

# Ellsworth Public School Newsletter March 2023



## From Our Superintendent:

Dear Ellsworth Patrons,

The following is a narrative we prepared for a federal grant opportunity to upgrade our mechanical heating system. It contains some interesting information I thought we should share with our public.

The Ellsworth Public School District #514 in Ellsworth Minnesota is a very unique district in the Southwest corner of the state. The Ellsworth school district consists of 80.99 square miles of mostly farmland with limited industry. The only town in the district is the city of Ellsworth which has a population of 390. The actual school district is rural and remote with limited resources. Because the district is located on the Iowa border, it is landlocked to the south, and it is a significant distance to any other Minnesota district. The district shares extra curricular activities with the closest neighboring district in Adrian, Minnesota which is 13 miles from Ellsworth.

According to national statistics, the median household income in Ellsworth is \$44,432, which compares to the national median household income of \$62,843. The median rent is \$513 compared to \$1,062 nationally. The median home value is \$58,100 compared to \$217,500 nationally. That would make a tax base of approximately 24% of what the average school could base their taxes on. Expenses per student is \$14,647. The national average is \$12,239. Therefore, it is more expensive to educate students in Ellsworth than the average school, but it is harder to raise the money because of the tax base. However, the students receive a good education. The student-teacher ratio is 8:1 while the national average is 17:1. Education expenses are 62% instruction, 33% support services and that leaves 5% for other, which limits funds for keeping up equipment and buildings. About 50% of the students are on free and reduced hot lunch. According to NICHE, a publication on the internet that ranks nearly 100,000 schools and districts based on statistics and millions of opinions from students and parents, Ellsworth Public School District gets an overall Niche grade of B. It considers Ellsworth Public School District an above average public school with 47% of students proficient in math and 62% in reading. It is the 20th safest school in Minnesota (out of 359), the 47th best place to teach in Minnesota (out of 355) and ranks 56th out of 356 districts with the best teachers in Minnesota.

The total net tax capacity (the value of the property which is taxable) for the district is \$3,751,980 so there is limited ability to levy for facilities projects or maintenance. Being so rural, the district has also struggled with decreasing enrollment. In the 2019-2020 school year, the district recorded 161 pupil units. This number has dropped to 136 pupil units in 2022-2023. The funding formula for Minnesota allows \$6863 per pupil so this has caused a significant decrease in pupil funding per year. It is estimated that the pupil units will level off in the 120-130 range for the next 10 years. In Minnesota, students may open enroll freely to neighboring districts. Ellsworth currently has 21 students enrolled into the Ellsworth district and 38 open enrolled out for a deficit of 17 students which also negatively impacts the district finances.

Continued on next page



The Ellsworth School Board is very interested in a mechanical heating system upgrade for the district buildings. The average age of the buildings in the district is over 50 years. The original 1906 building is still in use with a 1936 addition, a 1956 addition (which contains the currently in-use boiler plant), and a 1978 addition. Except for the 1978 addition, the entire connected building still runs on electrical fuses and fuse boxes, so major electrical updates including breaker boxes would be a first line of business should a mechanical update get funded and approved. The current heating system runs off two 67 year old boilers. While the boilers have continued to be maintained and continue to operate, the age of the boilers is a great concern. The boilers run on fuel oil and the district contracts 20,000 gallons annually to heat the building. Three years ago, fuel oil was \$1.25 per gallon, this year, the contract was for \$4.11 per gallon increasing the fuel oil expense \$57,200.

Of greater concern is the lack of control over the heating system. Over the years, the controls systems for the buildings have deteriorated to the point where there is very little control over the heat in most places in the building. The general practice currently is to run the boilers at high heat early in the morning, and let the heat level off as the day goes by, often by opening windows to the outside. Obviously this is an inefficient method of heating and cooling. It is also that desire of the Ellsworth School Board to consider replacement of aged doors and windows throughout the building. Obviously new, efficient doors and windows would assist in the overall upgrade of the efficiency of the school facility.

