



INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 2142

ST. LOUIS COUNTY SCHOOLS

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APRIL 2022

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Superintendent's Update



Supt. Reggie Engebretson, Ed.D

March 2022 – Two years ago today, March 15, 2020, Governor Walz closed all the schools in the state because of COVID-19. Last year, in 2021, the Governor started loosening restrictions and some schools around the state were bringing kids back to in-person learning for the first time in a year. We thought we were done with COVID, but then the Delta and Omicron variants came through. Now, it is two years later and we are feeling like we are again done with COVID. Hopefully, any new variants that might come our way will be mild, but no one knows for sure.

As we move towards the end of the 2021-2022 school year, we continue to look at what has changed in the past two years and how to adjust and move forward.

(Continued on page 2)

Project AWARE supports students, staff

New program focuses on social-emotional interaction skills

By Lee Bloomquist

As a need for additional mental health services in schools across the nation has emerged, ISD 2142 has implemented a new program directed at helping students and training school personnel. Project AWARE (Advancing Wellness and Resilience in Education) launched this year within ISD 2142 campuses under a Minnesota Department of Education grant.

“The need has increased significantly for the understanding of social-emotional development,” Alicia Isom, ISD 2142 Project AWARE coordinator said. “We want to focus on social-emotional learning in how kids express their emotions and everyday language so that kids understand their emotions, understand the emotions of others and build social skills.”

The purpose of Project AWARE is to increase awareness of mental health issues among school-aged youth, provide training for school personnel and other adults who interact with school-aged youth to be able to detect and respond to mental health issues, and connect school-aged youth who may have behavioral health or serious mental health illness and their families with needed services, according to the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services

Administration (SAMHSA) Center for Mental Health Services.

“The goal is to build a comprehensive mental health system and build capacity for more mental health providers in the school,” Isom said. “We want to increase self-awareness, self-management, relationship skills, social awareness and mental health literacy for students. We also want to focus on how to understand mental health disorders and treatment, decrease stigma and how to seek help effectively.”

After hiring social workers last year, it's the second major step ISD 2142 has taken to address social-emotional issues among students and assist staff.

“Prior to the pandemic hitting us in March 2020, we knew that mental health was a big concern for our students,” Dr. Reggie Engebretson, ISD 2142 superintendent said. “We hired social workers to become student and family advocates within our schools to provide another resource for our students and staff. Two years later, we see a

greater need for mental health services for our students and a bigger need for more supports for our staff. I am grateful that we have been awarded this five-year grant which gives us the tools to build a mental health system to not only support students, but also staff.”

ISD 2142 is one of only three school district regions in the state to receive grant funding for the program, Isom said.

The grant of \$1,789,293 was awarded in September by SAMHSA to the Minnesota Department of Education for a group of northeast Twin Cities schools, Duluth Public Schools, and St. Louis County Schools. The grant runs through September 2026.

The program also helps connect students and families with other local and state mental health and wellness resources, according to SAMHSA.

Social workers at ISD 2142 campuses communicate with staff at each campus on Project AWARE

(Continued on page 2)

PRESCHOOL 2022-2023 REGISTRATION



Preschool registration information has been mailed to all families on our Early Childhood mailing list. If you did not receive information by mail, we will need to add you to our mailing list. Please call or email DaNeil the following information: Child's legal name, birthday, parent name, mailing address, phone number and email. Children must be 4 years old on or before September 1, 2022, to register for preschool. Peek in to Preschool events will be held at each school in April!

