

Communicator

November 2022



Congratulations All Conference Band & Choir

Select high school band and choir members will be traveling to Gilman High School on January 21st for this year's All-Conference Band and Choir event. Throughout the day, students from the Cloverbelt Conference have small and large group rehearsals, preparing them for the evening's performance. The following Neillsville students were nominated and selected: Jacob Kopp, Kaden Sheikh and Sydney Magnuson for band; Gianna Kuhn, Lainey Horn, Victoria Ratsch, Olivia Koprek, Callee Mohr, Kayleigh Kubisiak, and Abigail Mathis for choir.



Important Dates

WED NOV	23	Holiday Break - No School November 23 - 25
THU DEC	15	Elementary Christmas Concert Fieldhouse - 6 PM
SUN DEC	18	Winter Choral Concert - 6-12 HS Auditorium - 6 PM
MON DEC	19	Winter Band Concert HS Auditorium - 7 PM
FRI DEC	23	Holiday Break - No School December 23 - 31



Superintendent's Message



We Need to Hear From You

The Neillsville Board of Education is considering an April referendum to help with much needed facility updates. Attached to this newsletter is a sample of a survey that will be sent to all of the district residents providing three options to consider that will help inform the board of education on what the community will support in helping to provide a safe and efficient learning environment for our children. Potential cost impacts are included in the survey. Please help the district out by completing and returning the survey.

Taxes for 2022-2023 School Year Drop:

School taxes in the School District of Neillsville will drop 22.06% in 2022-2023. The district's tax levy in 2021-2022 was \$4,175,000, making the tax rate 7.46, and the tax levy for 2022-2023 will be \$3,253,582, making the tax rate 5.07. To my knowledge, this is the lowest the tax rate ever. The reduced tax rate is due to an over 15% increase in state aid to the district, and an over 14% increase in the district's property value.

Thank You:

Because of your support our children are accomplishing great things in their schools, and they are creating great futures for themselves. Thanks to all of you for your ongoing support of them.

John Gaier
Superintendent

Learning About Dinosaurs in Second Grade

Things in Grade 2 have been very busy this year! It's hard to believe we are done with the first quarter of school. We have been working hard in the language arts area. We have been enjoying getting to know our Superkids in our brand new reading series. Our intervention time is up and running, too. During this time, students engage in phonics, fluency, and comprehension work in small group activities. We have also completed our first unit in math. We have covered lots of different topics like addition/subtraction, odd and even, and word problems. Keep working on reading and math at home.



In science we covered natural resources and earth long ago, including dinosaurs. For health and SEL (social emotional learning), we recently covered two very important topics: Bullying and Being Drug Free! Each day during Red Ribbon Week, we had different "dress-up" days to promote these topics. Everyone had a great time participating in these special activities.

This year, the elementary PBIS committee has put together monthly character traits. These are skills that we hope will be instilled into our young students to use now and into their future. So far this school year we have covered respect and kindness. If you see your child doing these wonderful things at home, please compliment them. You can fill out the monthly slip and return it to school for your child to be entered into a drawing for a fun activity like "Pie"ing a teacher or bird bowling. We look forward to what second quarter has in store!

High School Principal's Message



The first quarter of this school year is officially in the books! The task of educating every student requires help and support from an entire community. The passion that comes from being a parent and wanting every child to be successful as a student is something to be applauded and celebrated, but can be very stressful as well. Harvard University's Extension School has some very good suggestions for students to have a successful educational journey. Though most of the population will never attend Harvard University, these suggestions can be applied to all facets or our lives.

Know your strengths – Let's be honest, nobody is good at everything and that's okay! As a parent of two elementary children, I have stressed to them one simple thing, "Do your best". There are going to be times when your "best" doesn't reap the rewards we "want", but that doesn't mean that learning didn't take place to help build the foundation for future success. To put it another way, "Begin with the end in mind". The educational success of every person isn't defined by one assignment, but rather a multi-year journey that is full of multiple opportunities to grow and improve. Taking away what you can from the task at hand can help keep your educational success on track without frustrating the learner to the point that they feel the only option left is to give up.

Set specific and SMART goals – Setting goals is something that gives you a path and a plan to follow. For example, if I were to look at the academic record of any random high school student to see where they are at entering a grading period, I would be looking at past performance to see what the goals for that student "could" be (my goals do not equate to what that individual may want). The goal should be simple – IMPROVE! Drastic improvement doesn't often happen. When you set goals be SMART about them. Every goal, albeit in school, athletics, a career, or life in general should be: 1) Specific, 2) Measurable, 3) Achievable, 4) Realistic, and 5) Timely.



