



Minnetonka School District, ISD #276
 Dennis Peterson, Ph.D., Superintendent
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School Board

Chris Vitale, Chair	Patrick Lee-O'Halloran, Director
Mark Ambrosen, Vice Chair	Dr. John Odom, Director
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AROUND MINNETONKA

WINTER 2022

NEWS FROM MINNETONKA PUBLIC SCHOOLS



UPDATE ON 2021-22 SCHOOL BOARD GOALS

Each year, the School Board sets goals for Minnetonka Public Schools. The Board's goals for 2021-22 focus on maximizing opportunities for students academically, socially and emotionally. "It is the mission of Minnetonka Schools to provide an exceptional, world-class, child-centered education for all students who enter our classrooms, and that means providing multiple pathways for students to achieve their personal aspirations," said Chris Vitale, School Board Chair. "Each student brings their own perspectives and strengths to our District. It is our ongoing work as a community to ensure that students are supported so that they can thrive."

The goal for **Excellence in Student Well-being and Belonging** continues districtwide efforts to build a culture of positive self-regard, connection and inclusivity. Highlights from the District's work toward this goal thus far include:

- Partnership with the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement to implement additional District social-emotional resources
- Belonging Committees established at all schools and myriad efforts underway to support well-being and belonging at each school

The goal for **Excellence in Student Learning and Support** outlines efforts to enhance student learning at every level through Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, the expansion of Tonka Online full e-learning program opportunities, the strategic use of District space and the ongoing monitoring and implementation of the COVID-19 Safe Learning Plan. Highlights from the District's work toward this goal thus far include:

- Mapping the plan for the future of the Tonka Online K-12 full e-learning program
- Approval of construction for the new VANTAGE/MOMENTUM building
- Ongoing updates to the Safe Learning Plan

Want to learn more? Read about progress toward the goals at www.minnetonkaschools.org/GoalsUpdate22

MINNETONKA SCHOOLS IMPORTANT DATES

FEBRUARY 2022

- February is Black History Month
- 3.....School Board Regular Meeting, 7 p.m.
- 6-11....Minnetonka Public Schools Foundation Dream Makers 2022 (Virtual Event)
- 10.....Gr 8-11 "Experience Minnetonka," 5:30-8 p.m. (Virtual Event)
- 18.....E-learning Day K-12, Professional Learning
- 21.....No School K-12, DSC Closed, Presidents Day
- 24.....School Board Study Session, 6 p.m.

MARCH 2022

- 3.....School Board Regular Meeting, 7 p.m.
- 3-4.....Parent Teacher Conferences
- 3.....E-learning Day K-12, Parent Teacher Conferences
- 4.....No School K-12, Parent Teacher Conferences
- 17.....School Board Study Session, 6 p.m.
- 25.....3rd Quarter Ends
- 28-Apr 1.....No School K-12, Spring Break

APRIL 2022

- 4.....No School K-12, Planning and Grading Day
- 5.....4th Quarter Begins
- 7.....School Board Regular Meeting, 7 p.m.
- 15.....No School K-12, DSC Closed
- 18.....E-learning Day K-12, Professional Learning
- 21.....School Board Study Session, 6 p.m.
- 22-23.Tonka Pride Sale

STAY CONNECTED WITH MINNETONKA SCHOOLS



For more updates from around Minnetonka, follow us on social media and read our featured news stories on our website at minnetonkaschools.org.

EXPERIENCE MAKES THE DIFFERENCE!

TONKA ONLINE IS ENROLLING IN GRADES K-12 FOR 2022-23

Minnetonka Schools offers Tonka Online, a premiere e-learning experience for students in grades K-12. The program is now accepting enrollment in all grades for the 2022-23 school year.

Tonka Online was initially developed as a supplemental program for grades 9-12 to support students who thrive in a more independent learning environment. **Now, we're proud to build upon nearly 10 years of successful e-learning through Tonka Online and offer a full online option at all grade levels.** Minnetonka's years of experience in e-learning ensures that students receive an exceptional experience.

Learn more and enroll at minnetonkaschools.org/TonkaOnline



MINNETONKA SCHOOLS CALL FOR NOMINATIONS: CHILD-CENTERED EXCELLENCE AWARDS

When you think of excellence in the Minnetonka Public School District, is there a person who comes to mind who helps to make the District exceptional? A teacher or para? A staff member? A volunteer in the schools? Whether you are a parent, student, staff member or community member, you have the opportunity to nominate that person for a Minnetonka Schools Child-centered Excellence Award.

Award honorees are selected from the pool of nominations by a committee of past award honorees. Honorees will be recognized at the District's annual Celebration of Excellence Awards Ceremony on May 12, 2022. Additional details about the celebration will be provided as the event approaches.

Please take a few moments to learn more about the award categories and to acknowledge a school employee or community member for their dedication and impact by nominating them for a Child-Centered Excellence Award at minnetonkaschools.org/celebrate

Nominations are open through February 28, 2022.

AWARD CATEGORIES INCLUDE:

- Bradley G. Board Award for Excellence in Elementary Education
- Minnetonka Award for Child-centered Excellence in Teaching E-learners
- Joyce Gustafson Memorial Award
- Team Award for Child-centered Collaboration
- Minnetonka Employee Award for Child-centered Excellence
- Spinnaker Award (for community members' volunteerism and efforts in support of schools)
- Minnetonka Award for Child-centered Excellence in Teaching

MESSAGE from the Superintendent

As the District navigates the challenges of COVID every day, we are continuing to provide students with a high-quality educational experience in all grades. We realize that some of the changes in the Safe Learning Plan require students, parents and staff to adjust, but our constant focus is on keeping students and staff safe and in school. We know that most students are learning at high levels.

Another aspect of our efforts to support students again this year is addressing their mental health needs, which has been more challenging with the impact of COVID mitigation efforts. We realize that some of the measures we are using to keep students safe and learning at high levels are also creating serious mental issues for some students. The vulnerable students need our support and the support their families provide to get them through this challenging time.

We are also continuing the great work required by the School Board through the goals they have established this year. Minnetonka has been focused on academic success that enables graduates to be successful in life, and we are continuing to make improvements that will lead to greater learning and more success. Ironically, some even criticize us for those efforts.

The goals for this year focus on excellence for all students and their well-being. We have made significant progress on assuring those struggling students achieve at higher levels and make important progress throughout their years in school. The Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) program has built on prior efforts to support students at various levels of achievement by assuring that data are used to make determinations for the next level of intervention. These efforts include students receiving Special Education services, but it is not limited to those students. We want every student to be successful, and these new strategies are helping us assure that goal is met.

Other work under the goals includes continuing our efforts to assure that all students believe they belong in our schools and are respected for who they are. We are also continuing work on the expectation that we will broaden our already diverse staff even further.

Dr. Dennis Peterson, Superintendent