



Eye of the Tiger

District 879 Newsletter October-November 2019

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Fall musical "Elf"

Dates to remember

October

23.....Unity Day
24.....DHS Faculty Follies, 7 p.m.
28.....Band/choir concert, 7 p.m.
31...Halloween parade, 1:45 p.m.

November

1.....End of HS Quarter 1
3.....Daylight Saving Time ends
8-9.....Elf musical, details inside
11...Vets Day program, 9:30 a.m.
11.....HS PIE, 6 p.m.
12.....ES PIE, 7 p.m.
14-16...Elf musical, details inside
18.....IS PIE, 6 p.m.
20.....Two-hour late start
27-29.....Thanksgiving break
26.....End of ES Trimester 1



Community members are welcome to attend the annual Veterans Day program at 9:30 a.m. Monday, Nov. 11, in the Tiger Activity Center. A shuttle bus will depart from the Legion to the school at 8:45 a.m.



Colors of kindness

Delano students participated in the annual Kindness in Chalk event Tuesday, Oct. 1, by covering the campus with positive messages and images.

Tasks for the school year

By Matthew Schoen
Superintendent



In our last newsletter I shared the updated vision of our school district, along with the updated missions of each of the four pillars of our strategic plan.

As you know, last year we facilitated a halftime update to our 10-year strategic plan. I would now like to share some more specific information regarding our annual work plans for each of the district aims in curriculum, professional development, technology and facilities.

In the area of curriculum, we have established a number of major goals. The first annual goal will be to establish what is called a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Task Force. The idea

is that the district will be able to systemically establish the levels of support needed for every student, regardless of achievement level. These procedures are driven by research-based best practices in the field of education.

In addition, the district will review the Minnesota art standards and make appropriate adjustments and updates to our art curriculum. The district will also review the Minnesota science standards for purposes of implementation in the following school year.

Regarding our professional development work plan, we have established two major goals for the 2019-20 school year. The first will be to support the training and implementation of quality learning targets and the gradual release of responsibility (GRR) instructional model in all our classrooms pre-k-12. This is an extensive goal that will be worked on over the next three years. The majority of our professional development time will focus on this initiative, which should

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Honors for Almquist, Rodriguez

By Paul Downer
Communications Coordinator

Two Delano High School seniors have been named Commended Students in the National Merit Scholarship Program.

Jennifer Almquist and Chloe Rodriguez earned the honor by scoring among the top 3 percent of more than 1.5 million students nationally who entered the 2020 competition by taking the 2018 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.

"Those being named Commended Students have demonstrated outstanding potential for academic success," said a statement from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. "These students represent a valuable national resource; recognizing their accomplishments, as well as the key role their schools play in their academic development, is vital to the advancement of educational excellence in our nation."

Dr. Steve Heil, principal of Delano High School, said Commended Students are recognized by colleges and



Jennifer Almquist, left, and Chloe Rodriguez scored among the top 3 percent of students nationally on the PSAT exam.

companies across the world, and many offer scholarships or incentives to those students.

"Both students should be very proud of their accomplishment," Heil said. "It shows a level of high achievement after years of hard work."

While in rare company, Commended Students do not continue in the competition

for National Merit scholarships, as semifinalists do.

Jennifer Almquist

Almquist is no stranger to academic success, having earned the Yale Book Award as the top member of her junior class last spring. Still, she said

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Drive for vets returns

Delano Public Schools will conduct its annual clothing drive for veterans in need again this year.

The drive began on Monday, Oct. 21, and will end on Veterans Day, Monday, Nov. 11. All donated items must be newly purchased.

This year the Delano community will continue to support veterans who are hospitalized at the St. Cloud Veterans Affairs Hospital. In addition, proceeds will also support the Eagle's Healing Nest, located in Sauk Rapids and Anoka.

The St. Cloud VA Hospital supports hospitalized veterans, many of whom are homeless at admission. The veterans typically are hospitalized for 60 to 80 days. When they are well enough for discharge, the hospital staff works to ensure that their basic needs are met.

The mission of the Eagle's Healing Nest is to provide assistance with healing the invisible wounds of war. The Nest provides support for veterans struggling with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder; staff members work to address their immediate needs and then assist veterans with their transition back into the civilian world and their families.

Please consider donating the following items.

