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November, 2009

Nordic Tribune

What is ND Reading?

New books have just arrived in the North Dickinson High School Library which include the Blue Blood Series by Melissa De La Cruz. Many of the North Dickinson students are reading books from the high school library. Megan Palluconi is reading Unlikely Angel by Ashley Smith and Dillon Wickman is currently reading Game Plan for Life by Joe Gibbs. Thirteen Reasons Why by Jay Asher, is being read by Michelle Lundin and Christian Helms is mesmerized by Violets are Blue by James Patterson. Some students have been reading books suggested by Mrs. Lindholm, the high school English teacher. Hannah Hunter is enjoying Finding Noel by Richard Paul Evans, Ryan Smiltneek checked out Holes in my Life by Jack Gantos, and Jon Kowalczyk is reading Code Talkers by Joseph Bruchac. A new order for more books was sent out this month with anxious readers awaiting their arrival.

Office Notes

Schools Cut a Total of \$292 per Pupil-More Cuts Likely

Governor Granholm signed a school funding bill recently that cut most schools in the state by \$165 per pupil. The bill was a compromise bill worked out between the Senate and House of Representatives. She also vetoed over \$54 million dollars in specific line items in the funding bill. The funding bill reached the Governor's desk after several months of debate and inaction in the two chambers of the legislature. It is now 3 ½ months into the district's budget year and we are now finding that we will be cut \$56,700. We are currently working with a small fund balance from last year that will prevent us from over spending our revenue.

The problem is that the funding bill passed and signed into law does not have enough revenue attached to it to fund schools even with the \$165

per pupil cut. The State Treasury then notified the State Budget Director who notified the Governor that the School Aid Fund was short of revenue by \$227 million. This equates to an additional cut of \$127 per pupil. The Governor, by law, must prorate (or cut) the per pupil amount to districts. For North Dickinson, this creates a cumulative reduction of \$102,500. Because state revenues continue to come in shorter each month than projected there is a great possibility of even further cuts this year and places the district in a position of possibly going into debt. The 2010-2011 school year's state funding looks even worse, with more cuts on the way.

The 2008-2009 audited budget showed the district had \$3,141,000 in revenue and \$3,141,000 in expenses. We ended the year with a fund balance of \$76,000. The 2009-2010 unofficial school year budget has projected income of \$2,824,000 in revenue and expenses of

\$2,886,000. Through the retirement of four teachers last year and other cost saving measures, we decreased expenses by \$255,000. This district has been making cuts and implementing cost savings measures for over 12 years.

We are not alone. Many districts around us will face even worse budgetary deficits. There are currently at least 26 districts in this state in deficit spending. There will be many more as this and future cuts are implemented.

The State of Michigan is in the worst recession in decades. The Proposal A funding law passed in 1995 is no longer working. Changes are needed but there is very little willpower in our government to make those changes.

If you have any questions about this issue, please contact me at 542-9281 or by e-mail at csiders@gonordics.com. If you want to express your opinion on this issue, please contact

your lawmakers. The contact information is provided below:

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Swine Flu (H1N1) Update

Most of you are hearing news reports everyday about the outbreak of Swine Flu, also known as H1N1, across the country and this state. There have been several schools in our area that have closed because of high student absences. Not all of the absences in those schools have been due to swine flu. In fact, most cases of Swine Flu are not officially diagnosed with testing. Our school has been running at

about an 8-12% absence rate since October 15th when the number of students absent began to rise slightly. Some of these absences are due to flu like symptoms. Other reasons include other kinds of illnesses, injuries and other non-illness related absences. Our school administration has met with health department officials to develop a plan for dealing with staff and students with the flu. State law prevents a school district from counting a school day if more than 25% of the student body is absent regardless of the reasons. We monitor absences and the reason for absences on a daily basis. When a parent calls in to report a child will be absent from school, we will ask several questions to attempt to determine if the absence is because of flu like symptoms. We report to the health department regularly the number and type of absences. We will continue to consult with the health department on whether it is advisable to cancel school because of health reasons. You can help by reporting to us if your child has an illness and the accompanying symptoms. If we need to close school because of high rates of illnesses or any other reason, we will notify radio and television stations. Please see the list of stations in this newsletter.

At this time, **we do not have an epidemic of flu in our school.** If that changes, we will let you know.

From the Principals:

A note about parent/teacher conferences:

Please do not bring your child to conferences with you as there may be a need for a private conversation between the teacher and you. If there is a need for your child to be present, the conference can be

rescheduled to have him/her there.

There will be a survey for parents to fill out during conferences.

