

## Stay up-to-date on district construction projects

Thanks to voter approval of Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools' (PLSAS) two school funding requests, PLSAS is now in the process of moving from concept proposals into a design phase, along with construction timelines, for our building renovations and additions, new elementary school and new Bridges Area Learning Center.



### Building Planning Underway

PLSAS has a construction phasing plan for district-wide building projects that will continue through 2020. Throughout the planning and design phases there will be opportunities for stakeholder input. For a detailed chart that includes design, bidding, construction and occupancy timelines, visit: [www.priorlake-savage.k12.mn.us/construction](http://www.priorlake-savage.k12.mn.us/construction)

Staff meetings are underway to plan for additions or renovations to Five Hawks, Glendale (paid for using existing funding sources), Jeffers Pond and Redtail Ridge elementary schools to be completed in time for the 2018/19 school year.

PLSAS is expecting to break ground on a new elementary school in the Big Sky Estates development in Savage in late spring of 2019, after Prior Lake Aggregates has completed mining in that area. The new elementary school will then open in the fall of 2020.

At the secondary level, design, bidding and construction phases for school projects will begin in 2018 for classroom additions and kitchen/cafeteria expansion to Prior Lake High School, additions/remodeling at the middle schools and the construction of Bridges Area Learning Center, which are slated to open in fall of 2019. Other high school construction projects including the secure front entrance and gyms will open in fall of 2020. Remodeling and additions will also be made to Grainwood, WestWood and Edgewood in time for the 2019/20 school year.

Visit our dedicated web page for updates: [www.priorlake-savage.k12.mn.us/construction](http://www.priorlake-savage.k12.mn.us/construction)

### Short-Term Planning

To help ease crowding at the elementary level until the new school opens, the district is implementing the following short-term space solutions over the next two years with the goal of being as least disruptive as possible to students and families:

- Construction of two additional classrooms each at Redtail Ridge and Jeffers Pond to open in the 2018/19 school year.
- Continue to limit open enrollment for the 2018/19 school year up to 75 students in kindergarten and up to 1% of new students in grades 1-12.

In addition, the district is considering implementing the following additional short-term space solutions:

- Use existing, non-traditional spaces for classrooms in elementary schools, such as computer labs and staff lounges.
- Lease space in the community for pre-kindergarten programs that are currently located in neighborhood schools.
- Maintain La ola del lago Spanish Immersion at Edgewood School for the next two years, while also utilizing space at neighboring WestWood Elementary for 4th and 5th grade immersion sections.
- In March the School Board is expected to take action on potential elementary attendance boundary adjustments for the 2018-19 school year (a process to determine comprehensive elementary boundary changes will be made prior to the opening of the new elementary school and will include stakeholder involvement).
- Adjustments to class-size averages.

### Planning Groups

Core Planning Groups will provide input for major construction projects including Prior Lake High School, Bridges Area Learning Center and the new elementary school. Core Planning Groups consist of a cross-section of the users of each facility inclusive of staff, community representatives, site administration, parents and students (as appropriate).

Planning for several smaller-scale additions and renovations is also underway with input being sought from Building Instructional Leadership Teams (BILTs) comprised of PLSAS staff and administrators. For facility and construction purposes, parent and community representation will be incorporated for the project scope.



First graders at Jeffers Pond Elementary learn how to identify animal tracks in the snow with District Naturalist, Sue Mohn

### E-STEM in action

At Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools, winter does not hinder outdoor learning; it enhances it. The snow gives first graders at Jeffers Pond an opportunity to learn how to identify animal tracks. Sue Mohn, District Naturalist, not only shows the students the shape of the animals' feet, but the way they walk; which can help identify their tracks. After practicing walking like the different animals, students match photos of the animals to a set of tracks left in the snow; then they venture down the trail to see if they can spot animal tracks in their school's backyard.

For more E-STEM news, read the Superintendent's column, pg. 4



McKenna Crossing resident, Sandy, shares a book from 1978 with MNCAPS students Isabelle Tenorio and Lauren James

### Real-world learning at MNCAPS

Minnesota Center for Advanced Professional Studies (MNCAPS) provides Prior Lake High School students with professional experience during their school day working with business and healthcare partners in the field.

