

## From the Superintendent



Superintendent,  
Teri Staloch, Ed.D.

The world and our PLSAS community has changed incredibly. COVID-19 has caused us all to live, work and adapt to a new way of doing things. I know everyone in our community has had to do things differently lately and our school district is no exception. With all that has changed I know some things remain the same, including the way our community supports and cares for one another. For this I am very grateful.

PLSAS staff have done something unprecedented in the history of education. In just two weeks they transformed centuries-old practices in education by delivering online and interactive instruction, while remaining focused on connections and relationships with their students.

Our Child Nutrition Services staff have been preparing an average of 3,500 meals per day for students so that they are well fed and prepared to learn.

Our bus drivers have switched from delivering children to school to delivering meals to students' neighborhoods.

Our maintenance staff are providing support to every department and district operation as well as ensuring our schools are deep cleaned, sanitized and safe.

Our Kids' Company staff from Community Education along with some of our paraprofessionals and certified staff have been providing child care so that our emergency workers can in turn continue to help those in need in our community.

*Continued, page 2*



## PLSAS mourns the loss of former Superintendent, Dr. Sue Ann Gruver

Our PLSAS community is mourning the loss of former Superintendent, Dr. Sue Ann Gruver who passed away April 28.



Former PLSAS Superintendent,  
Sue Ann Gruver, Ed.D.

Dr. Gruver left a legacy in PLSAS. During her time as Superintendent, she was instrumental in bringing new programs to the district including SAGE Academy, La ola del lago Spanish Immersion, MNCAPS, E-STEM (Environmental Education - Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) and the PLHS FabLab.

During her tenure she also opened Redtail Ridge and an addition to PLHS. She will be dearly missed.

## PLSAS announces new Five Hawks Principal

Katy Schuerman has been named the new Principal of Five Hawks Elementary. Ms. Schuerman will resume the responsibilities for Principal Tim Bell, who is retiring at the end of the school year.



Ms. Schuerman currently serves as the kindergarten through sixth grade Principal of Kenyon-Wanamingo Schools.

Katy will assume her new role in Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools on July 1.

## Retirement Celebration is May 21

This year PLSAS is celebrating the retirement of 11 PLSAS staff members.

The celebration, in the form of a parade, will take place on May 21st, from 3:30 to 5 p.m. at Prior Lake High School, 7575 150th St. West, Savage. Well wishers in vehicles must enter at 154th Street.

The retirees will be spaced, with proper social distance, along the sidewalk of the lower entrance. We ask that no one leave their vehicle but can wave and offer their congratulations from their window.

Cards for retirees may be sent to the following address:  
PLSAS District Services Center  
Attention: Martha Walz  
4540 Tower St. SE  
Prior Lake, MN 55372



**Jane Balow**  
Teacher, Five Hawks & Jeffers Pond,  
20 years of service



**Lori Bartman**  
Teacher, Special Education, Hidden Oaks,  
34 years of service



**Tim Bell**  
Principal, Five Hawks,  
18 years of service



**Ida Clark**  
Kids' Company, Assistant, Jeffers Pond,  
26 years of service



**Linda Dankers**  
Teacher, Special Education, PLHS,  
19 years of service



**Nonda Henshaw**  
Teacher, Grade 2, Five Hawks,  
15 years of service



**Todd Kemper**  
Teacher, Science, Hidden Oaks,  
27 years of service



**Paul Larson**  
Teacher, Physical Education, WestWood,  
39 years of service



**Laura Macblane**  
Teacher, Special Education, PLHS,  
10 years of service



**James Strandemo**  
Teacher, Global Studies, Hidden Oaks,  
20 years of service



**Gary Thorsett**  
Technology Support, District Services Center,  
25 years of service

**Not pictured**

**Retired in 2019:**  
Barry Bengston  
Pat Bjorklund  
Manual Chaves  
Brenda Deuth

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

Non-Profit Org. U.S. Postage PAID Permit No. 30 Prior Lake, MN

Postal Customer  
ECRWSS

4540 Tower Street SE  
Prior Lake, MN 55372  
P L S A S  
P R I O R L A K E - S A V A G E  
A R E A S C H O O L S

**Superintendent continued**

Our technology department along with principals and school staff deployed 1,300 iPads to 6th and 7th-grade students and offered an iPad opt-in process to elementary families, resulting in the distribution of more than 1,600 tablets. Our technology staff also found a way to provide internet access to families in need.

