

SPRING 2004

School Talk



Keeping
the Levy's
Promises

Class size projections for 2004-2005

'Maintain' is theme for budget season

It's budget-building time again at Mounds View Public Schools. As school budget committees have been gathering to discuss creative ways to plan for 2004-2005, a frequently asked question emerged:

"Now that voters approved the levy, will there be more money for building support or to restore programs that have been reduced?"

Unfortunately, the answer is no. You might recall the School Board approved three priorities for spending the levy revenue for 2004-2005.

- Reduce class sizes from 2003-2004 levels.
- Maintain a comprehensive curriculum and educational program offerings.
- Reduce student activity fees for athletics, fine arts and clubs.

Because voters approved the levy, all three of these priorities will absolutely be implemented for next year. However, as we expected, there is no "pot of money" to restore old programs or implement new initiatives beyond these priorities.

This may seem disappointing to some, but our situation could be far worse. Mounds View is lucky it can maintain its current curriculum, keep all of its schools open, keep principals at each elementary school and continue to provide support services for students and schools. All of these things were in jeopardy next year if the levy had failed.

With no new money and declining enrollment continuing, budget committees will need to be creative in their planning. I encourage each of you to follow our schools' budget process for 2004-2005 by visiting the budget planning page at www.moundsviewschools.org. Our journey towards a balanced budget in June 2004 can only be strengthened by your participation and familiarity with our work.

Sincerely,



Jan Witthuhn
Superintendent



Keeping

Last November, voters approved a levy designed to provide smaller class sizes, a comprehensive curriculum and lower activity fees for 2004-2005. In addition, the School Board promised that no schools would close in 2004-2005, and school attendance areas would remain unchanged.

Now that the levy passed, how is the District doing?

"Next year's class size averages will meet or beat our goals across the District – even with the addition of more non-resident students," says School Board chair Mark Kimball.

This winter, Kimball and the School Board delivered that message during two community forums. During the gatherings, Board members discussed class size average projections for 2004-2005 and many of the ways enrollment trends are tied to the District's financial health.

"It's been clear that our residents want us to lower class sizes, and they want us to address our declining enrollment," says Board member Barb Bollum. "We can do both, by welcoming students in our schools."

"Class size averages will meet or beat our goals – even with more non-resident students."

— Mark Kimball,
School Board Chair

School Talk is published by Mounds View Public Schools, Independent School District 621.

Send correspondence to *School Talk* editor, 2959 Hamline Avenue North, Roseville, MN 55113-1664, e-mail naomi.rettke@moundsviewschools.org or call 651-604-9789.

Editor

Naomi Rettke

Designer

Jeanne Schacht

Photographers

Greg Helgeson

Joe Oden

Naomi Rettke

Superintendent

Dr. Jan Witthuhn

2004 School Board

Barb Bollum

Lori Grivna

Bob Helgeson

Mark Kimball

Marre Jo Sager

Bob Sundberg

Noreen Thompson

On the web:



www.moundsviewschools.org

On the cover:

Science teacher Martha Hovde and seventh-grade student Davon Wiley study together at Edgewood Middle School in Mounds View. Next year class size averages at the middle schools will be lower.

Enrollment news online

Looking for more information on class sizes and enrollment in Mounds View Public Schools? Visit



www.moundsviewschools.org

to learn more about:

- School-by-school class size projections
- Enrollment trends
- Frequently asked questions

the Levy's Promises

Efforts to slow declining enrollment will not interfere with reducing class sizes, offering a comprehensive curriculum and lowering activity fees.



Next year class size averages for third grade at Island Lake Elementary School in Shoreview — including teacher Julie Bohn's class — will drop from 27 to 23 students.

LEVY PROMISE

1 Reduce class sizes from 2003-2004 levels.

LEVY PROGRESS 2004-2005

	03-04 actual	04-05 levy promise	04-05 estimated*	if levy failed**
EL	26.5	24	24	27
MS	34	30	28	34
HS	37	32	31	37

Estimated cost = \$1.7 –1.9 million

* estimated averages as of February 20, 2004

** based on January 27, 2004, projections

Projected core class size averages are subject to change based on enrollment and staffing changes.

Slowing the decline

In response to declining enrollment and a net loss of students enrolling in other districts, Mounds View launched enrollment efforts designed to retain current students, bring back resident students who are currently attending other schools and invite non-residents to apply for a limited number of openings. The goal was simple: slow the decline of enrollment, without increasing class size averages promised in the levy. So what could enrollment look like for next year?

The District is retaining more of its resident students.

Mounds View High School is expecting 100 more resident students next year than previously projected. About half are current District eighth-graders and about half are resident students who are currently attending non-public schools.

A total of 90 new non-resident students were approved for enrollment in K-12.

Based on space available, the District accepted 85 percent of non-resident agreement applicants and denied 15 percent. Last year, the District accepted 69 new non-resident agreement applicants.

Class size averages will match the levy's promise.

Non-resident enrollment did not increase the class size averages promised in the 2003 operating levy. (See *class size averages chart*.)

