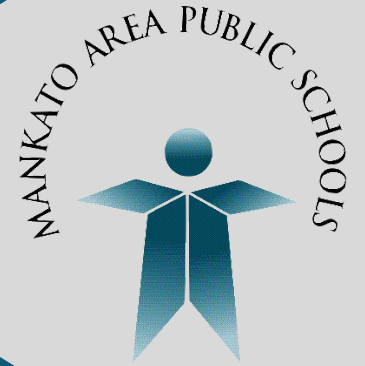




February 2023

Newsletter

MANKATO AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS



MESSAGE FROM SUPERINTENDENT PETERSON



Paul Peterson, Ed.D.,
Superintendent

The Minnesota legislative session has begun, and Mankato Area Public Schools is fully engaged with our elected officials in Saint Paul about the impact their work will have on the students and families we serve in our school district.

Prior to the session, internal and external partners worked together to develop the 2023 MAPS Legislative Platform. We are proud to include School Board members, teachers, district leaders, community members, parents and students in this work, who helped identify the major areas for MAPS that need legislative action.

The Mankato Area Public Schools' Legislative Committee developed a legislative platform that reflects the urgent challenges we face, including chronic underfunding of public education, mental health support for students and staff, and teacher recruitment. Each priority identified by the committee links to the overarching need to fully fund public education. Full funding has several elements, including:

- Tying per pupil funding to inflation. Currently, there is a \$1,605 gap per student.
- Funding special education and eliminating the need for local school districts to use general education dollars to cover underpaid federal and state responsibilities. This is often referred to as the 'cross subsidy'. For MAPS, this is over \$7 million per year.
- Funding all state mandates.
- Funding school districts to ensure that appropriate staffing can be maintained for all students. Staffing needs affected are in the areas of special education and non-special education, academic and behavioral intervention, social workers and paraprofessionals.
- Prioritizing pre-kindergarten and early childhood education access by funding school-based early childhood programming, including fully funded preschool screening.

MAPS is fortunate to have elected officials who understand the important link between a strong public school system and the long-term viability and health of our communities and state. Our ongoing conversations are focused on how the decisions we make today about public schools not only affect our current reality, but ensures that we are poised for strong and effective service that will be sustainable into the future.

When fully funded, Mankato Area Public Schools will be positioned to raise the achievement of all students by empowering staff with the resources that are required to fully support students so they can realize their fullest potential.

CALENDAR REMINDERS

- March 8th - Early Out
- March 10th - No School K-8
- March 23rd - No School K-5
- March 24th to March 28th - No School K-12
- April 7th - No School K-12 Good Friday Holiday
- April 12th - Early Out
- April 21st - No School K-12 in observance of Eid-al-Fitr

Find Calendars
Here! ↓



Mankato Area Public Schools is committed to working together equitably, with families and communities, so that each learner has the knowledge and skills to be a successful and contributing citizen in a diverse global society.

LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENING:

- ✓ School Board is Seated
- ✓ Spirit of Youth Awards
- ✓ School Board Student Spotlight
- ✓ Board to Review Referendum Survey Results
- ✓ Budget Adjustment Process Plans
- ✓ Kindergarten Roundup
- ✓ Educare Foundation
- ✓ MAPS Early Learning

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2023 MAPS SCHOOL BOARD IS SEATED



The 2023 MAPS School Board held its organizational meeting on January 5. Four members were sworn in as a result of their victories in the November election. Judge Kristine Weeks, pictured on the far left, administered the oath of office. Starting second from left are Kari Pratt, Patrick Baker, Shannon Sinning and Kristi Schuck.

SPIRIT OF YOUTH AWARDS



The Spirit of Youth Award recognizes those in our community who contribute to building assets in youth. Nominations for this competitive award are accepted through February. Awards will be presented at a public ceremony at 6:00 pm Wednesday, May 24, 2023 at Lincoln Community Center. This is the 10th year of this outstanding program sponsored by MAPS Community Education Advisory Council and is made possible thanks to the hard work and dedication of Melanie Schmidt, Enrichment Coordinator for MAPS Community Education.

For more information
and to submit a
nomination
Scan



SCHOOL BOARD STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Starting in November 2023, the school board began recognizing a student who has distinguished themselves with accomplishments in leadership, perseverance and/or academic tenacity. This is a new opportunity to highlight the work and accomplishments that often go unnoticed by others.

