

North Tonawanda City Schools



Message from the Superintendent

As we start to look forward to spring and seeing the sun again, one can only hope that COVID melts away like the snow. Although it is likely that this will become the new normal for the coming years, we are lucky to have a community and staff that value in-person instruction for students. While we expect the rules around vaccination and masks to be ever changing, one thing is for sure...we would not be sad to see them go! All the latest information is on the district's COVID-19 webpage.

While we wait to see what spring will bring, the district is busy with doing the annual budget planning, securing grants for programs, building a strong core of programming STEAM education, and developing a strategic plan. The strategic plan will provide a focus and direction for the coming years on what the Board of Education should prioritize as it goes forward. There are many opportunities for the public to have their voices heard. Please visit the webpage for more details.

This winter saw the return of a Middle School and High School musical and we are looking forward to the spring concerts. Please consider supporting these programs and enjoy one of the many performances offered by our talented students.

This is also the spring that three seats will be up for the Board of Education election being held on May 17th. Until then, please take some time to visit the website as there are constant updates on the budget development process, NYS testing, our food service program, and much more.

Working together we are building the future today here in North Tonawanda Schools.

Gregory J. Woytila
Superintendent of North Tonawanda Schools



High School Does Its Share for Boxes of Hope

Our annual Boxes of Hope Drive with our local partners was once again a huge success thanks to our students, staff and school community. What a great way to help out those in need over the holiday season. At the High School, the NT Jacks that Care program helped to collect food and filled over 150 boxes that go to NT families.



Senior Michael Colley, Mrs. Hawkins (Guidance Counselor/Coordinator), and Senior Aiden McManus.

Girl Golfers Correction

Our apologies to Cailey Enright and Jessica Utzig. It has come to our attention they were the first females on the Golf team during the 2007-2008 school year.

We are so proud of all our student athletes!



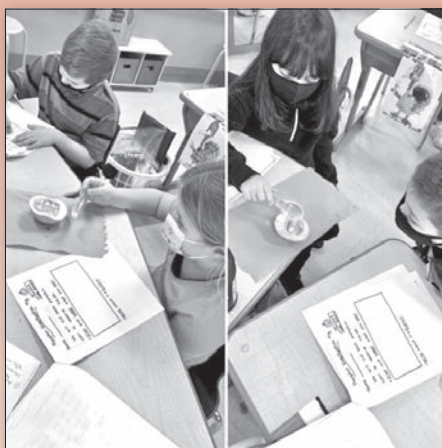
The Speech Tree

Students at Drake Elementary who participate in Speech, used their artistic talents to make ornaments for the Speech Tree. Students wrote on the bows what their personal goals are from the class.



Easton Maholsic, Charlee Bremer and Callista Neal.

Pumpkin Investigations!

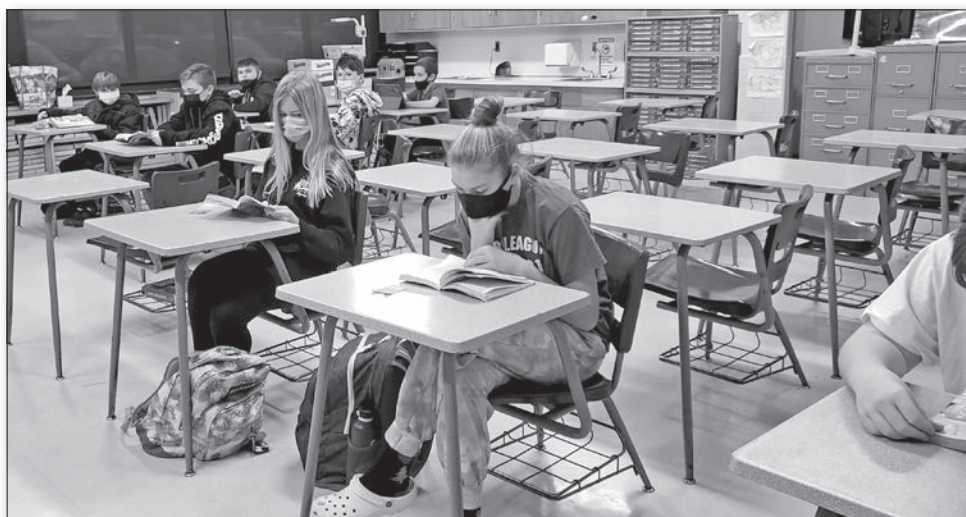


Some second-grade students at Spruce Elementary “investigated” small pumpkins in the month of November. They were like true scientists, full of wonder and curiosity!