Two new kindergarten classes were added as a result of non-resident enrollment.

Next year, additional kindergarten sections were added at Snail Lake Elementary School and Turtle Lake Elementary School in Shoreview.

Non-resident enrollment does not increase residents' levy taxes.

Residents of Mounds View Public Schools do not pay operating levy taxes on non-resident students, no matter how many more non-residents join the schools.

Keeping the Levy's Promises

How can the District lower class sizes and welcome non-resident students?

Next year, the District plans to hire approximately 40 new licensed teachers as necessary to reduce class sizes, by using the levy revenue and the state funds that accompany resident and non-resident students. By only accepting non-resident students on a space-available basis – grade-by-grade, school-by-school – Mounds View will meet the core class size average goals without jeopardizing class size promises.

To encourage enrollment, Mounds View's goals were clear. The District first worked to retain current students, and then to bring back resident students who are currently attending other schools. Over the past 10 years, more resident students have enrolled in schools outside of the District than non-resident students who have enrolled in

Mounds View schools. This year, Mounds View experienced a net loss of 172 students.

In addition, the District invited non-resident students to apply for a limited number of openings.

"We're not talking about bringing in more students," explains Superintendent Jan Witthuhn. "We're simply trying to retain and attract enough students to slow the overall decline we're experiencing."

Despite approving 90 new non-resident agreement students for enrollment next fall, the District expects overall lower enrollment next fall.

"For the most part, our residents are middle aged and settled in their homes," says Witthuhn. "Considering our demographics, I think slowing the rate of our declining enrollment is a more realistic goal than reversing our trend. Slowing our decline will be good news for the financial future of our schools."

LEVY PROMISE

2 Maintain a comprehensive curriculum and educational program offerings.

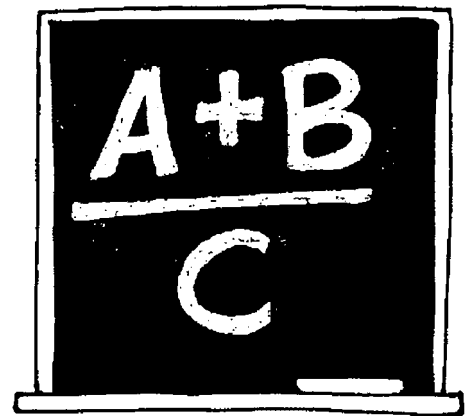
LEVY PROGRESS 2004-2005

Students will continue to experience the essential curriculum of science, social studies, math and reading/language arts, and other curricular areas including world languages, career and technical education, physical education, health and fine arts.

- All schools remain open.
- No changes to presently defined attendance boundaries.
- One principal position for each elementary school.
- Continued support services for students.
- Central support services to schools.

Estimated cost = \$3.6 – 4.1 million

The majority of levy revenue is dedicated to simply maintaining current programs. There are no additional resources available to restore old programs or implement new initiatives beyond these priorities.



Keeping the Levy's Promises



LEVY PROMISE

3 Reduce student activity fees for athletics, fine arts and clubs.

LEVY PROGRESS

2004-2005

The District is maintaining current co-curricular programs and bringing student activity fees more in line with other schools in our conferences.

Athletics fees will be reduced by approximately \$60 and fine arts and club fees by approximately \$10. This amount is assuming current levels of student participation.

Estimated expense = \$200,000

For a comprehensive chart of fees, visit www.moundsvIEWSschools.org

Legislative action: a critical next step

November's successful levy provided a critical first step in slowing the rate and scope of budget reductions in future years. However, it will not offer a permanent or long-term solution to the District's financial challenges. To achieve a more stable financial future, legislative action is required.

During the past months, the Legislative Action Committee has been meeting with District legislative representatives to discuss issues of interest to families in the District. The Committee is an active and energized group that discusses the state's role in school funding and creates strategies that could spark improvements.

In January, the School Board approved the Committee's recommended priorities for legislative action this year.

1 Eliminate the cross subsidy of special education programs from general education funds. Encourage state government leaders to lobby the federal government to meet its financial commitment to special education. Fully fund state mandates relative to special education. Reinstate state funding for inflation on special education costs.

2 Maintain or increase dollars available to school districts that have approved alternative compensation plans with their employee groups.

3 Amend the state report card on Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) to include student progress growth indicators in addition to test score data.

Provide \$10 per pupil to assist districts in compliance with No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the state report card. Request federal funding related to compliance with this legislation.



4 Approve funding for Mounds View Public Schools' partnership in a maintenance facility project with the City of Arden Hills and Ramsey County on the Twin Cities Army Ammunition Plant (TCAAP) site.

5 Consider changes to the funding formula that take into account regional differences in market costs required for the effective and efficient operation of schools.

To stay in touch with this committee's work, visit www.moundsvIEWSschools.org/enews and select the "Legislative Updates" e-news group. Also be sure to visit the legislative web page on the "About the District" page at www.moundsvIEWSschools.org.