DaNeil 218-749-8130 ex 1116 or dsirjor@isd2142.k12.mn.us

Iron Mosquitos Buzzing to the Top



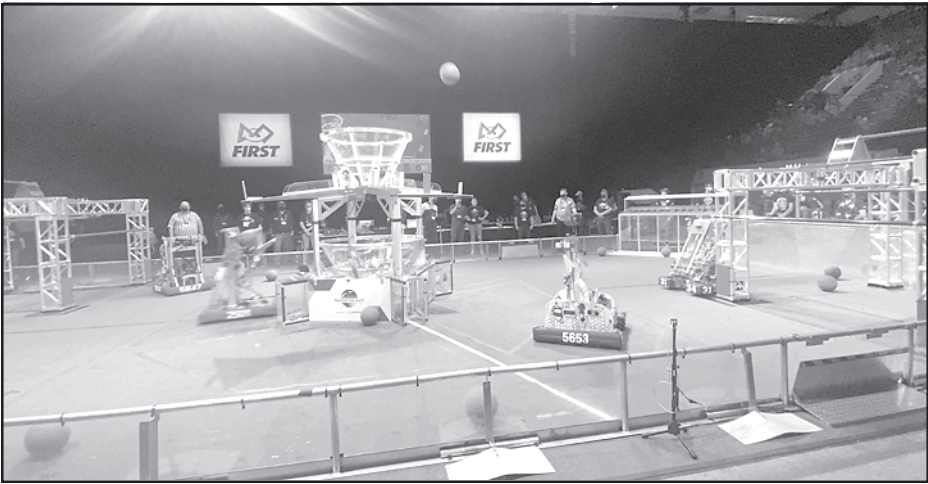
By Kohen Briggs

The Northeast Range robotics team joined with North Woods and Ely students, the Iron Mosquitos robotics team 5653, and competed at the Lake Superior Regional robotics competition on March 3-5 at the DECC in Duluth. They competed with 57 other teams from five states. The game's object was to shoot balls into a high goal or a common goal and climb up four horizontal bars at in-

creasing height in 2-1/2 minutes. The robot is fully autonomous in the first 15 seconds with no driver. You have to strategize with your two other alliance partners to see what they can do and where they need to start. It was off to a rough start when Babbitt's robot flipped over in the first practice round, but it was only up from there. With the driving of

(Continued on page 2)

• **Iron Mosquitos...** *(Continued from front page)*



Owen Koivisto and the coaching of Ryan Lindsay, Northeast Range was able to get eighth place in the qualifying matches.

The Iron Mosquitos' next competition is in Grand Forks, North Dakota, on March 25.

STEM at Northeast Range

This year at Northeast Range School, elementary students are experiencing a new class ... STEM. This area of lessons which encompasses Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math has given students opportunities to think, explore, and create in a hands-on classroom where they can either work individually or collaboratively. All students in grades K-6 are posed with age-appropriate challenges in different topic areas where they work on solving problems or exploring the world they live in.

Many of the different activities are made possible using simple materials such as recyclable and household items. For example, cardboard tubes from paper towel rolls, cloth, shoe boxes, popsicle sticks, and rubber bands. Donations of these items from the surrounding communities have helped students become creative in designing as they learn the objective of the lesson. With the ever-changing world that encompasses the topic areas, elementary students are thinking and learning how they



Making the "Big Dipper" constellation using toothpicks and marshmallows.

can solve problems on their own or with their peers.



Students making cities from their designed blueprint plans.

• **Supt's. Update...** *(Continued from front page)*

ward. What does this mean? It means we have had to learn (and we are still learning) how to meet kids where they are at in their education and then help them move forward. It is not our plan to catch up all the learning that might have been missed these last two years and cram it into one school year, which is only nine months of school. Not every student will make the same amount of gains and we need to be flexible and patient as we give each child what they need to make progress.

Fortunately, we have been in school and have provided in-person learning for the majority of our school days since September 2020. I am grateful for this. Yet, I know that each student has had their own journey these past two years and for some kids they were in school and then out several times either because of a close contact to someone who was positive for COVID, or they had COVID, or they were doing distance learning or they were homeschooled. Regardless of the reasons, it is our job to figure out where each student is at in their learning journey and then keep them moving forward towards graduation.

Besides the academic challenges of the past two years, we are hearing more and more about the mental health needs of students. Many students felt isolated or left out of peer activities. Many families couldn't gather with grandparents or other relatives for fear of giving them COVID. Parents lost their jobs and if household members became sick, there was more isolation. Family members and loved ones were hospitalized and some died.

