

# Communicator

November 2019



## Students Explore Careers at CVTC's West Campus



Students learn to give injections

The 8th grade year is off to a great start! Students are learning about reflections, rotations, translations, and angles of polygons in math. They are reading short stories and learning about the elements of a short story in English. In history, they have studied early peoples, explorers, and settlements of North America. Science has been filled with learning about classifying organisms and using a microscope. Most recently in phy ed, they have been working on their volleyball skills.

On October 16th, the 8th grade class took a trip to Chippewa Valley Technical College's West Campus in Eau Claire to learn about various job and educational opportunities. Students toured the campus and learned about many jobs related to energy. Some of the areas they learned about were: Electrical Power Distribution; Agronomy Management; Landscape, Plant & Turf Management; Air Conditioning, Heating, & Refrigeration (HVAC); Farm Business, Production & Operation; as well as Animal Science Management. Students got to participate in hands-on activities related to each field.

## Important Dates

WED NOV	<b>13</b>	Late Start: 10:05 AM No AM 4K
WED NOV	<b>27</b>	Holiday Break - No School November 27 - 29
MON DEC	<b>9</b>	Winter Band Concert HS Auditorium - 7 PM
WED DEC	<b>11</b>	Late Start: 10:05 AM No AM 4K
SUN DEC	<b>15</b>	Winter Choir Concert - 6-12 Fieldhouse - 7 PM
MON DEC	<b>16</b>	Elementary Christmas Concert Fieldhouse - 6 PM
MON DEC	<b>23</b>	Holiday Break - No School December 23 - January 1

Learning about safety while working on power poles



## Superintendent's Message



**School Closings:** It is actually snowing outside as I write this early November article, and it reminds me to let you know that you can get all school closing information from our local radio and television stations. I am sure hoping for fewer snow and cold days this year than last.

**School Safety:** As many of you know, our district was awarded two safety grants from the Department of Justice to improve safety in the schools. The grants were used to build secure entrances to the building, provide safety training programs for staff, and to purchase communication devices to use both inside and outside the building. Those special efforts to make our schools more secure are now complete. Thank you for everyone's understanding in helping us provide a safer environment for our kids.

**Educational Expectations for Students:** The School District of Neillsville wants to ensure that all of our students have the opportunity to excel through meaningful learning opportunities and understanding the value of respect. Therefore, our students will be asked to push themselves to reach their maximum ability to learn, to live a life of respect for themselves and others, and to fully participate in all classroom lessons. We believe that by meeting these educational expectations that all of our students can meet their full potential. Please help us by reinforcing these educational goals for our students.

**Community Outreach:** One of our goals for administration is regularly engaging with our community members and community organizations. If you are interested in getting

more information from the district, or if you would like me to present information about district programs, please contact me at any time. I would be happy to meet with you to discuss any educational topics with you.

**Tax Information:** After years of decline, the school tax for the School District of Neillsville will be increasing slightly for the first time this year. Our tax levy rate will be increasing from \$7.26 to \$7.38 per thousand dollars of property value, and our total cash tax levy will be increasing from \$3,722,124 to \$3,880,840. This is the first time in many years that the amount of money in the district's revenue cap has increased. The newest state budget increased the per student value for low revenue and low spending districts like ours. This was a much needed step towards establishing some level of equity between the highest spending districts and the lowest spending districts.

Our district has also experienced a slight increase in enrollment this year, which increases the revenue available to the district as well. Even after these increases, the School District of Neillsville will continue to be considered a low revenue and low spending district when compared to all other districts in the state.

*This is the first time in many years that the amount of money in the district's revenue cap has increased. The newest state budget increased the per student value for low revenue and low spending districts like ours.*

Thanks for Your Support Everyone!  
John Gaier  
Superintendent



## Now Hiring: Educational Assistants

*We are looking to hire motivated and energetic adults who are interested in making a difference in the life of children*

Support staff applications available at the Board of Education Office, 614 E. Fifth Street, Neillsville or on the school website - [www.neillsville.k12.wi.us](http://www.neillsville.k12.wi.us) • Questions? Call 715-743-3323

## High School Principal's Message



The educational path for students has changed immensely over the past decade or so. School and learning was once thought to be tied to the "brick and mortar" of the local schoolhouse. Though, still true in many regards, that once widely accepted belief is no longer true. Students and their families have many options when it comes to school. With each passing year as an educator I wonder if education, in general, has turned a

corner?