Around the District

Here's the latest news from Mounds View Public Schools

Students take a stand

Mounds View responds to threats with signs of solidarity

In the wake of racially related bomb threats discovered last winter at Mounds View High School, many students decided to take a stand.

"We don't want to be known as the school with the bomb threats, or the school with racists," says Student Council senior Kim Anderson. "That's not who we are, and it's not who we will be."

To demonstrate their unity against prejudice, students took action.

Students handed out green ribbons to wear as a sign of peace and support of diversity.

Hundreds of students signed petitions taking a stand against racism and prejudice and agreeing to open-mindedness.

During lunch periods, students gathered to share their thoughts and concerns in an open forum meeting with teachers, administrators and a School Board member.

The Mounds View commons were decorated with student-made posters offering words of wisdom on diversity and peace. Many students wrote original thoughts, while others quoted notable figures ranging from Martin Luther King Jr.

to John Lennon.

"I'm really proud of their response," says principal Julie Wikelius. "Our students are sending a clear message. They support a safe and welcoming environment in this school."

"We don't want to be known as the school with the bomb threats."

— Mounds View senior
Kim Anderson, Student Council



Sophomore Decontee Urey accepts a green ribbon from Student Council members and seniors Kim Anderson and Crista Johnson (L to R) at Mounds View High School. The ribbons represented signs of solidarity against racism.

Community shows support for diversity

Some 50 people from the community attended a meeting in February to discuss diversity issues at Mounds View High School. One week earlier, local city mayors and managers met with District officials to plan a unified and public response in support of diversity in our schools and communities (see *resolution on back cover*).

These meetings represent only a few of the District's responses following recent bomb threats at Mounds View.

- School District personnel and law enforcement officials are meeting regularly regarding the investigation.
- Increased security remains in place at Mounds View.
- Security cameras have been installed at the school.
- A \$5,000 reward remains in place for information and consequences for the person(s) responsible for the threats.
- Anonymous tips can be made to the Ramsey County Crime Tip Line: 651-266-8090.
- A community outreach position will be established for Mounds View and Irondale.
- Both high school staffs are participating in Intercultural Development Inventories to assess school climate issues.

In addition, Mounds View held a meeting with the representatives from the Minnesota Human Rights Commission to determine short- and long-term plans regarding curriculum and ways to increase awareness regarding hate crimes and speech.

"We are serious about providing a healthy social environment for all our students," says Superintendent Jan Witthuhn. "It's encouraging to see our students and community supporting these efforts."

State standards and exam are fragile mix

How valuable is the MCA?

Each winter, students across Minnesota participate in a common exam called the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA). This standardized test was first administered in 1998 in grades 3 and 5 to determine whether students were performing at proficient levels on the state standards.

When No Child Left Behind (NCLB) became a federal law in the summer of 2003, each state was required to select an annual measure of student proficiency. In Minnesota, the MCA was identified to fill this requirement. Despite good intentions, the MCA is not an adequate measure of student progress or school performance. Additionally, it does not provide an accurate look at how an individual student is progressing and what help or instruction may be needed to encourage academic growth.

A questionable tool for improvement

Ideally, teachers should use MCA results as a barometer of what a student has learned and what the student's next steps for improvement should be. Unfortunately, with each new change in the test, the reliability of the MCA comes into question. Already this year, the Minnesota Department of Education announced the need to re-run 2003 MCA scores and delay the 2004 reports. At the same time, new K-12 education state standards are being adopted. The state will then need to revise the MCA exam in order to reflect these new standards. This step will render this year's MCA results not applicable once the new standards have taken effect. Each of these changes makes the process of interpreting MCA results more difficult and less effective for the work of teachers and students.

In addition, state results and student reports often arrive well after students have gone home for the summer. Thus, teachers cannot use MCA results to change their instruction methods during the school year – and the opportunity to better student achievement has passed. All of these factors bring the MCA's validity into question and create a tenuous situation for students, parents and educators.

A better model for achievement

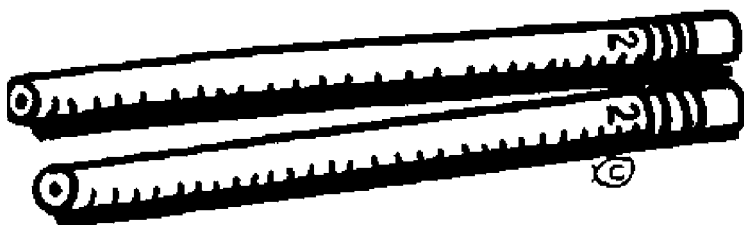
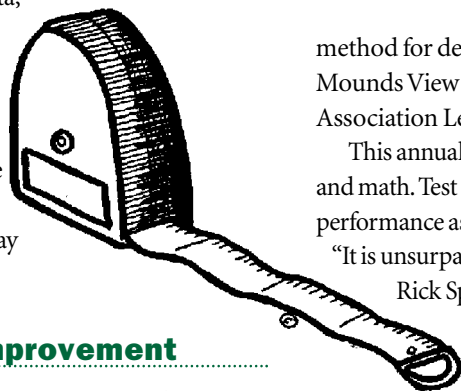
Although the state's recent errors on the 2003 MCA data won't bring about unexpected NCLB sanctions, the tests remain a questionable tool for improved classroom instruction. Still, it's crucial for teachers and parents to have an accurate method for determining a student's progress towards achievement. Mounds View Public Schools administers the Northwest Evaluation Association Level tests (NWEA).

