



The Norsemen **Pride**

May 2024 | Issue 35

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INSIDE



VFW Awards Scholarship to NM Senior

By Maddy Gleason

Senior Allie Friesner participated in the VFW “Voice of Democracy” Writing Scholarship this past winter. Starting in October, Allie developed her essay based on the prompt: “What Are the Greatest Attributes of Our Democracy?” This scholarship has many levels of competition: local post, district, state, and national. Allie won at her local post and won at the district level – both earning her monetary prizes. Finally, she went to the state competition where all the students get to engage in fun activities and have a grand banquet in their honor. Her essay won her top honors and she received \$1,500. I am so proud of Allie for taking advantage of this opportunity and having success with her writing.

“The VFW competition was an experience of a lifetime. I got to meet some incredible people and learned so many new things about our nation and its Veterans. I am very grateful for this opportunity and all those who supported me through it!” - Allie Friesner



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A Message From Our Superintendent!

Greetings Norse Nation!



Don't look now, but the final home stretch to our school year is upon us! The end of the school year is such an exciting and busy time. Please be sure to take in some of our students' performances, athletic events and other activities. We are very fortunate to have so many

incredibly talented young people in our community – it is a joy to watch them excel in their areas of interest. Several of those talented students will be moving to the next chapter in their lives very soon – congratulations to the Class of 2024!

As you are about to experience, the Norsemen pride is alive and well as depicted in the pages of this newest edition! The Tradition of Excellence Continues!

Now, get ready to enjoy your spring edition of the Norsemen Pride! As always, please contact me if you have ideas on how we may continue to make this an effective communication piece for our community. I hope to see you soon – take care!

Enjoy,

Curt Babcock, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools

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and expects the BEST."***

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NORTH MUSKEGON PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2024 ATHLETICS BOND PROPOSAL

BETTER TOGETHER

For generations, a unique partnership between the North Muskegon Public Schools and the City of North Muskegon has allowed the District to use the City's parks and recreational facilities for athletic programming. This May, our community will consider a tax rate increase of 1.00 mills to make important improvements to extend the life of these facilities. **A homeowner of a \$200,000 house would pay approximately \$100 more per year.**



FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS
\$5.6 million would be invested in athletic facilities



TAX IMPACT
The new NMPS tax rate would be 8.82 mills



ELECTION DAY IS MAY 7
Absentee voting begins March 28, 2024

PROPOSED BOND-FUNDED PROJECTS

If the May 7 bond proposal is approved, the District would pair the new bond funds with other funding sources from the City. Athletic bond funds would be used for:

- **North Muskegon Stadium** - Upgrades to the Fred Jacks Memorial Field, including a new entry plaza, track resurfacing, and the addition of synthetic turf. This new surface would increase playability throughout the year. A new concessions and restroom building would enhance the fan and visitor experience.
- **Waterfront Sports Park (Block 58)** - Improvements to the existing softball field and the construction of a new restroom building for district and community use.
- **Bear Lake Park*** - Assist the city with the finishing touches to the upcoming tennis complex (eight tennis/pickleball courts). This project is intended to expand capacity for competition and practice use for the district and community.
- **Soccer Competition Field*** - Assist the city with the finishing touches to the Astroturf field on Eimer Street. The district would focus on the addition of lighting and fencing to enhance the new facility.

* Projects that were approved by the Built to Play millage (passed in 2019). Athletic bond funds would enhance these already initiated projects.

VOTE BY MAY 7, 2024

Absentee voting begins March 28, 2024



Learn more at nmps.net

COMPLETING THE MASTER PLAN.

The May 7 vote is a **final step** in the District and City's shared facility master planning effort. Together we have identified opportunities to maximize state and federal grant funding while minimizing the millage impact to our residents. Learn more about our process:

IDENTIFYING NEEDS, ENVISIONING POTENTIAL

Over six years ago, a group of District and City leaders met to discuss the concept of replacing or improving all of our shared outdoor athletic/recreation facilities. This included all of the current city-owned recreation/athletic facilities and the addition of the Russell Rd. Baseball Complex.