As adults, we often revert back to our own experiences about what we believe to be true based upon our own individual experiences in education. I caution all that will listen not to judge the educational setting of today with those of the not so distant past. I do believe that education is turning a corner of sorts, albeit quite slowly. What do I mean by this? Simply put, the options that students have at the high school level today are nothing like those that most adults would have experienced in their own high school years. We have students earning job-related certificates for skills learned and mastered in a variety of technical areas. We have students earning dual credit (earning both high school and college credit) by taking college-level work as juniors and seniors in high school through state-approved programs supported by our school district. We have students enrolling in technical college programs and academies where they are learning job-related skills that will lead them to a career immediately out of high school. We have students participating in Youth Apprenticeship and work release programs where they are able to earn money, develop skills, and build a professional resume prior to graduation. The current options available today are a significant improvement for students in a rapidly changing world and work environment. However, we still have a long way to go.

The distance yet to be covered is unknown. What lies around that corner is yet unseen. Many variables will directly impact what we stumble upon on the other side of that curve, but I hope that the efforts of all stakeholders will yield further rewards for future generations of students. I am hopeful that we will see a school year be just that, a full year. I believe that having the school be "year-round" would be a benefit to students and their learning. This is not a new idea. This idea is slowly gaining some traction even in our own state.

For as long as I can recall summer break has been a welcomed time of year for most. I understand why as it's a time for students, teachers, and families to have time for other worldly experiences. I appreciate those times and opportunities as much as you probably do. However, what is the impact of that on our students? Imagine taking three months off of your job - would your transition back be smooth? Would there be some unforeseen challenges that you would face as a result of so much time away? The answer to these hypothetical questions would certainly vary. My point is, we have made so much progress on the curricular side of education in terms of what we can offer students, yet we continue to operate in other areas of education under the guise of "that's how it's always been done".

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## Fourth Graders Study Native American History

The first quarter of the year was exciting and educational for the fourth grade students and teachers. The students continue to expand their reading knowledge using the reading program *Wonders*, and continue to expand their math knowledge using the math *Expressions* program. They have been using both programs since kindergarten. The students are also studying Wisconsin history and different science concepts.

We had an archaeologist from the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse come and teach the students about the first Native Americans who lived in Wisconsin. The students had the chance to learn about the early Native Americans by working with different artifacts that have been found in different parts of the state of Wisconsin. We attended the homecoming parade and pep rally to show our school spirit. At the end of October, the students participated in different dress-up days that helped make them aware of the dangers of drugs as part of Red Ribbon Week.



## High School Principal . . . continued

The research on this topic is out there to show that year-round schooling can have benefits for students, teachers and families. However, there is also research that does not support such a change. As our communities change school too must change to address the problems they see at a local level. As time marches on it will be very interesting to see where things go regarding the idea of "year-round" school.

In closing, I simply pose a question. Have we turned the corner when it comes to education? Here at the School District of Neillsville, we are blessed to have many great people leading and working with our students and community to provide wonderful opportunities for our students. We hope that our own experiences and the best research available today will help make our school system a place where students can achieve the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate our ever changing global landscape.

Go Warriors!

Craig Anderson Ruskin  
High School Principal

## Middle School Principal's Message



Wow, have you ever thought where did the time go? That is my feeling this morning as I turn the page of my calendar to November and realize that the end of the first quarter snuck up on me!

A little about me . . .

My name is Kory Poeschel. This is my first year as the Middle School Principal, but I am not a new face to the School District of Neillsville. I have worked as the Instructional Facilitator for the School District of Neillsville for the past 6 years.

I have spent the majority of my career in education in a middle school setting. I was a Middle School Special Education Teacher in Baraboo for 19 years prior to coming to the School District of Neillsville. Since I have been in Neillsville, I have had the privilege of being a part of the Administrative Team which has allowed me to have a district-wide view and vision. This will be a benefit as we transition students from the Elementary into the Middle School as well as being aware of the opportunities students will encounter as they leave the Middle School for their High School career.

I will retain many of my current Instructional Facilitator and Director of Curriculum & Instruction duties, with a few being redistributed and some being accomplished through a team effort with the other principals. It was important to me to keep many of my past duties as I did not want to lose the District-wide focus that the Instructional Facilitator position has provided the last six-year for the School District of Neillsville.

My duties as the Middle School Principal are first and foremost to be the instructional leader for the building; ensuring that we meet students where they are at and grow them both academically and social-emotionally. Equally important, I am also responsible to lead efforts to cultivate a culture that is conducive to the learning of all. In addition, making sure the daily operations of the Middle School run smoothly. Overall, I see myself as an advocate for Middle School students and staff. I want Neillsville Middle School to be a place students and staff look forward to coming to on a daily basis.

*My duties as the Middle School Principle are first and foremost to be the instructional leader for the building; ensuring that we meet students where they are at and grow them both academically and social-emotionally.*

Introducing Neillsville Middle School . . .