This annual test is given to students in grades 2-8 and covers reading and math. Test results provide both national ranking of a student's performance as well as comparisons to a national growth performance. "It is unsurpassed by any other measure on the market today," says Rick Spicuzza, the District's coordinator of assessment and evaluation.

This exam is a rich source of information for families, teachers and administrators concerned about academic progress for all students. Through careful examination of the results of NWEA, teachers can assess a student's academic needs and tailor lessons to that student accordingly. Because of this, NWEA is a powerful tool for teachers to use in day-to-day instruction.

By using the NWEA results, Mounds View Public Schools can continue to provide students with high-quality, relevant academic challenges. These success-seeking practices are necessary to improve student achievement and go to the heart of addressing the goals of NCLB.

...the MCA is not an adequate measure of student progress or school performance...it does not provide an accurate look at how an individual student is progressing and what help or instruction may be needed to encourage academic growth.



Around the District

Here's the latest news from Mounds View Public Schools

Land development will net \$5 million or more

Use for funds is restricted by the state

For some time now, the District has been working to sell, develop or trade two of its properties to maximize efficiency and profits. In 2003, Mounds View Public Schools solicited proposals from a list of interested developers to buy, develop or trade the District-owned property south of Snail Lake in Shoreview and the District Service Center (DSC) property at 2959 Hamline Avenue North in Roseville.

After a committee reviewed 10 proposals, the School Board approved a contract with Shoreview developers Moser-Zawadski. The plan is to develop the currently named "Hills of Oaks" property in Shoreview with a minimum guarantee of \$5 million for the District and shared fees up to \$1.9 million or more. The land will become a residential development of single-family homes.

By state law, the profits from the sale of this land cannot be used for employees'

salaries. This restricted revenue can be used in the following ways:

- To pay off District debt.
- To purchase capital needs including textbooks, computers, maintenance equipment and desks and chairs.
- To pay for facilities or site improvements or repairs.

State law permits these options and defines the uses of the net proceeds. The School Board will discuss these options publicly at School Board meetings and work sessions in the coming months.

The School Board also agreed to proceed with a Phase I environmental assessment of 2959 Hamline Avenue to be completed by late summer 2004. The District will re-solicit development proposals by fall 2004 so all central administration services can relocate from the DSC to another facility – yet to be determined – by late fall 2005.

Board approves field improvements:

Turf will correct limited usage and safety concerns

In April, the School Board approved the installation of synthetic turf and the correction of drainage problems on the stadium field at Mounds View High School. Work will begin this spring with completion anticipated in fall 2004, dependent upon the weather.

The Board also approved a commitment to install synthetic turf on the stadium field in summer 2005 at Irondale High School, following a review of bids in February 2005.

The improvements are expected to increase the value of the facilities and significantly increase usage for students and community groups. For years, the conditions of the outdoor athletic facilities in the secondary schools have created limited usage and safety concerns.

In March, about 100 community members gathered at Mounds View High School to share their thoughts on synthetic turf with the School Board during a special forum. In addition, the Board considered a community task force recommendation to install turf at both schools.

To fund the \$1.5 million Mounds View project, which also includes track construction and bleacher modifications, the District will use \$1.2 million in revenue previously designated for field improvements at the high school – with no tax impact to residents.

For more information, visit www.moundsvIEWSchools.org.



2004 School Board

New School Board members Bob Helgeson of North Oaks and Bob Sundberg of Arden Hills were sworn into office in January. The following month, the Board voted to appoint Noreen Thompson of Arden Hills to fill the vacancy left following Dave Stimpson's resignation. 2004 School Board members include (L to R:) Lori Grivna (clerk), Bob Helgeson (treasurer), Marre Jo Sager, Bob Sundberg, Barb Bollum (vice chair), Mark Kimball (chair) and Noreen Thompson.

Construction entering final phase



District projects balanced budget

A recent survey by the Association of Metropolitan School Districts (AMSD) lists positive results for Mounds View Public Schools' upcoming budget year. In the survey, AMSD asked its 26 member districts about their projected budget outlook for 2004-2005. While the financial picture is bleak for many, Mounds View Public Schools is one of only a few districts not expected to make general budget cuts during that time. This positive rating is due to voters passing the general fund operating levy increase last fall.

However, as early as 2005-2006, declining enrollments will contribute to potential budget deficits for the District, assuming an inflationary increase of less than 2.5 percent and no increase in current state aid. In winter the District held community meetings to discuss the improvements in class size from the successful levy and the effects of declining enrollment on district finances. The School Board will vote on the 2004-2005 fiscal year budget on June 29, 2004.

