The 2017-18 school year has flown by. It’s hard to believe we are in the last week of school!

As I reflect on the past school year, I am honored to be part of a school community committed to building on a Tradition of Excellence and opening a World of Possibilities for and with each of our students. I am inspired every day by the incredible work of our students, teachers and families as we deepen a culture of learning and leadership in our schools. I thank you for entrusting us with your children each day. There is no greater work than impacting the lives of our young people in powerful and meaningful ways. We are committed to creating the best possible learning environment in our classrooms, in our schools, out in our community, and in all that we do.

Old Village School Renovation Ramps Up

The first project in the multi-year Bond 2017 construction and program initiative – the renovation and restoration of the historic Old Village School – is on track for an August move-in. The first two floors will accommodate the youngest learners in our nationally accredited early childhood program, with our Central Office staff on the third floor. This work is being done in a way that preserves the history of Old Village School, while also creating learning environments specially designed for early childhood – along with office and professional learning spaces that are flexible and balance the need for quiet/focused work, along with supporting collaboration and efficiency. In our planning for Old Village School, we have worked together with the City of Northville Historic District Commission to ensure the integrity and historic significance of the 101-year-old building. We are pleased with the wide support for renovating one of our district/community’s most historic assets.

More on Bond 2017 Projects and Progress

With the impending move from the Main Street School building (501 West Main Street) to the adjacent Old Village School (405 West Main Street), the district and Board of Education in March issued a Requests for Proposal for the sale of the soon-to-be-vacant Main Street School structure and a portion of the surrounding property. In April, the district received eight proposals. The Board of Education and district administrators are reviewing the proposals, with details to be shared with the community in the near future.

In addition, over the past several months, Bond User Groups have been meeting at Northville High School, Hillside Middle School and Amerman Elementary School – comprised of building administrators, teachers, support staff, students, and design and construction experts – to plan for the bond projects in their individual schools.

Work at Hillside over the summer months will focus on preparing the building and site for the major renovation and construction planned for the school. This includes construction of an additional parking area on the north side of 8 Mile Road, to serve as temporary Hillside parking during construction and long-term parking for the Tom Holzer Field Stadium area, Cooke School, and overflow parking for Hillside.

District-wide, new furniture will be in place for third, fourth and fifth grade classrooms and learning areas at all six elementary schools for the start of the 2018-19 school year.

School families, students and community members can stay apprised of the Bond 2017 Construction and Program Progress, by visiting the www.NorthvilleSchools.org and clicking on “Bond 2017 Construction Updates” on the main page.
**Sinking Fund Dollars Help with Needed Repairs**

In addition to the Bond 2017 projects, the district will also making some $2 million in much-needed repairs and improvements to its aging school buildings over the summer months through the second year of the district's Building Site and Sinking Fund Renewal, approved by voters in May 2015. These projects include:

- New flooring in Ridge Wood and Early Childhood offices and eight NHS classrooms. (NOTE: Painting projects are also planned for the NHS classrooms and Ridge Wood offices using General Fund dollars.)
- Lighting projects across the district

Also, a reminder that due to the extensive paving project at Ridge Wood, the school district's Summer Kids' Club and Full-Day Pre-K Summer Camp programs, along with the weeklong Camp Invention program, will move from Ridge Wood Elementary School to Thornton Creek Elementary School for summer 2018.

**One Familiar and Two New Faces Join District Leadership Team**

Please join me in welcoming three new individuals to the Northville Public Schools leadership team. One of them you may recognize is Beth Solensky, who will take the helm as Principal for Ridge Wood Elementary School for the 2018-19 school year after serving as interim principal from January through June 2018. A highly regarded member of the Northville Public Schools community, Ms. Solensky taught fifth grade at Moraine Elementary School prior to her interim role at Ridge Wood. Before joining Northville in Elementary and Secondary Administrative Certification from Michigan State University in 2015 and holds a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from Pennsylvania State University, and a Master of Arts in Reading and Language Arts from Oakland University. She served as an Administrative Intern at Moraine Elementary School in 2014-15, prior to being hired as a teacher, and completed the Wayne County Regional Educational Service Agency Aspiring Administrator Academy in 2016-17. Ms. Solensky succeeds Heather Bauer who resigned her position this spring following a leave of absence which began in January 2018.