While our teachers and staff definitely care about our students, I'll be the first to tell you that we don't have all the tools we need to meet the mental health challenges some of our students are facing. That's why I'm excited about the five-

year grant we received from the MN Department of Education (MDE). The plan is to build a mental health system that can sustain itself to help our students. And also to help our staff. We have all been affected by these last two years. None of us have been through a pandemic before and it has affected each person differently. The more we can understand our own mental health needs, the better we can help our students.

Together, we will come away from these past two years stronger and more resilient. We have learned more creative ways to teach and we have tried new things. We continue to learn ways to engage our students in their own learning and challenge them to be their best. We know the importance of human connection and face-to-face interactions. We know that kindness, flexibility, and patience go a long way. We know we can't do it all and we need each other. We need to balance our lives and take the time to recharge our spirits.

As parents and guardians of the students we serve, I know that you have several options for educating your children. I am grateful when you choose us and I don't take this responsibility lightly. Kids don't get a do-over. Each school year happens once and we know that we need to prepare them for the next year and the next year and the next year. We are in a better place than we were two years ago when we were all in lock-down and school was not in session for the rest of the 2019-2020 school year. Those days are hopefully long gone. As spring approaches, I am excited for our seniors as they prepare to end their school journey and start their next chapter. I'm also excited for our preschoolers as they get closer to becoming one of the "big kids" who go to kindergarten. I am hopeful for the future and am grateful for your support. Thank you!

• **Project AWARE...** *(Continued from front page)*

policies and practices, Isom said.

"We're putting policies and practices in place to help those with mental health needs," Isom said. Because the need is high for students across the state, we are putting policy and practice in place to better support student's mental health within the school system. Should students need additional mental health support, we want to make sure we are allowing access to necessary services during their school day."

Isom had been serving as a social worker within the Mountain Iron-Buhl school district prior to becoming

Project AWARE coordinator.

Isom is also coordinating Project AWARE within the Mountain Iron-Buhl district, which collaborates with ISD 2142 in several educational areas.

"I am excited to have Alicia as our Project AWARE coordinator," Engebritson said. "She brings a wealth of knowledge and resources to the position and she will be the one to help us build a mental health system that will benefit many people within the St. Louis County and Mountain Iron-Buhl school districts."

Parents — We are here for you!

Check out the Parenting Resources section on our website at <https://www.isd2142.net/page/3003>

On the website you will find four different newsletters that are changed monthly along with a family engagement library full of short brochures on a variety of topics for parents.



On February 16, the North Woods National Honor Society inducted 10 new members. The new members pictured are Annabelle Calavera, Autumn Swanson, Helen Koch, Addy Hartway, Evelyn Brodeen, Madison Taylor, Tiauna Peltier, Jonah Burnett and Sean Morrison. Not pictured is new member Ty Fabish. Congratulations!
Photo credit to Becky Smith

**TOWER-SOUDAN SCHOOL SAYS
THANK YOU TO A SPECIAL MAN**



Tower-Soudan Elementary School recently said good-bye to their long-time bus driver, Josh. Josh was honored for always going above and beyond for the students and school. He will be missed immensely as he begins a new job. Students and staff honored Josh with a special breakfast and a note from every student and wish him the very best!



CONGRATULATIONS, TJ CHIABOTTI



North Woods Senior Guard TJ Chiabotti scored his 2,000th point in the game against Carlton on Feb 28. TJ and family members... brother Dylan Chiabotti, Grandpa and Coach Jerry Chiabotti, brother Brenden Chiabotti, TJ, sister Presley Chiabotti



TJ receives a big hug from his Grandpa and Coach Jerry Chiabotti.

Happy 100th day of school from T-S elementary students!



2022 Winter Olympics at North Woods Elementary



Kindergarten student Christopher Koch aims at the ring during the curling event.