Projects initiated by the city's Built to Play millage project:

- Tournament-ready, eight court tennis/pickleball complex
- Creation of a new baseball complex (currently out to bid)
- Creation of a new soccer competition field (under construction)
- Creation of a new multipurpose field (under construction)

Projects to be funded by the NMPS 2024 Athletics Bond Proposal:

- Complete the Stadium Master Plan by upgrading/updating the field with synthetic turf, building a new stadium entrance with ticket booth, concessions, restroom facilities, expanded parking, etc.
- Restroom facility and softball field improvements at the Waterfront Sports Complex (Block 58)
- Add lighting and additional fencing at the soccer competition field
- Add and support the expanded facilities at the tennis/pickleball complex

MULTIFACETED FINANCING APPROACH

While developing the plan, it was acknowledged that multiple funding sources were needed to accomplish all the projects. Neither the District nor the City's existing operating budgets and millages could cover all the costs for the improvements needed. Whereas neither the district nor the city could do it on their own, it would be possible to work together with the support of our community to address these long overdue improvements.

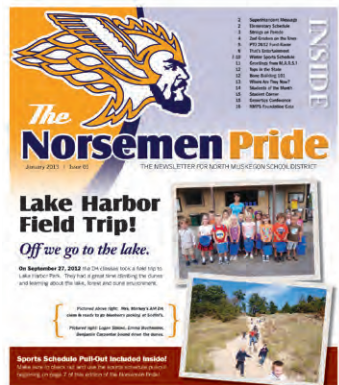
The following funds are being used to complete these projects:

1. **COMPLETED - State and Federal Grants** - The City received \$1.3 million in grants to support the projects at the Soccer/Multi-use Facility, the Baseball Complex, and the Tennis Complex.
2. **COMPLETED - City's Built to Play Millage** - The 2019 millage approved by city voters to initiate the baseball, soccer, and tennis projects.
3. **New! NMPS 2024 Athletics Bond Proposal (Vote by May 7th!)**
4. **Donations** - In-Progress.
5. **Volunteerism** - To put the finishing touches on our shared facilities and provide ongoing support.

FUNDING ALREADY SECURED

- \$1.3 million in city grant funds from National Park Service - Land and Water Conservation Fund and Michigan Department of Natural Resources Natural Resources Trust Fund
- \$1.5 million from the City's Built to Play millage to initiate construction/improvements to the baseball, soccer, and tennis complexes.

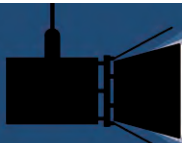
VOTE BY MAY 7, 2024



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STAFF SPOTLIGHT



MR. CLARK

Social Studies and PE Teacher

"I love NM because of the community support. The community values education. Also, it's pretty cool when people come up to me that might be in their 50's and start reminiscing about our experiences together when they were my students. Sometimes, I need a reminder of

their names, and they might have more vivid memories than I do, but it's neat that I might have made an impact on their lives."
- Doug Clark

WHAT ARE YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES?

My responsibilities include ensuring my students learn the curriculum not only mandated by the standards of the state of Michigan, but beyond. I want them to be more aware of what is important in the world, not just what is on social media. I, and all of the staff, want to help them prepare for life beyond their educational years at North Muskegon and be able to function as positive leaders in society.

WHAT IS YOUR MESSAGE TO TEACHERS JUST STARTING OUT?

Hang in there and prepare for change. Over the course of 36 years of teaching, I've seen a lot of changes. When I first started, I had a piece of chalk and a chalkboard. Every assignment was done on paper. There were no cell phones, there was no internet. Technological advances and educational ideas have changed over the years, but the goal always remains the same. Educate your students to the best of your ability.

WHAT IS ONE IMPORTANT SKILL THAT YOU THINK EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE?

Being able to learn from your mistakes. No one is perfect. We've all done things that we regret. The important thing is to reflect on your mistakes and to try to do better next time.

HOW DID YOU GET TO WHERE YOU ARE TODAY?