Rebecca Pek is joining Northville Public Schools in the newly created position of Director of Personnel Development and Quality Assurance. This new Central Office position, reporting to the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, will support a wide variety of functions across departments, with an emphasis on supporting and growing staff. Most recently, Ms. Pek has served as Assistant Superintendent of Professional Learning and Accountability, and before that as Director of Human Resources at Wayne-Westland Community Schools. Prior to joining Wayne-Westland, Ms. Pek worked at Romulus Community Schools in a variety of roles including teacher, high school principal and Director of Human Resources. Before joining the education profession, Ms. Pek worked in the private sector with a software company. She has her Bachelor of Science in English and communications from Western Michigan University, and a Master in Educational Leadership from Madonna University.

I am likewise pleased to share that with more than 17 years of experience in food service and child nutrition, Carolyn Morfino is joining Northville Public Schools as Manager of Food Service. She replaces Robin Bolitho, who is retiring at the end of the 2017-18 school year after 22 years with the district. Ms. Morfino has a Bachelor of Science in Dietetics from Eastern Michigan University. Since 2000, she has provided food service management through a third-party provider to a number of school districts in Southeast Michigan, most recently on assignment at Fraser Public Schools. In this work, she has been responsible for the daily operation of food service departments, providing leadership to food service employees. Ms. Morfino has experience in budgeting; inventory control; ordering, payroll; meeting federal, state and local guidelines; marketing and promotion; the Free and Reduced Meal application process and management; and nutrition education.

**Congratulations to the Northville Class of 2018!**

It has been my great privilege over the past several weeks – along with our principals, staff, administrators, Board of Education members, family and friends – to share in the significant milestone in the lives of our Northville High School and Cooke School Class of 2018. 576 Northville High School students received diplomas during the June 3, 2018 Graduation Ceremony at the USA Hockey Arena in Plymouth. The class includes a record 58 National Merit Scholar honorees, the third class of International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Candidates, 185 Phi Beta Kappa recipients, and more than $16 million in scholarship offers, including a prestigious appointment to the U.S. Air Force Academy. From National Honor Society members, to Scholar Athletes, Eagle Scouts and Gold Award Girl Scouts to those contributing thousands of hours of community service, the Class of 2018 has left its mark on Northville Public Schools and the entire Northville community.

Just yesterday, I had the honor of recognizing our Cooke School Class of 2018 graduates from our special education center program, serving students from age three to 26. In a moving ceremony each student, his or her family, caregivers, teachers and staff had the opportunity to reflect on the student’s growth, as well as the powerful lessons learned from and with each of our graduates. Our Cooke students, families and staff challenge us to go beyond what many may see as impossible, to stretch beyond limitations, to break new ground in learning and growth.

To our entire NHS and Cooke Class of 2018, thank you for being a part of Northville Public Schools, for enriching our lives and challenging us to become better educators.
At this past Tuesday’s Northville Board of Education meeting, we had the privilege of honoring the incredible work of the 27 staff members retiring from the school district at the close of this school year. This includes 14 educators, two para-educators, two Early Childhood staff members, two paraprofessionals, two elementary school secretaries, a Director of Operations, three Food Service staff members, and a Food Service Manager. A reception took place prior to the Board meeting for retirees and their families and colleagues. Collectively, the following individuals have served the district students, families and community for 560 years.

Robin Bolitho
Marlene Curlew
Chris Gears
Holly Heath
Maureen Moceri
Theresa Ohlgen
Paul Polanski
Laura Russell
Mary Stack

Suzanne Budzisz
Sheila Dake
Janet Gillies
Yvonne Hughes
Diane Moore
Susan Olsson
Mary Kay Pryce
Catherine Shapero
Constance Wall

Judy Cavanaugh
Michael Daoust
Concetta Hamel
Joanne Mink
Patricia Muyaert
Anna Ouimet
Kim Richardson-Hippler
Lynn Soluri
Pamela White

You may ask yourself what can a third grader do to change the world? And the answer would be – A whole lot! Propelled by a question asked by their teachers – Cori Thomas and Jamie Henderson – last December, some 50 Amerman third graders embarked on a six month journey to do something to help others. And while their teachers and families helped, the vision, planning and details were all the students. They agreed they wanted to do something to introduce homeless children to sports. They called around to homeless shelters and the Detroit Rescue Mission Women’s and Children’s Shelter thought it was a great idea. The Amerman students collected gently used sports equipment for the shelter and reached out to Northville High School soccer and lacrosse teams to run sports camps for the kids. The third graders also called on local restaurants for donations of food for a picnic including Genititi’s, Guernsey, Livonia Italian Bakery, Relish and Bellacino. They also received donations from a local dentist and Meijer to put together goodie bags for the kids. Some of the Amerman parents who are in the medical field pitched in to set up a “Wellness Area” to check blood pressures and talk about stress management. Along the way, there were problems to solve, like the date of the long planned visit to the Detroit Rescue Mission – June 3rd – was the same day as graduation for some of the high school athletes who had volunteered. But the underclassmen jumped in to help out. When the date for the visit finally came around, the Amerman third graders were both excited and nervous. What would they talk about? What did they have in common with the kids at the shelter? What they discovered, however, is kids are kids, no matter what their backgrounds. They talked about school and sports and friends. Several of the students exchanged e-mail address with the children at the shelter and plan to be pen pals.