Funding secure for indoor air quality improvement

Mounds View Public Schools received approval from the Department of Education for \$14.5 million in additional Alternative Facilities funding. These funds are directed at completing indoor air quality projects and deferred maintenance projects on District facilities during 2004 and 2005. The combined total of \$45.4 million will be divided into two bond issues (2003 and 2004) and will be retired over a period of 20 years. This debt issuance will not result in an increase in the local levy for overall tax purposes since the District is reducing the Health & Safety levy in a corresponding amount to what is required for the debt service.



The relocated administrative area and front entrance at Snail Lake Elementary School in Shoreview was completed last fall. Other improvements at the school include new and renovated classrooms, new media center areas, improved mechanical systems and indoor air quality work.

Construction activities continue primarily in three school buildings this spring. All work is supported by the bond referendum voters passed in 1999. By law, that revenue is restricted to construction purposes only. It cannot be used for classroom expenses.

Snail Lake Elementary School Shoreview

Finishing work continues in the Snail Lake media center. Tiled flooring is installed, and ceiling tile is in place. Windows and risers in the story-telling area are also completed. Seven classrooms adjacent to the media center are complete and being used by staff and students. Four of these rooms house fourth-grade, two are computer labs and one is a fifth-grade classroom. Perkins & Will, the project architect, has been studying additional site issues such as traffic flow, parking, bus access and parent drop-off areas.

Chippewa Middle School North Oaks

Construction of two computer labs and four math classrooms at Chippewa has been completed. Four existing science labs have also been remodeled. Students and staff members moved into those spaces in late March. Research has begun on pricing for ceramic wainscoting in high-traffic hallways and the wood floor installation in the gymnasium.

Edgewood Middle School Mounds View

The new front entry, administrative areas and media center at Edgewood were completed in December and students and staff members moved into the area in early January. Two new science labs have been in use since December. Four multipurpose rooms are also completed and in use. Remodeling work on the east side of the lower- and middle-level hallways was completed in February. Work on the old media center, which has been converted into an art lab, also has been completed. Ten classrooms and special ed rooms were vacated to begin work on the west side of the lower- and middle-level hallways.

Around the District

Here's the latest news from Mounds View Public Schools

Thoughtful Thursdays at Chippewa

Chippewa Middle School is reaching out to its community through a new program, called "Thoughtful Thursdays." The program invites senior citizen volunteers into the school to meet and greet students as they arrive on Thursday mornings. Volunteers say hello to students, open stuck lockers and check in with students they've met during previous visits. "It's a great intergenerational opportunity," says Mike Holmgren, dean at Chippewa. "The students learn from the older adults in our community, and it helps us out." The volunteers enjoy the morning too, according to Bob Ebert. "This is a good time. It's easy and I like doing it." After the students head to class, the volunteers enjoy a cup of joe, donated by Caribou Coffee. Chippewa welcomes additional volunteers to the program. If you're interested in learning more, call Mike Holmgren at 651-639-6234. Pictured are Ebert and Chippewa student Joseph Grove.



Chalkboard milestone

Members of the Mounds View Education Association produced and performed their 20th-annual Chalkboard Capers variety show this year. The show, written, directed and performed by staff members, raises money for District student scholarships and focuses on good, clean, family fun. Since its inception, Chalkboard Capers has provided nearly 300 scholarships thanks to the generous support of community members.

Snail Lake at State Capitol

The fourth-graders from Snail Lake Elementary School in Shoreview performed a patriotic concert at the State Capitol in February. To prepare for the program, the 95 students studied American songs and information. The program took place in the Capitol rotunda where state employees could spend their lunch hour listening to the students sing. The students were guests of State Senator Mady Reiter and their teacher is Roxanne Britz.

Physics Fair festivities

Mounds View High School celebrated its seventh-annual Physics Fair in March. This was the school's biggest Physics Fair yet with more than 320 students, 85 projects and 20 engineering professionals who did the judging. The fair represented six weeks of hard work and study, culminating in a large, chain reaction experiment that included all the projects.

Read Across America

On March 2, elementary schools around the District took part in Read Across America, the national event that celebrates literacy on Dr. Seuss's birthday. At Pike Lake Elementary School, this year's theme was "Hats off to Reading." Events included: guest readers like local news broadcasters, local officials and the Minnesota Twins mascot; wacky hat day, to go along with the day's theme; a lunch of green eggs and ham; and a special appearance by principal Bill Book, dressed as the Cat in the Hat.

Irondale teachers studied up on data

During Curriculum Development day in February, Irondale High School staff members worked on furthering their data-use skills. The day's featured speaker was Eric Twadell, from the curriculum department at Adelaide Stevenson High School in Illinois – a school nationally known for work in this area. Twadell worked all day with staff members to help determine the best methods for data use in classes at Irondale. The opportunity was made possible through a grant from the 621 Foundation and the Twin Cities North Chamber. Pictured are (L to R) Irondale math teachers Larry Beck, Joel Peterson and featured speaker Twadell.



