



Eye of the Tiger

District 879 Newsletter May 2022

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May

24.....Grade 5 field trip

25.....Grade 6 wax museum

26.....Kindness in Chalk

26.....Grade 1 concert, 6:30 p.m.

30.....Memorial Day, no school

June

3.....Last day of school

5.....Graduation, 1:30 p.m.

6.....HS PIE meeting, 6 p.m.

27...School board mtg., 5:45 p.m.

July

25...School board mtg., 5:45 p.m.

August

22...School board mtg., 5:45 p.m.

31.....IS/HS open houses

September

6.....First day of school

6-7.....ES Orientation Days



Clearing hurdles

As the 2021-22 school year draws to a close, students are wrapping up final testing, enjoying a host of fun activities and events, and taking advantage of the late-arriving spring weather. Here, sixth-graders sail over a row of hurdles - emblematic of their success during another challenging school year - on Track and Field Day, May 20.

A message of gratitude

By Matthew Schoen
Superintendent

As we finish the 2021-22 school year, I am reflecting upon the idea of gratitude. Yet again, as we finish a third year of an incredible journey through this pandemic, I am proud to announce that our staff, students and parent community have weathered through these difficulties.

Based on preliminary results, the district continues to show progress towards academic excellence, as per our vision. Our staff has overcome



"The attitude of 'We can do this!' that prevailed throughout this time has allowed us to continue providing a world-class education for every student.'

incredible obstacles, not only this past school year, but in previous school years, to maintain our district's vision.

The attitude of "We can do this" that prevailed throughout this time has allowed us to continue providing a world-class education for every student. This could not be achieved without the partnership of our parents. Their willingness

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Jerry Shouts, who led the highly successful DHS math team for 31 years, will be inducted into the Math League Hall of Fame this summer. See Page 4.

Logan is a National Merit Scholar

By Paul Downer

Communications Coordinator

One of the top students in the nation hails from Delano High School.

Senior Campbell Logan learned earlier this month that she has earned a \$2,500 scholarship from the National Merit Scholarship Program.

At the beginning of the school year Logan was named one of 16,000 National Merit semifinalists, representing fewer than 1% of high school seniors in the United States, because of her exceptional performance on 2020 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. That number was reduced to about 15,000 finalists by February, and only about 7,500 finalists were awarded a scholarship.

Scholarship winners were chosen based on their “abilities, skills and accomplishments,” according to the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. Factors include the student’s academic record, information about the school’s curriculum and grading system, the high school’s written recommendation, information about the student’s activities and leadership, and the finalist’s essay.

“Campbell is definitely somebody who



Campbell Logan, left, was congratulated by DHS Principal Barry Voight for her National Merit Scholarship Program honors earlier this school year.

is self-motivated and who challenges herself to achieve at the highest levels,” said DHS Principal Barry Voight. “Those things obviously benefit her now, and will continue to benefit her in the future.”

Next fall Logan plans to study chemical

engineering at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. She is the daughter of Scott and Sarah Logan of Loretto.

• For more about Logan’s National Merit honors, see <https://bit.ly/LoganMerit21>.

DHS ranked 25th in new school review

By Paul Downer

Communications Coordinator

Delano High School ranks No. 25 among traditional public high schools in Minnesota, according to the 2022 list of Best High Schools compiled by U.S. News and World Report.

The organization ranked a total of 414 Minnesota high schools, and Delano ranked 30th overall when magnet and charter schools were included on the list.



DHS also ranked within the top 12% of all high schools

nationally, including magnet and charter schools.

Schools were ranked based on six categories: college readiness (30% of total score), college curriculum breadth (10%), state assessment proficiency (20%), state assessment performance (20%), underserved student performance (10%) and graduation rate (10%).

In terms of test scores, Delano students significantly outpaced their peers around the state. According to U.S. News

and World Report, 69% of Delano students were proficient in math in recent Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments compared to 40% statewide.

In reading, Delano students had 80% proficiency on the MCAs against 60% statewide. And in science, 70% of Delano students were proficient compared to 50% statewide.

For more information, see www.usnews.com/education/best-high-schools.