One group of students in the business pathway was paired with Nuveen Investments in Minneapolis to help them with a project for one of their clients, McDonald's. Students researched ways to make the McDonald's mobile app more user friendly and create a customer rewards system. In turn, Nuveen will use the student presentation to inform their recommendations to McDonald's.

Students in the healthcare pathway have been visiting residents of McKenna Crossing Assisted Living facility in Prior Lake. Students interview residents about their lives in order to preserve and share their stories for future generations. The students will present a memorable story about the resident they met with at an end-of-the-year banquet May 24.

Learn more about MNCAPS at [mncaps.org](http://mncaps.org)

[www.priorlake-savage.k12.mn.us](http://www.priorlake-savage.k12.mn.us)

## / We Are PLSAS /

### Bonds sales save taxpayers more than \$13M over earlier estimates

At its January 25 meeting, the School Board approved the award of sale for two school bond issues, resulting in more than \$13 million in savings for tax payers over 20 years, compared with the estimates the district publicized prior to the election.

Bids were received on January 18 from a total of six investment firms for the 2018A bond issue, with the award of sale going to the lowest bidder, Morgan Stanley & Co.

Bids were received on January 18 from a total of seven investment firms for the 2018B bond issue, with the award of sale going to the lowest bidder, Wells Fargo Bank.

“Because of the district’s sound financial management, large tax base, and growing enrollment, you were able to maintain your high Aa2 bond rating from Moody’s. The high rating and favorable bond market conditions attracted a large pool of competitive bids,” said Gary Olsen, Senior Municipal Advisor with Ehler’s, the district’s financial advisors. “We were pleased to see the lower interest rates, which will result in savings for tax payers.”

Interest rates on January 18 were lower than they were when the Pre-Sale Report was prepared in

early December, 2017. As a result, for the 2018A issue, the True Interest Cost of 3.1695% was substantially lower than the estimate of 3.69% used for the estimates in the Pre-Sale Report.

For the 2018B issue, the True Interest Cost of 2.7661% was substantially lower than the estimate of 3.35% used in the Pre-Sale Report.

As a result, total tax levies from the combination of the 2018A and 2018B issues will be \$13.45 million less than in the estimates prepared prior to the election. Updated estimates of tax rates are lower every year than in the pre-election estimates. The total repayment of the bond is 20 years.

“I would like to thank Ehlers, Inc., our Executive Director of Business Affairs, Julie Cink, and her staff for their hard work and for being wise financial stewards of tax payer dollars,” said Rich Wolf, School Board Chair. “We have sound financial operating conditions and tonight we have received validation from financial experts that we are working in the best interest of our stakeholders and lowering the tax impact to residents.”

With the bond sale complete, the district will now invest the money until construction costs are incurred. The money will be used to address enrollment, safety and academic needs by building a new elementary school, additions to almost all schools and addressing traffic and high school entrance safety concerns, as approved by voters on November 7.

### Geography Bee winners

School Geography Bees were held recently at Five Hawks, Jeffers Pond, Grainwood, Glendale, Redtail Ridge and WestWood elementary schools, SAGE Academy, and a joint middle school competition at Twin Oaks Middle School.

Each Geography Bee consisted of seven rounds of questions regarding United States or world geography. Each geography bee resulted in one winner who will have the chance to compete at the regional level.



Pictured are winners, top row, from left: Madison Andrews (WestWood), Derek Gust (Redtail Ridge), Jesse Crocker (Twin Oaks) and Max Rathbun (Glendale). Bottom row, from left: Tayah Schmidt (Grainwood), Jack Nicolet (Jeffers Pond), Dylan Moyers (SAGE) and Cody Lyons (Five Hawks)



PLHS students Airiana Johanns and Greta Olson help make meals for The Sandwich Project

### Service learning at Prior Lake High School

Grade 12 Social Studies students at Prior Lake High School spent a portion of first semester working on service projects of their choice. One group created Wood Duck houses which they placed in area woods throughout the community to help combat the decline in nesting bird populations. Another student spent time with residents at a local senior living facility. Students documented their service work throughout the semester in a blog and highlighted their experiences.

“Helping others made me feel good because I knew I helped someone who really needed it,” Kalob Dorn said.