Around the District

Here's the latest news from Mounds View Public Schools

Math Committee begins its work

A K-12 mathematics program review committee has convened to thoroughly examine the K-12 math curriculum, to report findings and to recommend improvements. The group includes mathematics resource teachers Mike Huberty, Jane Grey Browning and Cheryl Wallin, as well as teachers, parents and other community members representing all schools and grade levels.

The committee has scheduled monthly meetings through June to review and make recommendations on the following topics: student performance, standards-learner outcomes, assessment, curriculum structure

and sequence, teaching and materials. To read the committee's full charge statement, visit the "News" page at www.moundsviewschools.org.

Honoring their teachers

Students at Turtle Lake Elementary School in Shoreview were asked to create a unique way to honor their teachers this winter. Some students wrote their teacher a nice note to acknowledge their hard work. Others created a coupon book for their teacher, some brought in an apple or a flower as a gift and others volunteered to clean the blackboard or overhead projectors. The event was sponsored by the student council. Teachers reported kind and "uplifting" results.



Joe Oden, Pioneer Press photo

Math masters make headlines

Shui Hu, an eighth-grade student at Edgewood Middle School in Mounds View has risen to the top in two of the state's competitive math tournaments. Hu won the state tournament's Math Bowl and the state MATHCOUNTS competition. He will now go on to represent Minnesota in the national MATHCOUNTS competition in Washington, D.C. in May. Hu won other honors during the math season, including tying with Mounds View High School sophomore Stephanie Cheng for second place in the state in the regular season and top student in the North Suburban Division.

These performances were among several outstanding math accomplishments by District students this year. The Mounds View High School team won the North Suburban Division, placed second in the state in the regular season and took third at the state tournament. The team from Irondale High School qualified for the state tournament. The team from Chippewa Middle School took fifth place in the MATHCOUNTS competition.

Of the top 10 students in Minnesota, three were from Mounds View High School: senior Gordy Stecklein and sophomores Patrick Miles and Stephanie Cheng.

Immunization Requirements for 2004-2005

Minnesota's School Immunization Law requires documentation of the following immunizations:

Students entering Kindergarten

- Five dates for DPT (Diphtheria/Pertussis/Tetanus)
- Four dates for Polio
- Two dates for MMR (Measles/Mumps/Rubella)
- Three dates for HBV (Hepatitis B)
- One date for Varicella (chicken pox)

Students entering grade 7:

- Date of a second MMR (Measles/Mumps/Rubella), given after the first birthday
- Three dates for HBV (Hepatitis B), two-dose immunization series with Merck vaccine (10 microgram dose) is approved if specifically noted by immunization provider with vaccine name, dose and manufacturer
- Date of Td (Tetanus/Diphtheria) booster given after the seventh birthday
- Date for Varicella (chicken pox) or documentation of disease history with date provided by parent/guardian or health care provider

Students entering grades 8-12:

- Date of Td (Tetanus/Diphtheria) booster given after the seventh birthday
- Students entering Mounds View Public Schools from other districts, states or countries must provide documentation of immunization as required at the grade level of entrance.
- For students who will not receive any of these immunizations for medical reasons or because of conscientiously held beliefs, a waiver form may be obtained from the school office. A health care provider must sign if the exemption is for medical reasons. If the exemption is for conscientiously held beliefs, the form needs to be notarized with parent/guardian signature to meet the waiver requirements.
- Students without required documentation by September 1, 2004, will not be admitted to classes until the required documentation of immunization or waiver is received.

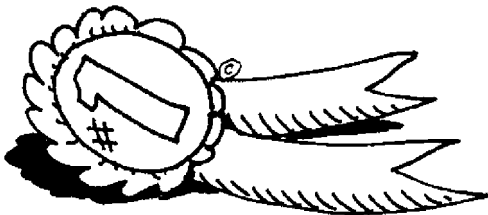


With Honors

Superior achievement is a hallmark of Mounds View Public Schools

Math contenders at Edgewood

The Edgewood Math team recently won the Minnesota Junior High Math League's division competition. Additionally, the team finished in the top 12 in the state. Three individuals from the team were top finishers at the division level as well: Nick Arciero, Theo Kanning and Adam Bruck – who also was in the top 10 at the state level.



Science successes

The Science Olympiad team from Mounds View High School in Arden Hills became state champions in March after winning the 20th anniversary state tournament. The 31 teams at the tournament competed in 22 events, ranging from chemistry lab to trebuchet building to forestry. The team is now invited to represent Minnesota at the national finals in Huntington, Pennsylvania in May.

