



HAWK HAPPENINGS

HERMANTOWN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2022



SUPERINTENDENT UPDATE

Dear Students and Parents,

Last summer administrators went to a "Professional Learning Communities" (PLC) conference, followed up with staff training in the fall and put together a team of teachers as a guiding coalition. The idea of a PLC is to determine essential standards, create common assessments and use data to continually improve instruction. As we look at how we could do this most effectively, the group is considering school starting 10 minutes earlier four days per week and creating one 40 minute late start once per week beginning in 2023-24 to create a common time for collaboration. We believe this is an educational best practice, but we also are aware this could create issues for some families. There will be a number of informational meetings for parents in January to gather input before a proposal goes to the Board - so be watching for these dates.

With poor road conditions on Tuesday, we released Middle School and High School 10 minutes early to make sure that buses would be safe and make it back to the elementary school on time. Also related to safety, this week we practiced lock down drills in our buildings. Typically these happen three times per year.

Finally, I want to send a special thank you to Gary Kneisl and Dianne Mathews, who have served for four years and eight years, respectively, on our school board. Both made the choice to step down after successfully leading the district through some very challenging times. Their leadership, integrity and institutional knowledge will truly be missed. Both of these leaders always prioritized students and education at the heart of their decisions. The district is in a better place today because of the time they served.

Have a happy holiday season!



Wayne Whitwam

Wayne Whitwam
Superintendent



LUNCH MENU DECEMBER

Breakfast: \$1.80 | K: \$0
Elementary Lunch: \$2.75
MS/HS Lunch: \$2.90



2022-23 SCHOOL CALENDAR

The school calendar lists key dates throughout the district. Print for the fridge!



ATHLETICS & ACTIVITIES SCHEDULE

Stay up-to-date on your favorite Hawks teams in every season.



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Numerous positions are available for the 2022-23 school year. Apply today!



SCHOOL CLOSURES DUE TO WEATHER

Find information on procedures for school closure/delays due to weather



- If your family would like to be sponsored for the holiday season, please complete the [Holiday Request Form](#).
- If you would like to sponsor/adopt a family this holiday season, please complete the [Holiday Sponsor Form](#).
- If you have questions, please reach out to the school counselor in your student's building.

WELCOME TO THE BOARD

Hokanson, Munger, Peterson win in November election.



Tim Peterson



David Hokanson



Matt Munger

Hermantown Community Schools welcomes two new faces, and one returning one, to its Board of Education following the General Election in November. Matt Munger and David Hokanson will fill the two seats vacated by Dianne Mathews and Gary Kneisl, while incumbent Tim Peterson retained his seat on the Board. Munger, Hokanson and Peterson will begin their four-year terms in January and will take their Oath of Office at the Board meeting tentatively scheduled for Jan. 9.

REMINDER!

JAN. 2, 2023: NO SCHOOL | JAN. 23, 2023: SCHOOL DAY

Reminder of the change to the District calendar:

- [Monday, January 2, 2023 - NO SCHOOL](#)
- [Monday, January 23, 2023 - SCHOOL DAY](#)
- Link to updated calendar: <https://5il.co/11oem>



ACTIVITIES ROUNDUP

• **STATE-BOUND HAWKS**
Norah Gunderson and Ava Niksich represented Hermantown at the MSHSL Girl's Swimming and Diving State Tournament November 17-18 at the University of Minnesota. Gunderson competed in the 200 individual medley and the 100 breaststroke events, while Niksich competed in the 500 freestyle. // The Hermantown Bowling Team also qualified for its state tournament and will have a send off on Friday, December 2 at the Elementary School.

• **VOLLEYBALL ALL-STARS**
Three Hermantown volleyball players, **Elle Jokinen**, **Emilie Rish** and **Alyssa Yokom**, competed in the 2022 Essentia Health High School All-Star Volleyball Game on November 16.

• **SIGNING DAY**
Natalie Vitek signed a National Letter of Intent to compete for the Kirkwood Community College softball team. // **Liv Birkeland** signed a National Letter of Intent to compete for the Minnesota State University Moorhead track & field team.

• **FALL ALL-LAKE SUPERIOR CONFERENCE HONOREES**
Click the link for the full list of Hermantown's Fall All-Lake Superior Conference honorees: [Full Story](#).

• **WINTER SEASON PREVIEWS**
ICYMI - Howie Hanson previews the 2022-23 seasons with Hermantown [boys basketball](#), [girls basketball](#) and [boys hockey](#).