I was raised in a supportive family that valued education. In my pre-college years, I never really considered going into education. I went to college to see what I was passionate about doing with the rest of my working life. I got a degree from Hope College in political science and PE, student taught at Holland High School, and Mr. Rypstra's mother, who was superintendent at NM at the time, gave me a call to come in for an interview. I was hired the same day and NM has been my life for the past 36 years. I wouldn't trade places with anyone.

WOULD YOU RATHER GO BACK IN TIME OR BE TRANSPORTED TO THE FUTURE?

I'd rather be transported to the future. I have memories that cover the span of almost 59 years that I will cherish. But, I'd like to see what happens 59 years from now and the changes that might occur.



MRS. BUDD

Elementary Secretary

"North Muskegon has always held a special place in my heart. My Mom, Judi (Jullie) McIntyre taught at North Muskegon for nearly 30 years. I graduated from NM and each of my three children also graduated from North Muskegon. There has always been

a high regard for excellence in education as well as a strong community bond that has resonated through the years. This is evident in community involvement, traditions and Norsemen pride! I am proud to be an alum and blessed to be part of the staff at North Muskegon." - Tami Budd

WHAT ARE YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES?

My responsibilities have evolved since first being hired. I make sure everything runs smoothly in the elementary building. I am responsible for making sure there is coverage for staff that are absent or attending meetings. I also reserve the spaces in the building with the exception of the gymnasiums (Mr. Cooke is in charge of the gymnasiums). I publish the weekly communication - NM Friday flyer. I publish notices of upcoming events and registrations on the NM website and NM app. I assist with state assessments, making sure the students are uploaded into the assessment system and their test tickets are printed and organized for testing day. I help students who are not feeling well. I set up Kindergarten round-up testing, new parent open house, and the Kindergarten round-up day. I enroll new students and their families entering NM Elementary. The list goes on...

WHAT IS A DREAM YOU WANT TO COME TRUE ONE DAY?

I would like to publish children's books.

WHO ARE SOME OF YOUR BIGGEST INFLUENCES?

My Mom, Judi (Jullie) McIntyre has always been my biggest support and has taught me the values of being a good person, a thoughtful friend, and loving parent. My geometry teacher, Mr. Ben Quick, taught me to "make a valiant attempt" in all that I do. My husband, Shawn, has always demonstrated the importance of high moral values.

WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN TEN YEARS?

In ten years, I hope to be enjoying time as a grandparent and having more time to travel with my husband.

HOW DID YOU GET TO WHERE YOU ARE TODAY?

After I had my first child, I was a stay-at-home Mom. I volunteered at school and eventually started subbing on occasion. I knew I wanted to enter the workforce when my kids were older and didn't need me at home as much. One day, Mr. Zainea asked me if I would be interested in being his secretary and the rest in history! I have thoroughly enjoyed being in the elementary office to help with whatever need arises! Interacting with the students, family members and staff on a daily basis has been a true blessing! I have always said that "I feel like I am where I am supposed to be." When I feel like I no longer make a difference, then it will be time for me to leave.



MRS. MCPHERSON

Head Cook

"I love being part of the community and the traditions of North Muskegon. I'm a strong believer in the saying "once a Norsemen always a Norsemen" is a very true statement because we are all willing to give what we have to make sure our kids have

everything they need." - Brenda McPherson

WHAT ARE YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES?

My main responsibility is that lunch is prepared on time and to feed all the students DK-12th grade. There are a bunch of other responsibilities that go into my role in making sure every part of our operations is safe for our kids. Delivery of products, storing, preparation, serving and clean-up. But it all goes back to making sure the students are fed and on time.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT THE CAFETERIA?

My favorite part is being able to see students everyday from DK-12th grade. I get to know the students that come to the cafeteria everyday and build relationships with them. The special part is keeping those relationships throughout their time at North Muskegon.

WHAT WOULD YOU BUY IF YOU WON THE LOTTERY?

If I won the lottery, I would build my dream house on Lake Michigan so I could see the lake everyday.