The survey is part of our School Improvement Plan. Also part of the School Improvement Plan is our school vision which states the following:

North Dickinson County School, as a reflection of a caring, unique community located in a natural setting, will empower and challenge all students to achieve their fullest intellectual potential, character, and attitudes to create better lives for themselves and the larger community.

Please make an attempt to enter the library and answer our survey.

This is just a reminder that one of our **school rules is: no hats are to be worn in the building.**

Please help us enforce our rules and lead by example by removing your hats when you enter the building.

Emergency Closings and Delays

If the school must be closed or the opening delayed because of inclement weather or other conditions, the school will notify the following radio and television stations:

WLUC TV6, The Bear 93.1,
WMIQ-94.1, WIMK 94.3 FM,
WZNL 1450 AM, WGLQ 97.1,
WCMM 102.5, WGKL 105.5,
WCHT 600, WYKX 104.7,
WDBC 680 AM, ABC TV10
(WBUP), WNMU 90.1, WMXG
106.3.

Nordic Veterans Honored

The window display in the main entrance of the school has been set up in honor of North Dickinson graduates who have or who are

servicing our country.

The right side of the display is designated to North Dickinson graduates who are currently servicing our country. Their name, photo, address, and email are posted with their permission. Community members and students are encouraged to write to these graduates to thank them for servicing our country. Some are currently serving overseas. There is nothing like a message or package from family or friends to lift their spirits.

The left side of the display is to honor those who have served our country and are no longer active.

The center display is in memory of SFC James D. Priestap who made the ultimate sacrifice serving this country. SFC Priestap has two children in North Dickinson, Brody and Frankie. They are very proud of their father's heroism.

If you meet a North Dickinson graduate who has served our country, please thank them, take the time to write a quick note, or send a package to those who are currently serving. If you visit the school, please check out the display. Also, if we have omitted anyone who has served, please contact the school office or email Tina Anderson at: tanderson@go-nordics.com

The school would like to thank those who have contributed to making this display a success including, Connie Priestap Murray and her family, The Department of Veterans Affairs, the VFW Post, and Wayne Nelson for working on a flag display that will be permanently mounted across from the display. Also, a huge thank you to those who are "in" the display for their service to our country. We cheer the Nordics on every year for their accomplishments in school, but let's give these men and women a huge "salute" for their service after school. We couldn't be prouder!

Booster Club Project

The Nordic Booster Club recently completed a project near our football field (discus area), where topsoil was put down, seeded, and mulched. We hope to have a nice grass area next year that will be used to better serve our discus landing area along with a practice area for our football team that will relieve some of the pressure on our playing field. This will also make a nice area for our gym classes to play baseball or other games. This is also a popular area for the children to play during our football games. The Booster Club would like to thank Mr. Mattson's Environmental Science Class for helping with the preparation and mulching, John Wagner for the donation of the mulching machine, and Randy Oman for donating cedar poles for the project. We would also like to thank Darrell Oman who helped coordinate the project and all the people who volunteered to help make this happen.

Schedule Change – Jr. High Boys Basketball Since Kingsford ended up with two teams, North Dickinson will be playing Kingsford-Gold at home on December 7th instead of Niagara.

Picture Retakes

Picture retakes will be Wednesday, November 18th at 8:30 A.M. Remember to return your original pictures. Students may also have their picture taken at this time if they missed the first date. Pricing information is available in the office. Payment must accompany the new picture order.

Driver Education Segment II Classes

Segment II Classes for students who took the driver education classes this summer will be held at the school. Classes will meet Monday, November 2nd, Tuesday, November 3rd

and Monday, November 9th. **Mrs. Talon's class** will meet from 3:30-5:30 on Mondays and 6:30-8:30 on Tuesday. **Mr. Murray's class** will meet 4:30-6:30 on Mondays and 6:30-8:30 on Tuesday.

End of 1st Marking Period / Report Cards Issued

The first marking period of the 2009-10 school year will end on Friday, November 6th. Report cards will be issued on Wednesday, November 11, 2009.

Early Dismissal/ Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences will be held on Thursday, November 12th. School will be dismissed at 12:45 PM that day. Teachers will be available from 1:30-4:00 and 5:00-7:30 PM.

November-No School Days

There will be no school on Monday, November 16th (hunting season) and Thursday, November 26th & Friday, November 27th (Thanksgiving).

