



The Viking Voice

Monthly

December 2023



Our Sawtooth students are excited to see the production of *Twas The Night Before Christmas* tomorrow afternoon in the ACA. We actually have a number of Sawtooth students in the production, so we are looking forward to not only seeing a live theater performance but also seeing our own Sawtooth students perform as well!

Our 6th grade students had a visit from the Mayor of Grand Marais, Tracy Benson, last week. They were able to interview her and learn about her role in local government. The main purpose of this visit was to kick off the "Mayor for a Day" essay writing competition they are participating in. The contest is put on by the League of Minnesota Cities and the students who submit their essays are competing with other students across the state for \$100 and recognition in Minnesota Cities magazine. This experience also tied into their trip last week in which they were able to visit the State Capitol building in St. Paul. Our 6th graders reported to school at 4:30 am to get on the bus and ride to Saint Paul. Through their tour of the building and art, students were able to learn a lot about Minnesota history and culture. After their morning visit they headed across the river to Minneapolis to take in a live production of *A Christmas Carol* at the Guthrie Theatre. All of the experiences happening in 6th grade are great examples of collaboration and work across curriculum areas between the social studies and English classes.

This Friday we have a number of high school students participating in the first World Culture Day in Two Harbors. This is an event put on by the Two Harbors High School World Culture Club. Students will be able to attend sessions on a variety of topics discussing cultures that may be different from their own. These sessions will be led by speakers that include former Peace Corps volunteers to college faculty members and will even include sessions centered around travel and learning opportunities for teenagers. Funding for both the 6th grade trip to the metro and the senior high trip to Two Harbors came from the Cook County School District 166 Education Foundation. We are very grateful and lucky to have support for such positive and authentic learning experiences.

Finally, please remember to send your children to school dressed for the weather. Students go outside in cold weather for both class and recess opportunities. It is important that they are coming to school prepared for the weather that day. Even if your child is a student that does not have recess, please help make sure they are coming to school dressed for the weather. If you have difficulty in providing the appropriate level of cold weather gear and clothing, please let the school know so we can help.

All the Best,
Principal Josh Belanger



**Don't miss our
Winter Band
Concert!**

**December 14th in
the ACA**

**6th & 7th Grades
7pm**

**8th-12th Grades
8pm**



Winter Weather Decisions from Superintendent Chris Lindholm:

As we flip calendars to the month of December, it's time to review how decisions about delaying or cancelling school due to the weather are made and communicated. When the forecast indicates that a storm is approaching, the Superintendent and the District Transportation Specialist closely monitor the information published by the National Weather Service in Duluth and communicate with them as needed to make the best decisions possible with the information that is available. While we always want to have school run normally if it's possible, we also must ensure the safety of students.

If a school delay or closure decision must be made in the morning, we will drive area roads starting at 4:00am and be in communication with the Cook County Highway Department. Cook County is a very large, geographically diverse area with significant differences in weather due to distance, elevation, and the Big Lake. The decision to delay or close school will be made between 5:00am and 5:30am to begin the communication process.

Decisions about weather cancellations will be communicated via the following: the district automated phone calling & email system, the district website ([cookcountyschools.org](https://www.cookcountyschools.org)), WTIP, WDIO, WCCO, KBJR6, KQDS, and Boreal. Please check these communication venues instead of calling the school as no one will be in the office to answer the phones.

In the event that the decision is to run an E-Learning Day (students learn from home) instead of a simple closure, the decision will be made the day before and communicated to families proactively. Devices and learning materials will be sent home with students the day before the E-Learning Day.

Parents always have the right/ability to keep students home for their safety when the weather makes travel dangerous. If you choose to keep your student(s) home -or if you choose to drive your student to school instead of having them ride the bus- please contact the school office in the morning so the bus driver can be notified proactively. Thank you to the many Cook County families that communicate so closely with the school office to help us keep our students safe and accounted for!!!



Facilities & Grounds Improvements Planning Update:

Thank you to the many community members, students, and staff members who participated in the October and November listening sessions regarding Cook County Schools facilities and grounds!! ICS has now completed and reported to the school board a demographics & enrollment projections study, a comprehensive facility study, an educational adequacy assessment, and a report on the input collected from both internal and external stakeholders. The school board will now consider the best options for addressing the identified needs and priorities and weigh options for moving forward.