The students experimented and made many hypotheses about the pumpkins. Pumpkin observations, a sink or float experiment, dissecting, diagraming, and naming/labeling were only some of the fun learning and critical thinking activities completed in room 207.

NTMS Students Embrace D.E.A.R. Initiative

Written by: Molly Rosen (8th Grade), Mason Crago (7th Grade), Ariana Rose (8th Grade) and Marissa Bloomfield (Advisor of the NTMS Newspaper Club)



A new initiative took place at the beginning of this school year to try and encourage NTMS students to not only read, but find books they loved. D.E.A.R. stands for Drop Everything And Read. The first Wednesday of every month is dedicated to reading an extra twenty minutes during homeroom. Each student arrives in the morning with a book of their choice and is allowed to sit freely and read, with no academic expectations. Ariana Rose says, “It is an opportunity to read that we don’t often get.”

The students appreciate this bonus time and love that they start the morning in a relaxing setting and are reading for enjoyment. According to Molly Rosen, “A lot of people don’t like to read on free will, but like the reminder to try and read. Many find that they enjoy it.” Mason Crago, agrees stating, “I like to read a lot, but not everybody does and this helps them find books they love.”

The students noted that the schedule change can be difficult to manage and wish it was publicized more so that the day didn’t feel rushed, but they appreciate the chance to drop everything early in the morning and delve into a good book. This is just one of many reading initiatives at NTMS right now. Advisor Marissa Bloomfield says, “Our hope is to not only have students reading more, but instill a love of reading in our students that can lead to lifelong enjoyment.”



Spruce Veterans Wall Holds Special Place in Aide's Heart



Teacher Aide Sally Urban spends time each November to help put up a Veterans Wall at Spruce Elementary to honor veterans who are near and dear to students and staff. One of the photos on the wall is her son Timothy Serwinowski who was a Marine and a 2007 North Tonawanda High School graduate. He did not return from his tour of duty in Afghanistan and she discusses her loss with the students as she talks about the sacrifices that the military and their families make to protect our country.

"I originally took on the Wall at the Middle School with Art teacher Christina Davis," she says. "When I came to Spruce they asked if it was something I was interested in doing here with Rose Mullins since Joanne LeVan retired from teaching." Students and staff are asked to bring in a photo of any relative who served our country and the photos are placed on the back wall when you first enter the school. There were about 76 photos hanging on the wall by Veteran's Day. "It is very heartwarming to see all the photos that people have brought in."

Sally and her daughter also try to find other ways to pay tribute to Tim and other military personnel. They have gathered donations and filled 300 boxes for care packages to send to troops overseas. They started the effort to put up hometown hero banners through North Tonawanda's streets with names and photos of local active-duty service men and women. The veterans' families and friends purchase the banners. "We have seen similar banners in Spencerport and Brockport and considering the amount of people in North Tonawanda who have sacrificed and served we felt that they should really be recognized," said Sally. Tim's banner, along with the other banners, is located at the Farmer's Market on the corner of Robinson Street and Payne Avenue.

Principal Patti Adler points to the Ganson Street Boys, where 41 residents went to war in a one city block. "On this tiny road, those 41 residents went to World War II and fought for our country. Few people know that. I think it is amazing what Sally has done to make sure everyone is recognized for their contribution."

Boxes of Hope

Drake Elementary School students did their part by collecting for Boxes of Hope. Students and staff donated soup and crackers to be part of the yearly tradition which is a partnership between schools, local churches, civic organizations and businesses. Boxes of Hope is a great way to model for children effective ways to serve their NT neighbors who are in need during the holiday season.

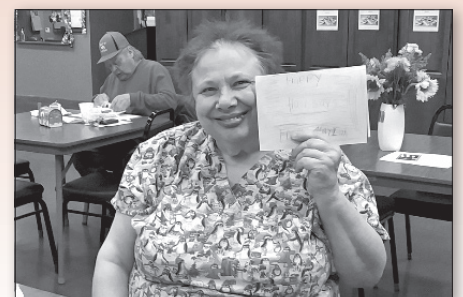


Ariella Incorvia, Avery Scott, Mrs. Lowry and Maddyn Knoell.

