



# ELK RAPIDS SCHOOLS

*Where EXCELLENCE is a tradition!*

DISTRICT NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2021

## Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year!

This newsletter is the first of three editions that will be distributed throughout the school year to our Elk Rapids Schools families and community members. Successful school districts are rooted in strong community-school relationships, and Elk Rapids Schools values the communities that make up the school district. The primary goal of the newsletter is to open a line of communication that reaches all stakeholders of Elk Rapids Schools. Great things happen each school year. We want our communities to share in the celebration of our schools, students, and staff.

Nine months ago, voters approved a \$50 million bond to upgrade school facilities. Updates on the progress of the bond work will be shared in each publication. The work in the first bond series includes the construction of the high school performance gymnasium, relocation of the high school administrative offices, and the demolition and reconstruction of Cherryland Middle School. Over the past seven months, various stakeholder groups have worked with architects and construction managers to create, and edit, various design schemes. Drafts of the most recent design work are included in later pages of the newsletter. More recent bond work includes the drafting of mechanical systems, electrical runs,



Elk Rapids Schools thanking voters for passing the bond issue. Courtesy photo

and tracking of budgets. With the volatile status of the construction industry, budget work has proven to be challenging. Bids for phase one of construction will be posted late fall, and construction will begin in the spring of 2022. Look for more updates during the year!

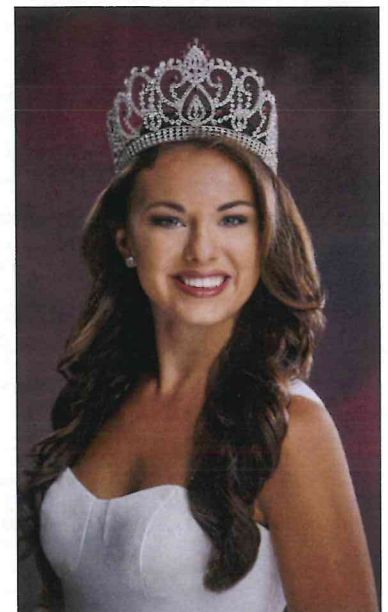
We look forward to reconnecting with our families and community members this fall. Board of Education meetings are held on the first and third Monday of each month. The meetings are open to the public and will be streamed on-line for viewing from virtually anywhere. Fall athletics begin with boys soccer on August 20th, and boys tennis, volleyball, and football games beginning the following week. Come out and support your Elks athletics! The first day of school is a half day for students on September 7th. Be sure to mark Homecoming on your calendars - September 17!

## Alumni Spotlight

### Alexis Graziano

"The 2021 National Cherry Queen is (Elk Rapids Schools Alumna) Alexis 'Allie' Graziano!" The 2016 graduate of Elk Rapids High School shares that, since being the 2004 National Cherry princess for Mill Creek Elementary, she dreamed of being queen. "My goals as the National Cherry Queen include building on the legacies and traditions established by former queens, inspire others to never give up on their dreams, and be the microphone for area farmers and the cherry industry."

Alumni Spotlight continued on back page



Allie Graziano, 2021 National Cherry Queen. Courtesy photo



## District Update

with Superintendent Julie Brown



Summertime in Northern Michigan is spectacular! This summer, with the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in the recent past, was, perhaps, especially appreciated. Each day I was able to spend time with family and friends and travel around our beautiful state, I found myself smiling just a little bigger. With August here, I find myself extremely anxious to begin the 2021-2022 school year and welcome our families, students, staff and community members back to our schools!

Unique to this summer, the district ran an eight-week summer school program for students in kindergarten through eighth grades. Along with academic programming, meals and transportation to and from summer school was provided. About 125 students participated. The goal of the extended summer program was to not only support improved student learning, but it was also to provide students and families with stability and social/emotional support much needed after the pandemic school year. Thank you is not enough to recognize our administrative team, teachers, and support staff who gave their time and support to our students!

The 2021-2022 school year is shaping up to be a much more "normal" school year! Our athletic teams begin practices, and in some cases games, in mid-August. The annual Homecoming football game is slated for Friday, September 17 against Charlevoix. While COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted, we continue partnering with the local health departments to monitor case rates and stay current on safety and mitigation strategies for schools.

As a reminder, in November of 2020, voters approved a two phase bond for Elk Rapids Schools facility upgrades. Phase one bonds were sold in the winter of 2021, and, due to the low interest rates, there was a \$6 million dollar savings for voters! Phase one of the bond includes the demolition and reconstruction of Cherryland Middle School, construction of the Elk Rapids High School performance gymnasium, and relocation of the ERHS administrative offices. Design work for phase one is nearing completion. We anticipate construction bid packages being posted in the late fall, and construction will begin in the spring of 2022. Plans for phase two of the bond work will be shared when we have a better handle of timelines.