Be positive – "Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference." – Winston Churchill. The path of education is not one viewed as essential by some, but is required to some degree for us all. The attitude with which we approach every task, as with most things in our daily lives, can go a long way in pre-determining our possible future success. The attitude that we all display at some point becomes nothing more than a personal choice.

Be resilient – Quite simply, not every day will be filled with success. We all experience failure in some capacity. Those struggles require us to be resilient. Everybody wants to be good at everything they do, but that's not realistic. In those times where we face adversity we need to learn from our mistakes in order to learn! Again, when we fail, it's okay! Learn from what didn't work so that you can correct it and make yourself better and more educated. Do your best!

Make time to recover – Learning is hard work and it requires time to recover. What does that mean, recover? Learning, and life in general, requires a balance between all the areas of our lives, including school. Taking time for yourself is necessary to keep things balanced and positive.

I appreciate the help and support that our schools receive from the Neillsville community. The education of all children is essential to building a great community for everybody. Enjoy the upcoming holiday seasons!

Go Warriors!
Mr. Anderson

Middle School Principal's Message



Wow, have you ever thought where did the time go? That is my feeling as I turn the page of my calendar to November and realize that the end of the first quarter snuck up on me! Our middle schoolers have been busy growing academically and socially through gaining new academic knowledge, attending field trips, welcoming guest speakers, and participating in multiple extracurricular activities.

The middle school has a character trait of the month where students are recognized by staff and peers for demonstrating the monthly character trait. The submitted character cards are hung up on our "Character Board" in the middle school hallway. At the end of the month, the students get to keep the character card that was filled out for them, along with a small token of appreciation.

September's character trait was sportsmanship. Sportsmanship is showing positive behavior in practice and in competition. October's character trait is dedication. Dedication is the willingness to put in the necessary time and energy into completing a task well.

Next, I want to take this opportunity to inform families of a few changes that have been implemented for the 2022-23 school year. New this year, discipline referrals and award letters are being entered into Infinite Campus by staff. The benefit of this change from last school year is that they are able to be viewed through the Infinite Campus Parent Portal. Also new this year, students in grades third through eighth are not allowed to take Chromebooks home unless permission is granted by their homeroom teacher for specific projects or assignments. Moreover, students in grades sixth through eighth are utilizing assignment notebooks to help them develop their executive functioning skills. Along with teaching executive functioning skills, we are working hard on teaching responsibility. In order to help teach the importance of deadlines, assignments turned in late may be lowered by one grade. Assignments not turned in by the end of the unit will result in the grade of a zero. Finally, Grab & Go is now open after school. Grab & Go is located in the High School Lobby. Grab & Go is a place where students can purchase snacks utilizing their lunch accounts. This has proven to be helpful for students who are involved in after-school activities.

Furthermore, there are a couple of important reminders I would like to highlight. First, only the water bottle portion of the drinking fountains is currently being utilized here at school. Therefore, it is very important that all students bring refillable water bottles to school to stay hydrated throughout the school day. Also, with the weather starting to get colder, families are reminded that the doors open at 7:45 am to let students enter the building. Please do not have students arrive at school much earlier than 7:45 am as we do not have supervision outside and we want to make sure students stay warm. Next, detention continues to be held on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays from 3:30-4:15 pm. Students who have detention are not allowed to attend their athletic practice that night. Students must bring along homework and a book to read. Phones will not be allowed during detention. Detentions are given as a consequence to students who receive an office referral. In addition, athletes who receive three office referrals in a single sports season must sit out for one contest date. Each additional office referral during the same season will result in an additional ineligible contest date as per the Athletic Training Policy.

In conclusion, I look forward to watching our middle schoolers grow and develop socially, emotionally, and academically throughout the school year.

Have a wonderful day,
Kory Poeschel
Middle School Principal

Elementary Principal's Message



Welcome to the 2022-23 school year! We have been enjoying our time with the students the past couple of months. In addition, we are continuously assessing data/information to adjust instructional and social emotional plans to meet the needs of our students. We are looking forward to all of our activities for the rest of our school year.