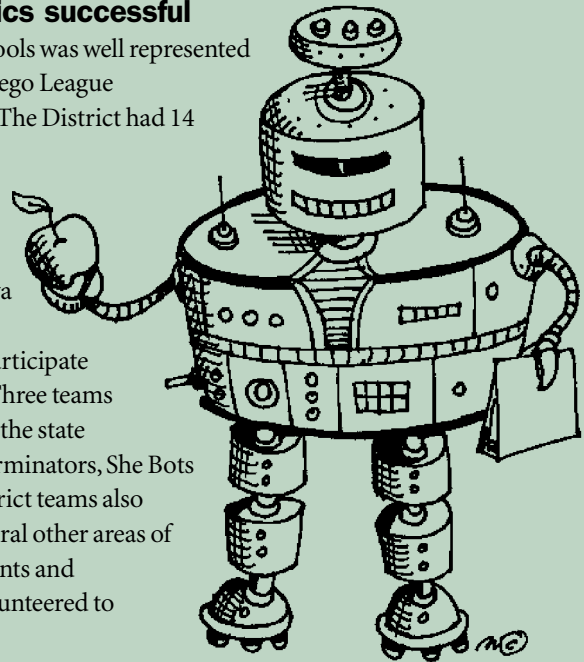
Service to Youth awards

Ron Lehman, the social worker at Bel Air Elementary School in New Brighton was a recipient of this year's Service to Youth award, presented by Northwest Youth and Family Services. Lehman was recognized for his dedication to positive programs that help youth in our community. Among the many projects Lehman has worked on during his career is the after-school Mentoring program at Bel Air.

Also receiving the Service to Youth award was former School Board member Wendy Benson. She was recognized for her commitment to the community – both as a School Board member and an active volunteer.

Lego League robotics successful

Mounds View Public Schools was well represented at the regional and state Lego League competitions this winter. The District had 14 teams who competed at the regional tournament, representing Snail Lake Elementary, Turtle Lake Elementary and Chippewa Middle School – 11 of those teams went on to participate in the state tournament. Three teams took home trophies from the state tournament: the Toxic Terminators, She Bots and Chicks in Space. District teams also received accolades in several other areas of competition. Several parents and community members volunteered to coach for the program.



Burke named Teacher of the Year for Adapted Physical Education

Rich Burke, one of the District's developmental adapted phy ed teachers, has been selected as the national Adapted Physical Education Teacher of the Year by the Association of the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. The award is a continuation of the regional Adapted PE teacher of the Year Award that Burke received during 2002-2003. Pictured with Burke are Highview Middle School students Nichole Geisenhof and Stephanie Lee.



With Honors

Superior achievement is a hallmark of Mounds View Public Schools

Accolades for District musicians

The Minnesota Music Educators Association has announced its All-State musicians for 2004-2005. There are 19 students representing Mounds View Public Schools in orchestra, band and choir. In August, these students will study at a week-long music camp in preparation for performances during the Minnesota Music Educators Association conference next February. Of the more than 2,125 musicians who auditioned, only 567 were selected.

Teacher/Coach honored by alma maters

Mounds View High School's orchestra director and diving coach, John Madura, will be inducted into two halls of fame this year. The first is Austin High School in Minnesota, his hometown, where he will be inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame. In April, he will be inducted into the University of Minnesota Swimming Hall of Fame.

District gymnasts go to state

Two District students participated in the state girls' gymnastics tournament this winter. They were Mounds View High School senior Courtney Tofte and Irondale High School junior Jackie LaFleur. LaFleur took sixth place in the state on the vault.

Citizen teacher of the year

Karen Aalund, a special education teacher at Irondale, was named the VFW's Minnesota Seventh District Citizen Teacher of the Year. Aalund, who was sponsored by Kraus-Hartig VFW, has facilitated the "Voice of Democracy" contest at Irondale for the last few years. Voice of Democracy is an annual competition where students compete by giving taped speeches on a particular topic. Aalund will now compete for the state title, which will be announced in June.



State champions compete in national Future Cities Competition

Three students from Chippewa Middle School in North Oaks took seventh place at the national Future Cities competition in Washington D.C. in February. Approximately 2,400 teams exist throughout the country. The Chippewa team qualified for the tournament by becoming state champions in January. The students worked under the direction of Chippewa teacher Nancy Roussin and Stefan Gantert, an engineer who volunteers for the program. The students are eighth-graders Anna Brockway and Sarah Kaiser and seventh-grader Garrett Tranquillo. Future Cities challenges middle school students to combine science and imagination while designing beautiful, livable communities of the future. Students must design their project based on that season's specific topic. This year's topic was how plastics might help senior citizens in the future.

Valentine Hills staff recognized

The Tri-City American Legion presented an award to Valentine Hills Elementary School in Arden Hills. The award recognizes the staff members at the school for "outstanding contributions to a strong education program that instills a personal obligation and responsibility in our young people."

Scholastic Art Awards

Artwork by 16 District student-artists was recognized for excellence this winter by judges at the Minnesota Scholastic Art Awards competition. There were more than 1,200 entries from across the state and only 216 pieces selected for the competition's exhibit. Pieces by Gold

award winners will go on to compete at the national level. Gold award artists are: Lisa Skildum, Sonia Kharkar and Lauren Harrison, all seniors at Mounds View High School; and Katie Kocourek from Chippewa Middle School.

Edgewood orchestra among best

For the sixth time in as many years, the Edgewood Middle School Orchestra has been recognized as among the best in the state. After competing at the Minnesota String and Orchestra Teachers Association Tier One Festival in Alexandria in February, the Minnesota Orchestra invited Edgewood to play on stage at Orchestra Hall in April.