Our human resources, business office and office staff across the district have continued to provide support to staff and the district.

Our communications team ensures that staff, families and the community continues to have up-to-date information as well as a glimpse into the many ways PLSAS staff are providing education, connections and services.

The School Board is providing support, trust and governance for staff to do their new jobs effectively.

I am also grateful to community members who have provided help and support. We have received donated cloth masks for staff who are working in our buildings and Prior Lake Rotarians helped deliver technology to students so all could participate fully in Distance Learning.

Reaching Our Community's Kids (ROCK) has also supported students and families with meals and basic needs.

All over the community there are chalk drawings and signs offering messages of hope and kindness along with the assurance that one day we will all be together again. Every day I hear stories of amazing connections and at a time of uncertainty and hurt in the world, each of these acts matter.



During this time of uncertainty and change, I could not be more proud of our staff, students, families and community for rising to the challenges we are facing, and for rediscovering that which unites us: our shared commitment to our district mission to help all learners reach their full potential as contributing and productive members of our ever-changing global community.

While this is not normal school and this is not normal life, I am grateful that our staff and community are focusing on connections with students and families to bring some normalcy during a very unique time. Thank you all for your support. We are here for all of you and we will get through this together. #WeArePLSAS #RelationshipsMatter

**Budget adjustments approved for 2020-21**

On May 4, the School Board approved \$3 million in budget adjustments for the 2020-21 school year. The Board action comes in response to lower than projected enrollment growth, combined with state funding that has not kept pace with inflation and increased operating costs.

While PLSAS remains a growing district, the budget adjustments were necessary in order to maintain our current financial condition.

Over the last several weeks, the Board reviewed recommendations that included a series of revenue projections and cost savings totaling \$1.27 million, which helped to ease the process.

In addition, budget reduction decisions totaling \$1.73 million were also made in the following areas:

- 10.5 full-time equivalent positions, due to lower than projected enrollment growth
- not filling vacant positions
- aligning elementary dean contract days to match secondary dean contracts
- operational adjustments including energy efficiency and a reduction in technology supplies
- administrative adjustments through contract negotiations
- Special Education support due to changing needs of students on IEPs, combined with students on IEPs who are graduating and aligning caseload sizes closer to those of other metro districts

"All of this information is difficult news to share during a time that is already so stressful," said Superintendent, Dr. Teri Stoloch. "While these adjustments present challenges, please know that we will continue to focus our existing resources towards the best education possible for all students."

For more information about the budget adjustments, visit [www.priorlakesavage.k12.mn.us](http://www.priorlakesavage.k12.mn.us)

**Survey results are in**

The fourth annual stakeholder survey results are complete. Full results are posted on the website: [www.priorlake-savage.k12.mn.us/2020Survey](http://www.priorlake-savage.k12.mn.us/2020Survey) Please note that the survey was taken pre-COVID-19 and Distance Learning. While we are proud of the high survey results from our stakeholders, we know that the last several weeks of Distance Learning have brought us new opportunities and challenges from which to learn.

96%



Parents say their child's school is clean and well maintained

**Parent Survey**

94% of parents said adults/teachers believe my child can learn and be successful.  
91% of parents feel respected at their child's school.  
89% of parents said they believe their child's school is safe and secure.  
89% of parents said their child likes to go to school.

96% elementary students



Students say teachers use technology to help them learn

93% secondary students

**Student Survey**

96% of elementary students and 88% of secondary students feel safe and secure in school.  
96% of elementary students and 87% of secondary students say adults/teachers in their building have high expectations for them.  
96% of elementary students and 84% of secondary students feel connected to at least one adult at their school.

97% of Certified Staff\*



94% of Educational Support Staff\*\*

said they are aware of how to implement Lockdown with Options procedures

**Staff Survey**

94% of Certified Staff and 94% of Educational Support Staff said they are proud to be associated with PLSAS and its brand.  
90% of Certified Staff and 95% of Educational Support Staff said they work in an environment that respects diversity and is discrimination free.