ICS facilitated ten input sessions with a wide range of stakeholders and identified the needs and priorities that were repeated with frequency during those sessions. Those priorities include:

Top Facility Issues From ALL Listening Session:

INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS		EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS
Commons/multi-purpose space	↔	Commons/breakout space
Multi-purpose/flex space	↔	Multi-purpose space
Updated security inside and outside	↔	Better security systems/common door locks/doors ajar
Bathrooms and gender neutral	↔	Bathroom updates
Larger fitness center	↔	Larger weight room
More gym space for all programs	↔	Additional gym space
Small meeting spaces	↔	Flex space for Elem and HS
Track	↔	Track
HVAC updates in the building	↔	HVAC improvements
Storage for building and athletics	↔	Enclosed outdoor storage for sports equipment
More student parking		Outdoor learning spaces
More classroom space at HS		Alternative learning space

25

During the “educational adequacy” study, ICS evaluated every space in the schools for compliance with school district facilities and grounds guidelines published by the MN Department of Education. In the image below, areas shown in green are in compliance, areas shown in red and not in compliance, and areas shown in yellow are partially in compliance.

If the district decides to move forward with developing ideas and options to address the identified needs and priorities, more feedback opportunities will be scheduled in the early months of 2024. If it is necessary to ask the public to approve a bond referendum to address some or all of the identified priorities, the school board will need to make that decision by May to include it in the November, 2024 general election.

Links to the complete slide decks for the four reports can be found in the school board meeting agendas for October 26th, November, 2nd, and November 16th at















<https://www.cookcountyschools.org/page/school-board>

Thank you again to everyone that has provided input!

Final Educational Adequacy Results

CATEGORY	Cook County Schools	
	Elem	HS
1 Classroom Size and Suitability	G	R
2 Cafeteria/Kitchen/Serving	Y	Y
3 Security and Supervision	Y	Y
4 Main Office/Nurse/Support Services	Y	Y
5 Science Classrooms/Labs	NA	G
6 Art Classrooms/Labs	NA	Y
7 Music Classrooms/Practice Areas/Etc.	Y	Y
8 Staff Lounge/Collaborative Planning Areas	Y	R
9 Student Commons/Break-Out Areas	R	R
10 Physical Education/Athletics/Locker Rooms Etc.	R	Y
11 Site Suitability: Fields/Green Space/Storage Etc.	G	R
12 Parking/Bus Drop-Off: Staff/Students/Parents	G	G
13 Technology	G	G
14 Library/Media Center	G	G
15 Special Education/Support Services	G	G
16 Auditoriums/Performing Arts Spaces	NA	G
17 Career and Technical Education	NA	G
18 Hallways/Lockers/Washrooms/Maintenance space	G	Y

December: A month to Celebrate and be GENEROUS

<p>4 Look ahead to the 12 days of Dress Up.</p> <p>Think about how you can show Generosity this month.</p>	<p>5 <u>12 Days of Dress Up Begins!</u> Wear red and green.</p>  <p>Color a picture for someone.</p>	<p>6 Mad about Plaid: Wear your favorite plaid/flannel</p>  <p>Share a compliment with someone.</p>	<p>7 Winter Wonderland: Wear blue and white today.</p>  <p>Share a hug with someone you care about.</p>	<p>1 <u>Generosity Kickoff:</u> Viking Pride Assembly - Wear Blue!</p> 
<p>11 Feelin' Frosty: Dress like a snowman.</p> <p>Be generous with your time by helping someone in need.</p> 	<p>12 Whoville Day: Dress like the Grinch or a citizen of Whoville.</p>  <p>Share a funny joke with a friend. Q: Why doesn't the Grinch like knock knock jokes? A: Because there's always Who's there!</p>	<p>13 Sweater Weather: Wear an Ugly Festive Sweater/Shirt</p>  <p>Be generous with compliments today!</p>	<p>14 Rockin' in your Socks! Wear Fun Holiday Socks!</p>  <p>Smile at everyone you see today.</p>	<p>8 Buddy Day: Wear your best Elf outfit.</p>  <p>Give a kind note to a new friend.</p>
<p>18 Candy Cane Day: Wear Red and White!</p> <p>Make and give a card to someone.</p> 	<p>19 Festive is always in style: Dress in your most holiday festive look.</p>  <p>Give the gift of joy!</p>	<p>20 'Twas the Night Before the Holiday Break: Wear your favorite pajamas!</p>  <p>Share a huge thank you to your teachers and school staff!</p>	<p>15 Holiday Hair: Wear a festive hat or hair accessory.</p>  <p>Hold the door for someone.</p>	<p>15 Holiday Hair: Wear a festive hat or hair accessory.</p>  <p>Hold the door for someone.</p>
<p>Vacation. Back to School on January 2nd!</p>				