Students at North Woods Elementary School celebrated their own 2022 Winter Olympic Games Friday afternoon, Feb. 4. The afternoon began with the Parade of Classes as students entered the gym to the Olympic Music proudly carrying their class flag and class torch. Students proceeded to hear from teacher Beth Wilenius about the importance of sportsmanship, teamwork, fair play. She motivated the students to continue in the values of the North Woods School of being Responsible, Respectful, and Ready to Learn. The Olympic motto was discussed, followed by the “Star Spangled Banner” and the Olympic Pledge, which was recited by all students. The Torch was raised and “Let the Games Begin” was proclaimed.

Each grade proceeded to participate in a Winter Olympic event. As the students participated in their event, the rest

of the students were spectators, cheering for their fellow classmates to try their best and persevere in their event. Students were prepared for their events in PE class before the big day and were able to try many of the events of the day in their daily PE class. Events of the day included kindergarten curling (rolling a ball at a target) first-grade snowboarding through an obstacle course, second-grade igloo challenge, third-grade speed skating (running around an oval track), fourth-grade touchdown game, fifth-grade floor hockey, and sixth-grade four-man bobsled using scooters. The grand finale event involved the teachers in a Human Hungry Hippo game where sixth-grade teachers Mrs. Briggs and Mrs. LaVigne came out victorious.

Students celebrated teamwork, sportsmanship, perseverance, diversity and hard work all while having a fun Olympic-themed afternoon.



Fourth-grader Silas Budreau catches a pass to earn a point as Sarah Koch looks on.



Carsyn Burnett, Kalle Nelson, Alice Sopoci and Brittan Koskela try to keep balance on their four-man bobsled.

North Woods Celebrates Dr. Seuss' Birthday

March 2 marked Dr. Seuss' birthday and what better way to celebrate the famous author than through reading his books! Members of the North Woods National Honor Society, each adorned in the tall red and white hat that is Dr. Seuss' signature hat, read some of his books to elementary students.



NHS members at NW pictured are: Top row: Jake Panichi, Sean Morrison, Erik Aune. Middle row: Michaela Luecken, Helen Koch, Maddie Taylor, Autumn Swanson, Lillian Voges. Bottom row: Annabelle Calavera, Cooper Antikainen.



NW juniors Karah Scofield and Kaden Ratai read to some of the students in Ms. Wilenius' kindergarten class.

Help us build our Early Childhood Mailing List!

Do you have a child under the age of 5? If so, we would like to add you to our Early Childhood mailing list. Please call and leave a message for DaNeil at 218-749-8130 ex 1116 or email her at dsirjord@isd2142.k12.mn.us

We need: Parent and child's name (legal names), child's birthday, mailing address, phone number and if you have an email we would like that too!

Celebrating Dr. Seuss' birthday at Cherry!



Cherry preschoolers enjoyed the cooking experience of making green eggs and ham!



KINDERGARTEN 2022-2023

Kindergarten registration information has been mailed to all families on our Early Childhood census who are not attending the district preschool program. If you are new to the area and have not received any information, please contact your local school. Families with children in our preschool program will confirm registration for kindergarten at their child's school conference in March.

Tower-Soudan School Reading Olympics



After a month of reading and Olympic-themed activities, the Tower-Soudan elementary readers were awarded their gold medals in a special ceremony.

