS implementation.



All NJSD Students Eligible for Free Meals

Neenah Joint School District students will not be charged for school meals throughout the entire 2021-22 school year through a federally-funded waiver program.

All students are eligible for free breakfast and lunch through the continuation of the USDA's Seamless Summer Option program. A la carte items and additional milk items will be charged a fee.

Families who may qualify for free or reduced lunch should continue to submit applications, even if you are not sure you qualify. Filling out the meal application form is necessary for other programs and may be used to determine if your household is eligible for other benefits.

The free and reduced meals application form is on the food service page of the District website.

NJSD Asbestos Removal Report

The Board of Education approved an Asbestos Management plan in accordance with the Federal Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). A copy of the District-wide plan is on file at the Administration Building, 410 South Commercial Street. Inquiries about the plan should be directed to the Director of Facilities at (920) 751-6800, ext 10133. Each school building also has a plan, which is on file in the principal's office. Inquiries about a building's plan should be directed either to the building principal or to the school secretary. Asbestos management activities which occurred over the past 12 months include, but are not limited to, the following: 1) the required 6-month inspections; and 2) ongoing operations and maintenance projects done as necessary by certified personnel.

Open Hearts, Open Minds

Over 1,000 Neenah High School Students Collaborate on Mural

Over 1,000 Neenah High School students collaborated on a sculptural mural that will reside in the school hallways and be a part of the new high school when it opens in 2023.

The project was planned by art students and completed with the assistance of artist-in-residence Connie Greany of Legacy Murals. Students in the school's art classes and advisory classes all contributed to the project that was coordinated by teacher Lisa Dorschner. Each student was given a clay medallion to inscribe with drawings or positive messages for the mural. The completed medallions were glazed by art students and glued to the mural. Over half of the school's 2,000 student enrollment participated in the project. Students and staff were surveyed last fall to help determine the content of the mural and the work took place



during the spring semester.

The design theme is "Open Hearts, Open Minds" to signify the many ways students care for one another as they strive to grow during their high school years. It promotes the wellness and mental health of the school community and highlights the "Sources of Strength" program that focuses on youth mental health. One side features hands and hearts reaching for the Sources of Strength logo, while the other side features a Fibonacci spiral in reference to the harmonious mathematical sequence seen throughout science, nature and space. The mural

also has a sculptural shape with a planter on top.

District technology education teacher Dean Olkowski built the framework that is designed to be moved when the school relocates to a new facility in two years. The project was funded by a grant from the District's PBNJ mental health fund.



For the second straight year, Neenah High School held a parade for graduating seniors on the morning of graduation day. Students donned their caps and gowns and rode around the high school neighborhood and Memorial Park.

Three Students Semifinalists for National Merit Scholarship



Three Neenah High School seniors have been named semifinalists for the prestigious National Merit Scholarship Program.

Andrew Hou (*pictured, top left*), Ethan Hou (*right*) and Caleb Youngwerth (*bottom left*) were honored for their performance among than 1.5 million students nationwide who entered the 2022 competi-

tion by taking the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.

Andrew and Ethan Hou are the sons of Yanming Hou and Jie Zhou. Both students posted perfect 36 scores on their ACT exams last year and both are involved in soccer and orchestra. Andrew has a 3.98 grade point average and Ethan owns a 4.0 grade point average.



Youngwerth is the son of James and Jennifer Youngwerth. He scored a 35 on his ACT exam last year and owns a 4.0 grade point average. He was a state qualifier in swimming last winter and is a member of the marching band. Youngwerth served on the subcommittee to help develop plans for the performing arts areas of the new Neenah High School.

performing arts areas of the new Neenah High School.

Sounds of Music Return in 2021-22

Music and drama events are back on this year across the District as the public will be welcome to attend any concerts or events. Last year, most concerts were cancelled. A musical was held in the spring and the show choir held its annual “Finale” for a limited audience.

The 2021-22 fine arts season began in late September with five shows of the musical *Legally Blonde*. The marching band has also performed at home football games and both the Shattuck and high school bands took part in the annual homecoming parade.



Choir and orchestra concerts will also be held and most of the elementary schools are scheduled to hold their winter concerts in December.

Masks will be required of spectators as long as masks are being required during the school day.



The Spring Road Elementary School playground now features a “Communication Board” to assist students at the school who are non-verbal. The students communicate in the classroom through an iPad with voice output, but they are unable to take the iPads on the playground, so the board allows for communication with peers and adults.

Girls Tennis Looks to Build On State Runner-up Finish With New Coach

Neenah High School’s girls tennis team has been the top-ranked team in the state for much of the 2021 fall season after a state runner-up finish during its spring season last May.

The Rockets are also under new leadership as longtime Neenah resident and former college tennis standout, Dan Grassl has taken over as head coach.

Grassl has lived in Neenah for 20 years and been active in the city’s youth sports programs. Grassl played four seasons at Michigan Tech University from 1996-99 and ranks sixth in school history in career singles wins and fifth in career doubles victories.