We wish all of our staff, families and community members a very fun last few weeks of summer! Nothing beats Northern Michigan's final weeks of August!



## Elk Rapids High School & Sunrise High School Update

With the start of school just around the corner, let us take a moment to recap the 2020-2021 school year and celebrate our ability to work together through the pandemic challenges. Students, staff, and families employed new technologies and established new ways to learn, teach, meet, collaborate, and conduct business. Although we lost some things this past year, as we look forward to a new year, we will have opportunities to leverage the technical skills we gained and employ the strengthened relational skills of patience, flexibility, and kindness.

There are many things to be proud of this year, but here are a few noteworthy things that our students accomplished that will serve as launching points for future growth and success:

- Junior student, Emma Macaluso was elected as the Youth Governor for the 2022 Michigan Youth In Government (MYIG) Conference to be held in Lansing.
- The Academic World Quest (AWQ) Teams took first (Girls' Team; Caroline Ducharme, Emma Macaluso, Amelia Beatty and Mallory Potter) and third (Boys' Team; Matthew Brown, Josh Doctor, Ethen Huhn, and Harper Daigh) at the regional competition and qualified for the National Competition where the Girls' Team placed 13th out of 105 teams.
- AP Computer Science students, Shane Pilate, Brett Brunner, Gabby Krakow and Josh Doctor won the Michigan 1st District 2020 Congressional App Challenge with their application Space Hop.
- Senior, Sydney Standerfer won 2nd place in the Traverse City Economics Club essay contest.
- With direction and assistance from Rob Stow, Blair Misico, and Erica Daly, the ERHS Drama Students successfully filmed the first-ever movie musical production (Into the Woods) at ERHS.
- Junior Stock Market student, Jillian Acker won the Invest-Write National Essay Competition for the State of Michigan.
- All Sunrise Academy seniors earned high school diplomas.

The Student Welcome Back Letter will be distributed by email and postal mail in mid-August and will contain all the essential information needed to start the 2021-2022 school year. Student schedules will also be available at that time as well. For help with enrollment or general questions, please contact Office Administrative Assistant, Lacey Straight, at [lsstraight@erschools.com](mailto:lsstraight@erschools.com). For questions or assistance with student schedules, please contact Guidance Counselor, Samantha Bueby, at [sbueby@erschools.com](mailto:sbueby@erschools.com).

It is always a great day to be an Elk, and 2021-2022 will no doubt be a great year to be an Elk!

Elk Rapids High School Administration and Staff



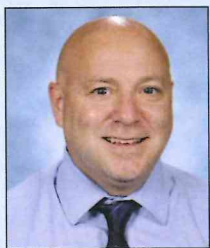
## Cherryland Middle School Update with Principal Josh Haggerty



We are so excited to be welcoming back students to Cherryland Middle School in September! While it is hard to beat the amazing summers we enjoy in Northern Michigan with family, friends, and fun-filled activities, we are looking forward to bringing energy back to our school. This summer our teachers have been working to prepare for a great 2021-22 school year. We are looking forward to continuing our partnership with the Positivity Project, our grade level trip experiences, and seeing our students grow academically, emotionally, and socially. The partnership with the Positivity Project allows our students and staff to explore the 24 character strengths and the Other People Matter Mindset each week. The goal of P2 is to help students to build strong relationships not only within the school but in the community as well. As has been our tradition for many years, we take great pride in bringing learning experiences beyond the classroom walls. This fall we will be taking trips to Maple Bay, Maplehurst, and Elk River. In the winter and spring, we will continue our trips to Camp LOC and Mackinac Island. As always, none of these experiences in the classroom or beyond would be possible without our amazing teachers and staff. We are looking forward to seeing everyone back at Cherryland Middle School soon!

*Mr. Haggerty, Principal*

## Mill Creek Elementary Update with Principal Brett Graham



We are excited about the upcoming 2021-22 school year, and the staff is working hard to have the school in superb shape when students arrive. Many of our teachers took part in professional learning as we continue to grow as educators. In addition, Mill Creek hosted the first four weeks of summer school, Summer Kids' Club, and the Migrant Program. It has been a busy and productive summer, and we can not wait to get the school year started and have the students back in the building. It is always a great day to be an Elk! If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Brett Graham at 231-267-9955 or [bgraham@erschools.com](mailto:bgraham@erschools.com). Please see below for important dates:

**Summer Hours:** Staff will be checking messages weekly. There is also a drop box where parents can drop off and/or pick up information.