HOW DID YOU GET TO WHERE YOU ARE TODAY?

I started out as a volunteer in the kitchen 25 years ago when my youngest started school full time. Since then I have done many roles in the kitchen to become a full time lunch lady and have grown in my role to where I am today as head cook.

NM Chess Team Starts Strong!

By Coach Audrie Cox

We are thrilled to announce the creation and accomplishments of our first ever Chess Team here at North Muskegon Public Schools!

The newly founded North Muskegon Chess Team offers a refreshing alternative—a chance to unplug, connect face-to-face, and engage in a timeless game of strategy and skill. This team, composed of some of our most strategic and sharp-minded middle and high school students, has been meeting and practicing throughout the year, and competed in a county tournament with teams from surrounding school districts Hesperia, Orchard View, and Whitehall. Our team consisted of students Logan Eerbeek (12th), Cole Blastic (11th), Hunter Soelberg (11th), Potter Johnson (9th), Anahera Leos (7th), Jaiden Smith (7th), and Trentin Perini (7th), who represented North Muskegon well as the first Chess Team for the district. Our season ended with two of our high school players, Cole Blastic and Hunter Soelberg, participating in an individual tournament in Whitehall where they both went 4-1 earning All Conference awards. Great job everyone, and we look forward to next season!



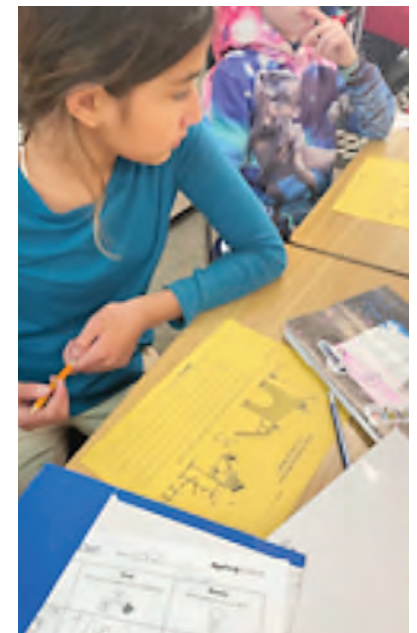
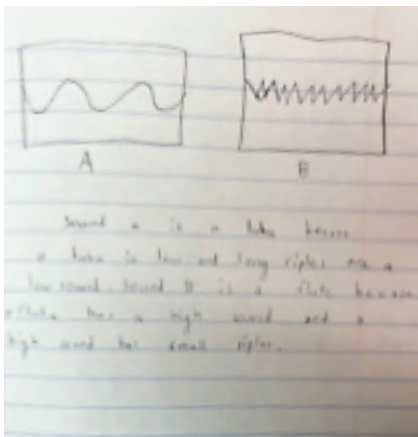
NORTH MUSKEGON 4TH GRADERS ARE SLIC!

North Muskegon 4th grade teachers, Amy Zonnebelt, Terri Fortmeyer, and Jen Bouman, were offered the opportunity this year to join with the Muskegon Area Intermediate School District (MAISD) in strengthening students' skills in science and language arts, with a focus on science writing. The Science Literacy Integration Collaboration (SLIC) program is a collaborative effort between teachers, coaches, and science consultants throughout Michigan to increase time spent in high-quality science instruction with integrated literacy practices. NM teachers met regularly with Kari Parnin, science consultant, and Erin Hedrick, literacy specialist, to plan and help implement exemplary lessons for our 4th graders.

The 4th grade team began by teaching a foundational understanding of writing summaries, stop and jots, main ideas/details, and C.E.R.s. Students then decorated science journals and began recording their thoughts during a Mystery Science Sound unit. Students used these writing moves to show their learning throughout the sound unit and then into the next energy unit.

There was strong evidence of learning throughout the unit.

"The Science & Literacy Integration Collaboration has changed the way we teach science and writing together by including more opportunities for students to discuss, think critically, and then write their ideas about what they are learning. This project also gave students the opportunity to organize their thoughts through sketches, notes, and shorter writing assignments while writing informational text. It was a SLIC project, and we look forward to continuing to learn from each other."





