
THE RIGHT TIME. Some of our facilities are inadequate, and some are out of space for some students.

- Safety and Code-Compliance are issues – Our parking lot is too small and the layout is unsafe. Buses, cars, and pedestrians all share the same spaces.
- Student Learning Space is inadequate – Teachers are sharing classrooms, and teaching in a storage room and small conference rooms.
- Students in modular classrooms lose instructional time – when changing into winter gear to go to lunch, library, and physical education.
- 5th and 6th graders don’t have access to a science room with standard equipment.

Elementary Physical Education Space Falls Short – With 757 children in eight grades (PreK-6), two dedicated spaces are needed to accommodate two classes at one time.
- PreK-6 children cannot use the gym because it is filled with other grades the entire day. The custodial staff must convert the cafeteria as a small activity space daily.

THE RIGHT SIZE. The Pierz motto of “just enough” played a big role in the planning of this referendum. The new proposal addresses critical needs. It does not include an auditorium and is less square footage. If the bond passes, the property tax increase will amount to less than $12 per month on an average-priced home in the district. The School Board has adopted a resolution to cap open enrollment so we won’t outgrow our facilities.

THE RIGHT STUFF. The Pierz motto of “just enough” plays a big role in the planning of this referendum. The new proposal will address inadequate facilities and improve our instructional model for about half of the 2017 request at just under $10 million or about half the cost of the last referendum ($8.8 million LESS). It does not include an auditorium and is less square footage. If the bond passes, the property tax increase will amount to less than $12 per month on an average-priced home in the district. The School Board has adopted a resolution to cap open enrollment so we won’t outgrow our facilities.

THE RIGHT PRICE. What Will It Cost Me?
- If the referendum is approved, the property tax increase on a Pierz School District average-valued home of $132,000 would be $140 per year or $11.67 per month. Want to learn more about your specific property? Contact Ehler’s, the school district’s financial advisor, to help calculate your tax impact. Call 1-800-552-1171 or email MNSchools@ehlers-inc.com with your parcel information. You may be eligible for tax relief see website for information.
Yet kids are being taught and are learning in a school that is better than most. "We’re a small community, we’ve put in multiple lines."

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**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

Q: What if the referendum doesn’t pass?
A: It is our duty to communicate the impact of your “yes” vote, as well as your “no” vote.

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Q: Can open enrollment be capped?
A: Yes. The Pierz School Board adopted a resolution to cap open enrollment in accordance with state law governing the practice on Feb. 28, 2018. State law permits a school board to limit the enrollment of nonresident students based on the capacity of a program, class, or school building. Pierz Schools established a maximum number of students that can be enrolled in each grade. First grade has exceeded that number and is closed to open enrollment immediately. All existing open enrolled students are required by law to be able to stay in Pierz schools.

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Q: Do I pay a lot of taxes?
A: No. Residents of the Pierz School District are paying significantly less property taxes for schools than residents of surrounding districts and less than the state average. On average, approximately $2,664 per student in local property taxes are collected from Minnesota residents. $928 per student is collected from Pierz District residents—that’s $1,736 under the state average.

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Q: I don’t have any students in the district. Why should I support this referendum?
A: Education is the first step to an effective workforce. What school leaders learn today could fuel the community’s economy tomorrow. Research shows that property values rise higher near good schools. Residents and businesses use good schools as selection criteria when relocating. An increased commercial and residential tax base spreads the cost of public investments across more properties and can lessen tax impacts over time.

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Q: What if the referendum doesn’t pass?
A: If our district did not have enough students to fill our 2018-2019 school year, we would consider school consolidation. If that doesn’t work, we would consider a school referendum for 2019-2020.

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Q: Why do you support this referendum?
A: Tom Otte, principal Pioneer Elementary

“Our problems are not going to go away; the cost is never going to go down. If we are going to do something this will be the best bang for our buck right now.”

Dean Virnig, School Board Member

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Janel Betsinger, parent

“There are safety concerns. I have a young child in the portables. I don’t like that they are not behind the secured locked doors of the school building.”