New Staff

This new school year brings new staff to the Neillsville Elementary School! Mrs. Megan Christianson is our new 4th grade teacher! She joins the following 4th grade team of teachers: Mrs. Seibel and Mrs. Lawrence. Mrs. Christianson is from Minnesota. She attended the University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire and earned a bachelor's degree in education. In addition, she has a wealth of teaching experience in different grade levels from the Eau Claire area and Thorp School District. Another interesting and helpful thing to know about Mrs. Christianson is that she is a certified lifeguard who teaches swimming lessons for us at the school. We welcome Mrs. Christianson to our Neillsville Elementary School family!

Mrs. Amy Hanna is our new 5th grade teacher in the Neillsville Elementary School. She joins the following 5th grade team of teachers: Ms. Luebke and Miss Werner. Mrs. Hanna comes to us from the Granton School District where she has taught for a number of years in various areas. Therefore, she brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to Neillsville Elementary School. We welcome Mrs. Hanna to our Neillsville Elementary School family!

Miss Chelsea Opelt is our new elementary school guidance counselor. We brought her over from the middle school this school year. She is pursuing her master's degree in guidance counseling from the University of Wisconsin - Superior. She brings a wealth of knowledge about pupil service opportunities and issues. She sees students on a daily basis and builds strong relationships with both students and staff. She is a resource for staff and they feel very comfortable going to her with specific questions. We welcome Miss Opelt to our Neillsville Elementary School family!



Mrs. Christianson

Along with our new teachers, we welcomed some new teaching assistants to our school family. Ms. Lori Thur, Ms. Angela McIntyre, Mr. Tucker Bethea, Ms. Stacey Dawson, Ms. Kara Milkey and Ms. Ellie Keller. These teaching assistants work with students in all areas of the school. We are very fortunate to have these wonderful people working with our staff and students every day.



Mrs. Hanna

Reading Instruction

It is very important to note that children need repetition when learning how to read. We *continued on the next page . . .*



Ms. McIntyre



Mr. Bethea



Ms. Dawson



Ms. Milkey



Ms. Keller



Miss Opelt

Elementary School Principal *continued*

have students repeat their reading all of the time to build their knowledge and reading fluency skills. Comprehension strategies are also modeled and practiced to assist students in thinking about what they are reading and using the information.

In addition, we are continually teaching students sound and syllable segmentation to build upon their phonological awareness. Phonological awareness consists of the sounds of the words (print and verbal), not the letters. It is the base level of reading instruction. Therefore, it is essential that the students gain this knowledge in order to move onto the next level, phonics.

When reading with children at home, it is helpful to follow the "I do, we do, you do" method. This method provides repetition of text, along with practicing decoding. What parents can do is read a book or page to the student while the student is following along. It is extremely important to have text in front of the student. Then the parent and the student can choral read the same page or book together while following along. The student is hearing it again, following along with the text, looking at the words. The next step is to have the student read the page or book to the parent/guardian. This process really helps with decoding words and reading fluency. I have to also stress the importance of reading to children of all ages too. This builds on their reading comprehension and fluency skills.

PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports)

The Neillsville Elementary School continues to implement our PBIS program. We meet monthly to discuss activities, rewards, programs, behaviors, and interventions. In addition, we have monthly character traits. September's character trait was respect followed by a reward of putting a pie in specific teachers' faces. October's character trait is kindness. Our monthly award will be turkey bowling. In addition to turkey bowling, the students participated in a Halloween parade on Friday, October 28. Our student council will be doing more of the planning as time goes on in the school year. Our elementary school student council members are the following: 4th grade - Morgan Begert, Jewel Riggins, and Axel Kruschke. 5th grade - Angelica Roman, Hadley Hare, Zoey Hunt, and Isabella Boon.



Highground Event

On November 3, 2022 selected 5th grade students were given the opportunity by the Wisconsin Department of Corrections Veterans Recognition Ceremony to lead the crowd in saying the Pledge of Allegiance. These students are Alexis Opelt, Noah Kaufman, Daisy Knoeck, Wyatt Caulkins, McKenzie Eastlick, and Claire Trojan. They accompanied me to the event. After the event, the students ate lunch with me before returning to school. Congratulations to these 5th grade students!

In Closing

I want to thank each and every one of you for your continued support of our school. It's amazing to me how quick school years pass by. Our number one priority is to make sure everyone is safe while getting the best quality education possible. I appreciate your trust in us!