Become a math or reading tutor for 2022-23

Delano Elementary and Delano Intermediate are both seeking tutors for the next school year. The elementary is seeking multiple Minnesota Reading Corps tutors, and the intermediate is seeking a Minnesota Math Corps tutor.

Tutors work with students during school hours throughout the school year. Whether you’re a recent grad, career changer, stay-at-home parent or retiree, you can make a great tutor. No experience? No problem. Tutors receive great training, so they are well-equipped to help students grow.

Tutors can expect to:

- Build your skills, network, and resume.
 - Receive a paid stipend every two weeks.
 - Earn up to \$4,400 for college tuition or student loans. Tutors 55 and older may gift the award to their child, grandchild, stepchild or foster child.
 - Receive access to health insurance with no monthly premium and child care assistance for those who qualify.
- Visit join.readingandmath.org or call 866-859-2825.



AP of the Year

A regional group of principals has recognized Delano's Shane Baughman as a standout among them. The Central Minnesota Association for Secondary School Principals, which covers 18 counties, selected Baughman as the Assistant Principal of the Year on Thursday, April 28. Baughman was nominated for the honor by DHS Principal Barry Voight (right), who noted Baughman's student-first approach, effective working relationships with staff, and unflagging desire to improve as defining characteristics. 'Shane is constantly focused on a better future for our students,' Voight wrote in the nomination.

Schoen

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to be supportive and adjust schedules to keep students home when needed allowed our schools to stay open in a safe learning environment.

In fact, our entire community has pulled together during this difficult time period to support one another, especially when it comes to the education of our students. This is a testament to the strength of our community.

So on behalf of the district, I would like to communicate my sincere gratitude to all of you for your support and understanding during yet another challenging school year.

Budget adjustments

Speaking of challenges, I would like to share about the district's financial situation in light of last fall's failed operating levy referendum. Last fall we explained that a negative referendum outcome would

result in budget reductions of \$500,000 for the 2022-23 school year. Early this year an updated analysis of our budget showed that we had to achieve a goal of reducing, reallocating or generating additional revenue beyond that number. Some specifics are outlined in the article below.

This is difficult news, but I feel it is important that you know where our district stands from a budget standpoint. We are in a critical time, and we will need additional support from our community, and especially from the state legislature, to maintain educational excellence.

That said, we are doing everything we can to continue the highest level of instruction possible with the resources available. Our staff members have proven their dedication to our students over the past few very difficult years, and we remain committed to upholding our district's tradition of educational excellence for every learner.

Failed referendum prompts adjustments

A frequent question before last fall's referendum asked why the school district was seeking a new operating levy one year before its existing 10-year levy was due to expire in 2022.

The answer is that the district has been cutting and otherwise adjusting its budget - to the collective tune of \$1.2 million - over the past three fiscal years due to insufficient funding.

Voter approval of a new, increased levy last November would have prevented additional cuts in 2022-23, but the ballot question failed.

As a result, the district will cut, reallocate funds or raise fees in the amount of \$553,000 for next school year. The majority of the adjustment is accounted for by cutting the equivalent of seven full-time staff members, which will save approximately \$425,000 in personnel costs.

"Managing these adjust-

Budget 2022-23		
What will change next school year?		
Reductions	Revenue	Reallocations
The equivalent of seven full-time staff members	Increased athletic fees for students in grades 9-12 to cover 20% of the total cost of providing activities	For the third year in a row, a significant portion of professional development funds for staff will be moved to the general fund
Sports for grades 7-8 will be "pay to play," meaning fees cover the full cost	Increased parking fees by \$50 per pass	

ments (in recent years) is among the most difficult things I have done during my career as a superintendent, but action is necessary in light of our current fiscal realities," Superintendent Matt Schoen said in an email to families of students earlier this spring. "Nearly every employee group has been affected by these reductions, including paras, custodians, administrative assistants,

interventionists, administrators, district office staff, IT, and teachers. Now that we are in our fourth year of reductions, the impact on our district is becoming increasingly evident. We will again exhaust all efforts to be creative with our budget to minimize the impact on staffing, but the reality of the matter is that 85% of the district budget is personnel."