Brought to you by our Cook County Schools PBIS Committee



Sawtooth Mountain Elementary News

Cook County Schools performed a ceremony to honor veterans on November 10, 2023. Sawtooth Mountain Elementary 2nd and 3rd graders joined the Cook County Schools choir singing several songs led by Mrs. Cindy Johnson. The singers were accompanied by members of the Cook County Schools band and local community led by Mr. Ray

Johanneck. The Color Guard was lead by Commander Bob Mattson and this year's keynote speaker was Officer Ty Backlund. The ceremony was attended by many local veterans, the entire student body and school staff.

Thank you veterans!





Cook County Middle School News



The 6th Grade class is learning all about local and state government! On November 28th they had a classwide discussion with Mayor Tracy Benson and on November 30th the class took a trip to the State Capital in St. Paul and saw **A Christmas Carol** at the Guthrie Theater.



One Act competition piece auditions!

Dec. 4 at 6:30 PM

@ the Arrowhead Center for the Arts

Queens

by Kristin Doherty

Roles for 9+ actors

OPEN TO MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL ACTORS

Mondays and Wednesdays in December

Monday - Thursday in January

Rehearsals evenings 6:30 - 8PM

or after school (depending on cast)

Contest on Friday, January 27

DIRECTED BY SUE HENNESSY

(play selection subject to change)





Cook County High School News



On November 1st, Kristin Lindholm's CITS WRIT 1120 class traveled to UMD to learn about using the library database system. Students will be using this system to find sources for a research paper they will be writing this semester.



Congrats to the newest inductees of the National Honor Society: Kyla Knapper, Jordan Backstrom, Grace Blomberg, Knut Remmem, and Lexi Surbaugh. These five students join seven other students as members of the Shingobee chapter of the National Honor Society. Current chapter officers are: Kalina Dimitrova, President; Raymond Dressley, Vice President; Wren Ferry, Secretary; and Amery Oberg, Treasurer. NHS members also volunteered in November for the annual Empty Bowls event raising money for hunger in Cook County.



Juniors and seniors in Mrs. Beal's English class have been working to answer the question, "Who am I, and how do I represent myself?" As they begin their memoir units, students crafted their own memoirs--but in only six words! They're on display outside room 106.

In Ms. Mila's art class, High School students created Henri Matisse inspired still life using oil pastels.



Mr. McHugh's 9th Grade English class spent their class time reading to elementary students.



Community Events

ISD#166 ECFE

presents...



Merry Grinchmas

Get your picture taken with
"The Grinch", make a cute
holiday craft and decorate
a cookie!

**Where: Grand Marais
Community Center**

**When: December 11th
5:00-5:45pm**

FREE! FREE! FREE! FREE!!
ECFE is for ages 0-4, but all
older siblings are welcome
to join in the fun!

The logo for Grand Marais Playhouse, featuring a reindeer and the word "playhouse" in a stylized font.

**Twas the Night
Before
Christmas**

December 1-3 & 8-10
Fri. - Sat. 7 PM
Sun. 2 PM

Arrowhead Center for the Arts
grandmaraisplayhouse.com

The logo for the 2X2 Volleyball League, featuring a volleyball player in a red jersey and blue shorts.

**2X2
VOLLEYBALL
LEAGUE**

Teams of two should register. If you don't have a team, no problem you can be a sub! Registration required, 6 week pool play 7th week tournament.

Who: 7-12 Graders

**When: Tuesdays, starting January 2nd
5:30-7:30pm**

Where: Cook County High School Gym

Fee: \$20

**Register Online: cookcountyschools.org
click on Community Education**

Calendar December 2023

Friday, December 1st
Boys Basketball @ South Ridge
'Twas the night before Christmas Play, ACA, 7pm

Saturday, December 2nd
'Twas the night before Christmas Play, ACA, 7pm

Sunday, December 3rd
'Twas the night before Christmas Play, ACA, 2pm

Monday, December 4th
Boys Basketball @ Carlton-Wrenshall

Friday, December 8th
Boys Basketball @ Floodwood
Mid-Term
'Twas the night before Christmas Play, ACA, 7pm
World Culture Day Field Trip