I am very excited that this school year we gave the Middle School its own identity by identifying our Middle School and High School into separate schools through the Department of Public Instruction. I believe that having a separate principal for grades 6 through 8 is extremely important. Adolescence is the second-fastest growth period in a person's life; second only to the first year of life. Therefore, Middle School students have unique needs that are different from both Elementary students and high schoolers. Having a designated Middle School principal gives the Middle School a voice to ensure they do not get lost in the middle.

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# CHECK IT OUT!

Welcome to the Library Media Center!! Mrs. Strangfeld is our new Library Media Specialist and is excited to join Mrs. Brey and Mrs. Klieforth in spending time with everyone this school year. Over the summer, the 4K-8 LMC got a facelift with a paint job and reorganization of the books. In the LMC, students get to check out books and participate in mini-lessons about the library and/or research skills depending on their grade level.

The High School Library has been working on reorganizing their books by genre so that they are easier to find. So stop in to find a new book, to study, or ask for help with research!

## Guidelines for borrowing a book:

- ⇒ Check out is for 2 weeks
- ⇒ If a student has an overdue book, we remind the student or send a sheet home & let the student check out 1 new book.
- ⇒ If a student has 2 or more overdue books, the library will remind the student and send a sheet home, while the student will still be allowed to check 1 book to keep in the classroom
- ⇒ We do not charge a fine for overdue books, however, we do charge a replacement fee for lost or damaged books.



## Library Staff

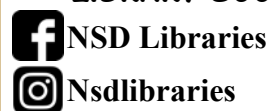
**Mrs. Melissa Strangfeld**  
Library Media Specialist

[mstrangfeld@neillsville.k12.wi.us](mailto:mstrangfeld@neillsville.k12.wi.us)

**Mrs. Deb Brey**  
LMC Library Staff

**Mrs. Laurie Klieforth**  
High School Library Staff

## LIBRARY SOCIAL MEDIA



## Middle School Principal . . . continued

My goal for the Middle School is to create an environment where students and staff want to be! To help create a culture where students feel they belong and have a sense of community; who begin and end their day with the same homeroom teacher. This creates a natural check-in/check-out with a staff member to build relationships. The beginning of the day homeroom is used to greet students: Pledge of Allegiance, daily announcements, pick up Chromebooks, and get students ready for the day. The end of the day 8th hour will be utilized for: Mondays - Academic & Career Planning (ACP) grade checks and tasks; Tuesdays through Thursdays - time for students to meet with teachers they need assistance from; and Fridays - reserved for "communities." Communities are a time where students in grades 6th through 8th are mixed together in multi-grade groupings to create a sense of belonging. During community time, students participate in team-building activities, social emotional learning mini-lessons, and goal attainment celebrations. Furthermore, we are encouraging a positive and inclusive culture through our district-wide "Kindness Campaign". We do monthly kindness-themed activities with students in grades 6th -12th on late start Wednesdays and we also plan to hold a district-wide "Kindness Day" in March.

In addition to creating a culture of kindness and inclusion, the middle school students and staff have had a productive and busy first quarter that has stretched students academically through coursework, field trips, and various guest speakers.

I am looking forward to seeing each of the students grow and change over the course of their three years in the Middle School. I also look forward to serving the students and staff of the Middle School.

Have a wonderful day,  
Kory Poeschel  
Middle School Principal



## Elementary Principal's Message



Have you ever wondered what else you could do? I thought of this question. I had been working in public education for 20 years and wanted to explore more options within the industry. Change can be a positive thing. Therefore, I am excited to be the elementary school principal for the 2019-20 school year.

### What's New?

Besides me being the new elementary school principal, the district has hired some wonderful new staff! The 5th grade teachers and students have welcomed Ms. Libby Scott to the 5th grade team. Ms. Scott is a graduate from the University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire. She has been a great addition to their team. The 1st grade teachers and students are excited about their new teachers, too! The school district hired Ms. Jennifer Lindner and Ms. Liz Heath to the 1st grade team. Ms. Jennifer Lindner graduated from the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee. Ms. Heath is a graduate from the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point. All of these teachers bring new ideas and enthusiasm to our school!

The Neillsville Elementary School has also hired an elementary school guidance counselor. Mrs. BriAnne Collins comes to the school with a few years of experience. She has her own classroom where she teaches guidance lessons to whole groups, conducts small group focused sessions, and sees students for one-on-one counseling sessions. Her room is connected with the school's NEW sensory classroom. The sensory room is for students to have a place and time where they can get their minds ready to learn in the classroom. The elementary school is very fortunate to have staff and places that will help students learn how to act responsibly in and outside of the school setting.