As one of the Amerman third graders said in reflecting on the project, “The kids from the shelter weren’t smiling very much when we first got there. It must be hard for them to live there. We had fun together. I think everyone was smiling by the end.”

What an inspiring example of a student initiative with support from teachers, coaches, families and the community. Really impressive not only to provide needed supplies to the shelter, but to bring kids together doing something kids love to do. It is truly amazing!

Congratulations to Amerman fifth-grader Brian Zhang and Meads Mill sixth-grader Phillip Zhavoronkov on being recognized on a national level in this year’s nationally sponsored PTA Reflections Art Program. Brian received the National Award of Excellence in Literature in the Intermediate category for his piece titled “Within My Reach.” Phillip received the National Award of Merit in Photography for his photo titled Magic is Within You. The theme for the 2017-18 Reflections art contest was “Within Reach.”

In addition to Brian and Phillip, 13 other Northville students from across the district garnered statewide Reflections awards. This includes:

- **Music Composition** – Emily Kim, Northville High School, Award of Excellence
- **Photography** – Phillip Zhavoronkov, Meads Mill, Outstanding Interpretation Award; Nina Moyski, Northville High School, Award of Merit; Aaron Hua, Thornton Creek, Honorable Mention; Malcolm Wang, Northville High School, Award of Excellence
- **Visual Arts** – Diya Ganguli, Hillside, Award of Merit; Julia Wei, Thornton Creek, Award of Excellence; and Malcolm Wang, NHS, Award of Excellence

All Northville Public Schools Reflections participants whose entries won at the state level were honored at a special ceremony at the Northville Art House in May, where their work was on display for the community to view. Thank you to all these talented students for sharing their artistic ingenuity with us. The theme for next year’s Reflections program is “Heroes Around Me.”
As we come to the end of another school year, I want to take this opportunity to offer our heartfelt appreciation to the Northville Educational Foundation (NEF) and its many donors – including businesses, individuals, staff members and community organizations – who support the Foundation. In particular, a big shout out to all the school families and community members who recently honored Northville teachers and staff members through the end-of-the-year Thank a Staff campaign, honoring the work of more than 400 staff members and raising $8,600 for the Foundation.

For the 2017-18 school year alone, the Foundation provided nearly $75,000 to Northville Public Schools for initiatives including the 2018 STEAM Fair with nearly 500 Northville Public Schools’ students becoming inventors for a day, sharing their 80 projects – with peers, and the community, at the one-day fair; and more than $30,000 in Innovative Teaching Grants to fund 22 projects submitted by 43 educators for all 10 Northville Schools.

With all this in mind I invite you to participate in this year’s Northville Educational Foundation’s 4th Annual Play Fore Education Golf Classic at the prestigious, newly renovated, Championship Golf Course of Meadowbrook Country Club, home of the 2018 GAM Championship. The outing will take place Monday, July 30, 2018 with a buffet lunch and open bar beginning at 11:30 a.m., a shotgun start at 12:30 p.m., and a post-play reception and awards dinner.

Since 2000, NEF has raised and granted more than $2.5 million for Northville Public Schools to support enrichment programs in academics, athletics and the arts, providing real-world experiences that prepare our students for the next chapters in their lives and helping to give them an edge.

For more information about the Play Fore Education Golf Classic, as well the Foundation, visit the NEF website at SupportNEF.org.

Every day in our classrooms, through the arts, on our fields of play, and through extracurricular activities our students and teachers from across Northville Public Schools give us much to celebrate. Here are some recent highlights.

- You may have noticed that Northville Public Schools is getting a lot of attention lately for the academic achievements of our students. Bridge Magazine recently took a look at student growth over time for school districts across the country, assessing the rate of academic growth starting in third grade through eighth grade, and named Northville an Academic State Champ.