The Ellsworth Public School District has a proud history of academic and athletic success. The residents of the district are determined that the district retain its unique identity and its place in the city of Ellsworth. Over the years, this community has raised and donated funds to the school district to assist in projects. Last year the Community Club donated \$5000 to purchase Chromebook computers for students. This year the Booster Club donated over \$7500 for gym upgrades including shot clocks and new basketball backboards. Residents and board members alike show up to fix or maintain the building on all levels just because they want to see their school succeed. The community wants this school to succeed. Unfortunately, because of enrollment concerns, taxation limitations, and economic uncertainty, previous school boards could not take the necessary actions to keep the heating systems up to date. Because of this, the district is now in a difficult situation. The school board will be considering several funding and levy options for the future in order to repair and maintain the district finances and improve the mechanical system. Public information releases will be forthcoming as well as public input opportunities will be given at later dates as these decisions move forward.

Currently, the district has a significant positive balance in the general fund. This is due to careful management by the board, but also the supplemental federal governmental funds from COVID. As we move forward, careful consideration of expenses will play an important role in the future of the district.

Dave Ackerman  
Superintendent

A large, stylized graphic of the word "Spring" in a blue, textured font. A red tulip with a green stem and leaves is positioned behind the letter 'i'.



# March 2023 Calendar



Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

[Link  
to  
Red Rock  
Conference](#)

1

2

BB Sect Tourn.

3

BB Sect. Tourn.

4

BB Sect. Tour.

5

6

7

8

9

BB Sect. Tourn.

10

School Musical  
6:30

BB Sect. Tourn.

11

School  
Musical 6:30

BB Sect. Tour.

12

13

14  
Large Group  
Music Contest  
At Luverne  
EPTO Mtg. 6:30

15

16  
BB Sect. Tourn.  
GBB State Tourn.  
5-12 Music  
Concert @ 7:00  
ECFE @ 5:30

17

GBB State  
Tourn.  
Grandparents  
Day 1:30-3:00

18

GBB State  
Tourn.

19

20  
School Board  
Mtg. @ 6:00pm

21

22  
BB State  
Tourn.

23

End of 3rd  
Quarter  
BB State Tourn.

24

Early Out 12:30  
BB State Tourn.

25

BB State  
Tourn.