Mrs. Marcy Kunze
Elementary School Principal

High School Guidance



Greetings! Happy Fall! I hope you have all enjoyed a great start to the 22-23 school year. As we start each year, I like to remind all HS students about the importance of getting involved in activities beyond the classroom walls. **Here are a few reasons why:**

(1) 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. Being a strong scholarship candidate requires more than just getting good grades and often some of the determining factors are volunteer experience & extracurricular involvement!

(2) Most 4-year universities still require students to list all the extracurricular activities (including athletics, clubs, volunteering and work experiences) as part of their application process. Again, being a strong applicant for many competitive universities hinges on being involved during high school.

(3) Most employers prefer to hire candidates who have been actively involved throughout their high school careers as they tend to have better communication skills, attendance, and can get along well with others on the job.

How can you get involved?

(1) Check out the [Ways to Get Involved at NHS!](#) Information Sheet located on the Neillsville High School home page.

(2) Join a community organization that focuses on service like 4-H, Boy or Girl Scouts, etc. or get a part-time job at a local establishment.

(3) Read “For Goodness Sake” in the Clark County Press each week; contact Judy Morrow, Interfaith Caregivers coordinator, at 715-743-2885 or judydonmorrow@hotmail.com for more information.

(4) Ask local non-profit organizations (Clark County Humane Society, Clark County Area Food Pantry, Hospital Auxiliary, etc.) or local churches or simply your next-door neighbor if they have needs you can help meet.

(5) If you’re willing to travel a bit, Marshfield has a whole website dedicated to volunteerism in their community at [Volunteer Marshfield](#) or, if you’re looking to volunteer in health care specifically, check out Marshfield Clinic’s Volunteers program at [Marshfield Clinic Volunteers](#).

Remember, keep track of your involvement throughout high school by routinely updating your **STUDENT INVOLVEMENT PROFILE** sheet with your Career Advisor!

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.

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High School Guidance *continued . . .*

• *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.*

• The **FAFSA** application opened on Oct. 1. It was great to see many of you at FAFSA Night on Oct. 13 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.

• **Job Shadowing:** Rated as one of the top ACP experiences, job shadows are encouraged for all juniors at Neillsville High School. Career Advisors or myself can help set them up for students over the course of this year. We hope many of you take advantage of this excellent career exploration activity.

• **Business Mentor Program:** New this year, as part of our ACP program, we have partnered with 16 different area business leaders to mentor our juniors regarding employability and soft skills once a month during 8th hour. Dates for the rest of the year are as follows: 11/17, 12/12, 1/16, 2/13 and 3/13.

• **ACT:** In accordance with the Wisconsin state testing procedures, all juniors will take the ACT plus writing **on Tuesday, March 7, 2023**. Even though many 4-year universities have transitioned to "test optional" since COVID began, they still use ACT scores for merit-based scholarships so we encourage all students to try their best regardless.

• **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 encouraged to register. Although there are several free test prep sites, this site in particular offers 7 full-length ACT tests with great individual question/response feedback.

Important Reminders for Freshmen & Sophomores:

• **CLASSROOM LESSONS:** Mrs. Backaus (or a scheduled guest presenter) will be presenting in your English or history classes 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:** Please remember that you should have completed your first XELLO Lesson by the end of first quarter.

• **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 this second part of semester one strong!

SAVE THE DATE: ACP Night - Monday, January 30, 2023 from 6:00 to 8:00 PM

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

Mrs. Backaus

Elementary Guidance



Who is Ms. Opelt

Hello everyone! My name is Chelsea Opelt and I am happy to say that I am the new school counselor at Neillsville Elementary. A little bit about me- I grew up here in Neillsville. The last three years I was working in middle school teaching 7th and 8th grade English Language Arts. Just last spring, I decided to enroll in a masters educational program to obtain my degree in school counseling. I am so happy to be in elementary and working with these amazing Neillsville students.

Guidance Lessons

Guidance lessons for kindergarten, first, second, and third grade take place as a part of GLAMP rotation for twenty-five minutes. Guidance lessons in preschool take place once a week for twenty minutes. Fourth and fifth grades see me every other week for thirty minutes.

Here at Neillsville Elementary we are using a program called Second Step as well as Harmony as social emotional learning curriculum that many other districts use. Second Step covers two units: Bullying Prevention and Child Protection. Harmony covers four units: Being My Best Self, Valuing Each Other, Communicating with Each Other, and Learning From Each Other.