\* Certified Staff are employees requiring a license through the MN Department of Education, ie. teachers, principals, superintendent

\*\* Educational Support Staff are all other employees not requiring a certified license, ie. cooks, custodians, secretaries

**PLSAS construction projects continue**

Construction on our newest elementary school, Hamilton Ridge, is well underway. As you drive through the Big Sky Estates development in Savage, you can now see the main entrance of the school along with the gym and some classroom wings taking shape. Hamilton Ridge will open this fall.



Hamilton Ridge Elementary

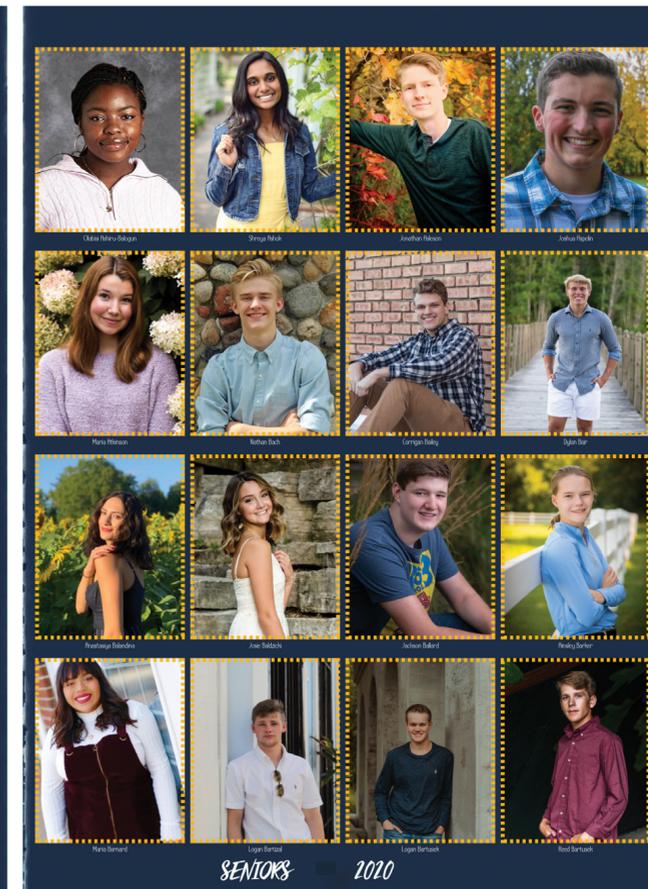
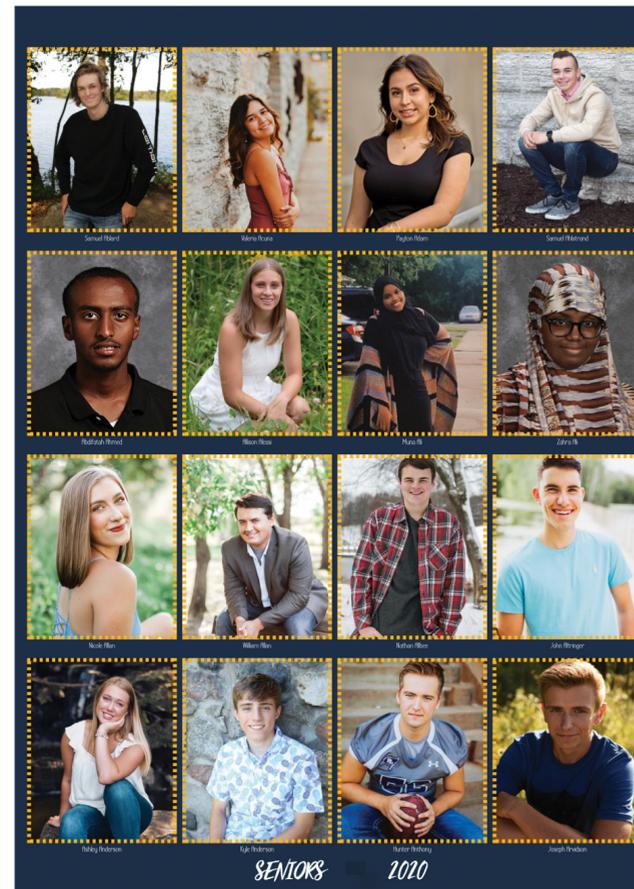
Other construction projects currently underway include Twin Oaks' classroom additions which will open in June, along with a new, secure front entrance at PLHS and an expanded parking lot located on the west side of the building. Work is also underway on a four-court activity center that will be accessible from the new upper entrance and a kitchen and cafeteria expansion, all to open this fall.

