

# NILES NEWS

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December 2019

## A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

### Niles Community Schools Shows Appreciation for Local Charities

With the holidays on the horizon, I am humbled and grateful to many community organizations who have reached out to partner with Niles Community Schools. Our students and families benefit from strong local partners who care about their well-being and the health of our community.

We are very fortunate to have local businesses and service organizations that contact us this time of year—and all year long—to see if our schools have families in need. This year, organizations such as Shelton’s Farm Market, Elks Lodge and Lions Club have all reached out to sponsor some of our families with holiday baskets. To ensure that children throughout our school district have a happy holiday

season, we have also been working with Toys for Tots, Shop with a Cop and other adopt-a-family drives.

For essential clothing items this winter, several partners - Salvation Army, Niles Service League, Kiwanis, Niles Fire Department, Four Flags Garden Club, and local churches have all shared their desire to lend a helping hand. Inspired by the season of giving, on Monday, November 18, Michigan State Senator Kim LaSata stopped by Northside Child Development Center and dropped off a donation of coats as part of her coat drive. The Niles Service League has also reached out to donate coats and clothing for the winter months. These gestures go a long way, and we are so impressed by these generous community partners.

We had our opportunity to help as well. When the Wortham family needed a venue for their inaugural free Thanksgiving luncheon, which was open to senior citizens, the financially struggling and those without a family to eat with, we were excited to offer to host the event at Niles High School. The Wortham family and many community volunteers served nearly 100 meals on Thanksgiving.

Our students are also giving back, and are going above and beyond with their fundraising and community service efforts. In addition to raking leaves and student sponsored donation drives, our annual Pink Week was held in October, which is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and included bake sales, special wristbands and

a school-wide walk. The week concluded with our Pink Out football game. It was great to see all the support for breast cancer awareness, with our football team in special pink jerseys, cheerleaders with pink bows and pompoms, and the crowd wearing pink. When everything was said and done, we raised nearly \$4,000 for local charities. Events like Pink Week show how willing and excited our students are to support important causes.

We want to thank the community for their continued support and show appreciation for our students that are making a difference. Thank you, and Go Vikes!

*Dr. Dan Applegate  
Superintendent*

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# HOWARD ELLIS SPOTLIGHT



Above and right: Howard-Ellis welcomed over 70 veterans on Veterans Day. The celebration began with a student parade where letters and pictures were given to the veterans. Each branch of the military was recognized. Students were shown a variety of uniforms and Mr. Bizoe played "Taps". The ceremony ended with a special poem from our 3rd graders and Mrs. Grontkowski's class.



Thanks to the Girl Scouts of Northern Indiana/Michiana, these 3rd, 4th and 5th grade girls participated in a three-day STEM camp. The girls learned how engineers use design thinking to solve problems by designing and creating their own assistive device, a water collection device and a device that launched a ping pong ball.

Below: Third grade classes had a chance to practice what they learned about table manners at their Thanksgiving feasts.



Students who have met their attendance goal so far this year celebrated with a little mummy fun.



# CEDAR LANE HAPPENINGS



Students enjoy the annual Thanksgiving Feast, a favorite tradition at Niles Cedar Lane. Staff provide home cooked dishes to celebrate the school family and good attendance.

As a fall service learning team project, students and staff are busy planning a special Winter Wonderland event for the kindergartners at Howard Ellis. On December 12 they will host the little ones for a special holiday event filled with music, lights, decorations, gifts, treats, crafts and games.



Guadalupe Rodriguez and Destiny Mena take a Thanksgiving picture together.



Sisters Halie Clark and Amberlee Cavessa promote breast cancer awareness during Pink Week.

## BALLARD ELEMENTARY NEWS

This year we changed things up from our normal School Book Fair to make the event a bit more exciting. A small committee of teachers came up with the idea for a "Fall Family Night" in October. As we started sharing our plans, excitement grew, and our night exploded into one big event with almost 400 people in attendance! Fall Family Night was a huge success! Not only was it the biggest family attended event our school has had in a long time, it was record breaking for our school book fair sales.

We advertised with posters, fliers, Facebook posts, and teachers used their Remind apps to send out notifications to parents. A week before the book fair, students made wish lists and previewed the book fair to build excitement.