**Normal Office Hours:** Begin on Tuesday, August 24th from 8:30am to 4:00pm

**Welcome Back Letters:** Teachers will mail out on Monday, August 30th.

**Open House:** Thursday, September 2nd.

**First ½ Day of School:** Tuesday, September 7th: 8:45am to 12:10pm.

**First Full Day:** Wednesday, September 8th: 8:45am to 3:48pm.

## Lakeland Elementary Update with Principal Bryan McKenna



Greetings from Lakeland Elementary School! We hope this summer update finds you well and enjoying another beautiful summer in the Elk Rapids region! Our elementary summer school program has been in full swing since June 14 with over 80 students enrolled. Our summer Kids Club child-care program has been operating since June 21st. In addition to our student activities, our staff has taken part in the first phase of high quality reading instruction professional learning, and our maintenance/custodial team has been busy deep cleaning and organizing our building for the 2021-22 school year. Below is a list of important dates and reminders for the start of the new school year. Please don't hesitate to contact Lakeland Elementary at 231-265-8289 or Principal Bryan McKenna at [bmckenna@erschools.com](mailto:bmckenna@erschools.com) with questions.

**Summer Office Hours:** Wednesdays from 9:00am-noon

**Normal Office Hours:** Begin on Tuesday, August 24th, 8:30am-4:30pm

**Welcome Back Letters Mailed by Teachers:** Monday, August 30th

**Welcome Back Meeting for Parents/Students:**  
Thursday, September 2nd (at this time we are planning to be onsite!)

**First ½ Day of School:** Tuesday, September 7th: 8:45am-12:10pm

**First Full Day of School:** Wednesday, September 8th: 8:45am-3:48pm

## Early Childhood Update with Joann Miracle



Elk Rapids Schools offers tuition-based, year round programming for children ages 3-12 years old. Our school year programs include preschool programming for three and four year olds and before/after school "Kids Club" at Mill Creek and Lakeland Elementary.

The pre-school classrooms provide play-based learning and teaching to the whole child while allowing the children's interests to help guide their learning.

The before/after school "Kids Club" program for preschool-5th grade students at each elementary provides working parents an extended care option to the child's school day. Kids Club runs with the district's school year schedule.

In November 2020, "Kids Club" continued care when schools went on a three-week pause to help working families provide a place for their children during the day. "Extended Day Kids Club" assisted each child enrolled to get school work help, guidance on their daily activities and also gave families the security to connect with their teachers virtually with no worries of internet issues.

Lastly, the district offers tuition-based care for school aged, in and out of district families, during the summer months. This program operates five (5) days a week, operating 7:00 am - 6:00 pm daily. "Summer Kids Club" provides opportunities for field trips, participation in the ER District Library Summer reading program and lots of fun activities weekly.



# ELK RAPIDS SCHO



Perspective Performance Gymnasium entry

There are several phases in the design process. "Programming" involves meeting with stakeholders and staff to define project goals. Schematic design concepts, identifies building systems, and provides document scope and goals sufficient for cost estimates. Design Development evaluates the design and provides final refinement, and m



Proposed floor plan for ERHS performance gymnasium.

We are currently in Design Development to align the design and construction with the Owen Ames Kimball when the Construction Manager. Our next step is to prepare the Request for Proposal Documents where we will include all the information needed for the construction package and High School renovation the Spring

Proposed entrance to ERHS performance gymnasium



ERHS Administrative entrance





# DLS BOND UPDATE

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School additions and  
s are slated to begin in  
of 2022.



CMS main entrance view from Third Street



Proposed floor  
plan for  
Cherryland  
Middle School

Proposed entrance to CMS



Aerial rendering of Cherryland Middle School Plans





# ELK RAPIDS SCHOOLS BOND UPDATE

## Guiding Principles of Elk Rapids Schools Bond work

Guiding Principles are statements that transform insights about the organization into actionable design directions. They are the first test to validate decisions made by the design team during the project development.

1. Design a safe and empowering environment for all: Spaces should be designed to be inclusive of ALL students.
2. Generate Excitement: Create spaces students and staff look forward to learning and teaching in.
3. Foster Collaboration: Spaces should be designed to promote effortless collaboration among students and staff.
4. Promote Independent Learning: Create space that provides students the opportunity to learn in a way that meets their individual needs.
5. Showcase Excellence in Athletics and Education: Transparency, Pride, Welcoming.
6. Engage the Community: Responsible, longevity, small town, architecture that reflects community.



Perspective Cherryland Middle School Main Corridor History Gallery



Proposed Cherryland Middle School Media Center



## Food Service with Rob Payne

What a great 2020-21 school year that food service had! While the pandemic changes were trying at times, there were many positives. Last year, under the USDA's Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), all students, kindergarten through 12th grade, received free breakfast and lunch. We served over 157,000 meals to students!