In Our Community



In many ways, Mounds View Public Schools strengthens the community

ECFE offers a gateway to life

Learning is especially important in formative years

Mary Fenske is not nervous at all about her son being ready for kindergarten next fall. After taking Early Childhood Family Education and Side by Side preschool classes together, she knows he feels confident at the school he'll attend.

"He's been in the kindergarten rooms, met his possible teachers and knows the library and the lunchroom. He talks about it all at home," she says. "I definitely believe the ECFE classes are a gateway to the school."

"If children see and interact with their parents in a learning situation, that influence will stay with them. Research proves that these children are more successful in life."

Sue Stoner, Coordinator of the ECFE Program

Fenske is just one of the nearly 2,000 parents who participated with their children in Mounds View Public Schools' ECFE program last year. The program's aim is to strengthen the community by providing families with young children the support and education needed to nurture the parent-child relationship and to prepare children for success in school.

To do this, ECFE offers an array of programs and classes, all of which emphasize that parents are a child's first teacher in life.

"When a parent gets involved in ECFE classes, they are immediately laying the ground work for that child's success in school,"

Is your child starting kindergarten in September?

Kindergarten Camp is a three-week program that helps prepare children for kindergarten. Camp is available to all children in the District, but priority will be given to children who have not been in a preschool, who are English Language Learners or are referred by their preschool teacher. This year's Camp will be Monday-Thursday, July 19 to August 5 at Bel Air Elementary School in New Brighton. Please call 651-639-6026 for registration information.

says Sue Stoner, Coordinator of the ECFE Program. "If children see and interact with their parents in a learning situation, that influence will stay with them. Research proves that these children are more successful in life."

To support the many needs of families, ECFE provides resources and educational opportunities such as:

- Weekly classes that include parent-child activity time and parent discussion time.
- A resource center where parents can check out toys, educational books or electronic materials.
- Home visits for families unable to attend classes.
- Friendship, support and learning opportunities for parents and children alike.

All ECFE classes are taught by licensed early childhood and parent educators.

"Before we moved to Minnesota, I had never heard of a program like this," says Fenske. "I might want a book on a particular subject, but the library has millions of books. I don't know which are good and which aren't. But at ECFE, I can ask the question and the teacher will tell me to check out a specific source. If I didn't have that resource, I don't know who else I'd ask. I love ECFE."



Therese Collins and her son Ryan play and learn together during class time in an Early Child-Family Education class through Mounds View Public Schools. To find out more information on the program, go to www.moundsviewschools.org or call 651-639-6027.

A community commitment

City and school officials recently met to discuss ways to show support for diversity in our schools and communities (*see related story, "Students take a stand" on page 6*). To demonstrate their unified position, Mounds View officials and several local leaders pledged their support through the following resolution.

Resolution

MOUNDS VIEW INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT, CITY OF ARDEN HILLS, CITY OF MOUNDS VIEW, CITY OF NEW BRIGHTON, CITY OF NORTH OAKS, CITY OF ROSEVILLE, CITY OF SHOREVIEW, AND CITY OF VADNAIS HEIGHTS JOINTLY:

Whereas representatives of the above-named cities (the Cities) and the Mounds View School District share an interest in human rights' challenges within our respective communities, including threats of terrorism and racism; and

Whereas the recent bomb threats and racial incidents in the Mounds View School District illustrate the challenges facing all of us; and

Whereas the Cities commend the Mounds View School District (the School District) for taking swift and sustained action in response to these acts of terrorism and racism; and

Whereas the Cities and the School District must continue to unite and jointly speak out against such acts of terrorism and racism.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the Mounds View School District Board and the City Councils of Arden Hills, Mounds View, New Brighton, North Oaks, Roseville, Shoreview and Vadnais Heights that we are committed to individual, joint, constructive, and peaceful responses to these acts of terrorism and racism in our communities;

That, while there are no easy formulas to eliminate both terrorism or racism, we will continue to work together and with appropriate law enforcement agencies to protect the well-being of every person subject to such threats; and

We hereby commit ourselves and our honor to the effort to eliminate terrorism and racism and to protect the freedom and safety of each person at the Mounds View Schools and in our communities. Dated: April 12, 2004

Beverly Apletkowski
Mayor, City of Arden Hills

Craig Klasing
Mayor, City of Roseville

John J. ...
Mayor, City of Mounds View

Sandra ...
Mayor, City of Shoreview

Awe Larson
Mayor, City of New Brighton

Paul ...
Mayor, City of North Oaks

Mark ...
Chair, Mounds View Independent School District 621

Susan L. Banovetz
Mayor, City of Vadnais Heights



Joe Oden, Pioneer Press photo

Junior Chelsea Chung was among several students who handed out green ribbons at the door of Mounds View High School as students arrived at school in January. The ribbons were signs of acceptance of all students from different backgrounds.



2959 Hamline Avenue North
Roseville, Minnesota 55113-1664

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ST. PAUL, MN
PERMIT NO. 4112