

School Board Takes Action on Short-Term Enrollment Growth Recommendations, Begins Long-Term Facilities Planning

On December 12, the School Board heard a preliminary report from our demographer that our district will continue to grow in resident enrollment over the next 5 -10 years. On the same evening, the School Board took action to limit open enrollment, per state statute, for the remainder of 2016-17 through the 2017-18 school year.

What does this mean going forward?

While we will continue to take applications for open enrollment, it will now be limited to 1% at grade levels K-12, including La ola del lago and SAGE Academy. Once students have been accepted into the district through open enrollment, they are students of PLSAS and will remain students in PLSAS. They will not be sent back to their resident district.

For open enrollment, families are welcome to continue to apply into our district. All applications will be placed in a lottery. Kindergarten families will be notified at the end of January whether their student has been accepted into the district or placed on a waiting list. Families with students in grades 1-12 will be notified at the end of February. Open enrollment applicants with PLSAS siblings who are currently enrolled into the district and students of PLSAS staff members have priority in the application selection process.

How does open enrollment affect our growth?

Open enrollment trends have changed drastically over the past 10 years. From 2007-08 through 2014-15 school year, PLSAS had a net loss in open enrollment. This means more resident students chose to attend other school districts than students from other districts choosing PLSAS through the open enrollment option. Since 2014-15 we have seen two important trends:

1. More resident students are choosing to stay and attend PLSAS. For example, this school year, 717 resident students chose to enroll elsewhere, which is different from the previous three-year trend of approximately 850 resident students choosing to enroll in other districts.
2. We have experienced a slight net gain in open enrollment. Currently this year we have 1,023 students open enrolling into the district and 717 resident students leaving our district for a net gain of 306 open enrolled students or 3.6% of K-12 open enrolled students.

Increased resident enrollment, more resident students choosing to stay and ongoing space constraints require us to look at all options to plan for space.

Does closing open enrollment solve our space shortage?

While closing open enrollment is one measure we can take to slow down the student enrollment growth in our schools, we will continue to experience resident students enrolling in our schools for the foreseeable future. Preliminary results of a new demographic study shared this week points to an increase of 850 resident students over the next five years spread across all grade levels.

“
PLSAS can expect at least 850 resident students over the next five years.
~Hazel Reinhardt, demographer
”

This number is on the conservative end of the enrollment projections. The demographer anticipates that enrollment growth will continue for at least the next 10 years.

The education that we provide at PLSAS takes place in classrooms, gymnasiums, hallways, common areas and small break-out spaces. While these learning experiences are aligned with innovative instructional practices, utilizing all of these spaces are also a necessity given our space constraints.

What other short-term solutions are being used to manage growth?

On December 12, the School Board also approved other short-term solutions for our space constraints including:

- Limiting new In-District Transfer requests for the 2017-2018 school year, excluding special programs offered in the district (e.g. SAGE, La ola del lago and Special Education).
- Reverting the school attendance boundary of the Providence neighborhood in Savage back from Jeffers Pond Elementary to Glendale Elementary.
- Moving two pre-kindergarten classrooms (1/2 day 5 days/week) to Glendale Elementary to open two classrooms for third grade La ola del lago at Edgewood School.
- Maintaining Bridges ALC student enrollment and programs.
- Continuing to expand the Minnesota Center for Advanced Professional Studies (MNCAPS) for year two of Healthcare and Business Pathways. Research and implement a third pathway for students at MNCAPS.

What is the district doing to plan for long-term enrollment growth?

Long-term facilities planning is underway, with the district's Facilities Task Force meeting through March 2017 to study enrollment and demographic data. The Task Force will identify needs, generate ideas and provide input to a Facilities Design Team.

The facilities study and resulting options will be based on capacity usage, current and projected enrollment, demographic projections, city housing projections, educational needs of the school district, school-day programs, after-school facility usage, survey input and financial stewardship. All data provided to the Task Force will also be available on our website: <http://www.priorlake-savage.k12.mn.us/growth>.