Toys for Tots



By Maddy Gleason

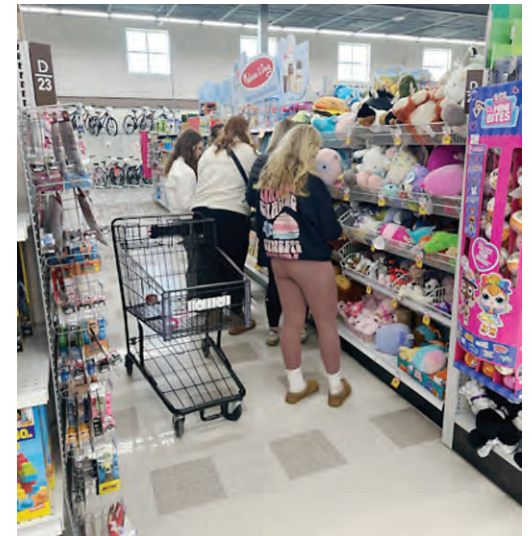


This past December, Ms. Gleason's Senior English classes participated in a service day event. Local community member, David Wilkins, raises money from his business, Wilkins Arms, every year to purchase toys for the children of Veterans in Muskegon county for Christmas. As a Veteran, serving 37 years in the United States Air Force, this cause is close to his heart. While Wilkins loves raising the money, he was hoping to find volunteers to actually choose and purchase the gifts. Ms. Gleason's class, who had been searching for a community service project, were the perfect shoppers! These two classes started their morning by writing Christmas cards to Veterans; then, they set out to Meijer and Walmart to shop for toys. The groups of students worked meticulously to get toys for all demographics of kids and to get the largest amount of presents within their budget. There was a sense of nostalgia for all while shopping every aisle, and I think everyone remembered how much fun it was to be a kid.



"After filling up the bus with bags of toys and dropping them off at the VFW, I had so much pride for our Norse Seniors. This group of kids displayed great kindness and selflessness through their service that brought tears to my eyes. As our Seniors go off into the world in a few short months, I will always remember spending this time with them and how proud I was to be their teacher." - Ms. Gleason

Special thanks to Kristina Archer, Sarah Rumley, & Lovie Gray for their support in this event.



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Our DK Class is Growing UP!

DK gardens are getting started with our annual growing project! We begin by starting seeds, then hanging them on our indoor grow racks. Our first plants will be beans and peas! Thank you to Ms. Sarah Krajewski for teaching us about plants, how to grow them, and how delicious they can be!



NM Fourth Graders Honor Earth Day!

By Mr. Tony Jarvis

NM has the unique opportunity to build relationships across the grade levels. This March the HS Environmental Club invited our fourth graders to enter the annual Statewide Michigan Earth Day Poster Contest for 2024. Mrs Fortmeyer's, Mrs Zonnebelt's, and Mrs Bouman's fourth grade students all participated, creating posters that included wildlife, plants, land, and/or freshwater ecosystems native to Michigan. HS Environmental Club members then voted, and winning posters were selected from each class. The winning artwork was posted in the High School building and entered into the Statewide competition. The State winners will be posted publicly prior to Earth Day April 22. Great job everyone!

Winners: Emerson Eckhardt, Sebastian Thompson, Charlotte Leonard

Environmental Club Advisor: Mr Jarvis

Club President: Sage Brewer,

Vice President: Evan Atkinson-Miller

Mrs. Fortmeyer, Mrs Zonnebelt,

Mrs Bouman, Dr. Babcock,

Mrs Schultz



NM STUDENTS' SHOWCASE SUCCESS!

Congratulations to our Showcase participants and WINNERS!



Ella Mallon- 1st Place Overall -

Solo dramatic performance of an original poem

Third Place Overall - Ensemble performance of "Oceans" featuring Isabelle DeJonge, Maya Corbin & Braydyn Santos

Anna Blastic- Visual Arts

Academics - Analeah Wingard

Athletics - Allie Jensen & Ben Meyer



NM Staff Celebrates Snowcoming with a blast from the 80's past!