NTI Makes Holidays Bright for Senior Citizens

Members of NTI's Junior Jacks Spirit Club created holiday cards for our local seniors.

Residents of the North Tonawanda Senior Citizen Center were overjoyed with their hand-made cards created especially for them. Literacy Specialist Lauren Miranto says, "As a school spirit club, we spread cheer and promote kindness within our building all year. Our members decided that their December project would focus on spreading the same theme throughout our NT community. We look forward to many more community projects in the future."



North Tonawanda CSD Students Inducted into National Technical Honor Society

Congratulations to our North Tonawanda students: Michael Kindron, Allison Lang, Braeden O'Neill, Nolan Szczesniak and Andon Woodward, who attend programs at the Niagara Career and Technical Education Center. They were recently inducted into the National Technical Honor Society. Out of all the high school students in the United States, the National Technical Honor Society students who receive this honor comprise 1.6 percent of that population. For staff at the Orleans/BOCES center, they represent the four pillars of the National Technical Honor Society: scholarship, leadership, service and character.

Michael takes the Electricity/Electronics Program, Allison is in the Conservation Program, Braeden and Andon are in the HVAC/R program and Nolan takes the Diesel Technology/Heavy Equipment Program.

The students were honored in front of their teachers, families and school district representatives. The students had to maintain an 89.5 grade average in their career and technical education programs and an 84.5 average at their high schools, have superior attendance, exemplary behavior, be a member in good standing with SkillsUSA and have a recommendation from a faculty member.



(LtoR) Allison Lang, Braeden O'Neill, Nolan Szczesniak and Michael Kindron.

Social Work Intern Gives Back to Alma Mater



Leah Manth, Dasher with Preston Baughman and Darren Watson.

When Leah Manth decided to do her social work internship, she knew she wanted to go back to her alma mater, North Tonawanda City School District. Leah, a NT 2018 graduate, is in the Niagara University's Social Work program and is thrilled to be at Drake Elementary School working on her senior year field placement.

Leah brings with her a friend every Tuesday and Thursday when she heads to the classroom, her therapy dog, Dasher. "We love it," she says. "Dasher and I are very excited to come to work and really enjoy working with the students and staff."

Principal Janet Matyevich says that Leah and Dasher have made a huge impact. "They are just wonderful with our emotionally disabled students. Just seeing this beautiful golden lab makes the kids so happy. It seems when the students can spend a few moments with him, they calm right down and are able to return to class. It has been a real blessing."

Welcome Back Alumni!

The Career Center at the High School recently held their traditional Alumni Day. On December 23rd, teacher Brett Sommers hosted the event and asked the alumni to share their college and career experiences with current students.



NTI Students Selected for All-County Band



Eric Grinnell, Javier Ortiz, Jeanette Haley, Jacquelyn Benjamin and Janice Hanna.

Fifth and sixth grade Band Director Brandon Burgess is proud to announce that five of his NTI students have been selected for All-County Band. Congratulations go to Eric Grinnell (Trumpet), Javier Ortiz (Trumpet), Jeanette Haley (Flute), Jacquelyn Benjamin (Trombone) and Janice Hanna (Trombone).

“To get into All-County Band, students must prepare a solo from a specific list of solos set by the New York State School Music Association,” explains Mr. Burgess. “Along with the solo, students must play scales from memory and play a sight-reading example (music they’ve never seen before) while they’re in the room with a judge. The judge gives the students a score based on their performance, and the top scores of the day make it into the All-County Band. The students only had five weeks to prepare their solos this year, and they worked really hard to make it into the ensemble. These kids are just awesome!”

This year’s band consists of 47 of the top 4th-6th grade musicians from Niagara County, and we are happy to send our five NTI musicians to perform with the All-County Band in early March!

Drake Elementary Students Celebrate 12 Days of Kindness

Students were rewarded for their good deeds at Drake Elementary School during the month of December. For 12 days students had a different task assigned to them that expressed kindness. Teachers nominated students who they felt really went above and beyond and their names were drawn out of a hat by Principal Janet Matyevich to win prizes that she made.



Leland Lesika, Piper Smith, Lucas Kozlowski show off some artwork that expressed kindness.

Gifted and Talented Program

The new Gifted and Talented (GT) program, at North Tonawanda Intermediate, has begun and the students have been quite busy. They are having so much fun and are loving the challenge the GT program provides them.