Acting responsibly and being a leader is something that the Neillsville Elementary School promotes. To assist in promoting leadership and responsible behavior, an elementary school student council has been formed to guide students to be more involved in the school and community. These 4th and 5th grade students have been a big part of planning elementary school homecoming activities and community service. The community service that grades 3-5 just completed was raking yards after school. There were many, many students that participated in this activity. It was great to see everyone working side by side to help others in the community. *continued on the next page . . .*



## Fire Safety Made Fun in Kindergarten

The five-year-olds have grown accustomed to a full day of school. It is quite a change from four-year-old kindergarten, which is only four half days per week. The kindergarteners are learning the alphabet and learning to identify and print letters. We are already learning high frequency words. The students have been learning to hear words that rhyme and listen for the beginning sounds of words. We have been enjoying the books of David Shannon and Mo Willems. Both of those authors started writing books when they were children. In math we have worked on numbers through 10. We are learning to print, count, and identify numbers.

Kindergartners learned a lot about fall when we took our field trips at the beginning of the year. We visited Cain's Apple Orchard and Laufenberg's Pumpkin Patch in Hixton. We learned about how apples grow, picked apples, learned about the different kinds of pumpkins, and got to bring home a pumpkin. We took a walk to Schuster Park and enjoyed the sights, sounds and smells of autumn. In October we visited the Neillsville Fire Department to learn about fire safety. The students enjoyed using the fire hoses, sitting in the fire trucks and seeing all the equipment that the firefighters use.

Kindergarteners got our hands messy and took the insides of a pumpkin out to explore. We used 3 pumpkins, small, medium and large, to count seeds. We estimated and were surprised by the number of seeds actually in our pumpkins.



## Elementary Principal . . . continued

### What's Coming Up?

Cold weather is here! Therefore, make sure students are dressed appropriately for the weather when coming to school. If any families need assistance in obtaining gloves, mittens, boots, hats, etc., please let us know.

The Neillsville Elementary School Christmas Concert will be on Monday, Dec. 16 at 6:00 p.m. in the North Fieldhouse. The students will be excited to showcase the holiday songs that they have learned in their music class.

### In Closing

Thank you to the community, the staff, and students for welcoming me to my new role as Neillsville's Elementary Principal! It is wonderful to be a part of such a caring community.

Marcy Kunze

Elementary School Principal



## High School Guidance



### THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING INVOLVED AND VOLUNTEERING!

One of the most common questions I hear from both students and parents is, "How can I (or my student) win scholarships my (his/her) senior year?" My answer very simply is **get involved!** Unless being awarded for specific criteria, most scholarship committees follow the "**ACE rule**" (*academic excellence, community service, and extra curricular involvement*) when selecting their recipients. As I tell students, in this current day and age, it is not enough to simply get good grades. While that aspect is still certainly of utmost importance, what tends to set the winners of multiple scholarships apart from those who only receive one or two is the amount of student involvement and "*genuine*" community service they have done over the course of their high school careers. Involvement can be anything from

school clubs and sports, to community groups (club sports, 4-H, Boy or Girl Scouts, etc.), to a part time job; simply stated, do something productive with your time. In addition to being involved, volunteering in your community is not only a wonderful, self-rewarding activity to do, but also a great way to set yourself up for being in the "elite" group in a scholarship candidate pool. Local opportunities exist all over our community and are typically just a phone call away from happening. Students are encouraged to keep track of all of this information in one place and add to it over the course of their high school careers to make the college and scholarship application processes easier. All Neillsville HS students have a **STUDENT INVOLVEMENT PROFILE FORM** (it should be stored in their ACP folder in their school Google accounts) to be used as a helpful tool to start this process. Students are given time in Career Advising to update this form.

#### Important Reminders for Seniors:

- All seniors should have had their Senior Individual Planning Conference already. Your advisors will continue on with these discussions to help you stay on track with your plans over the course of the year.
- Please continue to check your **YELLOW SENIOR CHECKLIST** to stay on track.
- *Applications to Colleges and Tech Schools should be completed soon if not already done; Halloween = Ahead of the Game, Thanksgiving = On Time, and Christmas = Slightly Behind.* Remember, the earlier you are accepted, the sooner you can apply for scholarships from your university/college.
- Please remember to **continually check your SCHOOL GMAIL ACCOUNT** for important announcements, specifically scholarship updates. *Please note, our local scholarship program will open in January. Scholarship PIE help sessions will be held at that time.*

The FAFSA application opened on Oct. 1. It was great to see some of you at FAFSA Night on Oct. 17 to get great information and complete the application process. If you were not able to attend and need assistance in completing the FAFSA, please contact me anytime and I will be happy to help.

#### Important Reminders for Juniors:

- **Junior Individual Planning Conferences** are scheduled for October and November; you should have received a letter in the mail with your scheduled date and time. Please contact Mrs. Backaus if you need to reschedule for a different time.
- **ACT Reminder:** In accordance with the Wisconsin state testing procedures, all juniors will take the ACT plus writing **on Tuesday, March 3, 2020.** (*New this year, the Work Keys test will no longer be given.*) The ACT can be used for college admission just like any other scheduled ACT; more information will be provided during your junior planning conference.