26

27

28  
SB Luv. (H)

29

30  
Early Out 12:30  
Parent/Teacher  
Conf. 2:00-7:00  
Baseball Luv (H)  
Track @ MCC

31

# March 2023

## Breakfast Menu

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

This Institution Is  
An Equal  
Opportunity  
Provider

1  
Omelet  
Toast w/Jelly  
Fruit  
Juice  
Milk

2  
Long John  
Yogurt  
Fruit  
Juice  
Milk

3  
Cereal  
Toast w/Jelly  
Fruit  
Milk

6  
Cereal  
Toast w/Jelly  
Fruit  
Milk

7  
French Toast  
Sticks w/Syrup  
Sausage Link  
Fruit  
Juice  
Milk

8  
Ham, Egg and  
Cheese  
on a Biscuit  
Fruit  
Juice  
Milk

9  
Pop Tarts  
Yogurt  
Fruit  
Juice  
Milk

10  
Cereal  
Toast w/Jelly  
Fruit  
Milk

13  
Cereal  
Toast w/Jelly  
Fruit  
Milk

14  
Pancakes  
w/Syrup  
Fruit  
Juice  
Milk

15  
Breakfast  
Combo Bar  
Fruit  
Juice  
Milk

16  
Coffee Cake  
Cheese Stick  
Fruit  
Milk

17  
Cereal  
Toast w/Jelly  
Fruit  
Milk

20  
Cereal  
Toast w/Jelly  
Fruit  
Milk

21  
Mini Waffles  
w/Syrup  
Sausage Link  
Fruit  
Juice  
Milk

22  
HashBrown  
Egg Bake  
Toast w/Jelly  
Fruit  
Juice  
Milk

23  
Banana Bread  
Yogurt  
Fruit  
Milk

24  
Cereal  
Toast w/Jelly  
Fruit  
Milk

27  
Cereal  
Toast w/Jelly  
Fruit  
Milk

28  
Funnel Cakes  
Fruit  
Juice  
Milk

29  
Sausage, Egg  
and Cheese  
On a Croissant  
Fruit  
Juice  
Milk

30  
Mini Donuts  
Cheese Stick  
Fruit  
Juice  
Milk

31  
Cereal  
Toast w/Jelly  
Fruit  
Milk



# March 2023 Lunch Menu

**MONDAY**

**TUESDAY**

**WEDNESDAY**

**THURSDAY**

**FRIDAY**

<p><b>THIS INSTITUTION IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER</b></p>		<p><b>1</b> <i>Pork Chopette Carrots Dinner Roll Fruit Milk</i></p>	<p><b>2</b> <i>Spaghetti Garlic Toast Peas Fruit Milk</i></p>	<p><b>3</b> <i>Baked Potato w/Toppings Bread Fruit Milk</i></p>
<p><b>6</b> <i>Goulash Green Beans Bread Fruit Milk</i></p>	<p><b>7</b> <i>Hamburger on a Bun Baked Beans Fruit Milk</i></p>	<p><b>8</b> <i>Scalloped Potatoes and Ham Carrots Bread Fruit Milk</i></p>	<p><b>9</b> <i>Lasagna Peas Garlic Toast Fruit Milk</i></p>	<p><b>10</b> <i>Fish Nuggets Lettuce Bread Fruit Milk</i></p>
<p><b>13</b> <i>Pulled Pork on a Bun Sweet Potato Tots Fruit Milk</i></p>	<p><b>14</b> <i>Chicken Fried Steak Peas Bread Fruit Milk</i></p>	<p><b>15</b> <i>Corn Dog Corn Chips w/Salsa Baked Beans Fruit Milk</i></p>	<p><b>16</b> <i>Chili Cinnamon Roll Crackers w/Cheese Fruit Juice Milk</i></p>	<p><b>17</b> <i>Macaroni and Cheese Broccoli Fruit Milk</i></p>
<p><b>20</b> <i>Ham and Cheese on a Bun Baked Beans Fruit Milk</i></p>	<p><b>21</b> <i>Super Nachos Green Beans Dinner Roll Fruit Milk</i></p>	<p><b>22</b> <i>Turkey Gravy Over Mashed Potato Carrots Dinner Roll Fruit Milk</i></p>	<p><b>23</b> <i>Tater Tot Hotdish Peas Bread Fruit Milk</i></p>	<p><b>24</b> <i>Chicken Fajita Lettuce Fruit Milk</i></p>
<p><b>27</b> <i>Grilled Chicken Patty w/Stuffing Carrots Fruit Milk</i></p>	<p><b>28</b> <i>BBQ on a Bun Baked Beans Fruit Milk</i></p>	<p><b>29</b> <i>Taco Haystacks Bread Fruit Milk</i></p>	<p><b>30</b> <i>Chicken Alfredo Green Beans Garlic Breadstick Fruit Milk</i></p>	<p><b>31</b> <i>Shrimp Cheese Stick Carrots Bread Fruit Milk</i></p>

**Important**

**School Musical**  
March 10th - 11th @ 6:30

**Large Group Music Contest**  
March 14 @ Luverne

**EPTO Meeting**  
March 14th @ 6:30

**5th - 12th Music Concert**  
March 16th @ 7:00

**ECFE**  
March 16th @ 5:30

**Grandparents Day**  
March 17th - 1:30 - 3:00

**School Board Meeting**  
March 20th @ 6:00



**End of Third Quarter**  
March 23rd

**School in Session**  
**Early Dismissal**  
March 24th @ 12:30

**Early Dismissal**  
March 30th @ 12:30

**Parent - Teacher Conferences**  
March 30th 2:00-7:00



# GRANDPARENTS DAY

FRIDAY, MARCH 17  
FROM 1:30-3:00 PM.