Between the Task Force and Design Team, PLSAS will receive viable and sustainable options to address long-term facilities needs, student enrollment growth and academic programming. Long-term options will be presented to the community for input in March, with final options presented to the School Board in the spring for their consideration and action.

We hope you will stay engaged with us throughout this planning process so that together, we can seek solutions and make the best decisions possible for our community's students and their education. As always, we welcome your input on this topic, or others, at any time by emailing input@priorlake-savage.k12.mn.us.

Laker Network



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Dr. Teri Staloch,
Superintendent

MNCAPS Gives Students Real-World Experience, Opportunities

"I'm developing crucial, professional skills needed to be successful in the real world."

"You learn to get out of your comfort zone, communicate with everyone and learn a lot about your interests."

"It's like a business venture but in a school!"

These are just a few quotes from high school students participating in the new Minnesota Center for Advanced Professional Studies (MNCAPS) program, which is helping them take their learning to new levels.

Thanks to this joint venture with Lakeville North and South High Schools, Prior Lake High School students are able to participate in this innovative program in which students jump-start their futures by becoming fully immersed in one of two educational pathways: business or healthcare.

Dressed in professional business attire, nearly 100 juniors and seniors enter a new kind of learning environment for part of their school day, in an office building in Lakeville filled with conference rooms and open spaces -- perfect for collaboration, creativity, critical thinking and communication.

With almost two quarters under their belts, students have already learned a lot! In the business pathway, students have toured Seagate to learn about the complicated process of designing, manufacturing and testing hard drives. They also got a chance to hear from a panel of recent graduates about how they spent their time in college to build the skills and experience employers are seeking.

Students have presented ways to help attract customers to downtown Prior Lake and Lakeville, had their headshots taken for LinkedIn profiles, took part in mock interviews conducted by business partners and participated in Outward Bound leadership activities throughout downtown Minneapolis.

In the healthcare pathway, students have learned about the importance of good communication with patients in the dentistry field, provided solutions on how to add 30 minutes of physical activity into the school day and have created health plans.

Students in both pathways are also assigned a one-on-one mentor. Mentors help guide MNCAPS students through the program and share real-world industry knowledge. Mentors will make networking introductions, and potentially provide internships and employment opportunities, as well as host extended site visits.

Teachers collaborate from both Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools and Lakeville Area Public Schools, and are as excited as their students about the program. I even heard one teachers explain how she has never worked so hard and never enjoyed it more!

For the next school year, an additional pathway will be offered: Technology + Design. This pathway will introduce computer science and design concepts, teaching students how to observe technology trends, study program methods and design applications. While we have shared 2017/18 MNCAPS information and registration details with current sophomores, juniors and their families at information sessions earlier this week, there is still another opportunity to learn more:

- Thursday, January 12th at 12 p.m. Lunch & Learn Webinar

You can register for the webinar by visiting <http://mncaps.org>. Mentors and guest speakers are always in demand, as well as project and internship opportunities. For more information, contact MNCAPS Coordinator, Melanie Smieja at 952-435-0120 or melanie.smieja@isd194.org.



Students in the MNCAPS Healthcare & Medicine pathway recently practiced their stitching skills on bananas.



Community Education
Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools

Community Education Classes

To learn more or register for Community Education classes, visit www.priorlakesavagece.com or call 952-226-0080.

The Truth Behind the Screen

Presented by Prior Lake Police Officer Matthew Nardo and PLSAS Social Worker Jaime Serbus

Monday, January 9

6:30-8 p.m., Twin Oaks Middle School

FREE, but registration requested

Learn firsthand accounts of students who have fallen victim to online predators and what can be done by you as a guardian, to keep this victimization from taking place.