At Fall Family Night, we had lots of activities for all of our families! First and foremost, the line for the book fair wrapped around the entire library and even out the door. So many students were excited about getting their hands on new books. We had a big pumpkin patch in the front of the school where every child got to choose pumpkin. The pumpkins were donated by a very generous couple who have grandchildren here at Ballard. Students who did not make it to the Fall Family Night even got their own free pumpkin the next day. We had students decorate their pumpkins at tables set up in the cafeteria. The hallways were filled with Halloween games run by high school student volunteers and a local Boy Scout troop. We had free hay rides on the school grounds. US Army soldiers in uniform read "not so spooky stories" to the kids as they enjoyed the hay ride around the playground and spotting fun scarecrows. Niles Senior High's Future Farmers of America Club (FFA) set up a petting zoo with goats and rabbits. The PTO sold hot dogs and drinks for families to enjoy. Clifford the Big Red Dog, Dog Man, and Viktor the Viking all stopped in for hugs and high-fives.

Ballard staff and the PTO look to continue the fun family events by hosting Storytime with Santa in December, Bingo Night in January, and The Ballard Ball in February.



Students pick a pumpkin from Mrs. Rosenbergh's pumpkin patch.



Families eat dinner and decorate pumpkins.



The excitement for reading fills up the library!



Members of our military read to families on the hay ride.

# EASTSIDE CONNECTIONS SPOTLIGHT

Collaboration and mentorship are an essential part of what makes Eastside Connections School (ECS) a unique place to learn and grow. The K-8 setting offered by ECS means that students roaming the hallways range from ages 4 to 14 years old. This offers a wonderful opportunity for our BIGS to serve as role-models to our LITTLES. Modeling good behavior, talking about the importance of working hard in school and sharing favorite books with one another are just a few ways our learners at ECS build lasting relationships with one another.



*Our Bigs are always there to remind our Littles to fly high and always follow their dreams.*

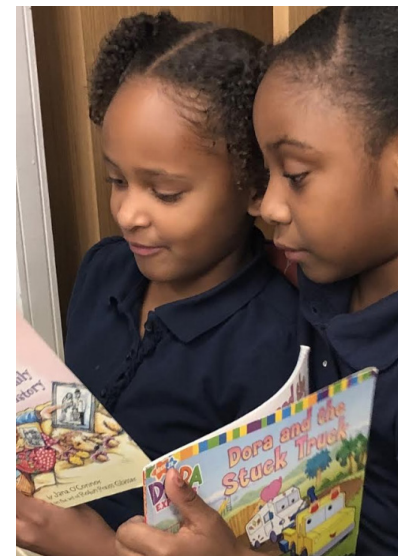


*Mrs Mitchell's 7th grade homeroom partnered with Mrs. Rose's kindergarteners to make a human body skeleton project out of pasta. The 7th graders had just learned about body systems so they were passing on their knowledge of the skeletal system in a fun way!*

*Working together to explore why things fizz, boom and bang!*



*Working together to practice lines and build sets. The ECS Drama Club shines once again, performing Shrek Jr.*



*Reading with a friend and mentor is the best!*

*Frog dissection and collaboration in Mrs. Mitchell's science class leads to fun hands-on learning.*



*Working together to research and build natural habitats is such a fun and meaningful experience.*

*ECS 2nd graders collaborate in building natural habitats. Project and problem-based learning helps our students to deepen knowledge and hone presentation skills.*



# NORTHSIDE NEWS

Montessori celebrated Grandparents / Special Person's Day at Northside Child Development Center on November 25. Every child had a special person come to school to celebrate with them. The children sang songs, Mrs. Dodge read a story, and everyone enjoyed donuts with a special person in their life.



Northside celebrated the children for their positive behavior with Mr. Dan the Music Man. Mr. Dan played songs, the kids sang, and danced and even Mrs. Shabazz was a part of the show. The entire school enjoyed the performance by Mr. Dan the Music Man, and we cannot wait to have him come back soon.



Mrs. Duis's class cooked French toast and noodles to celebrate the class working on the letter "f" and "n". The students enjoyed making the food and eating with their friends.



Mrs. Ward's class celebrated Special Person's Day this month. The children's special person spent time in the classroom making art projects and singing with the class. Mrs. Ward is thankful for all the special people that celebrated with her class.



Mrs. Benjamin makes friendship t-shirts every year with her class and families. The children celebrate Friendship Day each month by wearing their shirts and doing special activities in class.



Fall is an exciting time at Northside Child Development Center. Over 300 people in the Niles area enjoy the annual Pumpkin Social. Each classroom decorates a pumpkin to be displayed in the hallway for the big night. The children and families dress up to trick or treat in the hallway and have a harvest snack in the cafeteria. Staff performs The Big Pumpkin skit for families to enjoy.