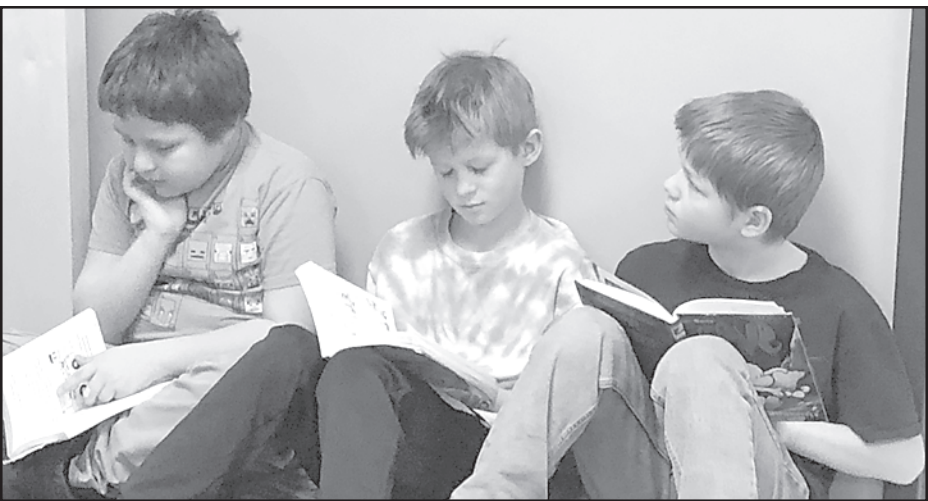


Tower-Soudan Elementary School students participated in a reading challenge in honor of Dr. Seuss' birthday on March 2. They were asked to try to read 100 books, working together, by the time a special snack of pancakes was prepared. In just under 25 minutes, the goal was met, as students rushed to the chart to record books read. There was a lot of teamwork with the older and younger students reading together. In the end, there were big smiles and full bellies after eating warm pancakes for snack time. *Great job, kids!*

T-S Students Enjoy STEM Olympics



There was a lot of friendly competition and great thinking as third- and fourth-grade students from Tower-Soudan School enjoyed several STEM Olympic challenges. After studying several winter Olympic events, students were challenged to create some of those using basic STEM supplies. With a small square of tin foil, a few pennies, and a piece of pipe cleaner, they needed to build a "rock" that would slide across the table and onto the target just like a curling match. A hockey net was built using plastic straws, tape, and string, as well as a hockey stick using Popsicle sticks. Getting the net to stand up proved to be a challenge, but the kids figured it out. The bobsleds were constructed and the students needed to go to the playground to complete that competition as they took turns sending them down the slide. What a fun way to work through some STEM challenges!



Tower-Soudan Elementary School students enjoy some time reading together in the school main hallway.

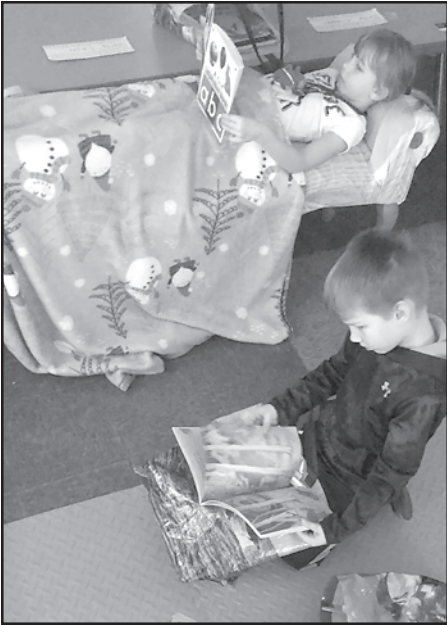


Peek in to Kindergarten Events

If your child will be attending Kindergarten with us in the fall, we invite you and your child to come Peek in to Kindergarten! Where and When?

Cherry School
Thurs., April 7 from 4-5 or 5:30-6:30
North Woods School
Thursday, April 7 from 3:15-4:15
Northeast Range School
Thursday, April 7 from 5-6
South Ridge School
Thursday, April 7 from 5:30-7
Tower-Soudan School
Tuesday, April 5 from 4-5

Cherry Celebrates ‘I Love to Read’ Month



Students in grades pre-k through six celebrated "I Love to Read" Month in February. Students got extra reading time during Stop, Drop and Read throughout the month. Cherry students read lots of extra minutes and earned many more AR points than in a typical month. Even more importantly, they grew even more as readers! *Great reading, Cherry Elementary students!*



During "I Love to Read" Month in February, Cherry preschoolers were challenged to read 400 books in exchange for a popcorn party. For each book read, they filled out a snowball that was used to create a special “sculpture / message.” They met the goal and continued reading to accomplish two additional goals ... if they read 450 books, they would earn a pajama day, and if they read 500 books they would earn an ice cream party!