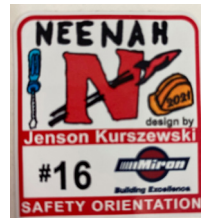


The Rockets went 16-1 during the WIAA alternate spring season in 2020-21, suffering their only loss in the state championship match 4-3 to Middleton in May. Additionally, Sophia Paape and Shelby Roth became the ninth Neenah tandem to capture a state doubles championship.

Grassl replaces Kyle Falk, who resigned at the end of the season and will continue as Neenah’s head boys’ tennis coach. This fall, the girls team won its ninth consecutive Fox Valley Association championship and extended its winning streak against conference opponents to 82 straight.

Tullar Student Designs Sticker for New High School Construction Site

Tullar Elementary fifth grader Jenson Kurszewski was the winner of Miron Construction’s contest to design a safety sticker for workers building the new Neenah High School.



Tullar third, fourth and fifth graders took part in the contest that was organized by Tullar art teacher Jen Redling and Miron. Jenson’s design includes the Neenah and Miron logos with a screwdriver and a hard hat. Each sticker also includes Jenson’s name and an individualized number for identification.

As workers come on site, they are awarded a sticker and adhere it to their hard hats when completing the safety orientation.



Maddie Wanamaker, a 2013 Neenah High School graduate, became the third Neenah alum to qualify for an Olympic Games when she made the USA rowing team and competed in Tokyo this summer. Charles Timm qualified in bobsled for the 1968 Winter Olympics and Laura Coenen participated in team handball in the 1988, 1992 and 1996 Summer Olympics (USA Rowing photo).

Foundations Being Poured for New Neenah High School



What's Happening

- ◆ Crews have been using dynamite to pulverize the bedrock, which allows them to pour footings (the base of the building) and gain access for installing utilities in the site.
- ◆ In early October, crews will begin drilling geothermal wells which will contain underground loops of pipe that will move liquid for heating and cooling. When the weather is cool, the liquid heats up to bring heat into the building. The system runs in reverse when the weather is warm, bringing cool air into the school and saving significant costs and fossil fuel use.
- ◆ Over 400,000 yards of dirt has been removed and 300 yards of concrete has been poured. A retention pond was also built on the southeast side of the property..

Safety/Security and ADA Updates Completed Throughout the Summer

Coolidge Elementary



This summer, construction crews completed safety/security and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) updates to Coolidge Elementary, Hoover Elementary, Roosevelt Elementary, Tullar Elementary and Washington School of Early Learning. The other schools were all completed in the summer of 2020. The photos on this page show the new secure entrances at the five elementary schools. Tullar's project was more significant due to the layout of the building as the new entrance used existing classroom space. Two new classrooms were built on the school's west side.

Hoover Elementary



Roosevelt Elementary



Tullar Elementary



Washington School of Early Learning



Russell Selected as Taft Principal

An experienced educator as a classroom teacher, literacy coach and administrator, Karen Russell has been named the new principal at Taft Elementary School.



Russell has spent the past four years as the Associate Principal at Howe Elementary Community School in Green Bay. She previously worked nearly 13 years in three different roles in the Appleton Area School District. Russell was a classroom teacher for nine years at McKinley Elementary School before working as a Reading Interventionist and Literacy Coach for two years at Johnston

Elementary School. She was also the District's Literacy Coach for grades 3-5 for two years.

Russell holds a bachelor's degree in education from UW-Milwaukee and earned a master's degree in education and administrator certificate from Viterbo University.



Tullar Elementary fourth grade students adopted cows and learned about them throughout the year. Students in Ms. Burmeister's class adopted Sharlamagne and students in Ms. Beno's class got to know Dorito. Students and their families took a field trip after school ended to visit their cows in person for the first time in Manitowoc.

Yang Named to Equity/Inclusion Post

Sae Yang has been named the Neenah Joint School District's Equity and Inclusion Coordinator. The new position is a District-level position that provides guidance and leadership to District and building level staff focused on developing practices, policy and strategies geared toward equitable outcomes and maintaining high academic standards for all students.



Yang has been an English Learner teacher for the past seven years at Appleton West High School. Yang has served on the Appleton Area

School District's achievement, community and equity committee for the past six years. She has also worked with several District diversity groups and assisted newcomers and refugees in their transition to the area.

In addition, Michelle Streed was hired as the District's Equity and Inclusion Instructional Coach.

Neenah Rocket Apparel Available on Demand Through Neenah Outfitters

Neenah Rocket apparel may be ordered any-time through the newly-created Neenah Outfitters online store. All proceeds benefit the Neenah High School Downtown Campus.

Orders may be placed through the District website by clicking on "Neenah Rocket Apparel" under the Community tab.



Orders will be available within two weeks. There are no refunds or exchanges. Orders will be shipped to your home (shipping charges apply).

The store features a wide range of apparel and other items.



In Memoriam: Mike Lehman (1971-2021)

The Neenah Joint School District is deeply saddened by the passing of Mike Lehman, who taught chemistry at Neenah High School for the past 25 years. Lehman passed unexpectedly on Tuesday, May 4 after experiencing health issues in recent years.