To cap-off their semester of service and to honor Martin Luther King Jr’s legacy, they spent a day making sandwiches for The Sandwich Project, a local non-profit created and supported by grassroots efforts. Throughout the day, PLHS students made 1,163 sandwiches; more than a quarter of the organization’s typical weekly supply.

The sandwiches help feed homeless people in Minneapolis and the organization feeds about 4,500 people each week.

### Save the dates!

Prior Lake Rotary’s Lakefront Music Fest is again coming to Lakefront Park in Prior Lake! Save the dates:

**July 13 and 14, 2018**

This annual event continues to benefit students in PLSAS. In 2017, The Prior Lake Rotary Club presented a check for more than \$71,000 to the Laker Activities Booster Club, Patrons of the Arts & Activities and elementary Parents and Teachers for Children. Visit the website for updates:

[lakefrontmusicfest.com](http://lakefrontmusicfest.com)

### The Laker Educational Foundation needs you!

The Laker Educational Foundation is currently soliciting nominations for positions on the Board of Directors in hopes of expanding the Board to 21 members.



The term of office is 3 years and the Board meets monthly. Learn how to become more involved by attending a meeting as a guest. The meetings are held at the District Services Center, 4540 Tower Street SE, Prior Lake, MN 55372 on the third Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m.

Anyone interested in the Foundation and serving as a Board member can contact the current President, Lori Frank at [lfrank@lakerfoundation.org](mailto:lfrank@lakerfoundation.org) or leave a message at 952-226-0063.

### Jenny Nagy named Business Person of the Year

Congratulations to PLSAS Community Involvement Coordinator, Jenny Nagy on receiving the Business Person of the Year Award from the Prior Lake Chamber of Commerce.



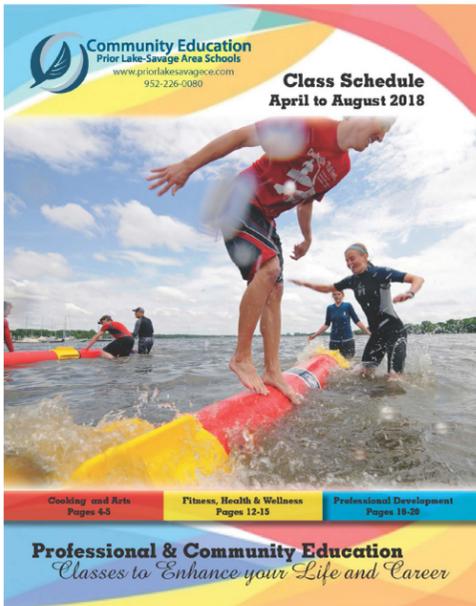
Jenny received the award for her dedication as an ambassador to the Chamber along with the many events she donates her time to including Lakefront Days, Fall Community Fest and monthly membership meetings, all the while promoting our many Community Education class offerings and partnerships.

PLSAS Community Involvement Coordinator, Jenny Nagy and Prior Lake Chamber President, Kim Prchal





Registration opens soon for our Summer courses. Visit [www.priorlakesavagece.com](http://www.priorlakesavagece.com) for all of our offerings.



## Career and Job Fair

Any Age, Any Wage!

**Tuesday, March 27**  
5-7 pm  
**Prior Lake High School**

# 2018

**Meet your future employers and learn from the experts.**

If you or your business is interested in being a vendor, please contact Jenny Nagy at 952-226-0085 or [jnagy@priorlake-savage.k12.mn.us](mailto:jnagy@priorlake-savage.k12.mn.us)

Engineering & Specialty Trades

Education

Business & Finance

Health Services

Hospitality & Retail

Government

Other

### Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE)

952-226-0952 | Register: [www.priorlake-savage.feepay.com](http://www.priorlake-savage.feepay.com)

Join us for ECFE classes at Edgewood School. Below is a sampling of our spring classes:

**Early Birds, for Infant to 2 years: Mondays from 8:30-10 a.m.**

If you have early risers in your house, we've got you covered! Each week will bring a mix of large-movement explorations and quiet-play activities, plus time to talk, laugh, and problem-solve with other parents/caregivers.