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THANK YOU 2023 DONORS!

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NEF's Mission is to enhance the educational experience of our students by funding excellence in teaching and learning beyond what is provided through operating funds.

Congratulations to the 19 applicants who received Spring mini grants in February 2024! A total of over \$15,000 was granted to support the following Enhancing Education for all our students' learning projects:

Stephanie Atchison, Flexible Seating; Sara Bahorski/Tanya Kolkema, Dystopian Novel Unit; Heidi Houseman, Real Life Applications; Ronda Pek, Organization is the Key to Success; Christine Livingston, Art and Literacy; Tom DeLong, Sound/Microphone System; Charles Rypstra, Engineering/Electronics; Beth Slimko, Pops Choreography; Tanya Kolkema, Student Planners 24/25; Julie Johnson, Dramatic Play; Jenn Schultz, Where Everyone Belongs; Brittany Bethune, Supply my New Classroom; Deb Johnson, pGLO Bacterial Transformation; Tony Jarvis, Gone Boarding Materials; Chip VanderWier, Card Shop; Sydney VanZee, emWavePro; Terri Fortmeyer, LEGO Robotics with SPIKE Prime; Jessica Howe, Peace Room Enrichment/Sensory Integration; Amy Zonnebelt, Fun with STEM Activities.

History of Grants

NEF started grants in December 2012. There are two yearly grant cycles comprised of full grants in the fall and a mini cycle in the spring. To date we have awarded 150 grants.

All donations have helped NEF give back to the Staff and Students of North Muskegon Public Schools – Incredible!

KickStart to Career

Muskegon County invests in kids through KickStart to Career Muskegon – a children's savings account program designed to give students an early boost towards a great career. KickStart to Career opens a \$50 savings account for every kindergartener in Muskegon County. Norse Education Foundation matched that for all 1st-5th grade current NM students with a \$50 deposit on December 12th as a Dorothy Wilson Scholarship. Kindergarten accounts opened in February and Norse Education Foundation matched that initial deposit with another \$50 Dorothy Wilson Scholarship. Dorothy's wish is for all students to have a successful future. These scholarships will help all our North Muskegon students' future successes.

NEF is excited to announce Scholarships starting with the Class of 2024

Traditional Scholarship of \$10,000 and 2 - Non-Traditional Scholarships of up to \$5,000 for Technical or Trade School programs. Candidates will apply through the Muskegon Community Foundation.

Website:
NMP.S.NET/NEF

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Like and Follow Norse Education Foundation on Facebook

North Muskegon Quiz Bowl Is Growing!

This year's Inaugural Middle School Quizbowl team participated in the West Central Junior High Quizbowl Mashup and took 4th place! Congratulations to team members Steven Zonnebelt, Jonas Slimko, Robby Blastic, Johnny English, and Anahera Leos!

Our High School Quiz Bowl team continues to grow! We applaud this year's team members Cole Blastic, Anna Blastic, Analea Wingard, Oskar Howard, Ella Mallon, and Teresa Enders!

Many thanks to our committed coaches, Kim Blastic and Brett Howard!



*Celebrating
Educational
Excellence*



NORSE
EDUCATION
FOUNDATION

**OPEN HOUSE GRANT
SHOWCASE EVENT**

Monday, May 13, 2024

6 to 8 p.m.

North Muskegon Elementary Library

Attire: Casual

**Norse Education Foundation will
showcase Teacher Grants throughout the
building and share plans for NEF's future.**

Punch & Hors d'oeuvres will be served.

CAREER CAMP >>

For 7th & 8th graders at the Career Tech Center



June 17–June 20, 2024

Seats are limited so enroll today at

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CAREER TECH CENTER

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NORSE WRESTLING KEEPS GROWING!

By Coach Jonathan Allen

It was another year of firsts for both the North Muskegon Middle School Wrestling Club and the second-year Varsity High School Wrestling Club!