November:

Olivia Koeneman, senior at West High School, cares about her school community and is motivated to act when she sees a need. She welcomes students by giving tours, offering her number to new students and adding them to social media so they know they have a friend. Olivia worked with school support staff on creating the club Mental Health Connections. Olivia and the club have supported organizations such as Feeding Our Community Partners and The Reach with the help



Olivia Koeneman, senior at West High School.

of Mankato Clinic and students through a t-shirt fundraiser. Olivia is a go-getter who sees a need, collaborates with others, and moves to action.

December:

Rose Lieth, 5th grader at Jefferson Elementary School, demonstrates positivity, respect and leadership skills. Rose demonstrates qualities of being an active listener that empowers her to be a respected student and classmate. As a member of our Student Leadership Team she brings ideas of her peers and serves as a role model through acts of service and kindness. Rose continues to work very hard on her academic growth in math and reading while always stepping up for a friend or classmate in need of support or advice.



Rose Lieth and her 5th grade Jefferson teacher, Mrs. Berdan.

January:

Katelynn Bergeman, 2023 Central High School graduate, who showed resilience, perseverance, self-advocacy, and self-growth at her time at Central High School. Due to her motivation to reach her goals, she was able to graduate a semester early on January 20th. Katelynn hopes to continue her education by attending South Central College for a Psychology degree and then continue her education in either Education, Counseling, or Social Work. She hopes to pursue a career that capitalizes on her empathy and helping others.



Paula Bergeman, (Katelynn's mother), Katelynn Bergeman, graduate of Central High School and friend Chikgach Khat *

*Photo, Holly Marie Moore, The Free Press Jan 20, 2023

BOARD TO REVIEW REFERENDUM SURVEY RESULTS



The MAPS School Board reviewed the results of the January referendum poll at their work session on February 6th. MAPS continues to prepare for a potential referendum in November 2023 that will address long-range facility and operational needs of schools.

The survey, conducted by the the Morris Leatherman Group, sought resident feedback on their interest and support of a wide range of school needs, including:

- Welcoming and safe entrances at numerous schools in the district
- Expanded early learning and day care options
- Swimming pool in the West attendance area
- Remodeling at West High School, similar to renovations made to East High School less than 10 years ago
- Outdoor community, education, and athletic improvements

District leaders and School Board members will use the information from the survey to help inform the size, scope and timing of a community referendum.



BUDGET ADJUSTMENT PROCESS PLANS

The school district's current budget year ends on June 30, 2023, and district leaders have begun developing plans to ensure next year's school year budget is balanced. To meet this goal, a nine million dollar budget adjustment is needed.

Superintendent Peterson and Director of Business Services, Amanda Heilman, are meeting with all schools in the district to provide an overview of the reduction target and how staff can provide input and feedback on the process. Adjustments for next year will be challenging, especially given the fact that the school district has cut over \$11 million from its expense budget in the last three years.

The MAPS School Board will provide the community with updates on the process at their meetings, and will also outline the ways for community members to share ideas to keep our schools strong and financially stable for the future.

KINDERGARTEN ROUNDUP 2023

Come see what your neighborhood school has to offer!!

- Visit kindergarten classrooms
- Learn about a day in kindergarten
- Meet your teachers
- Get answers to any questions
- Meet other kindergarten families

Thursday, March 2nd

*Times will be announced at a later date

Kindergarten Registration
Open February 1st

Register your student here
*Registration is not required to attend roundup





EDUCARE FOUNDATION

For more information visit:
educare foundation.org



Save the date

June 26th
Fore Educare Golf Tournament
North Links Golf Course



Educare

FOUNDATION for
Mankato Area Public Schools

Support the wonder of learning

Donate Here



Educare Foundations Mission: Educare is a non-profit, public entity which provides financial support to Mankato Area Public Schools, beyond the normal operating budgets, for programs and activities that enhance educational opportunities for all students. Through this funding, we enable teachers to explore new ways to expand a world of learning for their students.



MAPS EARLY LEARNING



ACES

EARLY LEARNING

CHILD CARE OPTIONS
THAT COMPLEMENT
THE PRESCHOOL
EXPERIENCE!

Programming for
children Birth to Age 5
and their families.

- ECFE-Family Education classes
- MAPS Preschool
- ECS-Early Childhood Screening
- ECSE-Early Childhood Special Education



Standards-based curriculum



Family involvement



Nature-based experiences

CONTACT US

Early Learning Department
Phone: 507-625-4620
ACES Early Learning
Phone: 507-387-5501
NEW 15 Map Drive location in June 2023

CONNECT WITH US!



Mankato ECFE



Mankato Community Education



www.mankatocer.com/programs/early-learning