For men: Socks, boxers, undershirts, pajama pants, T-shirts, sweatpants or sweatshirts, jeans (waist 30-36, length 30-34), winter boots (size 9-14), slippers and winter coats, hats and gloves.

For women: Socks, underwear, pajamas, shirts, sweatpants, jeans of any size, winter boots, hats and gloves, and slippers with rubber bottoms.

If you would like to make a monetary donation, collected funds will be used to purchase winter boots.

Make your check payable to Delano Public Schools, and note "veterans clothing drive" in the memo.

Speakers to address anxiety

Delano Elementary School will host a free speaking event featuring Rob Winker and Amy Lou Anderson of Playmore and Prosper from 6:30 to 7:15 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 5.

The speakers are sponsored by a grant from the United Way, and will deliver their message in the school cafeteria.

Parents, educators and community members who work with children and teens are encouraged to attend. Free childcare and CEUs will be available.

Defeating anxiety

It is very important to bring the body and mind together to heal anxiety.



Rob Winker

Anxiety is prevalent among kids and teens, yet it is under identified, and under treated. It is vital to empower youth

with strategies for coping with anxiety.

Play therapy and pediatric occupational therapy combine wonderfully to offer practical mind and body strategies for dealing with anxiety.

The presentation will offer several strategies parents, teachers and kids can immediately implement in their lives. The strategies will range from general regulation and calming practices to specific mind-body strategies for overcoming and defeating anxiety.

Winker has his master's degree in counseling psychology and is credentialed as a registered play therapist.

Anderson, OTR/L, is a pediatric occupational therapist.

Partners joining DHS for Veterans Day

History Channel program will coincide with annual event

By Paul Downer
Communications Coordinator

The Veterans Day program is an annual tradition at Delano High School, but this year's ceremony will include an extra element thanks to some high-profile partners.

Charter Communications/Spectrum, in conjunction with HISTORY (the History Channel), will combine HISTORY's Take a Veteran to School Day program with the DHS event.

"When they called me they had asked if we were willing to have a ceremony," said DHS Principal Dr. Steve Heil. "They said they had heard we might still have a ceremony of our own but they weren't sure. So when I confirmed that we did they were excited. Part of Take a Veteran to School Day is to have a Veterans Day program because most schools don't really recognize it, but here we want to make sure to honor our veterans every year."

Take a Veteran to School Day aims to connect veterans



Members of the Delano American Legion enter the Tiger Activity Center during last year's Veterans Day event.

with young people so they can hear stories of service and so students can learn more about Veterans Day. The speaker the companies are bringing in for Delano's event is Minnesota Senator Bruce Anderson, a long-time member of the state legislature who is also retired from the Minnesota Air National Guard and the U.S. Air Force Reserve. Anderson's Sen-

ate District 29 includes most of Wright County.

While the Veterans Day program will, for the most part, follow its usual format, the companies will also provide a hospitality room for veterans and their families, arrange for student ambassadors, and give a donation to the Delano Legion during the ceremony.

Heil said that while the

companies will have some communications personnel on site for social media purposes, there are no plans to film the event for television.

"This is strictly about Take a Veteran to School Day," Heil said. "It's just to recognize the veterans who allow us to live our daily life."

Benefits for the students include a greater knowledge of, and appreciation for, those who serve.

"Our kids will get to hear stories of what it is like for someone around them to have had that experience. I think a lot of our kids don't realize how many of their friends have family members who have served or are serving," said Heil. "It's exciting that we are being recognized for our Veterans Day ceremony, because we've never really partnered up with somebody like this. It's a good way for our students to see that there are businesses out there that try to connect our veterans to our young people."

Schoen

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ultimately result in improved test scores. The second annual goal in the area of professional development will be to support teacher development and education, including license renewal training.

The third major component of our strategic plan is in the area of technology. Our major focus here will be to analyze current technology resources in the district and identify needs for a potential 1-1 initiative that will involve a blended learning environment for our 21st century learners. This means that there will be one device for every student in our district, whether it is a chromebook, laptop or iPad.

The fourth and last component of our strategic plan

involves facilities. We will continue working with our contractors in order to establish consistent and efficient heating and cooling in all of our buildings in order to provide an optimal environment for our students, staff and visitors.