Students in Mrs. Colletta’s Math groups are competing in the Continental Mathematics League, which is a national math competition. They have been learning strategies for complex problem-solving and are working both individually and collaboratively to practice those strategies. They have already completed two of their five meets and they are doing wonderfully. Now they are working on developing board games which incorporate the math and problem-solving skills they have learned.



Mrs. Colletta’s ELA (English Language Arts) groups just completed a writing unit. The students spent a good deal of time focused on creative writing. They learned about special techniques authors use to hook the reader and how to add detail and dialog to a story to bring characters to life. They studied foreshadowing and inferencing, and also did word studies to learn about new descriptive vocabulary.



Students practiced different divergent and convergent thinking strategies, as well as the four components of creative thinking (flexibility, fluency, originality, and elaboration). Then they used all their skills to complete a creative writing piece. They celebrated their hard work with a publishing party, where they were able to read the writing of other students and leave constructive feedback.

Reading Initiative Celebrates Reading at Middle School



The NTMS English Department, in conjunction with their reading specialists and the library media specialist, relaunched their reading celebration program in October.

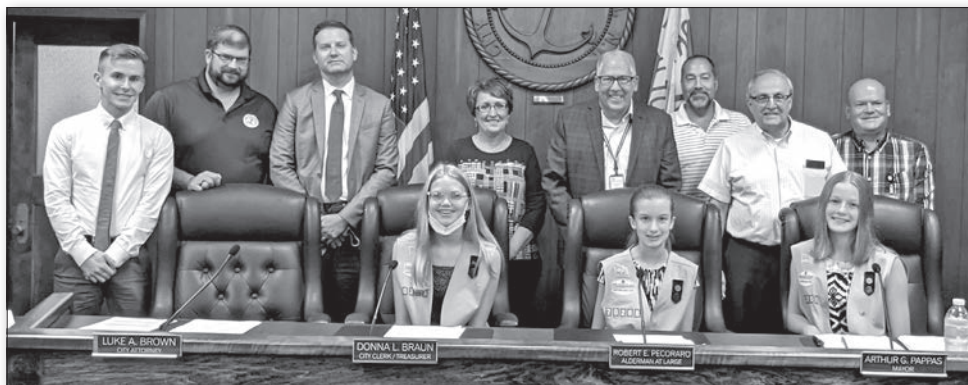
The theme of this school year's celebration is "Color Your World with Books". Students completed independent reading tasks during special DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) day schedules, in ELA classes, as well as other team classes each week.

The October kick-off was filled with activities including scary-story themed "book tasting" in the library and a "Flash Fiction Friday" on the announcements, both hosted by Mrs. Edholm. Throughout the month, students who were caught reading were rewarded with a tasty treat from the staff. However, the highlight of October was the reading competition between the grade-level teams and Principal Mr. Janese. Needless to say, Mr. Janese lost as NTMS students read over 80,000 pages collectively. The overall winning team, Team Aries, read almost 28,000 pages! The prize was awarded when Team Aries student, Ava Woods, pushed a pie in Mr. Janese's face in front of Team Aries the day before winter recess.

The celebration closed out 2021 with the Gift of Reading event. Led by NTMS faculty members Amy Fiegl and Sara Bonitati, students were invited to take home a free, new or gently used book for themselves, family, or friends. The books donated by NTMS staff and the Teacher's Desk totaled well over 1,000 choices, and students were elated to accept the gift and to pass it forward to others.

As the new year starts, the reading will continue with a scavenger hunt, "shelfie" opportunities in the library, where students take a selfie with their favorite books, and the completion of the "Color Your World with Books" wall.

NTMS Girl Scouts Earn Silver Award



The Girl Scouts recognized by the North Tonawanda Common Council.

Congratulations to eighth graders Meredith Roberts, Meredith Shaver and Nora Davidson who recently earned their Girl Scouts' Silver Award.

The North Tonawanda Middle School students completed an amazing environmental project that benefited our city and its water supply. The students worked with the City Engineer to learn about the sewer system. They found it interesting that combined sewers collect water that is sent down the drains at houses and water from rainstorms and snow melting. These sewers are in the older part of the City and this water goes to the wastewater treatment plant on River Road. The other part of the City has separate sanitary and storm sewers. In these areas the sanitary sewers go to the treatment plant, but the storm sewers do not. Water that goes into the catch basins will go directly to the river or creeks. The City Engineer gave them a map of the City's sewers to help figure out where the separate storm sewers are located and where they should put the medallions. Storm medallions help remind people not to dump anything other than water down the catch basins because it will pollute our waterways. They were also given a tour of the wastewater treatment plant with the Water and Wastewater Superintendent to learn about where the combined sewers go and how the water is cleaned before it is sent back to the river.