Tower-Soudan School kindergarten students are pictured here ready to kick off the Winter Olympics after completing a fun art project, Olympic torches.



The following students are now members of the Cherry School Reading Wall of Fame. They achieved this goal by the end of February.

Kindergarten Students: Liam Waters, Easton Jaeger, Ezmay Olsen, Lydia Alesch, Odin Flannigan, Weston Scovill, Tyler Vaughn, Stella Lever, Abigail Raich, Lacey Pink, Rhett Jacka, Sequoia Taylor, Ashton Bjerklie, Ava Gilluim, Demitrius Barron, Landyn Skaudis

1st Grade Students: Chase Samson, Matthew Wilhelm, Merida Furey, Harper Kemp, Henry Melhorn, Kaden Adkisson, Norah Carver, Lydia Acosta, Emmanuellah Elliot, Ezekiel Goerd, Esabelle Argir, Mackenzie Haapala

2nd Grade Students: Dominic Bergerson, Ellie Besemann, Aaron Kick

3rd Grade Students: Sophia Warwas, Adam Weiss, Ethan Vanderhoof, Nevaeh Bergerson, Eliza Johnson, Kristen Rajkovich, Reese Samson, Trey Schinderle, Annabeth Greenly, Easton Olson, Lydia McKenney, Owen Kimmes

4th Grade Students: Trinity O’Gowan, Annabelle Courteau, Kailee Pink, Cole Nelson, Jaci Majerle

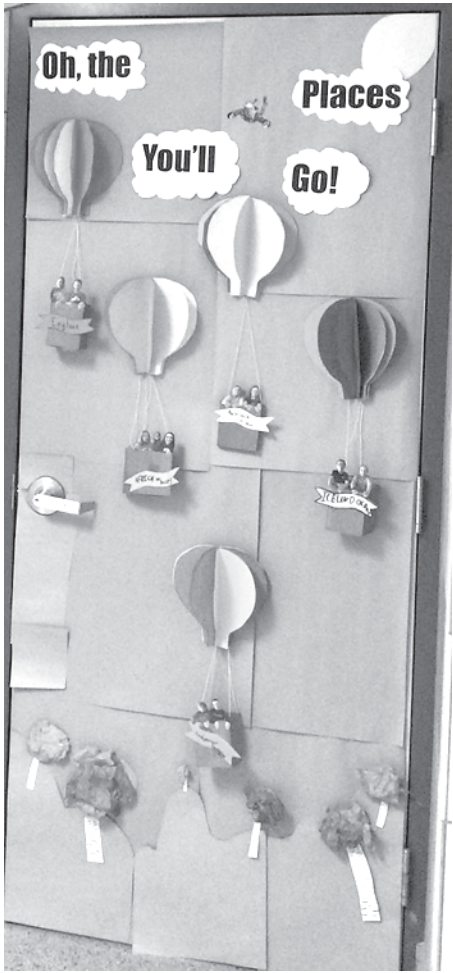
5th Grade Students: Quinn Fischer, Brooklyn Alesch, Nakoya Zozgornik, Allie Grotberg

6th Grade Students: Josie McNickle, Arwen Steele
’ Way to go, "Roaring Readers"!!!