In addition, the district will continue to pursue security upgrades. These will include, but not be limited to, the entrances of our schools. The objective is to maintain a safe and welcoming learning environment. Our facilities committee will also continue to monitor traffic patterns, both of vehicles and pedestrians, on our campus.

Budget update

As all of you are aware, the district reduced its budget for this school year by approximately \$300,000. This was needed in order for the district to be fiscally responsible based

on the forecasted revenues generated by student enrollment and our current expenditures.

The district took steps beginning last year to reduce its expenditures in a fiscally responsible and incremental fashion in order to maintain the appropriate fund balance for our school district. We will tighten the belt a little bit more this year based on current funding forecasts and budget projections.

More detailed information will be forthcoming in the near future. The bottom line is that our community expects the school district to facilitate educational programming at the highest level and in the most efficient manner. The district will continue to facilitate all operations in the most fiscally responsible manner.

Delano School Board

Strong interest for open seat

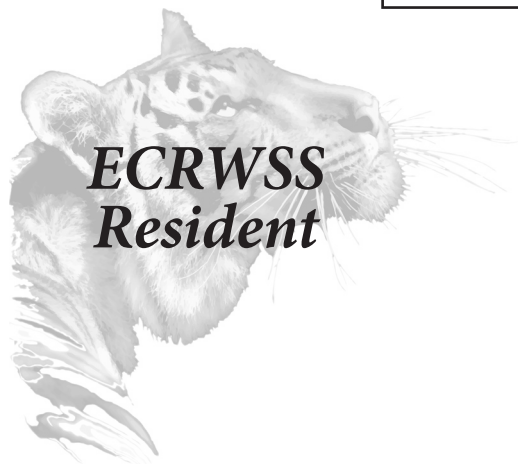
More than one dozen district residents have completed applications to fill an open school board seat.

The school board was scheduled to conduct interviews with each of the applicants on Tuesday, Oct. 22, and to appoint one individual to fill the seat during the school board meeting on Monday, Oct. 28.

A seat opened in August when Mark Larson resigned after moving out of state. A two-year position will be on the November 2020 ballot to complete the remainder of Larson's term.

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Delano Public Schools Vision

*Systemic growth toward educational
excellence for every learner.*

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DELANO DRAMA PRESENTS:



Book by: Bob Martin Music by: Matthew Sklar Lyrics by: Chad Beguelin
Based on the New Line Cinema Film by David Berenbaum
Directed by: Kerri Olson

at the
**DELANO PERFORMING
ARTS CENTER**

	NOV 8	NOV 9	NOV 14	NOV 15	NOV 16
Students \$5					
Adults \$7	7PM	3PM	7PM	7PM	7PM

Tickets available online at: <https://www.delano.k12.mn.us>

Honors

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that while she knew her PSAT score was in the range for recognition, the actual announcement came as a surprise.

"It's very exciting," she said. "I was not expecting it at all when I got called down to the office."

Almquist said her favorite subject in school is math, though she has thoroughly enjoyed psychology so far this year. Teachers who have been particularly influential to her at Delano High School include Jerry Shouts and Karen Hohenstein.

The main ingredients to her success, Almquist said, were hard work and time management.

Almquist has not yet decided on a college, but is planning to apply to a handful of liberal arts schools in the Midwest.

Almquist is the daughter of Ken and Rhonda Almquist of Delano.

Chloe Rodriguez

Rodriguez, who is a post-secondary student at Bethel University in St. Paul this year, learned that she had been named a Commended Student

through a phone call from her mother.

"At first I didn't believe her," Rodriguez said. "I thought she had just read it wrong."

Rodriguez also was honored by the National Hispanic Recognition Program for scoring in approximately the top 1 percent of Hispanic students nationally.

Eventually, Rodriguez plans to pursue a doctorate in astrophysics, and physics and mathematics have been her favorite classes in school.

"I really like when you can solve an equation and it all works out nicely in the end. You get a straightforward answer," she said.

Like Almquist, Rodriguez named Shouts and Hohenstein as two teachers who made a difference for her at DHS.

While Rodriguez said her dream college is Yale, she may opt to stay on at Bethel, which has a strong physics program of its own. She said the key to her academic success has been managing homework assignments evenly over time so deadlines don't become insurmountable.

Rodriguez is the daughter of Mario and Emilee Rodriguez of Delano.