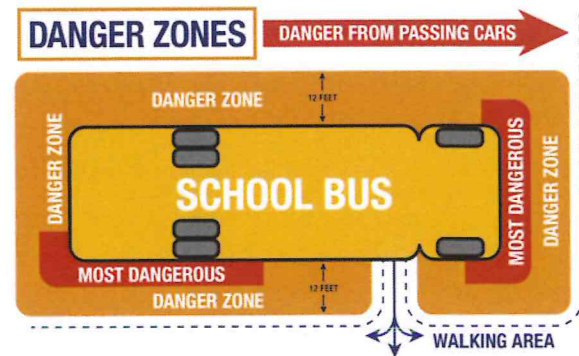
The biggest challenge we have is serving food to students that they want combined with what they need. The requirements school food service must follow can be challenging. In our efforts to improve the quality of the meals we serve, we have incorporated more made-from-scratch items. Some of the items we served last year were meatloaf, fresh salads, pizza, yogurt parfaits, and special holiday meals. We also have made a commitment to serving Michigan grown produce and vegetables. Some of the Michigan made items we serve include preserves for the peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, carrots, green beans, peaches, apples, pears, dried blueberries, dried cherries, and asparagus.

We look forward to the 2021-2022 school year and continuing to serve students. Please reach out with any questions you might have about the food program - my contact information is below.

Rob Payne  
Director of Dining Service  
rpayne@erschools.com

## Transportation, Maintenance, Technology or Food Update

### Safety at the Bus stop



- When waiting for the bus, stay away from traffic.
- Line up at least five giant steps away from the curb or the roadway to wait for the bus.
- Always wait for the bus in a single line.
- When getting on the bus, stay away from the danger zone, make eye contact with the bus driver, and wait for the driver's signal. Board the bus one at a time. Always walk 10 feet in front of the bus when crossing in the front so the drivers can see you.
- Don't push or shove to get on or off the bus.
- Arrive at the assigned stop ten (10) minutes before bus pickup.
- Stay off private property.
- Do not stand on the traveled part of the road.
- Be respectful and watchful of traffic.
- Wait in a quiet and orderly manner.
- Remain seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- Leave the bus in an orderly manner.
- Exit only at your assigned bus stop.
- Never run after the school bus if it has already left the bus stop.
- If you leave something on the bus or drop something outside of the bus, never go back for it. The driver may not see you and begin moving the bus.

### Ways to Connect

Food Service .....	231-264-6077
Transportation .....	231 264-9321
Technology .....	231-264-8642 x3121
Maintenance .....	231-264-9321 x6003
Elk Rapids High School .....	231-264-8108
Sunrise Academy .....	231-264-5890
Cherryland Middle School .....	31-264-8991
Lakeland Elementary .....	231-264-8289
Mill Creek Elementary .....	231-267-9955





Local  
Postal Customer

## Alumni Spotlight *continued*

As a contestant, Allie devoted time and energy into growing her knowledge of the local cherry industry. Visiting farms, Allie learned the ins and outs of the industry, from planting and growing orchards to harvesting and selling the product. Allie shared, "The cherry community has been so welcoming! I feel so humbled representing their interests. Seventy-five percent of the world's tart cherry production comes from the farms in Northern Michigan! On average, it takes seven thousand tart cherries make to 28 pies!" While Allie wears the National Cherry Festival sash and crown, her focus to give back to the festival organization and communities is a testament to who Allie is at her core.



Allie on a visit to a local cherry farm. *Courtesy photo*



Newly crowned National Cherry Queen. *Courtesy photo*

The desire to encourage people to dream and inspire others to dream drives Allie. Never giving up on dreams, no matter how "out there" they may be, is a credit to her parents. "My parents never asked me why I wanted to do anything," Allie starts. "They always supported my dreams, asking how they could help me reach them." From an early age, Allie has been inspired by others.

Even today, Mill Creek teacher, Jane (Brusso) Krzywosinski, continues to inspire Allie as she recalls, "We called her 'Beautiful Basketball Brusso,' and she inspired me to play basketball. Her students are not allowed to say, 'I can't.' She truly cares for students, and I will be reading to her class next school year."

Allie is in the final year of the Baker College nursing program. When asked why she is choosing to be a neonatal (NICU) nurse, her answer goes back to her core beliefs. "During the rotation in the NICU, I knew that was my calling. I love working with kids, caring for others is important to me, and the families of the children also need the support of the NICU nurses."

In closing, Queen Allie encourages others to set goals, do not allow fear to get in the way, and never put a time limit on dreams.

*\*please send suggestions for alumni spotlight to Kortni Huron at [khuron@erschools.com](mailto:khuron@erschools.com)*