So far, this year students have learned about how their thoughts, actions, and feelings are connected in Harmony's first unit, Being My Best Self. Additionally, October is Bullying Awareness month. Students have learned about the three R's of bullying: recognize, report, and refuse. During the bullying prevention unit this month, students have watched videos and discussed what bullying is and how to recognize when someone is being bullied. There are three main points about bullying that we discuss in guidance. Bullying is when someone keeps being mean to someone else on purpose and the person it's happening to is unable to make it stop. Bullying is unfair and one-sided. Students practiced reporting and refusing bullying in guidance class by using strong and respectful voices.

Big Buddies

Our Big Buddy program is officially up and running again. This is a really great program that provides our elementary students the opportunity to meet with a high school student 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,

Chelsea Opelt
Elementary School Counselor
copelt@neillsvillek12.org
715-743-8745

Middle School Social Emotional Learning



Some of you may remember what it was like to be a middle school student. It is a transition that challenges students academically and socially; they often find themselves growing physically and emotionally and sometimes don't quite know how to manage all of these changes. Students grow more during these years than they ever will again in their lives, and it is important for them to realize that what makes them different is what makes them who they are.

To give NMS students the opportunity to build the strategies and coping skills that are necessary for navigating these exciting years, we will work with them through guidance lessons that center around social emotional skills, stress management techniques and conflict resolution presented through a program called Positive Action. Positive Action stresses that positive thoughts lead to positive actions, which in turn lead to positive feelings.

We have continued the kindness challenge from last school year when we were introduced to Rachel Joy Scott and her legacy of starting a chain reaction of kindness. This year, students will spread kindness, "like confetti," with the creation of a bulletin board illustrating the kindness we share with each other. During the month of October, FOR (Friends of Rachel) Club members have challenged our students to wear blue to stomp out bullying and pink to bring awareness to the fight against breast cancer. Several 8th graders also attended the first annual RVA Leadership Summit which provided them with opportunities to join with students around the region in learning leadership skills.

Jill Neville, Interventionist & Coach

Third Graders Welcome Miss Anderson

This year third grade welcomes Riley Anderson to our team! Miss Anderson joins us from Siren, WI. She graduated from UW-Stevens Point with a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education. She enjoys spending time with family and friends. We welcome her 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 with 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 terms, skills, and strategies in Math. The third graders really are using critical thinking skills and problem-solving strategies. **You can continue to support your child at home by practicing multiplication and division facts every day.**

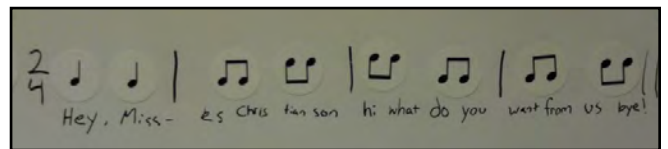
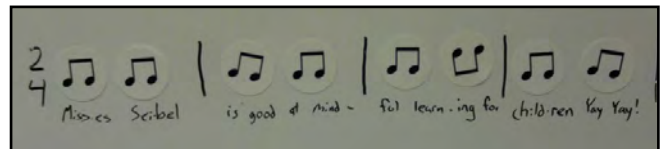
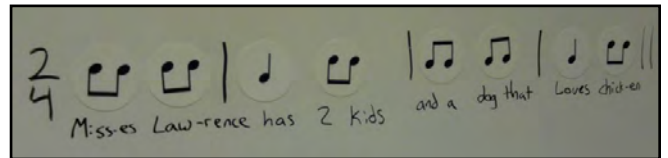
Third grade is an exciting year. We are looking forward to growing and learning all kinds of new things!



Kindergartners acting like Grandmas and Grandpas!

What's happening in Elementary music?

Fourth Graders creating Rhythm Raps on the board with music symbols!



Fifth Graders Study the Skeletal System

This school year started out busy as usual in the fifth grade. Adding and subtracting fractions are how we began math, and we have just completed adding and subtracting decimals. Social studies found us studying the first Americans, and we made our own version of painted Buffalo hides. In health we learned about the skeletal system and lined our halls with dancing skeletons for Halloween. We also went on a field trip to The Highground where we learned about the different monuments and how to properly fold and dispose of the American flag.



Sixth Graders Focus on Math Formulas

It has been a busy start to the school year! The sixth graders are adjusting to life in the Middle School, with some road bumps in the 'sticky locker' department! They are definitely busy.