With La ola del lago now a full-grown K-5 Spanish Immersion program, the school will move from Edgewood School to Grainwood in the fall of 2020. La ola del lago at Grainwood will receive renovations to the media center, kitchen/cafeteria, kindergarten classroom, boiler room, and HVAC systems, along with office space for Community Education.

Over the years, hundreds of staff, students, parents and community members have given their time, talents and input to make these spaces a reality for our students. In the coming months we will be sharing details on soft and grand openings so that all in our community can see the many positive changes we have put in place together for all to enjoy for years to come.

**Celebrating THE SENIOR CLASS OF 2020**

The following pages are dedicated to the Prior Lake High School and Bridges Area Learning Center class of 2020 (Please note that additional Bridges ALC students are listed on the back cover)





# — THE SENIOR CLASSES OF 2020 —

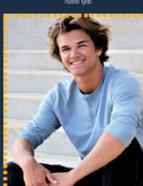
Celebrating

 Evan Anderson	 Mayah Bay	 Jared Brown	 Justin Brown
 Paul Buck	 Mike Hoffman	 Joseph Heger	 Stacy Rubin
 Mason Sakre	 Frank Hill	 Bryant Rubin	 Jacob Rubin
 Caleb Harrison	 Drew Harrison	 Liam Harrison	 Jacob Harrison

SENIORS 2020

 John Brown	 John Brown	 Paul Brown	 Liam Brown
 Edwin Havel	 Jeff Havel	 Emily Havel	 Drew Havel
 Logan Havel	 Eli Havel	 Blake Havel	 Carly Havel
 Jacob Havel	 Eli Havel	 Kajal Hill	 Sam Havel

SENIORS 2020

 Morgan	 Nolan Cole	 Kaitlyn Cole	 Kaitlyn Cole
 Chloe King	 Lyle King	 Nolan King	 Nolan King
 Ethan Green	 Nolan Green	 Samuel Green	 Isaac Green
 Hudson Green	 Hudson Green	 Hudson Green	 Hudson Green

SENIORS 2020

 Benjamin	 Eli Green	 John Green	 Jack Green
 Eli Green	 Emma Kowalski	 Heidi Kowalski	 Liam Kowalski
 Edessa Kowalski	 Joseph Kowalski	 Liam Kowalski	 Liam Kowalski
 Hudson Kowalski	 Hudson Kowalski	 Hudson Kowalski	 Hudson Kowalski

SENIORS 2020

 Morgan	 Chloe King	 Kaitlyn King	 Kaitlyn King
 Kaitlyn King	 Nolan King	 Drew King	 Drew King
 Paul Jaffer	 Denise Jaffer	 Nolan Jaffer	 Gabriel Jaffer
 Sydney Jaffer	 Nolan Jaffer	 Anthony Jaffer	 Drew Jaffer

SENIORS 2020

 Caitlin All	 Nolan All	 John All	 Jack All
 Paul All	 Nolan All	 John All	 John All
 Grace Karmark	 Kaitlyn Karmark	 Caitlyn Karmark	 Nolan Karmark
 Nathan Karmark	 Nolan Karmark	 Nolan Karmark	 Edy Karmark

SENIORS 2020

 Nolan Larson	 Nolan Larson	 Nolan Larson	 Nolan Larson
 Nolan Larson	 Nolan Larson	 Nolan Larson	 Nolan Larson
 Nolan Larson	 Nolan Larson	 Nolan Larson	 Nolan Larson
 Nolan Larson	 Nolan Larson	 Nolan Larson	 Nolan Larson

SENIORS 2020

 John Larson	 Nolan Larson	 Nolan Larson	 Nolan Larson
 John Larson	 Nolan Larson	 Nolan Larson	 Nolan Larson
 Nolan Larson	 Nolan Larson	 Nolan Larson	 Nolan Larson
 Nolan Larson	 Nolan Larson	 Nolan Larson	 Nolan Larson