The largest accomplishment was that Brennen Allen became the first Varsity Norse Wrestler to ever qualify for the State Finals Tournament at Ford Field! Brennen battled his way into the “blood round” but fell one victory shy of All-State honors, although he has two more years to push towards his ultimate goal of being a State Champion. This was after he earned the title of District Champion in the 138-pound weight class. Along with Brennen, the Norse had two other wrestlers becoming the program’s



first three Regional Qualifiers: August Gerardi and Brayden Chase. The high school program is looking forward to its largest group of incoming, experienced freshmen next year so make sure you keep an eye on this growing team! They are only just getting started and more success is sure to come!

At the middle school, the team boasted its largest squad yet with 22

kids hitting the mat! This year the middle school team had a team record of five All-Conference wrestlers: Audra Allen (champion), Hudsyn Fielstra (champion), Will Bahorski (2nd), Gavin Quarry (2nd), and Bridget O’Connor (2nd). Audra and Hudsyn are the first two conference champions for our middle school team ever!

Another huge highlight from this year is girls’ wrestling in particular. Jaden Reagan, a sophomore, was the first female Norse wrestler to win a varsity match this year: a pin against Muskegon Catholic Central at team districts! The middle school team boasted 6 female athletes as well - the most in the West Michigan Conference - and three of them (as already mentioned) were All-Conference in the girls-only division.

If you want to learn more, donate, or otherwise support the Norse Wrestling program, please contact Coach Allen at jallen@nmps.net!



**The North Muskegon
Athletics Calendar
is available online at
www.nmps.net/athletics**

Schedules are regularly updated to reflect necessary changes

OWN THE FLOOR!

By Coach Melody Zziwambazza

North Muskegon competitive cheer owned the floor this year! After almost 20 years without a team, competitive cheer came back to NM four years ago. Many of the first athletes had done sideline cheer, but none had experience in the competitive arena. Over the years, the girls put in endless hours at practice and during private lessons learning how to clean their motions, perfect all the jumps, synchronize the skills, and learn how to lift other athletes and fly while making it look easy.

Coaches Melody Zziwambazza and Lexi Wolffis set a goal this season to improve on last year's scores and place higher than 7th in the conference and 10th in districts. Every day the push was to do better than before. Not only did the team beat last year's score, but they also placed 4th in districts making it to

regionals. Then they placed 4th in regionals, earning their spot as a 2024 State Finalist. North Muskegon competitive cheer ended the season 8th in the state out of over 80 schools in division 4. The team was led by 4 seniors who were on the first team four years ago: Maya Corbin, Katie Crawford, Olivia Midora, and Sophia Zziwambazza. North Muskegon competitive cheer will also be represented by our 1st and 2nd team all-district senior athletes Sophia Zziwambazza, Keira Staley, and Maya Corbin at the East v. West All-star football game June 22nd!

LET'S GO NORSE CHEER!!



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★ Students of the Month ★



November Students of the Month

Ella Mallon is the daughter of Larry Mallon and Yvonne Rekeny. She is a member of Student Council, National Honor Society, Norse United, Choir Council, NM Theatre and Environmental Club. In her free time, Ella enjoys playing board games, snowboarding, hanging out with friends, and building Legos. After

high school, she plans on attending college where she will major in Theatre.

Evan Atkinson-Miller is the son of Colleen Christophersen and Joe Miller. He is president of the Pride Club, vice president of the Environmental Club, treasurer of the National Art Honor Society, and a member of National Honor Society. Evan also runs cross country and track. In his free time he enjoys drumming, running, spending time with friends and family, playing video games, and playing soccer. After graduation, Evan plans to attend college to major in environmental engineering with hopes to become an environmental engineer.



December Students of the Month

Miriam Wilkie-Jones is the daughter of Debra Johnson and Chanol Wilkie-Jones. She enjoys playing sports with her classmates, working out, hanging out with friends and going to the beach. She is a member of National Honor Society, National Art Honor Society

and Harmonics. After graduation she will attend a university and major in philosophy with the intent to become a professor or go into law.