In math they have finished a unit on ratios/rate tables and have now moved on to area/perimeter. We did make perimeter people to go along with the unit and they did a wonderful job! Currently they are working on creating the first floor of a haunted house and figuring out the area and perimeter of that. They have also realized the importance of note taking. This year they are able to use any notes that they take and put in their red math notebook. They weren't super excited about it at first, but have now found the purpose behind it!

In science the sixth graders are learning about Newton's Laws of Motion and getting ready to take their chapter 2 test on November 3rd, the last day of the first quarter. They have study guides that they work on in class and if they take those home and spend ten minutes a night going over them, they will be more than prepared for the test next week! In geography, their current topics of conversation include; equinox and winter and summer solstices. They will be creating a mini book on all the wonderful features of our community, Neillsville. They are going to learn all about the interesting activities throughout the year here and around Neillsville. In ELA students are getting in the Halloween spirit. They were able to choose books that interest them and pick a character from that book, once they did that they were able to design a pumpkin that resembled the character they chose. They have been doing a wonderful job and they are on display in the library for all to see!



4K Fall Fun

On Thursday October 20th, 4K students and staff enjoyed the fall weather and colors at Schuster Park. They raked and jumped in the leaves, identified fall colors, and enjoyed playing at the park. It was a beautiful day!



Kindergartners Enjoy Visit to Children's Theater

Five year old kindergarten is off to a great start this year! With our new reading program Super Kids we have been working on skills such as letter and sound identification, handwriting, and onset sounds. The students are really getting the hang of all those letter skills! In math, we have been working on identifying numbers 1-10 and comparing and writing them. We have also been busy learning about shapes and their attributes. We recently learned a math card game called Garbage which the kids have loved playing while practicing the order of numbers!

We have had two spotlight authors so far, which means that our classes have enjoyed many stories by these authors, and have seen the youthful writing styles of both David Shannon and Mo Willems. Kindergarten students were even able to go watch the play, *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus*, put on by the Eau Claire Children's Theater. This play is based off of one of Mo Willems most loved characters and the kindergartners enjoyed the performance with many laughs.



Kindergartners have learned a lot about fall through discussions and activities involving the fall leaves, apples, and pumpkins. In September we had a chance to taste test different types of apples, we then voted on and graphed to see the results of our favorites. Our classes took a field trip to Cain's Apple Orchard and the students got to pick their own apples. We took a nice walk to Schuster Park and enjoyed the sights, sounds, and smells of autumn.

Fourth Graders Show School Spirit

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. Students are studying Wisconsin history during social studies and they investigated features and processes of the earth's surface during science.

Our first quarter student council representatives were Jewel R., Morgan B., and Axel K. They worked together with the 5th grade student council representatives to plan fun rewards each month. We attended the homecoming parade to show school spirit. At the end of October, the students participated in different dress-up days that encouraged students to have a drug-free and bullying-free lifestyle.

Crazy dress up day during Red Ribbon Week



Student Council reps

Watching the Homecoming Parade



First Graders Enjoy Crunchy Arboretum Walk

First graders are off to a great start this year! We have always known that first graders are “super kids”! However, in our new language arts program, titled Adventures of the Superkids, we read, write, and learn about other superkids. This program follows the science of reading. Phonics and decoding are so important in setting up a successful reading base for children. We are excited to see what this year holds for reading development in our first graders!

Good phonetic skills lead to decoding, word recognition and fluency. When all those fit into place, there will be good comprehension. Families are encouraged to build the habit of reading into their nightly routine. The more purposeful language and vocabulary we can provide for our children, the more successful they will be able to read and comprehend.

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 chilly and 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 schoolwide activities. At the end of the week we wore costumes to remind us to say “BOO” to drugs!

The schoolwide behavior program is being implemented. 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 our community for their positive choices. Our classrooms also get tokens for showing the Warrior Way. By collecting these tokens, we earn “Positive Activities” for the class to participate in.