SENIORS 2020

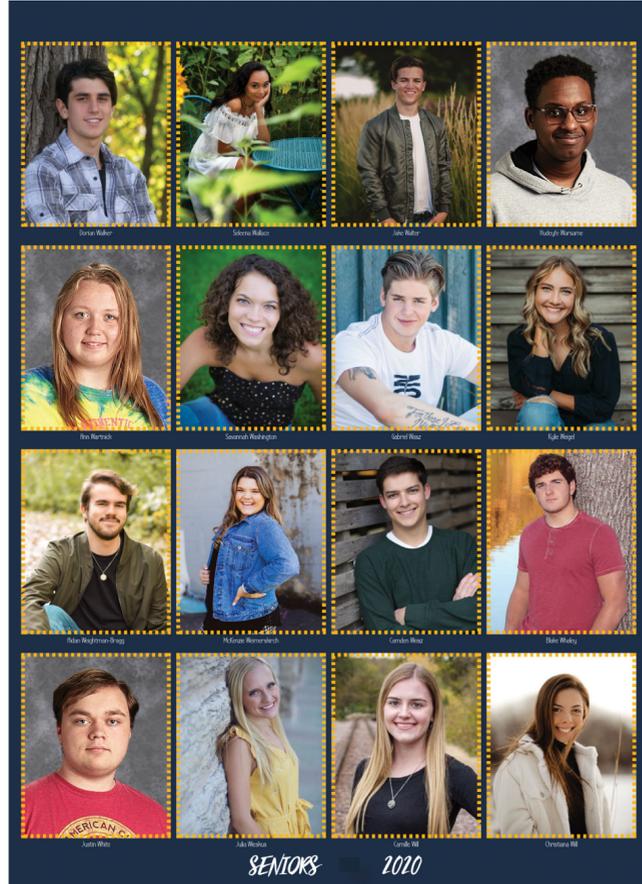
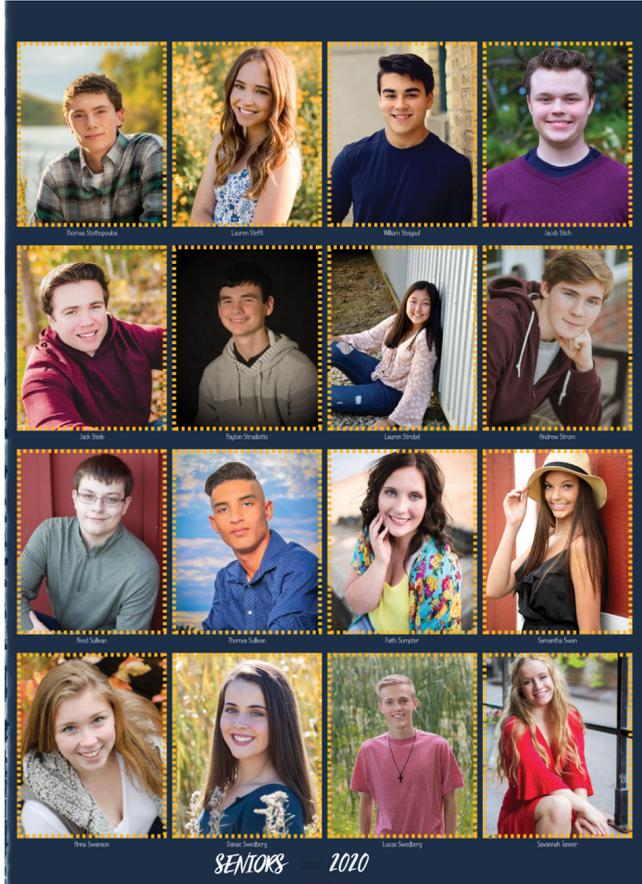
# — THE SENIOR CLASSES OF 2020 —