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## High School Guidance *continued . . .*

- **ACT Preparation-At School:** All juniors will participate in the Neillsville HS ACT Prep Program. Juniors will take a full length ACT one day during the week of Dec. 2-6; more information to come. The results from this test will be used for additional ACT Prep during January-February at school.
- **ACT Preparation-On Your Own:** It is not too early to start practicing for the ACT. FREE ONLINE PREPARATION is available through **March2Success**. All juniors have been informed about this site and most have been registered. Although there are several free test prep sites, this site in particular offers 7 full length ACT tests with great individual question/response feedback.

**ACT Side Note:** Students can still take the ACT on "regular" ACT test dates. Please see the list below for those dates and registration deadlines. ACT DATES: To register online, please go to [www.actstudent.org](http://www.actstudent.org) and click Registration to start the process.

- o December 14, 2019; Register by November 8, 2019 (Late Reg: 11/22/20)\*
- o February 8, 2020; Register by January 10, 2020 (Late Reg: 01/17/20)\*
- o April 4, 2020; Register by February 28, 2020 (Late Reg: 03/13/20)\*
- o June 13, 2020; Register by May 8, 2020 (Late Reg: 05/22/20)
- o July 18, 2020; Register by June 19, 2020 (Late Reg: 06/26/20)

\*Note, in most cases, it is wise to wait until you have the results from the mandatory state test on March 3, 2020 before signing up for another test.

### Important Reminders for Freshmen & Sophomores:

- **CLASSROOM LESSONS:** Mrs. Backaus (or a scheduled guest presenter) will be presenting in your English 9 and 10 every month. This is a great time for us to connect about your academic, career, and personal/social growth! I look forward to these days each month and hope you do as well!
- **CONTINUED CAREER EXPLORATION:** As you found out in guidance last month, Career Cruising *has now changed* to Xello. If it's been awhile since you logged onto your Career Cruising account, consider re-visiting it again soon under its new format, Xello. The link to login (with your school Gmail account) is located under the student tab on our website. Please email Mrs. Backaus or stop by the counseling office if you need help getting into your account.

**SETTING A STRONG GPA EARLY:** Just a friendly reminder, setting a strong GPA early in high school is very important. Remember, semester grades are the ones that go on your transcript; finish each semester strong!

*Practice being grateful and thankful always, be gracious even when someone is undeserving, smile often and forgive always!*

Warm wishes for a happy and healthy Thanksgiving and Christmas season!

Mrs. Backaus



## Elementary Guidance



Hello everyone! My name is Bri Anne Collins and I am happy to say that I am the new school counselor at Neillsville Elementary. A little bit about me - I grew up down the road in Owen-Withee so I spent many summers in Neillsville showing animals at the county fair and playing summer league basketball in the fieldhouse. Although this is my first year here at Neillsville, this is my fifth year as a school counselor. I spent my last two years working as an elementary counselor at Osseo-Fairchild and the K12 counselor at Gilmanton. Prior to that, I was in the Adams- Friendship Area School District as an elementary counselor. I am so happy to be back in Clark County and working with these amazing Neillsville students.

### Guidance Lessons

- ♦ **4K** - The past couple of months we have been learning about some pretty important topics. We started off the year talking about whole body listening, how to be helpful, and how to greet people. We also listened to a really great book called Don't Squeal Unless it is a Big Deal. This book taught us all about the difference between tattling and telling.
- ♦ **Kindergarten** - In Kindergarten we started off the year talking about responsibility and what it looks and sounds like. We read a few of my favorite books - How to Fill a Bucket, which is all about doing kind things to make others feel good; and My Mouth is a Volcano, which teaches us about interrupting and how it might make others feel when we "erupt" and steal their words.
- ♦ **First** - First grade was able to start off the year talking about having a growth mindset. A growth mindset is all about thinking in a positive way. We listened to a few really great Sesame Street videos that helped us get our wiggles out while learning about the "Power of Yet." We also have talked about the difference between tattling and telling, and practiced listening/following directions skills.
- ♦ **Second** - Second grade started off with some hero-themed guidance lessons. We talked about how even though we may not have super powers, we can still be an "Everyday Hero" and what it looks like to be that "Everyday Hero." We also discussed what it looks like to be a good learner and read the book Tattle Tongue, which teaches us very important tattle rules.
- ♦ **Third, Fourth, and Fifth** - My upper grades meet every other week and have been working on goal setting. We discussed what a goal is and the importance of having them. We also talked about the difference between long and short term goals. The past couple of guidance lessons, students have been working on creating their very own S.M.A.R.T. goals. They each set a long term goal and then came up with two short term goals that they could do this year to help them reach their long term goal.