Saturday, December 9th
'Twas the night before Christmas Play, ACA, 7pm

Sunday, December 10th
'Twas the night before Christmas Play, ACA, 2pm

Tuesday, December 12th
Nordic Ski @ Proctor

Thursday, December 14th
Winter Band Concert in ACA, 7-9pm

Friday, December 15th
Alpine Ski @ Lutsen, 10:00 am
Boys Basketball Home vs. Cromwell-Wright, 6:30pm

Tuesday, December 19th
Boys Basketball Home vs. Ely, 6:30pm
Nordic Ski @ Grand Rapids

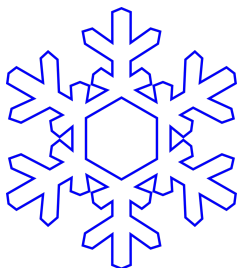
Thursday, December 21st - Monday, January 1st
Winter Break NO SCHOOL

Thursday, December 21st
Alpine Ski @ Giants Ridge

Friday, December 22nd
Alpine Ski @ Giants Ridge

Wednesday, December 27th
Boys Basketball @ Ely

Thursday, December 28th
Boys Basketball @ Ely



Calendar January 2023

Monday, January 1st
NO SCHOOL

Tuesday, January 2nd
Boys Basketball @ Two Harbors
Nordic Ski @ Cloquet

Friday, January 4th
Girls Basketball JV @ Silver Bay

Saturday, January 6th
Nordic Ski @ Grand Rapids

Tuesday, January 9th
Alpine Ski @ Spirit Mountain

Thursday, January 11th
Nordic Ski @ Two Harbors

Friday, January 12th
Boys Basketball @ McGregor
Girls Basketball JV @ McGregor

Saturday, January 13th
Alpine Ski @ Giants Ridge
Boys Basketball @ Hill City

Monday, January 15th
Alpine Ski @ Mont Du Lac

Tuesday, January 16th
Nordic Ski Home: Pincushion, 11:00 am

Friday, January 19th
Alpine Ski @ Mont Du Lac
Boys Basketball Home vs. South Ridge, 6:30pm

Saturday, January 20th
Nordic Ski @ Duluth Marshall

Tuesday, January 23rd
Boys Basketball @ Mesabi East

Thursday, January 25th
Alpine Ski @ Giants Ridge

Friday, January 26th
Boys Basketball Home vs. Floodwood, 6:30 pm

Saturday, January 27th
Nordic Ski @ Ely



December 2023 Menus

ISD 166 2023 DECEMBER MENU

Breakfast is a choice of: Breakfast Sandwich, Muffin, Cereal, PBJ, Yogurt, Cheese Stick, Fruit or Juice, Milk
Daily choice of Soup and Sandwich or Salad bar

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
4 Pulled Pork Fries Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk	5 Nachos Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk	6 Orange Chicken on Rice Roasted Broccoli Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk	7 Corn Dogs Tator Tots Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk	1 Pizza Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk
11 Cheeseburger Fries Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk	12 Burrito Bowl Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk	13 Penne Pasta in Meat Sauce Bread Stick Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk	14 Cheese Bread With Marinara Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk	8 Chicken Nuggets Baked Beans Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk
18 Chicken burger Fries Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk	19 Pancakes, Sausage, Hash browns Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk	20 Chicken Alfredo on Penne Pasta Roasted Broccoli Breadsticks Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk	21 NO SCHOOL	15 Hot Dogs Baked Beans Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk
25 NO SCHOOL	26 NO SCHOOL	27 NO SCHOOL	28 NO SCHOOL	22 NO SCHOOL
				29 NO SCHOOL

Menu Subject to Change

THIS INSTITUTION IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER

December 2023 Menus

ISD 166 2023 December Alternate Menu

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
				1 Chicken Nuggets Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk
4 Corn Dogs Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk	5 Quesadillas Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk	6 Chicken Tenders Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk	7 Pizza Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk	8 Cheese Bread Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk
11 Corn Dogs Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk	12 Quesadillas Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk	13 Cheese Burger Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk	14 Pizza Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk	15 Chicken Nuggets Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk
18 Corn Dogs Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk	19 Quesadillas Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk	20 Chicken Burger Fruit and Veggie Bar Milk	21 NO SCHOOL	22 NO SCHOOL
25 NO SCHOOL	26 NO SCHOOL	27 NO SCHOOL	28 NO SCHOOL	29 NO SCHOOL

Menu Subject to Change

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