# NEWS FROM NILES NEW TECH

Over the past few weeks, a good number of partners (local organizations, businesses, and community leaders) have joined us at Niles New Tech to hear our learners present their marketing plans and branding ideas. Our learners have also ventured out to area organizations to share their research and present their findings on a variety of topics. Specifically, in our Health Marketing class, learners developed marketing resources for the Children’s Advocacy Center which included brochures, posters, and commercials. In BioChem, learners traveled to the YMCA to showcase their research on how exercise and illness impact the body’s balance.

At Niles New Tech, we believe our learners have something important to say and we provide them with the venue to do so. However, before they ever meet with a partner, a good deal of “up front” work takes place. This “up front” work is what we refer to as scaffolding which consists of teaching the skills needed to confidently and accurately communicate ideas to a partner. There is no guess-

work; these skills are outlined on project specific rubrics which express exactly what a good presentation in the given venue looks like. These skills may include: how to use eye contact, projection, gestures, word choice, and appropriate dress to engage and inform an audience; how to display ideas in a logical order; how to use compelling and convincing media elements that are appropriate to the task. All these skills are first taught, then practiced, and eventually used with the partners. After all, school is not a place to learn solely content; it is a place to learn the skills needed to be successful in college and ultimately a career.

Learners understand the benefits and advantages of learning how to present. Allison Cox, a New Tech sophomore believes, “Niles New Tech has offered me great opportunities to grow and learn how to be flexible in many different situations. I used to be a very quiet kid that found socializing with anyone a hassle, but with the PBL program I’ve learned how to communicate effectively with my peers and respected adults.”

Jordan Edwards, another Niles New Tech sophomore concurred.

“I am able to talk in front of people and not be nervous. The reason for this is we have business partners we present to and I have been taught how to be confident while presenting,” he said.

Learning how to present is one of the skills we want all our graduates to leave New Tech with. Knowing the content is important. Having the skills to express the content and speak with confidence and conviction are equally important.



# NILES ADULT EDUCATION NEWS



Carmen Boatwright, of Niles, is finishing her high school diploma this year and considering a potential venture into the culinary arts. “It’s wonderful that we’re given this opportunity,” she said. “I don’t think that many people know that this opportunity is out there and how easy it is to do this, because they definitely work with your schedule.”



Adult Education is in full swing at our new location in the lower level of the Niles District Library. Above, Adult Education student Patrick Doxie receives college advice from Southwestern Michigan College Admissions Counselor, Ben Spencer.

Niles Adult Education enrollment is open throughout the school year, Monday through Thursday, 3 p.m.-7 p.m.  
 For more information, please contact:  
 Niles Adult Education  
 620 E. Main Street  
 Niles, MI 49120  
 NilesAdultEducation@nilesschools.org

# WAY PROGRAM

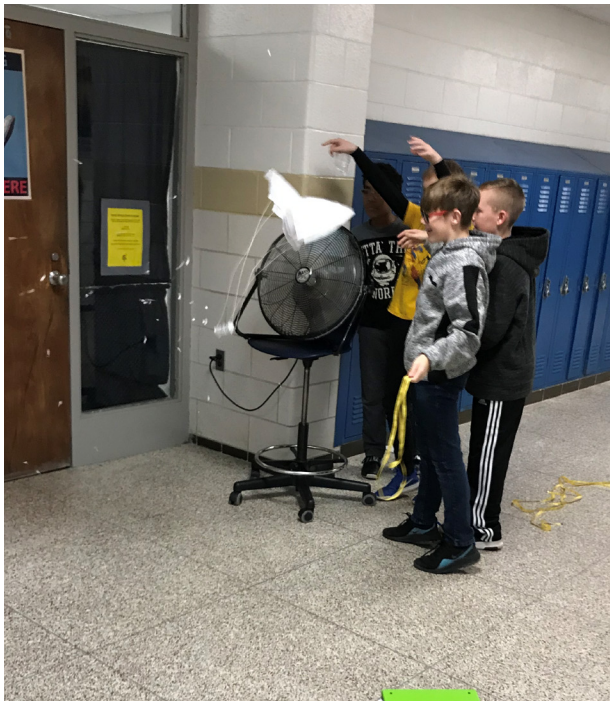


Sheccid Torres won "Project of the Month" with "Find Your Wings."