**Small Groups:** Small groups are up and running in third, fourth and fifth grade. We have a wide range of topics being covered to start off the year. Some include self-regulation, self-esteem, friendship, and social skills.

**Big Buddies:** Our Big Buddy Program was up and running the first week in November. This is a really great program that provides our elementary students the opportunity to meet with a high school student

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## First Graders Say “Boo” To Drugs

First Graders are off to a great start this year! In language arts we have been reading many stories that highlight the short vowel sounds and high frequency words. This gives us good practice on blending sounds into words for fluency. Reading Good Fit Books at home each night also improves fluency and comprehension. Families are encouraged to build the habit of reading into their nightly routine. While reading, we have been focusing on finding **key details** by using **text evidence**, **comparing** and **contrasting** fiction and nonfiction genres, and visualizing for comprehension. Two goals in our writing are to use capital letters to begin our sentences and choose the correct punctuation to end our sentences.



Our Common Core Math Expressions text keeps us thinking and talking mathematically. We are working on our “math talk” when the students lead our Daily Routine and explain examples of how they arrived at their answers. We have been using picture and circle drawings to solve addition and subtraction equations. We also have learned what equal and not equal mean. We are practicing the counting on strategy and being able to count on from the greater number. The students love using their math boards for daily math practice.

We have been busy with science, health and social studies themes, such as fall changes, fire safety, apples, pumpkins, and staying healthy. All of the first grade classes enjoyed a fall walk through the arboretum. It was a very crunchy hike! Along with our nature hike, the children participated in bark and leaf rubbings. The local fire department donated fire safety bags filled with fun, educational activities. We enjoyed reading and learning from them!

Red Ribbon Week was promoted this year by participating in several school-wide activities. The end of the week we wore costumes to remind us to say “BOO” to drugs! The school-wide behavior program is being implemented where students can earn a Warrior Pride Ticket by showing safe, respectful and responsible behaviors anywhere at school and on the bus. Once a week a student is chosen randomly from those Warrior Pride Tickets and is our Warrior of the Week! This student is recognized in the school and community for their positive choices. Our classrooms also get tokens for showing the Warrior Way. We earn “Positive Activities” for the class to participate in by collecting these tokens.

## Elementary Guidance . . . continued

once a week for about 20 minutes. Meeting with a high school student who can serve as a role model is incredibly beneficial for our younger students. So a big thank you to our high school student volunteers who take the time out of their day to build relationships with our elementary kids.

**Questions and Concerns:** If you ever have any questions about the guidance program please feel free to contact me. Also, if you are interested in getting your son or daughter in a small group or individual counseling with me please reach out.

Thank you and have a great rest of your year,

Bri Anne Collins

Elementary School Counselor

# HELP WANTED

**The School District of Neillsville is looking for daily school bus route drivers and sporting event drivers.**

## General Qualifications

- Work well with children and staff
- Available 6 to 8 am and 3 to 5 pm for daily routes or late afternoons and evenings for sports trips
- Currently hold or have ability to obtain a Wisconsin Class B CDL License with appropriate Endorsements for School Bus (Training available for non-CDL holding applicants)



**For more information contact:**

**Dale Erickson, Transportation Supervisor**

**715-743-8734**

**[derickson@neillsville.k12.wi.us](mailto:derickson@neillsville.k12.wi.us)**

## Math Takes Center Stage in Second Grade

Time has been flying by in Second Grade! It's hard to believe the first quarter of school is over. We have been very busy. We completed STAR testing in the areas of math and language arts. All students did a great job with this test! In reading we are working in our Reading Wonders series. We have been talking about families and pets and how important they are in our lives. It is a wonderful series with lots of new and exciting concepts! In math, we are working on many different types of word problems and how to solve them. Along with this, we are working on place value and addition and subtraction computation.



We attended the Homecoming Parade. The weather was perfect and we had a great time. We celebrated Fire Prevention Week in October and wish to thank the Neillsville Fire Department for the awesome materials they provided to remind us how to be safe in case of a fire. In October, we had a visit from an archeologist from UW-La Crosse who showed us various artifacts found in Wisconsin. We even got to hold a wholly mammoth tooth!

Parent Teacher Conferences were a huge success and we were very happy to have met with all of you to share these successes along with all of our up and coming areas of instruction. Also in October, we celebrated Red Ribbon Week, which emphasized a "drug free" life. Each day we had a different dress-up day and discussed what it meant to be drug free. Everyone had fun with the dress-up day . . . even the teachers! With the weather changing and the hint of snow in the air, please remember cold-weather attire. Please label all clothing! Happy autumn to all! Report cards are coming soon!!!