Daddy/Daughter Dance (Girls Age 12 and Under with an Adult)

Saturday, February 18

6:30-9 p.m., Prior Lake High School

\$35 per couple/\$15 for each additional girl

ISD 7.19k Family Run/Walk

Saturday, May 6, 2017

9 a.m.-1 p.m., Twin Oaks Middle School

Fee is \$25/person or \$35/family

Registration deadline: April 23

This 4.5 mile run will start and end at Twin Oaks Middle School. There will also be access to Laker Field track. The event will feature health and wellness vendors, along with family and school organizations and food. Proceeds will be awarded to the Savage Area Women of Today. If you are interested in being a vendor, please call Bobbi or Jenny at 952-226-0080.



Laker Educational Foundation Combines with R.O.C.K.

The Laker Educational Foundation (LEF) has some exciting news:

This month, R.O.C.K. (Reaching Our Community's Kids), will be combining with LEF. This new partnership will help both organizations provide even more support to district students! The Foundation is also happy to announce that R.O.C.K.'s President, Keri Thayer, has accepted the position of LEF's Development Director and all of R.O.C.K.'s board members will join the LEF board.



R.O.C.K. is a non-profit organization that fills "Power Packs" with food that are sent home at the end of each school week to Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools (PLSAS) students who are food insecure, ensuring they have meals for the weekend. It is estimated that there are more than 500 elementary school students in the Prior Lake-Savage community who are classified as food insecure--not knowing when or where they will get their next meal.

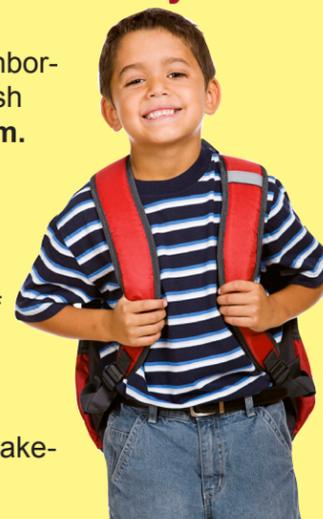
Stay tuned to see what 2017 holds for LEF and R.O.C.K. by visiting www.lakerfoundation.org or www.rockmn.org.

Kindergarten Registration is January 19!

All resident students are welcome to register for kindergarten at their neighborhood school or La ola del lago Spanish Immersion on **January 19 at 6:30 p.m.**

Non-resident students are welcome to apply for open enrollment into the district. All applications will be placed in a lottery. Families will be notified of the enrollment decision at the end of January.

For more information, visit www.priorlake-savage.k12.mn.us/enroll.



Teachers of the Year to be Honored January 16

Eleven teachers were chosen by their peers as the 2016-17 Teachers of the Year. Please join us for a celebration to honor them on Monday, Jan. 16 from 3:30-4:30 p.m. at Twin Oaks in the Media Center.

Congratulations to the following honorees:

Bridges ALC: Melissa Olson

Edgewood: Trudy Adderly

Five Hawks: Laura Hageman

Glendale: Jeff Sillman

Grainwood: Lisa Deile

Hidden Oaks: Cheryl Barnes

Jeffers Pond: Gwen Moldan

PLHS: Sam Steinberg

Redtail Ridge: Paula Rudd

Twin Oaks: Andrea Peterson

WestWood/SAGE: Sue Muelken



Trudy Adderly



Cheryl Barnes



Lisa Deile



Laura Hageman



Gwen Moldan



Sue Muelken



Melissa Olson



Andrea Peterson



Paula Rudd



Jeff Sillman



Sam Steinberg

2016/17
Teachers of the Year



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Middle School SWAT Students Show Off High-Tech Skills at TIES Conference

The Middle School SWAT team - Students Working to Advance Technology, were recently invited to be part of a special technology group at a Technology and Information Educational Services (TIES) convention.

Students were able to show off their high-tech skills and demonstrated a 3D printing project created by students. They also shared information about SWAT with teachers, technology specialists, principals and superintendents from all over the Midwest.