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“I’m proud to tell people that I’m from Pierz and many times outsiders will mention the great 9-hole golf course, the great market and how successful our kids are in school and athletics. I feel our school system is an asset to our community and a key to help Pierz stay a viable small town.”

Steve Stumpf, grandparent

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**NEEDS**

“There are safety concerns. I have a young child in the portables. I don’t like that they are not behind the secured locked doors of the school building.”

Janel Betsinger, parent

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“I am proud to tell people that I’m from Pierz and many times outsiders will mention the great 9-hole golf course, the great market and how successful our kids are in school and athletics. I feel our school system is an asset to our community and a key to help Pierz stay a viable small town.”

Steve Stumpf, grandparent

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“I see being between 220-250 students a day. 5th and 6th grade from Pioneer and Holy Trinity come over to the band room. We are using the hallway outside the band room and storage closets, using every nook and cranny we can possibly find.”

Joel Pohland, band teacher

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“Parents dropping kids off have to avoid high school students walking across the parking lot to school and at the same time dodge the buses. It’s unsafe.”

Loren Meyer, Pioneer Elementary custodian

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“It would be beneficial to have scheduled gym space available to our preschoolers for consistency. Studies have shown the benefit between brain development and physical activity.”

Jodi Marshak, Head Start lead teacher

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“If our district did not have enough students to sustain these programs, our schools would be cutting programs and staff. This would cause our families to choose to send their children to other surrounding school districts. It’s important to keep these programs here in Pierz in order to keep our district alive and thriving. A thriving school goes hand in hand with a thriving community.”

Jennifer Sadlovsky, 3rd grade teacher and parent

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“This referendum is truly the bare bones of the benefit between brain development and physical activity.”

Toby Egan, mayor City of Pierz

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“Academic excellence creates community pride, which makes Pierz Schools a pillar for our city and surrounding communities.”

Eric Hanneken, Pierz chief of police

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“You can look around our District 48 schools and see this success in our excellent health care for our elders, local services that farmers can rely on, manufacturing, retail and food industries that provide good paying jobs. We love our Pierz school system as an asset to our community and a key to help Pierz stay a viable small town.”

Thomas Girtz, businessman and grandparent

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“Since I am the Majority Leader, serve on the Tax Reduction Committee, and made this one of my top priorities. I have NO intention of letting it go away.”

Paul Gazelka, senator (R)

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“We want the community to know we listened and heard what they said and the school board has capped open enrollment so that we don’t overgrow our needs.”

Rick Szulewski, School Board Member
It is with excitement and a bit of trepidation that I write this farewell note to you the residents, parents, and students of School District 484. This paper “Education Today” will be the last one that I will see put into publication. In case you haven’t heard yet—...I’m retiring!

I have been blessed with a wonderful career, working with the best co-workers in a community that I truly love. You see, I was raised on a dairy farm near Buckman, which means I attended Healy Jr./Sr. High School myself. I really bought into the importance of education early on. This very school and the teachers I had, certainly had great influence on me attending college to become a teacher myself. After 4 1/2 years of college, I found myself right back here doing some substitute teaching. It was that same summer when then Superintendent Reiny Opp and Junior High Principal Roy Miller called me and asked me if I would be interested in this “new” job call Community Education Director. It wasn’t exactly teaching but it was an opportunity to work in a school system promoting education. That was in 1980 and I have been here ever since. Certainly the job itself has changed over the years, but what hasn’t changed is the opportunity to serve great families that live in our communities of Buckman, Genola, Harding, Hillman, Lastrup and Pierz. In these 38 years, I have had countless opportunities to connect with so many of you, perhaps first as students and later, parents of students.