Volleyball District Tournaments-

Volleyball districts will begin at Carney-Nadeau High School in a non-tradition format. N. D. vs. Carney at 6:00 PM CST on Thursday, November 5th. If we win, we advance to the finals on Friday or Saturday, November 6th or 7th at North Dickinson. The opponent would be determined from competitions between the following schools – Superior Central, North Central and Bark River-Harris held on November 3rd and 5th.

Veteran's Day Program

The Veteran's Day Program is scheduled for Wednesday, November 11th at 1:30 P.M. The ND students

will honor all veterans in our area. Cake and coffee will be served after the program

Christmas Break

Tuesday, December 22nd is the last day of school before Christmas break. School will resume on Monday, January 4, 2010.

Christmas Concert / Elementary Program

The Christmas band concert will be held Tuesday, December 8th at 7:30 PM. Both the middle school and high school bands will participate.

The Christmas program for the elementary and 5th & 6th grade band will be held at 1:30 PM on Monday, December 21st.

Jump Rope For Heart / Hoops for Heart

is scheduled for

Wednesday, November 4th.

Students are getting ready to help raise money for this cause; your support is needed.

En la clase de Español—In Spanish Class:

¡Hola! Learning is in full swing in Spanish class. We learned about “El Día de la Raza” (or Columbus Day here in the U.S.) on October 12th. This fiesta celebrates the many cultures that have resulted from Columbus’ arrival in the New World. Next month, we will learn about the fiesta “Día de los Muertos” (Day of the Dead). This holiday is often confused with Halloween, but is very different. It is a very traditional holiday in Hispanic communities, and honors the memories of loved ones who have passed away. Slowly, our vocabulary is growing. Topics we are currently working with are: numbers, days of the week, and soon, the alphabet. Some useful vocabulary that will be introduced is: **¿Puedo ir al baño?—Can I go to the bathroom? Agua, por favor.—Can I get some water, please?**

**Por favor—please
Gracias—Thank you
De nada—You’re welcome
Sí-yes, No-no**

PTO Information

PTO is saving Econo Food and Super One slips, ink cartridges, Box Tops for Education, Kids Caps and Cash Milk Tops. Any Campbell’s Soup labels we receive will go to the Felch VFW Women’s Auxiliary. A special thank you goes out to the PTO for purchasing classroom projector screens and speakers.

The kindergarten class has been very busy the last month learning all about letters and letter sounds. In November, we will start putting the letters together to read words. Please continue to read every night with your child so that they can earn their monthly Book-It award from Pizza Hut.

The first grade class has been really working hard! We are reading everything in sight and will soon begin the accelerated reader program. We are adding and starting to subtract using number families and we are experimenting with states of matter in science class. We would like to thank Mrs. Talon for doing writing workshop with us. Our stories are coming along and we are having so much fun writing them! -Please keep practicing words with your children and listening to them read!

The second grade will have a Thanksgiving play on Tuesday, November 27, 2009 at 2:30 P.M.

The third grade students have learned a great deal about the Ojibwa, Potawatomi, and Ottawa tribes of Michigan. The students created a project to depict their lives in the 1700’s. Also, students need to keep practicing counting change and money. A great website to practice math is <http://www.netrox.net/~labush/math.org> Keep working on reading homework. Also, Reading Olympics starts Novem-

ber 5th. There are teams for the 3rd-8th grades. The libraries at school have all of the books available for students to check out. Seven books and journals need to be completed by January 8th. Students may read the books independently, with parents, or listen to them on tape. Some of the books are available at the library in town or can be requested through the North Dickin-son Branch. Please see Mrs. Slagle for a Reading Olympic Journal to get started.

Fourth Graders are working on descriptive paragraphs in English and are continuing to learn about Michigan in Social Studies. We just finished enjoying a popcorn and movie party for winning the Homecoming Spirit Week.

Fifth Graders just finished writing about a person they admired and are currently working on spooky, disgusting, and hilarious recipes for Halloween.

In Science we are learning about force and motion. We did some fun and exciting experiments in our new science lab! We’ve been trying to type most of our assignments so we can become better typists. We LOVE the fun websites that Miss Tina linked onto our Nordic web page. In November, we will begin creating our own stories that will be made into hard cover books.

Elementary Library News

The PTO purchased new books—a Big Thanks to the PTO. The students will enjoy them. A few of the new books that have entered our library are: **The Snow Day** by Komako Sakai, **Mudshark** by Gary Paulsen, **Skippyjon Jones Lost in Spice** by Judy Schachner, **Bird, Butterfly, Eel** by James Prosek, and **The Magician’s Elephant** by Kate DiCamillo. **The Baby Mouse Series** and cookbooks have been the favorite book choices this month.