In addition to the challenges

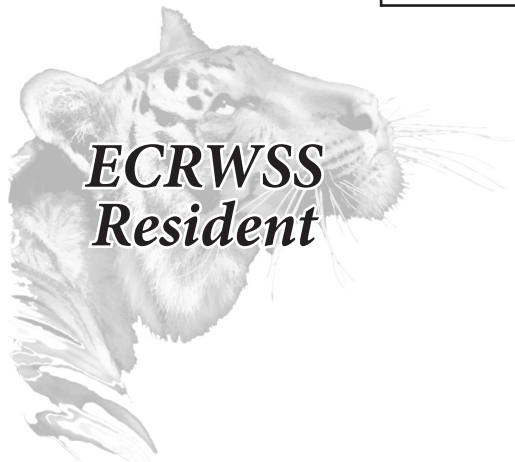
posed by an expiring operating levy (voter-approved levies expire every 10 years and must be renewed or replaced by voters), the district has experienced a drop in enrollment of about 140 students over the last two years. Similar enrollment declines have been common among public school districts since the onset of COVID-19.

"Due to this enrollment loss, we are making some adjustments in class sizes/sections in the elementary and intermediate school. It is important to note that some of these adjustments are necessary because of enrollment changes apart from budget considerations," said Schoen. "If some of these students return next year, we will adapt accordingly."

• The school board will likely call for another operating levy referendum on Nov. 8, which is the last opportunity to replace the expiring levy before larger cuts become necessary.

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Delano Public Schools Vision

*Systemic growth toward educational
excellence for every learner*

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Shouts will join Math League Hall of Fame

By Paul Downer
Communications Coordinator

For 31 years, Jerry Shouts guided Delano High School's math team from one success to another.

This summer he'll be inducted in the Minnesota State High School Math League's Hall of Fame, which honors those "who have served the League in a great capacity."

"I was very happy with the honor," said Shouts about learning of his impending induction. "It's exciting."

Shouts is in his 46th year of teaching overall, and came to Delano in 1984 to teach math and computer classes. He coached basketball and softball before learning about Math League, then set about recruiting students for a math team in Delano.

"There is a core group of kids who just legitimately enjoy math or competition," said Shouts during his last year of coaching the math team in 2020. "It can be hard to describe to people who aren't into math, but it's fun."

It didn't take long to build a powerhouse. The team was



Jerry Shouts organizes students before one of his last meets as math team coach in 2020.

almost always competitive, and once reeled off a 10-year run of first-place conference finishes. In all, Delano won the conference and went to state 11 times, in addition to various individual state appearances. In 2010 Delano took third at state.

"Our first few years we were kind of average. Then we were really strong for a while," said Shouts. "Not only did we take first place 10 years in a row, but during that time we won 20 meets in a row, and then we had a second place, and then we won another 20 meets in

a row. So we won 40 out of 41 meets."

At its height, the team needed two buses to get its 85 students to meets.

"That was more than 10% of our 9-12 student population," said Shouts.

Now the longest-serving teacher in Delano, Shouts stopped coaching the math team before the 2020-21 school year. He also reduced his classroom schedule to half days in 2021-22, and will continue that half-time schedule next year.

"I enjoyed all my years of

coaching math," he said. "It was a lot of fun."

What drew him to teaching in general, and to math in particular?

"I always knew I wanted to be a teacher because I like helping kids," he said. "I come from a family of teachers and teaching is just in my personality. As for math, it's very logical. I just like the logic of it and solving math puzzles."

Although the math team has a strong legacy in Delano, its future is murky. DHS did not have a team this school year because there was no coach.

"I know there were a lot of kids who were disappointed this year that they didn't have a team," said Shouts, indicating that challenges arose from the pandemic and from staffing changes.

Whether the team is able to re-form in the years ahead remains to be seen, but it will always be represented by Shouts in the Math League Hall of Fame.

• The league chooses five individuals every five years to induct to its Hall of Fame. Shouts will be inducted at Augsburg University on Aug. 11.