## 7th Graders Conquer Math Challenges

The 7th grade students may be new to our Neillsville Middle School, but they started their year off feeling right at home. They have adjusted to their new normal and are really making incredible strides as the year progresses; not only academically, but also socially. In math, the students have been working on adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing integers and rational numbers. These concepts can be extremely difficult for many to understand (even adults), but they were up for the challenge. After we get through the foundation of computing these problems, the students will then move into solving multi-step equations. The 7th grade students in accelerated math 7 are currently working on solving algebraic equations and inequalities. These skills are the stepping stones to understanding 7th and 8th grade mathematics.

To practice these skills, Mrs. Brown's math 7 classes helped count the Penny War jars for the entire middle school. As of Friday, November 8th, the NMS 6th-8th grade students have raised \$347.45 so far! NMS and NHS students are competing in a grade 6-12 Penny War to help benefit the local angel tree project. Students have been bringing in change since September and will continue through the beginning of December. Pennies hold a value of +1 point, and all other currency holds a negative value. Homerooms have been adding silver and green to the competition's jars, while trying to fill their own jars with copper. Watching the students give generously to our community members in need, while having fun seeing the competition unfold, has been exciting for all involved. Please continue to encourage your child to support a good cause and bring in their loose change! Also, challenge your 7th grade student to count money and total values the next time you're out and about shopping. Hopefully they will surprise you with their newfound skills!

## Penny Wars



## Learning About Energy in Fifth Grade

Math started out the year with adding and subtracting fractions, and we have just completed adding and subtracting decimals. In social studies we studied the first Americans and made our own version of painted buffalo hides. In health we learned about the skeleton and lined our halls with dancing skeletons for Halloween. Science students experimented with different types of energy by creating marble tracks. Six of our students were chosen to say the Pledge of Allegiance at The Highground for Veteran's Day. We are looking forward to an exciting second quarter!





# CHOIR NEWS

The Neillsville Choir Department held a successful fall "Pops" concert on October 28. The choirs in grades 7-12 enjoyed performing selections from artists and groups such as OneRepublic, Train, Ed Sheeran, and even The Chiffons! Movies like "The Greatest Showman," "Titanic," and "A Star is Born" were represented in the concert as well.

The next Choir concert (grades 6-12) will be on December 15 at 7:00 p.m. in the Fieldhouse. This is a new location for the holiday concert this year. The 6th Grade Choir students are very busy preparing for a musical called "Harmony High," which will be presented on Friday, November 15. The elementary school students will have the opportunity to see this musical at 10:00 a.m. followed by a performance for the public at 2:00 p.m. This event will be held in the auditorium.

On November 2nd, high school choir students and some of their parents had a wonderful trip to see "Mamma Mia!" on stage at the Chanhassen Dinner Theatre. The show was outstanding and we were all very impressed. The food was pretty great, too! We then spent a few hours at the Mall of America to end the day of fun.



# STAFF SPOTLIGHT

## Emma Walters

**Current Assignment:** Speech-Language Therapist

**Years of service in Neillsville:** 1st year

**Hometown:** Eau Claire, WI

**College Attended:** UW-Eau Claire

**Background:** My name is Emma Walters and I am the new Speech-Language Therapist at Neillsville Elementary School. I am from Eau Claire and graduated from UW-Eau Claire in May of 2018. I worked in a nursing home for a little over a year, which I loved, but I missed working with students. I have always wanted to work in an elementary school, so this is a wonderful opportunity. Thank you for all of the help and warm welcome. I am looking forward to getting to know this community better.



## Choir Chanhassen Trip





## Family Activities Key to 4K Success

On Friday, October 4th, 4K families were invited to Turnpike Greenhouse for a parent involvement activity. Despite the mud, everyone who attended enjoyed a hay ride, corn maze, bouncy house, and playing in a corn pit. There was also a petting zoo with goats, rabbits, and chickens. Students received a free pumpkin and other goodies. Cookies, fresh fruit, and juice were provided for a snack. 4K students and siblings were given the opportunity to choose a book for their home libraries.

On September 13th, 4K families braved the rain to meet at Schuster Park for a variety of activities. Families went on a scavenger hunt searching for leaves, birds, rocks, and spiderwebs. 4K students and siblings could pick a free book from a wide variety of fiction and non-fiction choices. Donna Fabian, reading specialist, and Ms. Nook helped serve ice cream for build your own ice cream sundaes. Mrs. Able took family pictures. The students had time to play and make friends. Parents had the opportunity to meet 4K teachers, Jenny Langreck and Tina Perkins.

An essential component of Neillsville School District's 4K program is family involvement. Several activities are being planned throughout the year to build bridges between families and school. Parent involvement helps extend teaching outside the classroom, creates a more positive experience for children, and helps children perform better when they are in school. Future events include: a bowling alley field trip in January, the Teddy Bear Clinic in April, and a public library field trip in May. We encourage all 4K families to participate!