7th Graders Study Global Information System

The 7th graders have had a great start to their year. In science, students have started learning about rocks and minerals on the earth. In ELA they have been reading an exciting novel, *The Outsiders* by SE Hinton, about life in the 1960s and how even the most different people can find common ground. In geography students have studied how to find places on a map using their latitude and longitude skills and how geographers look at the regions of the earth and group places using similar characteristics. They also got to have two guest speakers from EMCS, Inc. to talk about a fun potential future job surveying land using a Global Information System and their latitude and longitude skills. In math, 7th grade started the year by working on computation skills with positive and negative integers and rational numbers. Now they have started to dive into pre-algebra and are now beginning to solve multi-step equations. All middle schoolers also had lots of fun celebrating homecoming week with fun dress-up days to show their



Learning About Native American History in 8th Grade

We welcome back our 8th graders to their final year as middle school students! 8th graders started their year in ELA reading several different short stories. They looked at different types of characters and analyzed the decisions behind their actions. They also worked on their comprehension skills and understanding the plot structure in a story. They currently are starting a unit on how to write a news report! In American history students started by discussing the beginning of earth and the first people that migrated into North America. They also looked at the Native American tribes in North America and created postcards highlighting various aspects of the tribes. Students are currently finishing up their unit on the mystery behind the lost colonies of Roanoke by writing either a diary, short story, picture book, or graphic novel to tell their theory of their disappearance.

In math, 8th grade started the year off with a solving equations review and then jumped into some geometry. They spent a few weeks working on transformation and manipulating figures. Now they are combining their algebra and geometry skills to explore and find the measure of triangles. In science, students began the year doing the blue ice race lab and practiced using the scientific method. They also learned about character and the scientific method using movie clips of the Sandlot. Currently, they are completing a fun cells project using food or by designing a poster. Throughout the quarter they also have practiced using microscopes during labs.

All middle schoolers had lots of fun celebrating homecoming week with fun dress-up days to show their school pride! **PHOTOS ON NEXT PAGE!**

Choir Concert Photos



Mixed Choir (left) and Swing Choir (below)



6th Grade (left) and Concert Choir (below)



7th Grade (left)



8th Graders Celebrate Homecoming Week





School District of Neillsville
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 Neillsville, WI 54456

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YOUR FEEDBACK MATTERS

Please return this form by **Friday, November 25**, so we can proceed with the best option for our community.

Return this form by 11/25/2022 so we can proceed with the best option for our community.

WHAT IS YOUR AGE?:

- 18 - 25
- 26 - 35
- 36 - 45
- 46 - 55
- 56 - 64
- 65 or over

BEST METHOD TO RECEIVE
 COMMUNICATION FROM THE
 DISTRICT:

- E-MAIL PHONE DIRECT MAIL
- SCHOOL WEBSITE FACEBOOK
- OTHER _____

ARE YOU A:

- PARENT/GRANDPARENT STAFF MEMBER
- NON-PARENT, NON-STAFF

PLEASE CHECK WHICH OPTION YOU'D PREFER:

- OPTION #1 - INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATES
- OPTION #2 - OPTION 1 + BUILDING RENOVATIONS
- OPTION #3 - OPTIONS 1, 2 AND 3
- NONE

COMMENTS _____

There are several ways to participate.

Direct Mail Survey

Detach, fill out, and return the postage-paid mailer in this newsletter.

Electronic Survey

Visit www.surveymonkey.com/r/Neillsville2022 to complete the survey online. Limit one survey per registered voter.

Learn More

Contact John Gaier at 715-743-8728 or jgaier@neillsvillek12.org or any Board of Education member to learn more about the proposed projects.

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF NEILLSVILLE

Facility Planning Community Survey



The School District of Neillsville's mission is to provide students with the basic skills necessary for the foundation of all other learning. We do a great job of that through our academic and extracurricular opportunities.

While the students need solid footing to build their educations, they also need a strong foundation in their learning environments. You first see a well-cared-for facility when you walk into our building. The lockers are painted, the classrooms are clean, and the library flooring is new. However, what lies beneath the surface is an area of concern.

The facility was built in 1954 with various additions over the years. However, much of the infrastructure is original to the building. A notable concern is the outdated electrical panels. Currently, a 240-volt high-voltage line runs through the building. While this configuration was allowed in the 1950s, it isn't up to today's standards. A power surge in 2018 caused the school to lose one of its three electrical phases, resulting in a domino effect of equipment malfunctions.

In addition to electrical concerns, the school also contains outdated lighting, casework, heating and ventilation systems, and piping. The building is showing its age.

As facility planning conversations begin, it is apparent the needed repairs are more than the District's budget can handle. Therefore, we are asking you to help determine our next steps. The following pages outline identified needs and estimated costs. Please read the options and return the survey with your vote on which projects will help us lay the best foundation for our future.