The students met every Sunday morning at 7:00 a.m. for four hours from June to August to work on their project. They installed 200 storm water medallions at catch basins throughout the city this summer. Storm drain medallions are installed on the top of the curb behind a catch basin. To install them, first they used a wire brush to clean the concrete curb. Next, they used a caulk gun to squeeze adhesive on to the back of a medallion. Then the medallion was glued to the top of the curb where it had been cleaned. They also picked up garbage, leaves, and weeds from the top of the catch basins they visited. They learned how important it is to keep the catch basins clean so that rainwater will drain during a storm.

To keep track of where all the storm drain medallions are located, they used an app on their phones called JotForm where they could fill out the address, GPS location, and take a picture of the medallion. They gave copies of the medallion table and each form they made to the City Engineer.

In addition to the environmental and community benefits, this work is also considered public involvement. That means the City of North Tonawanda will be able to take credit in their annual storm water report that will be submitted to the NYSDEC in May.

On Tuesday, September 14, 2021, they presented their project at the North Tonawanda Common Council Meeting, and they were thanked for their community service. Only about 10 percent of Girl Scouts nationwide receive the Silver Award.

Great job ladies! We are so proud of you and your efforts!



Meredith Roberts, Meredith Shaver and Nora Davidson hard at work.

Hot to Trot in Second Grade at Ohio!

The second grade students at Ohio participated in many multi subject activities throughout the month of November.

To kick start the season, students brainstormed some creative ideas using the mentor text, *Balloons over Broadway* written by Melissa Sweet, which showcases the life of Tony Sarg. Mr. Sarg was the puppeteer who invented the first balloons for the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. During this STEAM challenge, students used the engineering process to plan and create their very own balloon masterpiece to showcase as they paraded through the halls of Ohio.

As a grand finale to all the excitement, the team held the first annual Ohio Second Grade Turkey Trot at the NTI track with plenty of family fans to cheer us on.



Balloon art in Mrs. Carley Hromowyk's class.



Students racing for the finish line.



Turkey Trot



Turkey Trot

A Caroling We Will Go

Mrs. Simpson, Mrs. Anson, Mrs. Sanders and Mr. Genco's classes at NTI went caroling up and down Vanderbilt Drive before winter break.

Neighbors were greeted with smiling faces and caroling from our Junior Jacks. It was quite the cold day, so they all warmed up with hot chocolate and treats when they returned to school. It certainly got everyone into the holiday spirit!



High School Students Talk Careers with Guest Speakers

The Career Center at the High School recently had some special guest speakers.

Sports broadcaster Sal Capaccio, who is a Buffalo Bills sideline reporter at WGR550 Radio Sports Broadcasting, talked to students about his career. North Tonawanda Mayor, Austin Tylec, a graduate of NT High School talked with students about state and local government with our very own Government teacher Mr. Peter Fezer. Graduate Samantha Kennedy talked about her experience attending Tampa University to study Marine Biology.

Thank you so much to our guests who were willing to share their time and expertise!





NORTH TONAWANDA
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NTI Transforms into Art Gallery

Art teacher Melinda Wright highlighted her students' amazing work in the hallways, windows and display cases of the North Tonawanda Intermediate School.

Sixth graders had their cityscapes put on display. "The students researched and constructed watercolor cityscapes using foreground, middle ground and background compositional elements," Ms. Wright explains.

Insects were the theme for fifth graders who researched various creatures who have segmented bodies, jointed legs and exoskeletons. The students used several ceramic hand-building techniques to make their pieces.

"My fourth graders studied works by internationally renowned artist, illustrator and children's book author Hervé Tullet," says Ms. Wright. "Tullet recently completed an exhibit at the Albright Knox Northland campus and installed a mural along Main Street in the Medical campus." For the display, Tullet's books were featured on the second floor near the library. "Our fourth grade artists made Tullet inspired "glass" windows with POSCA paint marker pens that are on display in our library."