# A Rainy Day In The Park





## Middle School Guidance Has A New Look

This year there is a bit of a new look to our Neillsville Middle School and that has carried over to the guidance department as well. Mrs. Neville is now covering most of the social emotional conversations with students in the Middle School; coordinating check-in and check-out with identified students, as well as delivering guidance lessons to students in grades six through eight. Lessons so far have covered things such as ways to deal with conflict, goal setting, problem solving, and gratitude, just to name a few.

Sixth grade has focused on what challenges there are to starting middle school and how to manage feelings and relationships in this new territory. We also talked about long-term and short-term goals.

The seventh grade, specifically, has learned about their "Wizard Brain vs their Lizard Brain"; hypothalamus, amygdala, prefrontal cortex, and brain's relay center. We learned how our brain reacts differently in different situations and how we need to get our thinking brain (Wizard) to be in charge.

Eighth grade students have had a little different experience. For the second year, our eighth grade students have been paired with students from the junior class who make up the Teen Leadership Council (TLC). The TLC students have been paired up with small groups of eighth graders, to begin to establish relationships between our students as they move into high school. These students help lead the lessons for the eighth graders as well as keep in touch with them outside of class to answer questions, etc. In October, the high school students were also able to lead discussions about school spirit, participation in school events, and why those are important parts of our school community.



4K Visits the



Pumpkin Patch





## E-cigarettes, “Vapes”, and JUULs What Parents Should Know



### Are e-cigarettes less harmful than cigarettes?

*There is no FDA oversight of the manufacturing of these products - which means there is no oversight regarding potentially harmful ingredients.*

- E-cigarettes almost always contain harmful ingredients including nicotine.
- Acrolein, a known ingredient of many e-cigarettes, causes irreversible lung damage. Nicotine exposure during adolescence can harm the developing brain.
- The most popular e-cigarette among teens is JUUL
  - All JUUL pods contain some nicotine - something many youth don't realize.
  - According to the manufacturer, one JUUL pod may contain as much nicotine as a pack of cigarettes.
- No e-cigarette has been found to be safe and effective by FDA in helping smokers quit.

### Is there a difference between e-cigarettes and JUULing?

- No. JUULs may look different, but they're actually a type of e-cigarette.
- E-cigarettes are battery powered and deliver nicotine through a liquid which turns into an aerosol.
- The e-liquids come in fruit flavors that appeal to youth.

*JUUL is more discrete and looks like a USB drive. Other e-cigarettes may look like phones.*

- Cartridge-based e-cigarettes like JUUL contain nicotine salts that do not produce vapor or visible emissions when the device is used and may make the product even more addictive.
- JUUL claims that some of its pods have roughly as much nicotine as an entire pack of cigarettes.

### How bad is the e-cigarette epidemic?

Most common reasons youth use e-cigarettes



**39%** Use by “friend or family member”



**31%** Availability of “flavors such as mint, candy, fruit, or chocolate”



**17%** Belief that “they are less harmful than other forms of tobacco such as cigarettes”



## Tessellations - Integrating Math & Art

Our 6th graders just finished a unit on geometry and had the chance to put their skills to the test while showing their creative sides!

Just like tiles on a floor, which mostly consist of rectangles and squares, tessellations are a set of figures that can cover a flat surface while leaving no gaps. In fact, the word "tessellation" comes from the Latin word tessella – which means "small square".

All students started out with a small square piece of paper and used their knowledge of area and polygons to create their own unique shape that "tessellates"! Check out all of our creativity displayed here! Want to try making your own? Ask a sixth grader, we'd love to show you!



## Focusing on Critical Thinking Skills in 3rd Grade

This year third grade welcomes Reed Lehman to our team! Reed joins us from Edgar, WI. He graduated from UW-Stevens Point with a Bachelor's of Science degree in Elementary Education and went on to teach 4<sup>th</sup> grade in the Bruce School District for two years before being hired at Neillsville. His favorite leisure activities are sports, hunting, fishing, hiking . . . basically anything outdoors! We welcome him to Neillsville Elementary's third grade team!

We have been very busy getting into our classroom routines. Third grade students are now reading to learn; learning problem solving strategies; and learning how to be respectful, responsible and safe.

Third graders will be participating in the online Wisconsin Forward Exam, otherwise known as the state test, this spring. Both our reading and math series are designed to better prepare our students through a rigorous reading, writing, and mathematics curriculum as well as through the use of technology. **You can continue to support your child at home by reading at least 20 minutes daily.**

Our math series teaches our students to *understand* the how and the why for solving math problems. We have been learning many new math terms, skills, and strategies. The third graders really are using critical thinking skills and problem solving strategies. **You can continue to support your child at home by practicing the multiplication and division facts every day.**

Third grade is an exciting year. We are looking forward to growing and learning all kinds of new things!