**Exploring E-STEM with Dad, for Infant to 5 years: Tuesdays 5:30-7 p.m.**

Racing, rolling, building, busting, pounding, planting....we'll do all that and more in this hands-on, indoor/outdoor, try-it-out exploration! This class is for your child and their favorite guy (father, grandfather, uncle, etc.).

**Time with My Toddler, for 10-18 months: Thursdays from 10:30-Noon**

This special morning will include a variety of mind and muscle-building activities, sensory play, circle time and socialization.

**Out & About with ECFE: E-STEM in the Park, for 2-5 years: Fridays from 9:30-11 a.m.**

Our wonderful area parks provide the perfect environment to explore, ask questions, and have fun! (held rain or shine)

### Congratulations Teachers of the Year

In each of the district's buildings, an exemplary teacher was chosen by staff to represent the quality and contributions of all PLSAS educators. This year's honorees are:



Shana Bates  
WestWood



Stacy Kodada  
Redtail Ridge



Meghan Fulton  
Prior Lake High School



Rachel McKay  
Twin Oaks



Chris Furney  
Jeffers Pond



Kymn Peacock  
Edgewood



Becky Gillette  
Glendale



Malorie Schultz  
Grainwood



Mary Kauzlarich  
Five Hawks



Nichole Tuma  
Hidden Oaks

# Laker Network

THE SOCIAL MEDIA HUB FOR **PRIOR-LAKE SAVAGE AREA SCHOOLS**

Get all the latest news on the social media channel of your choice: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, You Tube. Visit [www.priorlake-savage.k12.mn.us](http://www.priorlake-savage.k12.mn.us) and click on "Laker Network" on the top of the page.

## PLHS students win MN Scholastic Art Awards



Thressa Schultz won a Gold Key for her painting titled, "The Past Remembered," which was created for the PLHS winter play, A Christmas Carol.



Josette Tellin won an Honorable Mention for her painting, "Grandpa Love." There were more than 3,800 submissions this year. Of the submissions there were 371 Gold Key Awards, 363 Silver Key Awards and 735 Honorable Mentions.

- REGISTRATION OPENS MARCH 5TH -

# KIDS' COMPANY

## 2018-2019

### School Year Registration

BEFORE + AFTER SCHOOL CARE  
6:30am - school start  
school end - 6:00pm

Kindergarten to 5th Grade

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT KIDS' CO.?

LEGOs  
Projects  
PLAY  
ART  
MAKERSPACE  
ROBOTS  
my friends  
Snacks

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER, PLEASE VISIT US AT [WWW.PRIORLAKESAVAGECE.COM](http://WWW.PRIORLAKESAVAGECE.COM)

FIELD TRIPS, ART, ENGINEERING, MATH, FORT BUILDING, THEATER, CRITICAL THINKING, MUSIC, ADVENTURE, SELF-DISCOVERY, ENGAGEMENT, ATHLETICS, FRIENDSHIP, TECHNOLOGY, CONSTRUCTION, SCIENCE, TEAM BUILDING, DAILY ACTIVITIES, GARDENING, NATURE EXPLORATION, PROBLEM SOLVING, COOPERATION.

Pre-K to 2nd Grade - located at WestWood / Edgewood  
3rd to 5th Grade - located at Prior Lake High School

NEW EXPERIENCES, NEW ENVIRONMENT,

# NEW FUN!

June 14 - August 24  
6:30am-6:00pm  
\$37/day

**REGISTER**  
guarantee your spot by April 16  
For more information or to register, please visit us at [www.priorlakesavagece.com](http://www.priorlakesavagece.com)  
Registration opens March 5th

**Kids' Company**  
Summer 2018  
Registration

### Are you new to the district?

Welcome to Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools! If you have school-age children, you can enroll them online at [www.priorlake-savage.k12.mn.us/enroll](http://www.priorlake-savage.k12.mn.us/enroll) or visit the District Services Center, 4540 Tower Street SE in Prior Lake.

For more information, call 952-226-0000. We look forward to welcoming your child into our school district as a Laker!

### Connect with us

To get news, photos, events and more, "Like" us on Facebook and/or follow us on Twitter and Instagram.

[facebook.com/PLSAS](https://www.facebook.com/PLSAS)  
[twitter.com/isd719](https://twitter.com/isd719)  
[instagram.com/isd719](https://www.instagram.com/isd719)



Teri Staloch, Ed.D.