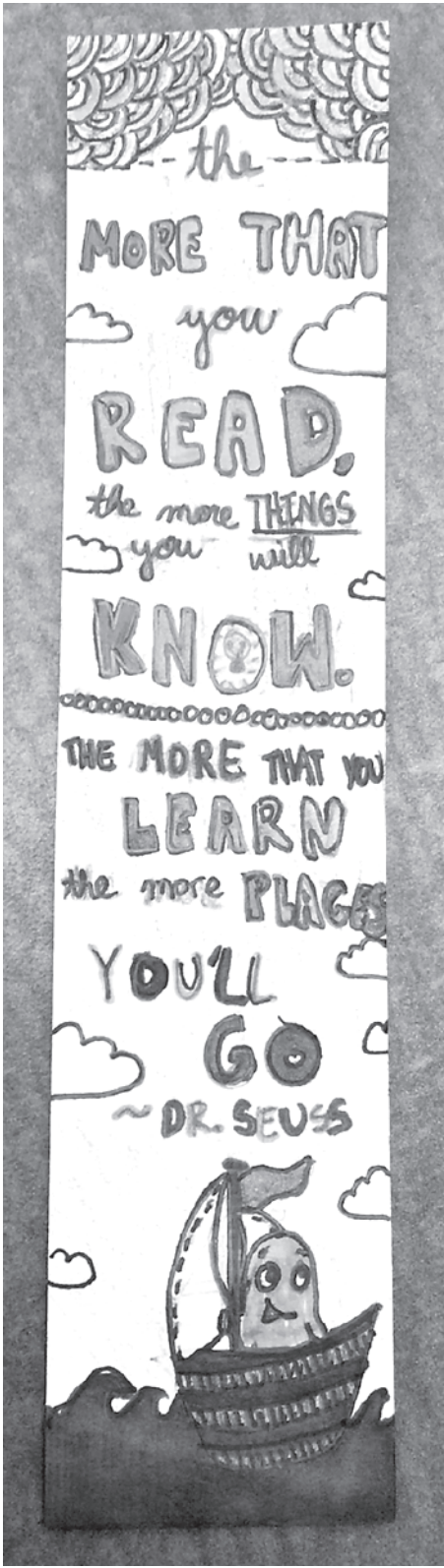


The North Woods School library celebrated I Love to Read month with a bookmark contest. Each elementary class had a winner and won a new book. There was one grand prize winner whose bookmark will be copied and distributed to each student. They also won a new book and a gift card. Grand prize winner was Carsyn Burnett. Other winners were Elizabeth Nuthak, Kaiden Kuhlman, Everett Crain, Chester Talberg, Shania Tracy Christensen, Esme Brodeen, Elizabeth Trip, Shay Wilcox, Lauren Hampson, Sarah Koch, River Deatherage, Josie Gibson, Peyton Swanson, and Alice Sopoci.

Pictured above is Carsyn Burnett and pictured below is her winning bookmark.



The North Woods School library celebrated Dr. Seuss' birthday in February with an elementary "Decorate your Door" contest. The Dr. Seuss-themed doors wereAMAZING!!! The classroom on the other side of the winning door received a gift certificate for the spring Scholastic Book Fair provided by the Peer Helpers. Pictured is the winning door decorated by Mrs. Panichi's fifth-grade class.



North Woods 5th and 6th Graders Go Skiing at Giants Ridge



The North Woods fifth- and sixth-graders went on a skiing field trip to Giants Ridge on Thursday, Jan. 13. Sixty-seven students participated in this event; 51 of whom had never skied before! This was an amazing experience for the students outside of the classroom, and many great memories were made. For January, it was a beautiful day with temps in the upper teens. Several students who were beginners struggled at first and even wanted to give up, but with some cheerleading and positive attitudes, they persevered and had an amazing time. One skill they learned that day was that sometimes things don't come easy and you have to work hard to succeed. When students came to school the following day, they were begging to go back!



ECFE – Early Childhood Family Education

If you have questions about ECFE, please contact the ECFE staff at your school! We are here to support you as a parent! Please reach out! Join us for a class!



School	Staff	email
Cherry	Lori Udovich, Parent Educator Jocelyn Jerkovich, Child Educator	ludovich@isd2142.k12.mn.us jajerkovich@isd2142.k12.mn.us
North Woods	Becky Chopp, Child Educator Lori Udovich, Parent Educator	bchopp@isd2142.k12.mn.us ludovich@isd2142.k12.mn.us
Northeast Range	Gena Flank, Child Educator Sarah Hansen, Parent Educator	gflank@isd2142.k12.mn.us shansen@isd2142.k12.mn.us
South Ridge	Christina Nelson, Child Educator Sara Lorbiecki-Brown, Parent Educator	chrisnelson@isd2142.k12.mn.us slorbieckibrown@isd2142.k12.mn.us
Tower-Soudan	Mary Larson, Child Educator Sarah Hansen, Parent Educator	mlarson@isd2142.k12.mn.us shansen@isd2142.k12.mn.us

TWOS-DAY 2/22/22 IN GRADE 2!!