John Gaier
District Administrator

Please return the
survey by
Friday,
November 25



Financial Implications

Wisconsin property taxes directly impact school funding. The School District of Neillsville has not pursued a referendum since 2008 and has one of the lowest mill rates in the state at \$5.65. The 2021-22 Wisconsin mill rate average was \$8.64. A mill is equal to \$1 of tax for each \$1,000 of property value.

The maintenance needs described in this survey can't be covered with general funds. If the District were to pursue one of these options, it would need a referendum. The estimated tax impact is listed next to each option.



Option 1 - Infrastructure Updates

The District's aging infrastructure is an ongoing concern. Option 1 includes repairs to outdated electrical lines, leaking roofs, and inefficient equipment. The scope of work includes:

- Replace heating and ventilation equipment in the high school
- Perform handicap accessibility upgrades
- Replace elementary windows and classroom casework
- Update the electrical infrastructure, including new service panels, lighting, and conduit
- Install new ceilings and lighting
- Perform building tuck pointing, painting, and sealing
- Replace the elementary and auditorium/pool roof
- Complete environmental testing and asbestos abatement
- Perform Technical Education updates

Projects in this option were deemed the most critical by a third party. Therefore, Option 1 will serve as the baseline, with the opportunity to add other options to its scope.

OPTION 1 - \$10 MILLION ESTIMATED TAX IMPACT

Property Value	Monthly Cost	Annual Cost
\$100,000	\$8.25	\$99.00
\$200,000	\$16.50	\$198.00
\$300,000	\$24.75	\$297.00

Option 2 - Building Renovations

While the building's infrastructure is of the utmost concern, the facility also houses 50-year-old casework, rusting pipes, and outdated technology. The scope of work for Option 2 includes the following:

- Upgrade technology
- Modernize water piping and classroom plumbing
- Fix field house and playground asphalt and drainage issues
- Replace needed doors, windows, flooring, and casework
- Install field house dehumidification
- Perform pool duct work, duct cleaning, and locker replacement
- Update heating and ventilation equipment in the District office
- Replace football field poles and lighting

The estimated cost for this option is \$12.5 million and includes project costs for Option 1.

OPTION 2 - \$12.5 MILLION ESTIMATED TAX IMPACT

Property Value	Monthly Cost	Annual Cost
\$100,000	\$10.33	\$124.00
\$200,000	\$20.67	\$248.00
\$300,000	\$31.00	\$372.00

Option 3 - Sustainability Efforts

Sustainability is a top priority for any business. A school district is no different. Renewable energy can lead to utility savings, educational opportunities, and reliable backup power. The scope of work for Option 3 includes the following:

- Renovating the high school front entrance
- Investing in solar panels for renewable energy
- Upgrading the generator

The estimated cost for this option is \$15.5 million and includes project costs for Options 1 and 2.

OPTION 3 - \$15.5 MILLION ESTIMATED TAX IMPACT		
Property Value	Monthly Cost	Annual Cost
\$100,000	\$12.83	\$154.00
\$200,000	\$25.67	\$308.00
\$300,000	\$38.50	\$462.00

Current Maintenance Projects

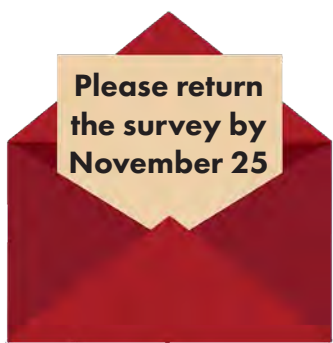
Schools need ongoing maintenance. The School District of Neillsville understands that and budgets to the best of its ability. Currently, the District is funding more than \$3 million in construction projects to:

- Replace the elementary gym wall panels and hand-washing sinks
- Perform electronic door upgrades
- Replace the field house boiler
- Install playground fencing
- Replaced bus garage heater
- Install middle school classroom flooring
- Replace the pool heat exchanger and boiler
- Update heating and ventilation systems in the elementary school

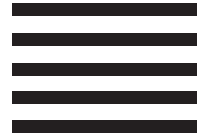
The District will fund these projects using federal ESSER funds and money from the District's Fund 46 account, a long-term capital improvement plan. The District has been strategic in its maintenance planning, but the building's age and equipment condition continue to compound. The District is at a point where it can no longer budget for these costly repairs.

More information about these options can be found by visiting neillsville.k12.wi.us/district/facility-planning.cfm.

Please detach and return the survey to share your opinion. The results will be posted on the District's website.




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