Producing and publishing “Education Today” began with our first edition in 1989. Twenty-nine years and 88 issues later it is still one of our main public relations tool for getting information out to community members. Granted, we now have other means of getting news into your hands like eNewsletters, Facebook, emails, etc. But, I must admit, there is something about sitting in a recliner holding a full-page newspaper in front of me that I enjoy. What started as an 8-page, black and white, large print paper, has evolved into a 12-page, colored production of what’s happening in your school district. And certainly, I cannot take all the credit for what you get to read. I pretty much beg, borrow, and steal from our teachers and administration to put out something worthy of your time to look at.

Being with Pierz Community Education since its beginning, I have had the pleasure of offering a “bagillion” classes, activities, trips, clubs, etc. for individuals of all ages to participate in. Putting out a quality program means seeking out and sometimes persuading an individual to share their talent with others. A few of the programs that I take great pride in starting up include: Pierz Regional Education program for Adults with Disabilities, Pierz Community Theatre, and our Driver Safety class offered through AARP for our senior population.

To elaborate just a bit on these, Community Education took over from the City of Pierz, summer programming that included swimming lessons and morning baseball that at the time served around 100 students. These last few years, this program has averaged 27 different activities, with over 1400 registrations each year. We still do swimming and baseball, but have expanded to include safety camps, babysitting clinics, theater, craft-type classes, instrumental lessons, Spanish, piano and a multitude of recreational activities/camps. And even more amazing has been keeping these activities so very affordable to families BECAUSE of local civic organizations and the many city councils and township boards who have donated dollars year after year helping to defray the expenses associated with it.

The second program that brings such satisfaction to my job has been the Adults with Disabilities program. For a number of years now, I have tried to schedule an activity each month throughout the school year that in some small way brightens the day for these individuals AND thanks to the many community volunteers and community organizations—I believe we have made that happen.

A program that was on my “wish” list for many years, became a reality just two years ago with the forming of Pierz Community Theatre. With the help of Diane Haun, our High School Choir instructor, and Joel Pohland, our Band instructor, we have produced two spectacular summer musicals. It really is hard to express the proud feeling of being part of this adventure where you put people of all ages, talents, and walks of life, on the same stage and then provide a quality theatrical experience for community members. It’s been amazing!! And here’s a plug for our next production…expect the same as this summer “Oklahoma” comes to town.

The fourth program that involves our senior community population and is in cooperation with AARP is our Driver Safety classes. We in the Pierz School District are one of the top organizations in the area for setting up these classes and registering several hundred individuals in any given year. How cool is that, having our 70, 80 & 90 year olds calling our school to register?

Pierz Schools are well known for their quality programs throughout and Community Education is no exception. That success is due in part to the many individuals who throughout the years have served on the Community Education Advisory Council. Their continued support, input, and advice have been invaluable to me personally and to the program.

I hope you can sense that I truly feel that I have had the best job in the world, working with and for the best people in the world. WILL miss it…absolutely. But in my heart the time is right. I’ve got grandkids to love, cabin life to enjoy, and who knows maybe I will even become a traveler!! So, it is at this time I would like to express a heartfelt THANK YOU to all of you whose paths I have crossed. You have enriched my life beyond words.

- Mary Tschida

Happy Retirement to Mrs. Georgia Kretschmar. Mrs. Patsy Athman, Mrs. Mary Tschida and Mr. Randy Fischer. These four individuals have a combined 97 years of employment with our School District and an additional 23 years in another educational setting. That is a vast amount of experience, dedication and commitment to our students and families.

Mrs. Athman’s teaching career began in 1989 as a long term substitute teacher right here in Pierz. The following year she began a 19-year stint teaching FACs (Family and Consumer Science) in Upsala. It was in 2005 the FACs position opened in Pierz and Patsy has been here since. The majority of her time has been devoted to teaching classes such as Child Development, Foods and Nutrition, Sewing, Family Relationships, and Independent Living. When she produced the Adults with Disabilities program. For a number of years now, I have tried to schedule an activity each month throughout the school year that in some small way brightens the day for these individuals AND thanks to the many community volunteers and community organizations—I believe we have made that happen.