Lehman was well-known for patrolling the middle of the dance floor as a long-time chaperone for prom and homecoming dances at Neenah High School. He also advised the school's Science Olympiad team for over 20 years and loved performing science experiments for elementary students during summer school STEM courses.



Lehman was recently inducted into the District's Quarter Century Club for his 25 years of teaching. A Berlin High School graduate, he attended UW-Oshkosh and received a Bachelor of Science degree in physics, chemistry and math. He earned a Master of Science in Education from National Louis University. Lehman is survived by his wife Kelly, son Zeb and daughter Annabelle.

Neenah High School's 12th annual Helping Hands Craft Fair

is set for Saturday, Nov. 6 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the Ron Einerson Fieldhouse. Over 100 fine arts and crafts vendors will display a wide variety of goods and there will be a used book sale. Admission for the entire day is \$2 per person. All proceeds benefit NJSD families in urgent financial need during the holiday season.

The vendor list is full for this year's event.

2021 NJSD Employees of the Year



Elementary Teacher
Amy Frost, 13th Year
Coolidge Elementary, K-1st Grade



Middle School Teacher
Jessica Muller, 9th Year
Horace Mann M.S. Music



High School Teacher
Jesse Schettle, 19th Year
Neenah H.S. Biology



Special Services Teacher
Dr. Mike Altekruze, 7th Year
District Mental Health Coordinator



Administrator
Jackie Muñoz-Ellmann, 16th Year
Principal, Horace Mann M.S.



Administrative Asst./Exempt
Rocco Marchionda, 10th Year
District Instructional Systems Analyst



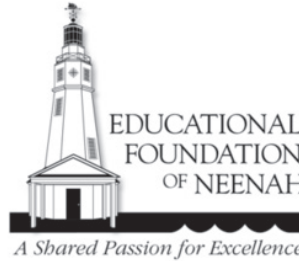
Educational Assistant
Jan Stankivitz, 19th Year
Alliance/Roosevelt Elementary



Operations/Maintenance
Chris Cummings, 4th Year
Spring Road Elementary

Educational Foundation of Neenah Selects Teaching Award Recipients

The Educational Foundation of Neenah honored 19 Neenah Joint School District educators in its 2020-21 “Rocketing Ahead: Celebration of Education” Teaching Awards.



Each recipient receives a grant for classroom enhancements or professional development opportunities. The grants were created to recognize educators who have demonstrated innovative or creative classroom methods and who are involved in extra-curricular activities for their students and community.

Each school has at least one recipient of the awards with two selections from Shattuck Middle School and three honorees from Neenah High School.

Those honored include: **Becky Bardosy** and **Stephanie Markman** (Alliance), **Emily Diggins** and **Rylee Engelland** (Clayton), **Jerry Spanbauer** (Coolidge), **Danielle Lisowe** (Hoover), **Kristine Hutchinson** (Lakeview), **Karie Ann Zeinert** (Roosevelt), **Molly Messner** (Spring Road), **Brad Brookins** (Taft), **April Schoepel** (Tullar), **Deirdre Floros** (Washington), **Jeannine Schmidt** (Wilson), **Michelle Marchionda** (Horace Mann), **Sara Trochinski** (Shattuck), **Kristen Woulf** (Shattuck), **Scott Hertting** (NHS), **Andrea Peterson-Longmore** (NHS) and **Tony White** (NHS).

The Educational Foundation of Neenah, founded in 1986, is a non-profit community-based organization with an all volunteer board of directors. The foundation’s mission is to provide funds to enhance the quality, accessibility and diversity of learning opportunities within the Neenah public school community.



Neenah schools participated in Hmong-American Day on May 14. Students learned about Hmong culture through a variety of activities. Some staff members and students, including superintendent Dr. Mary Pfeiffer, dressed in traditional Hmong clothing. Classes discussed various aspects of the Hmong culture and history. Hmong students even shared their own family experiences with different classes.



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Key 2021-22 Dates

* All Dates Subject to Change

October

29.....Early Dismissal - All Levels (Parent-Teacher Conferences)

November

5.....Early Dismissal - Grades K-8 (End of Quarter)

24-26 Thanksgiving Break

December

23-31 Winter Break

January

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

17.....No School - All Levels (Martin Luther King, Jr. Day)

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

February

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

March

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

11Early Dismissal - All Levels (Parent-Teacher Conferences)

18.....Early Dismissal - Grades K-8 (End of Quarter)

21-28No School - All Levels (Spring Break)

April

15.....No School - All Levels

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

May

25.....NHS Graduation

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

30.....No School - All Levels (Memorial Day)

June

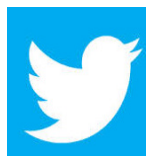
2.....Last Day of School - 4K and Early Childhood

3.....Last Day of School (Early Dismissal) - Grades K-11



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Neenah Joint School District

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Two Ways to Join Board Meetings

All Neenah Joint School District Board of Education meetings are being held online via Zoom and in person. The public is welcome to join the meetings through a link on the District website (www.neenah.k12.wi.us) or in person. Meetings are typically held the first and third Tuesday of each month.