INVITES SHOULD HAVE GONE HOME WITH STUDENTS IN GRADES PREK (MWF CLASS)-4TH GRADE. PLEASE RSVP TO YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER WITH THE NUMBER OF GUESTS COMING.



# SENIOR SPOTLIGHT 2023



### Jazlyn Marie Vander Poel

Jazlyn is the daughter of Ben and Mindy Vander Poel. And on June 28th she celebrates her birthday. Jazlyn has two siblings, Danielle and Ruger. Some classes that keep her busy this year are Economics, Art, and TA. Her favorite class would be art. If you would like to treat Jazlyn to her favorite food, well you could make her a big plate of spaghetti!. Jazlyn's favorite color would be red, and her favorite teachers are Ms. Patrick and Mrs. Huisman. Jazlyn says that her favorite memory from High School would be woods class her Junior year, and a favorite memory from Elementary was playing cherry bomb in 5th and 6th grade. Jazlyn says that her favorite pastime thing to do is hunt. She participates in Softball in the spring. Jazlyn works at Park View Manor in Ellsworth and says the best part about her job is the residence. Her advice to underclassmen is: "Don't Procrastinate!" And Jazlyn's future plans include going to Mitchell Tech and becoming a Power Lineman.

Best of luck to you Jazlyn!



Matilyn is the daughter of Doug and Lori Kruse. She was born on June 30th, 2005, Matilyn has two siblings, Hannah (Nolte) and Grace. Some classes that keep her busy this year are: College Algebra, College Biology, College Comp 2, and other various college courses. Her favorite class would be Independent Life Skills. Activities Matilyn is involved in this year are: FFA, Student Council President, NHS Vice President, Class Vice President, and Basketball, with her favorite being FFA. If you would like to treat Matilyn to her favorite food, well that would be a medium rare steak from her parents freezer! Matilyn's favorite color would be lime green, and she says that Mrs. Romans is her favorite teacher. Matilyn's favorite memory from High School was when Mr. Palm came to school thinking he was wearing a black sweater when really he was wearing a purple sweater. And a favorite memory from Elementary was when her class used to play king of the hill. Which involved pushing every kid off a mountain of snow until you were the last one standing! In Matilyn's spare time you can find her sewing. She is employed at Ellsworth Parkview Manor as a CNA. She says the best part about her job is the new friendships she makes with the residents. Her advice to underclassmen is: "Have fun and make the most out of school so you leave with memories not doubts" Matilyn plans on going to SDSU for Animal Science.

Best of luck to you Matilyn!



### Matilyn Anna Mulder

# 2023

# Class of 2023

Gabriel M. Wiebrand

Gabriel (Gabe) is the son of Mike, Samantha, Darcy and Angela. He celebrates his birthday on December 29th, 2004. As for any siblings, Gabe says that he has some brothers and sisters. Some classes that Gabe is taking this year include: Trigonometry, Art I, Psychology, T.A. and Physics this year. Gabe's favorite food would be an orange and his favorite color is also orange. When asked who his favorite teacher is, he said it would have to be Mr. Palm. A favorite High School memory of Gabe's is having all those snow days off! And an Elementary favorite memory he adds was just leaving Elementary. Gabe's favorite pastime would be reading. As for his advice to underclassmen: "Double negatives are not funny!" After High School Gabriel plans to go into the Navy.

Best of Luck to you Gabriel!



Paige is the daughter of Mark and Ann Bixby. She celebrates her birthday on May 16th, 2005. She has three siblings, Madyson, Rylan and Caycee. Classes for Paige this year are: T.A., Design Concepts, Independent Living Skills, and Economics. With Independent Living being her favorite class, and Mrs. Kramer being her favorite teacher. Paige's extra-curricular activity includes trap shooting in Rock Rapids with the Lyon County Straight Shooters. Chicken alfredo and the color red are some of Paige's favorites. A few favorite pastimes that she likes to do are hunting and watching TV. A High School memory for Paige is when she was in Clothing and Textiles, she was sewing and Seth said "wait, I'm not straight." and an Elementary memory would be playing outside in the winter and making snow forts. Paige works at Parkview Manor in Ellsworth and says the best part about her job is seeing the faces of her residents when she makes them laugh or smile. Paige's advice to underclassmen is: "Don't pretend to be someone you're not. We all know who you are anyway." As for her future plans, Paige plans on going to Minnesota West for her generals. Then hopefully continue her education for Interior Design.