Skyla Moore won "Student of the Month."

# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT RING LARDNER?



7th Grade hands-on science. Which design will allow you to spread seeds the furthest? Just one example of extension activities that students participate in during intervention block.



Ring Lardner 8th graders celebrating reading achievements with a waffle breakfast. Students who read 7 or more books in the first quarter were treated to waffles served by their ELA teachers.



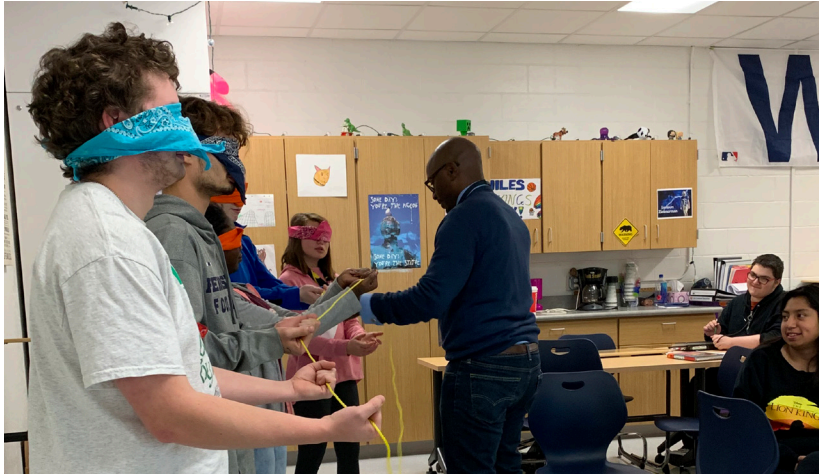
Fitness icon Jake Steinfeld coaching Ring Lardner students on the new fitness equipment received through the National Foundation for Governors' Fitness Council's DON'T QUIT! Fitness award.



Students (and Viktor) working out in Ring Lardner's new DON'T QUIT! Fitness Center that was dedicated on October 4.

# NILES HIGH SCHOOL: FALL AT A GLANCE

Niles High School students have had a very busy fall between extracurricular and academic activities in all of our course offerings. Course standards and engaging assignments are the basis for what we do here at NHS so check out our Fall at a Glance photospread!



Students work on effective communication skills in their Connections class with a guest speaker. How is effective communication helpful at school, at home, and on the job?



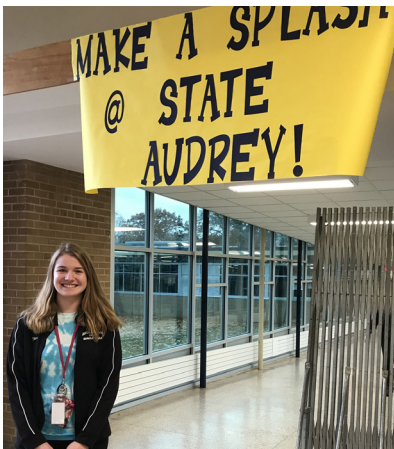
In late November, our future medical leaders participated in HOSA competitions at the regional level. Niles High School offers two county-wide programs- Allied Health, and Professional Health Careers Academy. Six Niles HOSA students are moving on to the state competition.



Each spring and fall, the Niles High School chapter of National Honor Society inducts new members. The organization accepts members after a rigorous application process focused on scholarship, character, service, and leadership. Congratulations to our new and current members.



At the second annual Berrien County Career Pathway Day at LMC, all NHS freshmen had the opportunity to visit various booths with numerous career opportunities to explore. Our NHS programs were also featured.



Audrey Dixon is a freshman at NHS and participates in Women's Swimming through our Bridgman Co-op. She qualified for state competition and was honored by NHS with a goody bag and our traditional hallway banner. We are proud of you, Audrey!

Our NHS Key Club partnered with Circle K, the Key Club at the University of Notre Dame, in a raking of leaves event. NHS students volunteer hundreds of hours each year in a multitude of activities. Mrs. Leona Hein is their sponsor.



## SOUTHSIDE SPOTLIGHT



At Southside's Veteran's Day luncheon held on November 13, 2019, Mike was among the six students who were chosen to read their poems or essays about their admiration and appreciation for veterans.

Approximately 30 veterans were honored at Southside's luncheon. Pre-Voc teachers Jerry Scott and Jan Maciulski chaired the committee. Together, with the assistance of students and staff, they put together a wonderful luncheon that brought our community together.