Celebrating



# — THE SENIOR CLASSES OF 2020 —

Celebrating



10 Not Pictured Seniors: Fabricia Araujo De Farias, Kathryn Bartell, Kyle Berg, Montrell Brooks, Ashleigh Buckman, Hunter Carlson, Lillian Church, Noah Dahlen, Madelyn Dempsey, Layton Devore, James Durnbaugh, Lauren Eccles, Makayla Evanger, Dain Feil, Emanuel Franklin, James Garrity, Joseph Gehlen, Nathalia Gonzalez, Nicole Grundman, Ethan Haglund, William Hall, Ella Hammond, Sarah Hansen, Jordan Hughes, Tan Huynh, Tyree Ihenacho, Alexander Jacobson, Mikayla Jakubowsky, Ifrah Janaw, Cautia Johnson, Jonathan Jones, Madison Jones, Logan Kasel, Debra Keller

Michael Kennedy, Adam Kuehn, Sydney Kuhl, Morgan Ladner, Nicholas Lakose, Bernadeth Lapore, Maia Lieske, Grady Ling, Cody Mitchell, Najma Mohamed, Sakinah Muhammad, Pierce Nelson, 11  
 Kailey Ohlhues, Alexandria Peot, Alex Petersen, Ryan Piper, Derek Prochaska, Lily Rudeen, Austin Rue, Gabriela Ryabchuk, David Shchegolev, Ryan Shipley, Brian Shuman, Imad Siddiqui, Catherine Solis, Chet Somerson, Polina Stepanenko, Alexander Stumpe, Andrew Tran, Queenie Tran, Tito Ulibarri, Kevin Valverde Bustos, Anna Voegel, Savana Waag, Jaden Wallenta, Salma Yassin

# Celebrating THE SENIOR CLASS OF 2020

## BRIDGES AREA LEARNING CENTER · Class of 2020



**Not Pictured Bridges ALC Seniors:** Noh Abdi, Henry Banzi, Stephanie Bedard, Justin Braesch, Adam Burnell, Jackson Carroll, Jon Galvan, Jamie Haulton, Natalie Herber, Sompohi Guy, Marinno Phay, Austin McCarty, Sydney Oxendale, Zoey Tucker, Hadley Weydert

### LEF Gratitude Greetings honor staff

Each year, the Foundation offers Teacher Tributes for graduating seniors along with Gratitude Greetings. It's a thoughtful way to say "thanks" and teachers and support staff are thrilled when they receive one.

For every tax-deductible donation of \$25 made to the Laker Educational Foundation, your chosen staff member(s) will receive a personalized Gratitude Greeting or Teacher Tribute, and a \$20 gift card to a local restaurant of your choice.

Donations must be made by May 22. To donate, go to [www.lakerfoundation.org](http://www.lakerfoundation.org)



### Meal deliveries continue through June 4

We thank families for participating in our meal program over the last several weeks. Your support not only helps students receive nutritious meals, but also supports staff and local agriculture during this difficult time.

Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools (PLSAS) will continue to provide breakfast and lunches free to all children ages 3-18, weekdays through June 4.

Students do not have to be enrolled in PLSAS or qualify for free and reduced-priced meals to receive a free meal.

Meals are available for pickup at WestWood Elementary (5370 WestWood Drive SE, Prior Lake) from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. When receiving meals, stay in your car, roll down your window and a staff member will hand you the meals.

PLSAS also delivers free, packaged breakfast and lunch meals to students at a variety of locations. Delivery locations can be found on our website: [www.priorlake-savage.k12.mn.us/COVID-19](http://www.priorlake-savage.k12.mn.us/COVID-19)

For meals assistance during the summer months, please contact Reaching Our Community's Kids (ROCK) at [www.rockmn.org](http://www.rockmn.org)

### Athena Award winner



Josie Kropp

Congratulations to PLHS Athena Award winner, Josie Kropp. The Athena Award program recognizes outstanding female students in athletics and academics.

### Schulze Innovation Scholarship winner



Aviral Chauhan

MNCAPS student Aviral Chauhan has earned the Schulze Innovation Scholarship from the University of St. Thomas and a four-year, full-tuition scholarship.

#### 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)

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

#### 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

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

#### 2020 Board of Education

**Chair**  
Lee Shimek  
**Vice-Chair/Clerk**  
Stacey Ruelle  
**Treasurer**  
Jonathan Drewes

**Directors**  
Melissa Enger  
Mary Frantz  
Michael Nelson  
Enrique Velázquez  
**Superintendent**  
Dr. Teri Staloch  
**Student Representative**  
Isabelle Boelker