Analea Wingard is the daughter of Pamela and David Wingard. She is a member of the Student Council, Choir Council, NHS, Environmental Club, and Harmonics. She also participates in solo and ensemble, the talent show, and the honors performance series. In her free time, she enjoys hanging out with friends, reading, painting, and making music. After graduation, Analea plans to attend a four-year university where she will get a degree in biochemistry with the hopes of starting a career in scientific research with a focus on neurodegenerative disorders.



January Students of the Month

Allie Jensen is the daughter of Kelly Jensen and Eric Jensen. She is a member of National Honor Society, Environmental Club, National Art Honor Society, Norse United, and is class vice president in Student Council. Allie also plays soccer, basketball, and volleyball. In her free time, she enjoys hanging out

with friends, playing sports, working at the Lake House, and being with family. After graduation, Allie plans to attend MCC for two years and then transfer to a four year university.

Maya Corbin is the daughter of Angela and Ryan Corbin. She is a member of National Honor Society, French Club, and Environmental Club. Maya is also a four year member of both the sideline and competitive cheer teams. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with friends and family, reading, hiking, and listening to music. After graduation, Maya plans to attend a university to major in human biology, with hopes to become an ophthalmologist.



February Students of the Month

Sophia Lindsay is the daughter of Zabrina Santiago and Robert Lindsay. She is Senior Class President, Vice President of Rotary Interact, Treasurer of Environmental Club, and a member of NHS, Spanish Club, and Harmonics. She also plays on the Varsity Volleyball and Tennis teams. In her free time she

enjoys hanging out with her friends and family, going to the beach, and being active. Fia is headed to the University of Pennsylvania in the fall, where she will be studying Environmental Studies.

Anna Blastic is the daughter of Kim and Andrew Blastic. She has been a member of National Honor Society, National Art Honor Society, HS Theatre, and numerous other organizations. Anna enjoys drawing, playing guitar, writing, and creating an insurmountable legacy for her siblings to live up to. This fall, Anna will attend Ferris State University as an honors student studying Pre-Optometry before moving on to attend the Michigan School of Optometry.





Winter Sun is a Reggio-Inspired preschool that has been serving Muskegon county for 18 years. Our mission has remained steadfast; to provide infant to 6-year-old children with a literacy-rich environment, nurturing teachers, and place-based curriculum that encourages them to fully exercise their mental, emotional, physical, social, and creative potential.

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Mission Statement:

**Committed to equipping
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Success Through Social Emotional Learning

by Lisa Cobb, LMSW and Sydney VanZee

In recent times, we are hearing more and more about social-emotional learning (SEL), but what actually is it and is it beneficial? The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) defines it as “the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.” The CASEL framework comprises five core competencies including self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, relationship skills, and social awareness. Research shows that SEL leads to improved academic achievement, healthy well-being, safe schools, and skills that promote future readiness. Because of these benefits, we would like to provide students with more tools to continue to help them develop their self-awareness and self-management skills.

Through an NEF grant, we received an emWave Pro from the HeartMath Institute. The HeartMath Institute

has 32 years of research dedicated to heart-brain communication and “the study of the physiology of learning, resilience, and performance.” The emWave Pro is a heart-rate monitor and a software program that shows real-time heart rhythm patterns. Our heart rate is always changing, creating a pattern. Heart rhythm patterns, based on our “heart rate variability” (HRV), are a powerful window into our health and emotional wellness. We can learn to change our heart rhythm patterns to change how we feel and perform. Through interactive games, graphs, and other displays students will be able to see how their heart rhythm goes from unregulated to regulated and learn how to apply the self-regulation skills taught previously. The HeartMath Institute cites benefits from the emWave Pro such as improved impulse control, development of emotional resilience, and increased problem-solving. Additionally, the emWave Pro can be used in test preparation and academic work as it can help decrease frustration and improve attention and focus as students learn how to regulate performance inhibitors that cause test anxiety. Thank you to the Norse Education Foundation for your generous support of this valuable tool!