KEY DATES

- DECEMBER**
- 5 **NO SCHOOL (Grades K-4 ONLY)**
 - 5 MS/HS Band Concerts
 - 6 Elementary Conferences
 - 6 Elementary Book Fair Begins
 - 8 Elementary Conferences
 - 9 Elementary HAWKS T-Shirt Day
 - 12 MS/HS Choir Concerts
 - 12 School Board Meeting
 - 12 Elementary Book Fair Ends
 - 22 Elementary HAWKS T-Shirt Day
- 23-31 NO SCHOOL - Winter Break**
- JANUARY**
- 1-2 **NO SCHOOL - Winter Break**



LIFESTYLE

6 | TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2022 | DULUTH NEWS TRIBUNE



Kristal Berg, director of community education for Hermantown and Proctor public schools, cuts a blue ribbon to mark the completion of a wooden stage, the final piece added to the Hawks Nest playground next to the Hermantown Community Learning Center on Thursday while preschool students, Skyline Rotary volunteers and community members celebrate.

NEW PLAYGROUND opens in Hermantown

By Teri Cadeau
Duluth News Tribune

Hermantown's new playground, a small wooden accessible play stage with the last piece built by volunteers from the Skyline Rotary club is the final feature to be added to the new Hawks Nest playground next to the Hermantown Community Learning Center.

"For the last two years here we didn't have a playground and our kids were going into the forest or out onto the tennis courts to play," said Kristal Berg, director of community education at Hermantown and Proctor community education. "So this allows every student in our building to get outside and use their large motor skills and have some free imaginative play."

The Hermantown Community Learning Center was built in 2019 and hosts early childhood family education classes, a couple of preschool classes and a partnership with Head Start. The playground was designed by Trish Crego, a landscape architect with JPI Engineering. She also teaches a community education class inside the building which is how she noticed the playground area could use a little help.

"The building was already here for some natural play," Crego said. "So I wanted to do something that was halfway between nature play and a playground. We have a lot of features that can be moved due to snow removal and we have a lot of features that are accessible."

Crego said she also focused on getting the playground towards use for younger students. Just down the hill from the playground is the elementary school playground which she said is geared for students between the

A recently added climbing wallside provided the inspiration for the name of the new playground—the Hawks Nest. The playground is used by preschool and Headstart students at the Hermantown Community Learning Center during the school day and is open for community use outside of school hours.

HAWKS NEST PLAYGROUND

Hermantown Community Schools hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony for the newly completed Hermantown Community Learning Center (HCLC) playground in early November (pictured page 1).

The HCLC provides a school readiness program for children ages 3-5 where outdoor education plays a significant role in the children's education. JPI Engineering worked with the Proctor Hermantown Community Education staff to design an innovative playground to augment the outdoor education program. The recently completed playground called the "Hawks Nest" includes both play and learning features from both the natural and built environment.

A major feature of the playground is the stage and shelter which was a collaborative effort between the school district and the local Skyline Rotary Club, in which the Skyline Club constructed the building.

Along with being a significant asset to the school readiness program, the Hawks Nest is also open for public use outside of school readiness hours.

News Features: [Full Story](#) // [FOX21](#) // [Duluth News Tribune](#) // [MIX108](#)

FACILITIES UPDATE

The community has voted for the increased sales tax for improvements to Fichtner Field, a trail system and for a new sheet of ice. Ideally the City of Hermantown would like to attach this sheet of ice to the existing arena. West of the current school arena, the ground was filled in at one time, so it will require more soil mitigation for a future arena to be built on that ground. Due to these additional costs, we have been in discussion about the possibility of the City building to the East, on the corner of Ugstad and West Arrowhead. Currently this is where our district office is located. This district office (prior meat locker) has been an administrative building for the last 54 years. Our strategic plan included planning and saving for a new

district office in 2025. The City Council is voting for the school to acquire land where the blue garages are located next to the Essentia Wellness Center in order for us to relocate our district office across the road. The School board is supportive of the idea and would like for this to all work out, but we are also non-committal to relocating until we know the exact cost of a new district office.

HERMANTOWN HIGH SCHOOL

HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE

'TIS THE SEASON OF GIVING
DECEMBER 2022

GRADE-LEVEL COMPETITION
DONATIONS FOR SECOND HARVEST
NORTHERN LAKES FOOD BANK

EARLY CHILDHOOD SCREENING

WHO: 3-5 year olds

WHEN: Friday, January 13

TIME: By Appointment

WHERE: [HCLC](#)

SCHEDULE: [ph.ce.eleyo.com](#)

ELEMENTARY CONFERENCES

WHEN: December 6 & 8

TIME: 4:00 - 7:30pm

SIGN UP: [signupgenius.com](#)

Contact your child's teacher for an invitation

MS/HS BAND CONCERTS

WHEN: December 5

WHERE: HS Auditorium

MIDDLE SCHOOL: 5:30pm

HIGH SCHOOL: 7:00pm

MS/HS CHOIR CONCERTS

WHEN: December 12

WHERE: HS Auditorium

MIDDLE SCHOOL: 1:30pm

HIGH SCHOOL: 7:00pm

Get into the holiday spirit!

SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR

ELEMENTARY BOOK FAIR
JANUARY 6-12