On a daily basis, these 8th grade students help both their peers and their teachers with technology trouble-shooting. This includes, computers, iPads and SMARTBoards. They also run software and app updates on the iPads, and ensure Chromebooks are plugged in and charged in the cart.

SWAT Team Advisors are Amanda Fay, Technology Integration Specialist and Gina Zurn, Media Specialist at Twin Oaks/Hidden Oaks Middle Schools.

To learn more about middle school SWAT, visit its website: <http://technologyintegrationfay.weebly.com>.



SMSC Presents District with \$125,000 Grant for Indian Education Program, E-STEM

During Laker Pride at the Dec. 12 School Board meeting, PLSAS had the opportunity to recognize and thank members of the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community (SMSC) for its very generous \$125,000 grant. A portion of the grant will be used to support and advance our Indian Education program. Another portion of the grant will go towards E-STEM programming.



Pictured at right: Superintendent Dr. Teri Staloch & SMSC Vice-Chairman Keith B. Anderson

SAGE Academy Offers Full-Time Gifted Education

SAGE Academy offers full-time gifted instruction for students who qualify in grades 3, 4 and 5. It is a school-within-a-school at WestWood Elementary, where students also participate in art, music, physical education and media.

Students qualify for SAGE Academy based on their scores on the Cognitive Abilities Test (CogAT) and the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP).

The application process is starting later this month! Scan the QR code to watch an informational video or visit www.prior-lake-savage.k12.mn.us/schools/sageacademy.



District Receives Clean Audit Report

Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools has been issued a clean audit report from independent audit firm of CliftonLarsonAllen, which is the highest opinion an auditor can issue.

The district was praised for going above and beyond audit requirements in providing detailed budget information in favor of greater transparency. "The district has continued to do a commendable job of financial planning and reacting to enrollment changes and changes in state funding," said CliftonLarsonAllen Executive Director, Dennis Hoogeveen.

The audit report also revealed that PLSAS' expenditures per student is less than the statewide average by 3.6 percent. It is less than the seven-county metro area average by almost 10 percent.

In addition to the clean audit report, our Business Office has received the Minnesota Department of Education School Finance Award each year for the last nine years for exhibiting fiscal health, sound fiscal management and accountability.

PLSAS has also received the Association of School Business Officials International Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting Award every year for the last seven years.

Executive Director of Business Services Julie Cink recently earned a Certified Administrator of School Finance and Operations (SFO) designation from the Association of School Business Officials. This nationally recognized credential represents excellence, expertise and transparency in the school business field. She is one of only 17 in the state of Minnesota to receive the designation.

Important Dates

- Jan. 9**
7 p.m.
School Board Meeting

- Jan. 16**
No School, Grades E-12

3:30-4:30 p.m.
Teachers of the Year Celebration
Twin Oaks, Media Center

- Jan. 19**
6:30 p.m.
Kindergarten Registration

- Jan. 26**
2-Hour Early Release, Grades K-12

No School, Early Childhood

- Jan. 27**
No School, Grades E-12

- Feb. 13**
7 p.m.
School Board Meeting

- Feb. 20**
No School, Grades E-12

District Offices Closed

No Kids' Company

Forty-three Inducted into the National Business Honor Society



Forty-three juniors and seniors were inducted into PLHS' chapter of the National Business Honor Society on Monday, Nov. 21. Congratulations to the following students and this year's officers:

Morgan Anderson, Fatima Ayour, Cassidy Bantley, Shelby Bartusek, William Bingham, Tanner Burggraaff, Joshua Caven, Caleb Effertz, Ashley Everson, Luke Everson, Tanner French, Zach Fuller, Paige Getman, Sophie Golay, Paige Grecco, Elizabeth Hautman, Jacob Hofschild, Tommy Hua, Kaden Kalton, Sydney Kirchoff, Jack Koenig, Richie Lambright, Connor Laughridge, James Ludowese, Hailey MacGillivray, Reece Montross, Nathan Moorse, Ethan Nelson, Keith Nordling, Jack Nusbaum, De'Angelo Pillai, Alex Rejda, Jack Renfro, Josue Rodas, John Schoeller, Kristina Sorensen, Logan Stokes, Jack Thram, Nicole Tiritilli, Mylan Tran, Colton Warren, Steven Wright and Megan Zentner.