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Best wishes to our 2018 retirees
Notes from the Principal

As always, we’ve been busy at Pioneer Elementary School this winter. The month of February proved to be one where the students of Pioneer read and read and read. February is “I Love to Read Month” and culminates with the celebration of the birthday of Dr. Seuss. Every student in the school set a reading goal for the month, and if they made their goal they were given the opportunity to dump SLIME on the principal or one of several daring teachers. Our staff expends much energy all year trying to get our children to develop internal motivation; in February we have a little fun with it and add some external motivation. The kids loved it and almost 400 of them made their goal and dumped their portion of around 40-50 gallons of SLIME over one of several unwary, but willing, adults. All-in-all, it made for a fun event at the end of a highly engaging month of learning.

In addition to Operation Slime, the Pioneer PTO put on its second annual FREE Bingo for Books night. Because of the incredible level of participation last year, the venue was moved to the Pioneer Cafeteria this year. It was a good move as hundreds packed the event with every child going home with a free book, some with several new books.

We continue to dedicate an inordinate amount of time, focus, and energy on getting our children to grow academically by more than one year. At Pioneer, we now have a long history of getting more than one year’s growth in a single school year. At the same time, our biggest academic challenge continues to be our larger than average summer academic drop off. To address this challenge, we are partnering with the PTO to do a unique summer reading program. Although we don’t have the details ironed out yet, we will be in contact with students and parents closer to the end of the school year regarding our continued efforts. As parents, we must continue to bear some of the weight of our children’s summer drop off. In almost all cases of large summer academic drops, children have spent little time reading during June, July, and August. It is up to us, as parents, to play the role of teacher and help dedicate routines for reading at home during the summer. For those of us with little ones, we need to take 15 minutes per day and snuggle in with them for a good children’s book. And, for the those of us with children who can read on their own, we need to help them develop routines that prioritize reading on a daily basis. Summer, especially in MN, is a time for play and fun, but for the life-long success of our children, we must mix that fun with a good book.

As most of you know, April tends to be the month of the MN Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) for children in grades 3 and up. We have been knocking the socks off of this exam for a number of years now and hope to continue to outpace the students of MN. As parents, we can help by keeping to bedtime routines including getting our children a good night’s rest before their exam days and a good breakfast the morning of. Additionally, all the positive encouragement we can dish out will build confidence in our children to try their best. As educators, that is really all we hope for - a child’s best effort.

Mr. Otte
Celebrating 100

Ms. Tomala’s 1st Graders celebrated the 100th Day of school! They brought in 100 items to measure using a nonstandard measurement. Students also made a trail mix and sorted 100 food pieces into food type groups. They wrote about being 100, created art out of 100 and wrote 100 words from around their room.

Teamwork at its best

5th graders were given 18 minutes to work as a team and apply knowledge learned in Science about balance and unbalance forces. Teams were given the following items to construct a tower that at the end would balance a marshmallow. Items included were: 20 spaghetti noodles, 1 yard of tape, 1 yard of string, and a pair of scissors. The activity was harder than all anticipated.

Another fantastic musical in the books

Pioneer Elementary School performed the musical play “Let Your Hair Down Rapunzel.” The talented cast and crew was made up of 60 5th & 6th graders. The play was directed by Beth Claybaugh. Jacob Kruse taught the children the songs along with the choreography for the show. Kristie Voring, Bevly Ruprecht, and Angela Burnett and their crew put together costumes and makeup. Sandy Swaser and Zach Becker drew and painted the backdrops of the set. Loren Meyer was in charge of the sound and set. We also had the honor of working with three 7th grade assistant directors, Hayden Dodge, Kenny Schlegel, and Aiden Anderson this year. Their help directing, with snacks, and support was much appreciated. A dress rehearsal performance was held on Thursday, February 8, at 9:30 a.m. Over 800 elementary students and adults watched the first performance. An evening performance was held on Friday, February 9 at 7:00 p.m. in the Pioneer Elementary School Gym with over 200 people in the audience. The children did an outstanding job this year. Both performances were great, and everyone involved learned so much, from beginning to end.
Academic programs designed for students success

Academic programs at Pioneer and Healy run the full gamut - from helping struggling students to advanced programs and enriched learning, to providing college courses at no cost to students. Here are a few of examples of some of the programs offered.