Best of luck to you and your ventures, Paige!



Paige Marie Bixby



2023

  
Graduate



**The Musical will be on Friday and Saturday,  
March 10 & 11, at 6:30 pm.**

Tickets need to be bought for Ellsworth's production of "Disney's Moana Jr" on March 10 and 11 at 6:30 pm by Friday, March 3. Tickets are \$12 each, and include a meal and the performance. The meal will be served from 5:30 pm to 6:15 pm on both nights. There will be tickets for just the performance available each night, as well as concessions. The meal will be spaghetti with a variety of sides and desserts. Cast, Chorus, and Crew members eat for free both nights, and awards will be given out Saturday night for any seniors and high school members.

If there are any parents of drama kids willing to help in the kitchen, please email Mrs. Kramer at [rachel.kramer@ellsworth.mntm.org](mailto:rachel.kramer@ellsworth.mntm.org). You will be able to eat a meal for free, as well as see the performance for free that night.

For both performance nights, all cast and chorus members should be in black pants and black or white socks. I want to also give a big thank you to Ms. Patrick and her art students for making some of the set, and Mrs. Romans and Mrs. Heikes for helping with some other props as well.

## Cast/Crew and Chorus

Harley Blom  
Logan Bossert,  
Sierra Custer,  
Josh Jansma  
Landon Leuthold  
Marcus Lewis,  
Angelo Trotter  
Caycee Bixby,  
Rylan Bixby,  
Colton Blom  
Andrea Honken,  
Kiara Lewis  
Carson McClure,  
Joel Trotter,  
Kolton Gieseke,  
Josh Honken,  
Brylin Boltjes,  
Allison Honken  
Blake Simpson  
Makenna Boltjes,  
Caitlin Custer,  
Kelsey Deutsch  
John Essman  
Lauren Gaul,  
Erica Essman



# High School Band and Choir



The band had their last pep band performance of the year on February 16th. We have been able to add several songs to our play list throughout the year, which shows how hard they are working.

Now, we are working on our concert and contest pieces. Both groups will be performing at Large Group Contest in Luverne on March 14th. Our next concert will be March 16th.



## Young Adult Novels

Young Adult Novels is one of two classes available to Juniors and Seniors for English this semester. In this class we read 9 novels, one of each is an independent read by each student outside of class. We are reading three books that deal with different aspects/points of view on World War 2, which are part of our historical fiction unit. The students have been doing well with in-class discussions, and the project assigned for each novel. It is great seeing them learn about an historical event everyone has heard of, by learning new details and seeing how it affected different people during that time.

- Mrs. Kramer

## Children's Literature

Children's Literature has spent the first month looking at picture books, and why it is so important to read to children during the early stages of life. We also discussed how picture books have changed throughout the years, and why they still matter to us today. We will then move on to middle grade chapter books, and explore the different themes presented in those. We will discuss why those themes are important for that age group, but also discuss why they are still relevant today.



-Mrs. Kramer





# Disney THE MOVIES THE MUSIC

Join us April 24th at 6:30pm  
For the K-4th Grade Spring Concert!



EPTO



**NEXT MEETING**  
**MARCH 14TH**  
**6:30 PM**  
**LIBRARY**



## Dance Camp

Great job to all the girls who participated in this year's dance camp! You guys did a great job! Thank you as well to Caycee Bixby, Rylan Bixby, and Mrs. Leah Deutsch for leading this dance camp this year.



The Staff would like to thank the School Board for

the pizza dinner that was provided for us in honor of educator paraprofessional week. We all appreciate your thoughtfulness. The pizza really hit the spot! Thanks!