From learning outdoor winter survival skills at McColl Pond Environmental Learning Center, to Jeffers Pond first graders becoming "nature detectives" studying animal tracks to determine who had been in their woods, students are fully engaged in the district's E-STEM learning activities.

E-STEM stands for Environmental Education, Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. E-STEM is all about engaging instruction and learning that is focused on inquiry and real world problem-solving, and our staff and students are really good at it. In fact, our schools were the first district-wide E-STEM schools in the state of Minnesota and we have even been receiving national recognition as leaders in providing high-quality environmental education programming.

Edgewood School/La ola del lago, Glendale, Redtail Ridge, Five Hawks and Jeffers Pond have all received a U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools designation and our district was also named a Green Ribbon Sustainability District.

Now, Hidden Oaks and Twin Oaks Middle Schools are applying for Green Ribbon recognition based on their ability to reduce environmental impact and costs, improve the health and wellness of students and staff and provide effective environmental and sustainability education, incorporating STEM, civic skills and green career pathways.

Middle School teachers are also hard at work planning their first ever E-STEM Day set for May 18. The day will be filled with opportunities for students to learn about personal health and wellness, raptors in Minnesota, water quality,

## From the Superintendent

Winter can be an unpredictable time to explore outdoor learning in Minnesota; however, many students and teachers in Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools (PLSAS) continue to engage in exciting E-STEM activities and embrace the weather.

From learning outdoor winter survival skills at

climate data, as well as ways to improve their school forest by removing invasive buckthorn plants.

While environmental education is what PLSAS is known for, staff and students are also engaging in STEM activities such as coding. PLSAS students are learning the language of the future - a language that powers software, websites and mobile applications - and they start in kindergarten!

Elementary students are learning fundamental computer science skills in media classes using hands-on digital resources. Teachers and district leaders are also developing courses for secondary students so they can continue to build on the skills they learn in elementary school.

To make E-STEM truly work for students, it takes committed, dedicated teachers and support staff to make it happen. Last month, during our student early release day, staff came together for professional development in support of our district's strategic plan and priority work.

Early childhood through 5th grade educators braved the elements with naturalists from Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center, the Jeffers Foundation and the Raptor Center to learn how to integrate outdoor learning into their curriculum.

Middle School teachers spent the afternoon planning for an interdisciplinary day of project-based learning for all students, and high school teachers learned a wide variety of ways to use technology in the classroom.

Whether it's being outside to study the mass and volume of snow, or crawling inside our district's mobile planetarium to learn about our winter constellations, PLSAS believes in its vision to create challenging, diverse and personalized learning for students so that all learners can reach their full potential. E-STEM is just one of many ways we work to help students become contributing and productive members of our ever-changing global community. We are PLSAS!



Middle school students, staff and community members gather to cut the ribbon, marking the beginning of new learning opportunities in solar science

## PLSAS brings solar to its students

Thanks to a \$100,000 donation from the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community (SMSC), PLSAS students have even more math and science learning opportunities through the use of newly installed solar panels. The district will also realize nearly \$100K in energy savings over the next 25 years, helping to meet its sustainability and E-STEM goals.

The project was installed at Twin Oaks Middle School by local solar developer, IPS Solar and funding for the project was made possible through the generosity of the SMSC. Students now have the ability to chart data, conduct experiments and learn through hands-on application of the solar panels. They can access a dashboard which charts how much energy is produced on any given day, week or month and they can even see the performance of each panel.

### About this Newsletter

For questions or comments regarding *Laker Connections*, contact Kristi Mussman, Director of Communications, [kmussman@priorlake-savage.k12.mn.us](mailto:kmussman@priorlake-savage.k12.mn.us) or 952-226-0014



The stock we are printing on contains 10% PCW

Our mission is to educate all learners to reach their full potential as contributing and productive members of our ever-changing global community.

### 2018 Board of Education

#### Chair

Rich Wolf

#### Vice-Chair/Clerk

Lee Shimek

#### Treasurer

Stacey Ruelle

#### Directors

Melissa Enger

Mary Frantz

Ben Hanson

Todd Sorensen

#### Superintendent

Dr. Teri Staloch

#### Student Representative

Katy Anderson