Officers: Michelle Doughansey, President; Samantha Murray, Vice President; Jacob Schumacher, Secretary; and Kathryn Vaage, Treasurer.

The National Business Education Association developed the National Business Honor Society as a way to recognize and honor students' achievements in high school business classes. Membership is based on performance, character, leadership and service.

Detective Skills, 21st Century Learning Help Students Unlock the Breakout EDU Box

On a recent afternoon at Grainwood Elementary, two teams of fourth and fifth grade students were huddled on opposite sides of the classroom, each team surrounding a black box with a variety of locks.

"I think I know it!" whispered one excited student, referring to the combination of the first lock. They needed to figure out the other clues fast and open their box before the other team. The clock was ticking!

Breakout EDU kits come with a box, and a series of locks and other items that can be used depending on the game. During the game, players need to successfully navigate a series of mysteries and solve engaging problems to open the locks. The game is centered around the box and players have a set time to open it. All games feature a blend of physical and online puzzles involving the 21st century learning skills of critical thinking, creativity and collaboration.

Students and teachers can use Breakout EDU games or use an on-line template to create their own, which is what the group of teachers at Grainwood did. This particular game had all geometry based questions to review the recent math chapter they had studied.

Breakout EDU kits allow teachers to bring gaming into their classrooms in a meaningful way, and another innovative opportunity to get students out of their seats and moving around.



Preschool Registration Begins February 1

Circle of Friends is Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools' 4-Star Parent Aware rated preschool program located at Edgewood School, serving children who are 3, 4, and 5 years old. Our classes range from 2 to 5 days per week, and include both half-day and full-day options. All options provide inquiry-driven, child-centered learning activities supporting kindergarten readiness outcomes and include environmental education in our outdoor learning spaces. Programming is aligned with Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools' elementary curriculum standards, along with state and national early childhood learning standards. This ensures a strong start in school for all children.

Priority registration for current families occurs January 24-31. Registration opens to the public on February 1. To be considered in the first wave of public registration, please register by February 12. If you would like to receive preschool registration information, call our office at 952-226-0950 to ensure you are on the mailing list.

Middle School Registration Information for 2017-18

All parents of current 5th grade students are invited to attend a Middle School Parent Information Night January 31 at 6:30 p.m. in Twin Oaks Middle School's Jerabek Hall (lower level). Parents will have a chance to learn about middle school structure, student scheduling, ways your child will be supported and will have an opportunity to ask questions.

In May, when building placement for your child has been determined, the fifth graders will tour their middle school for next school year, followed by a parent orientation night at your child's 6th grade middle school building.

PLHS Incoming Freshmen Register This Month

Parents of current 8th grade students are invited to an informational meeting about freshman registration on Tuesday, Jan. 5 at 7 p.m. at Prior Lake High School. Twin Oaks students will register for 9th grade courses on Jan. 19; Hidden Oaks students will register on Jan. 20. Current high school students will register the first week of February. PLHS guidance counselors will assist students with their registration.

Orientation for 2017/18 9th grade students and their parents/guardians will take place in late summer, prior to the first day of school. Details regarding 9th grade orientation will be sent to families in the spring.

Current PLHS sophomores and juniors are eligible to apply for MNCAPS, the Minnesota Center for Advanced Professional Studies. Applications are due Feb. 1 and can be found at <http://mncaps.org>. See Dr. Staloch's column on page 2 for an inside look at this awesome program!



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