Our newest program at Pioneer Elementary, SUCCESS, aims to help students that may need just a little extra help with reading skills by combining the efforts of both our Special Education and our Title 1 departments. Mrs. Miranda Hoheisel and Mrs. Tanya Thielen researched and implemented the program. "We have a vision for refining and maximizing reading instruction in Title I and Special Education by collaborating as a team and intervening early to close the gap for students who are below benchmark. Students will be provided intense individualized instruction through our SUCCESS program," says Mrs. Hoheisel. Mrs. Thielen adds, "Our motivation is to intervene with students before their reading deficits impact their academic success and to provide research-based interventions. Through this collaboration, and the use of closely monitored weekly data collection, we will be able to provide more tailored instruction for each student. Paraprofessionals assist the teachers to help make sure students are using their time wisely. Without the parapro's support, the teachers would not be able to accommodate all of the students.""}

The Schools courses (CIS) which are college classes taught at Healy by our highly qualified teachers. Students in CIS classes earn college credit while in high school – at no cost to families – classes and textbooks are all free. This means many students can graduate from high school with enough credits for an entire semester (or even an entire year or two!) of college. 

Collaborating with our Community

In addition to the CIS and career-focused courses at Healy, Horizon Health approached the district five years ago suggesting a Certified Nursing Assistant Class partnership. They would provide the instructor and facility, we just had to provide the students. Students take the course in the Fall of their Junior or Senior year free of charge. The only cost to students is the required certification assessment at the end of the course. Roughly fifty students have gained their certification since this opportunity began. Each student saves over $600 compared to the cost of obtaining the certification on their own. CNA licensure is also a requirement for students going into the nursing program. This course eliminates that additional requirement if they decide to enter the medical field. This program is just one example of how the Pierz community collaborates with our students.

Winter Olympics

3rd graders in Mrs. Sadlovsky and Mr. Dobis’s class were having fun learning about the Winter Olympics in PyeongChang, South Korea. Students created flags for the countries participating and graphed the medal count each day on their chromebooks. They love learning about the countries, athletes, and events. Go team USA!

ASPIRE

We are off to a great start with our new ASPIRE program! ASPIRE stands for "Achieve Student Potential: Inspire, Reach, Experience". Other districts have similar programs such as Advanced Academics, High Potential, or Gifted and Talented. Through this program we hope to inspire students to reach their potential through meaningful experiences. The mission of ASPIRE is for students to recognize, enhance, and share their talents to reach their individual potential.

In grades 1-6, small student groups are meeting in the areas of math and reading. The focus of our small groups is to grow and stretch students in their talent and strength areas. Some of the programs we are working on include: playing the Stock Market Game; working on passion projects - like learning how to start a baking club, finding out which rabbit breed would make the best pet, and finding ways to promote and use board games in the classroom; using critical thinking skills through problem-solving activities; using shared inquiry through the Junior Great Books; and Jacob’s Ladder programs; learning and playing cribbage and chess; learning about philosophy and taking part in the Philosophy Slam; and more. We have also started a virtues and capturing kindness group where students are using their passions to help make Pioneer Elementary the best it can be.

The future looks bright for the ASPIRE Program as students and teachers alike continue to recognize, build on, and share our talents. When we put our hearts into using and sharing our talents and gifts, we will inspire others to do the same.

Pioneer Elementary News

Reading buddies

In honor of “I Love to Read Month!” 4th grade students from Ms. Caughey’s room met their new reading buddies! They enjoyed listening and reading to Ms. Tomala’s 1st graders.
Pioneer Elementary News

Engineering bridges
Students were challenged to design and make a bridge that would hold the most dice in the cup. Very carefully they dropped each dice while “holding their breath” that it would not collapse.