- In addition, a recent analysis of state data by the media outlet MLive shows Northville High School is second only to the International Academy (a multi-district consortium International Baccalaureate school) in producing the highest percentage of college graduates in Michigan. Of the 1,652 Northville High School graduates between 2011 and 2013, 70 percent had at least a bachelor’s degree by summer 2017, with that number climbing to 74 percent when including those who earned associate degrees, or completed a post-secondary certificate program.

- And, in a report published recently by the Michigan Center for Educational Performance and Information, Northville High School in among the Michigan high schools with highest percentage of students from the Class of 2018 testing as fully “college ready.” The “college ready” designation is based on students’ SAT scores as juniors. The SAT college-ready benchmarks are a score of 530 on the math section and 480 in the reading and writing section. A perfect score is 800 in each section. About 73 percent of Michigan’s Class of 2018 met the reading and writing benchmark, up from 60 percent for the Class of 2017. About 37 percent met the math benchmark, the same as the year before. About 35 percent of test-takers met both standards, also the same as the Class of 2017. For the Northville High School Class of 2018, 77 percent met the math benchmark and 92 met the reading and writing benchmark. 77 percent were deemed college ready in all subjects.

- District Summer Hours – Elementary and middle school offices will be open through Wednesday, June 27, 2018. Middle school offices will reopen for the 2018-19 school year on Monday, August 6, 2018 and elementary school offices will open on Monday, August 13, 2018. The Northville High School office will remain open throughout most of the summer, from 6:45 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 6:45 a.m.-1:45 p.m. on Fridays (Please note: the high school office will also be closed on July 5th and 6th.) Our Board of Education/Central Office will be open throughout the summer, Monday through Thursday from 7:30 a.m-4:00 p.m., and Friday from 7:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. beginning the week of June 25th through the week of August 6th.

- Summer School – The registration deadline for the district’s Summer School program is Thursday, June 28, 2018 for all students. In-class high school courses will take place at Hillside Middle School beginning Monday, June 25, 2018, through Thursday, July 26, 2018. High School online courses began on June 4, 2018. English as a second language classes will take place June 25-July 19, 2018 (no class on July 4 and 5), 8:00-11:00 a.m., at Hillside for elementary students. For more information, visit Summer School on the district website.

- Community FYI ListServ – The popular Community FYI ListServ published by the district each Wednesday detailing events and programs from across the Northville community will move to an every other week publication during the summer months, starting Wednesday, June 27, 2018 through Wednesday, August 22, 2018. Weekly publication of Community FYI will resume on Wednesday, September 5, 2018. For more information, visit ListServ and Flyers on the district website.
• A big congratulations to the Northville High School Robostangs for garnering the Engineering Inspiration Award at the state robotics tournament and the prestigious Entrepreneurship Award at the FIRST Robotics World Championship. This is the first time the Robostangs as a team have been recognized with a judged award at the World Championship. The Entrepreneurship Award celebrates the entrepreneurial spirit by recognizing a team that has developed a comprehensive business plan in order to define, manage, and achieve the team’s objectives. The team displays entrepreneurial enthusiasm and vital skills to ensure a self-sustaining program. Awesome Job, Robostangs!

• The Northville High School Science Olympiad Team took its fourth consecutive Science Olympiad State Championship qualifying the team to participate in the National tournament for the fifth consecutive year. The Meads Mill Middle School Science Olympiad placed second in the state competition, qualifying for the National tournament for the seventh year in a row. The Meads Mill team went on to place seventh in the nation for middle schools.

• Our sincere appreciation to the many Northville area businesses and community organizations who so generously support our students, teachers and programs each year. Most recently our thanks goes out to the Knights of Columbus and Mitsubishi Electric Automotive America, Inc., for their generous support of our Cooke School students and families. In addition, the Northville High School Track and Field teams were recently awarded a $2,000 grant from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and DTE to plant trees on the south side of the track along Six Mile Road to create a wind break on that side of the track over time. (And a big thanks to all the Track and Field families who helped to plant the trees on Arbor Day.)

• Way to go Hillside Middle School eighth-grader Ved Muthusamy (right) who recently placed an impressive sixth in the International Geography Bee – U.S. National Championship in Atlanta, Georgia. Ved placed 10th in the 2017 tournament.