Tower-Soudan second-grade students enjoyed a fun day centered around TWO, PAIRS, DOUBLES on 2/22/22 (which actually ended up being "take 2" on 2/23 due to a snow day on 2/22!). They had fun putting two words together, playing a two-syllable word game, doubling numbers, thinking of pairs of things, and having a "taco Tuesday" snack with the rest of the school.

T-S Students Learn About Dental Health



Nurse Teila teaches Tower-Soudan elementary students about dental health.

PEEK IN TO PRESCHOOL EVENTS

If your child will be attending Preschool with us in the fall, we invite you and your child to come Peek in to Preschool! Where and When?

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- South Ridge School**
Thursday, April 7 from 5:30-7
- Tower-Soudan School**
Tuesday, April 5 from 4-5



Fifth-Graders Participate in Read to Achieve Program



The North Woods fifth-graders participated in the Read to Achieve Program that is sponsored by the Minnesota Timberwolves. They were challenged to read 500 minutes between November 1 to December 12. If they met this reading goal, they were awarded a prize package from the Minnesota Timberwolves, including a ticket to watch one of their games. All of the fifth-graders met this goal, and some students went over and above and read over 1,500 minutes. This program helps promote reading and aims to develop a love for reading inside and outside of school.

T-S Students Enjoy Winter Fun!!



Tower-Soudan elementary students enjoyed some outdoor fun after a very long cold snap, sledding during gym time.

ICE FISHING FIELD TRIP

By Josie Gibson, North Woods Fifth-Grader



Bois Forte COs came and did a winter survival course. They shared lots of great information and different tools for winter survival.

The North Woods fifth- and sixth-grade field trip was miraculous! It was a well-planned adventure. We played games such as capture the flag, roasted marshmallows, ice fished, and went

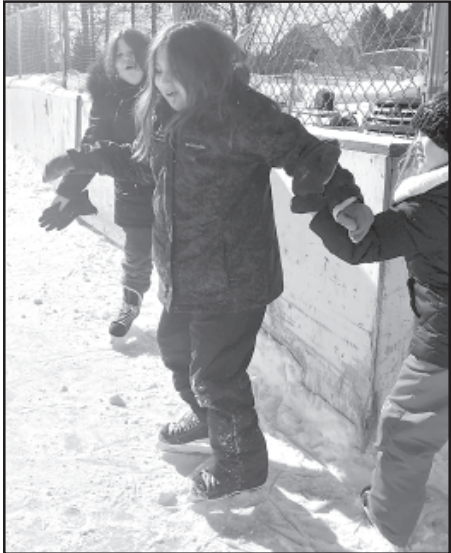
snowshoeing. We went ice fishing with friendly volunteers who made sure to help everyone either bait hooks or take a fish off. We are thankful for such amazing volunteers! Thank you to all the parents, and volunteers for making it a wonderful experience. We had a delicious lunch provided by The Landing restaurant on Lake Vermilion. I am very grateful they hosted this amazing event!

After we ate, we fished some more and caught some big catches! We did a catch-and-release system. Afterwards, we did a winter survival course with the Bois Forte COs in which we learned a lot about different tools and techniques to survive in Minnesota's harsh winter climate. At the end of the day, we packed up and we had to leave our great ice fishing adventure. Thank you again to all our helpful volunteers (The Lake Vermilion Guide Association), teachers, and kind parents for taking us out on this adventure.



Tessa Burnett, North Woods fifth-grader, showing off her big catch.

SKATING PARTY IN SOUDAN!!



Tower-Soudan School elementary students enjoyed an afternoon of skating at the Soudan rink recently. Thank you to Breitung Township for warming up the shack and serving hot cocoa and cookies on a chilly afternoon. The kids had a great time!



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