• This year 39 students from Northville’s Academic Games Team travelled to Knoxville, Tennessee, to participate in the 53rd Academic Games National Tournament. The Northville team distinguished its self, winning six national championship team titles, with the overall top place going to the eighth grade team from Meads Mill Middle School. In addition, two Meads Mill eighth graders, Akshaya Kannikaswaran and Bianca Brie, took the top two positions in overall individual performance, as well as one individual championship title each. In the elementary division – where there is no individual competition -- among the top ten scorers, six were from Northville. Team awards went to:

• Eighth Grade: Dank Teams (Akshaya Kannikaswaran, Arya Gowda, Bianca Brie, Dillan Lau, Winston Wong) – Overall, Regular Wff‘N Proof, Middle Linguistik Champion, 3rd place Middle Equations
• Sixth Grade: Masterminds (Caroline Chacko, Emir Tascioğlu, Isaac Song, Steven Fu, Zahra Kagal) – Elementary Wff‘N Proof and Elementary Linguistik Champion, Elementary On-Sets 3rd place, 2nd place overall; Simplipers (Anda Brie, Ansh Shah, Harshal Vepamankula, Marya Gowda, Nila Muthusamy) Elementary Equations Champion, 4th place overall; and Fiery Pandas (Charlie Sands, Grant Hu, Rohan Menon, Syona Gupta, Vishalakshi Meyyappam) Elementary Wff‘N Proof 2nd and Elementary Linguistik 3rd

• Individual awards include:
  • Eighth Grade: Akshaya Kannikaswaran: Overall National Champion, Regular Wff‘N Proof Champion, Middle Linguistik 3rd place; Bianca Brie: Overall Runner-up, Middle Equations National Champion; and Arya Gowda: Middle On-Sets 3rd place
  • Sixth Grade: Isaac Song: Overall Runner-up, Vishalakshi Meyyappam: Overall 5th place
  • Fifth Grade: Ansh Shah: Overall 4th place

For the 2018-19 school year, third and fourth grade students from across the district will be able to participate in the Academic Games program. Students and parents who are interested, please visit http://mlagonline.com/ for more information.

• Many thanks to Northville High School junior Christian Peck-Dimit for organizing the Healthy Over Hungry Cereal Drive across all the district’s school buildings to benefit Gleaners Community Food Bank. My deepest appreciation to all of the families and staff who donated to this great cause. Together you donated more than 28,000 servings of cereal for kids across southeast Michigan and right here in Northville who would otherwise be without breakfast!

• I am very excited to share that two of our educators were honored recently as Teachers of the Year. Northville Band Director Michael Rumbell made the final ballot for the Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association Teacher of the Year, placing him as one of the top three band directors in the state. Cooke School Speech and Language staff member Susan Oleson is the Michigan Education Association Region 7 Outstanding Teacher of the Year for 2018. Congratulations Mike and Susan! Well deserved!

• The Northville High School Jazz Ensemble earned First Divisions from all three judges at the Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association (MSBOA) State Jazz Festival and has been invited to perform at the Detroit Jazz Festival over Labor Day weekend. Way to go! In addition, Evan Masters on baritone saxophone and Nicole Damon on lead trumpet, were selected to perform in the MSBOA/Michigan Youth Arts Festival (MYAF) Honors Jazz Ensemble. Pavana Karanth (flute) and Paul Nastelin (horn) were chosen for the MSBOA/MYAF Orchestra; and Pavana, Clare Wan (flute) and Yongwei Che (piano) have been invited to audition for the role of soloist with the Michigan Youth Arts Festival orchestra. Awesome!
• Also, kudos to the Northville High School Bel Canto Choir for earning a #1 Excellent Rating at the Michigan School Vocal Music Association State Choral Festival.

• Amazing job by the Northville High School Indian American Student Association (IASA) in raising $18,000 through the Desi Tashan Charity Dance Competition. The group hopes to reach its fundraising goal of $25,000 by the end of June. All of the proceeds will go to Vista Maria, which serves vulnerable youth in our community, for a new recreational room in one of Vista Maria’s new mental health buildings. The IASA board worked tirelessly on this year’s charity dance competition. Congratulations to NHS students Dhruv Patel, Neeti Gandra, Vineet Raju, Anjalee Patel, Mahathi Kishore, Krishna Patel, Anushka Gulati, Keya Patel and Aarvi Shah whose dedication and contributions made the event such a great success. A big acknowledgement also goes to the consortium of school districts participating this year including Troy, Farmington, Utica Consolidated, the International Academy East, Plymouth Canton, Novi, and the University of Michigan IZZAT team.

We have so much to be proud of at Northville Public Schools. For those families enrolled in our summer programs – whether through Summer School, the Cooke Summer Program, or Summer Kids’ Club – we look forward to seeing your children engaged in meaningful learning over the course of the summer. We wish each of our students, families and staff members many relaxing moments and the gift of time spent with family and friends this summer.

Sincerely,

Mary K. Gallagher
Superintendent