Cultivating kindness
Fifth and sixth grade students helped make the “Take What You Need” and “Give What You Can” bulletin board. Students will be able to pick up a quote from the various pockets when they feel they need a little inspiration. They are also promoting a “Weekly Act of Kindness”. Students are encouraged to complete the weekly task and get to add a sticker to the bulletin board once they do. They also encouraged classes to make their own kindness poster, and you will find them posted throughout Pioneer Elementary.

Northern Pines Mental Health Center is grateful to be continuing a fruitful partnership with the Pierz School District. At Pioneer Elementary, the number of children being served fluctuates between 30-40 children at any given time. The perk of having this service in the school is that children can have their appointments just like they would at a clinic without having to leave school and spend time traveling! Referrals are made through Michelle Ferguson, school social worker. Parents and teachers approach her with concerns, and she contacts Northern Pines who then contacts parents. Children are seen for a variety of concerns including trauma, rude and argumentative behavior, depression, hyperactivity/impulsivity, grief, and anxiety.

Community members share their knowledge
Junior Achievement sessions were provided to Grade 3 students during the month of February. Junior Achievement of the Upper Midwest has a mission to inspire and prepare young people to succeed in a global society. Three community volunteers, (Stacey Gahler, Melissa Prozinski, and Kelsey Meyer) taught the JR Achievement Unit: “Our City”. The unit explores the jobs people perform, the skills they need to accomplish these jobs, and how their work has a positive effect on a city’s economy. Students enjoyed the engaging activities and the introduction to managing their own money. Thank you to the three volunteers who are pictured with the third graders during one of the 5 sessions that were taught.

Mrs. Burnett gets students excited about reading
Students in Mrs. Angela Burnett’s 1st grade class are sporting their Cat in the Hat hats that were made possible by fabric purchased by the Pioneer PTO, cut by parents in the classroom, and sewn by Angela’s mother. Trevor LeBlanc was the lucky winner in the I LOVE TO READ month drawing where students who met the highest reading goal were entered into a drawing to cut Mrs. Burnett’s hair. Over 12 inches will be donated to Children With Hair Loss.

District Celebrates (with some sadness)
Pierz Schools Icon, Mary Tschida
Mary blazed an unknown trail in not only Community Education here in Pierz, but also for female sports.

There was a time (not that long ago) when, for the most part, sports were “for boys only”, and the world of high school sports volleyball, girls basketball and high school softball that we see today was simply not available for girls to experience. When those sports came to Pierz, Mary put Pierz on the map. Her highest points per basketball game record held for years. She also was the star of the local softball league. After high school she went on to play college basketball and fast-pitch softball at St. Cloud State University. She was inducted into the Pierz Hall of Fame in 2000.

Mary’s connection to the people of our district, her thoroughness, her attention to detail, and her knowledge of the history of our school have made her an invaluable member of our school administrative team. Mary has built a tremendous number of programs. She manages facilities usage for all community clubs and groups and has been the “go to” person for so many in our community for a long time. Anyone fortunate to cross paths with Mary undoubtedly comes away with reciprocated respect and admiration. We will all miss her, yet know we still get to see her active in our community.

On behalf of Pierz School District Administration and Staff—thank you Mary, for everything.
Happy Spring to all of you! Let’s make this spring the best spring yet both at home and at school!

Below you will find a recap of a couple recent events we held here at the high school and then also some dates for key events that are up and coming in the weeks to follow.

Academic Awards Breakfast
Congratulations to all of the students honored at our 20th annual Academic Breakfast held on March 8th. We had 154 students honored. Great job!! We know also that student success depends a lot on parental involvement. We want to extend our thanks to all of you as parents/guardians for being involved in your student’s academic life. Success doesn’t happen without your help and encouragement!

High School Showcase/Open House - See related article and pictures on page 10.

Academic Awards Night - The annual Pierz Healy High School Academic Awards Program will be held on Wednesday, May 9th. There will be Jazz Band entertainment from 6:30-7:00 p.m. – Academic Awards at 7:00 with the scholarship presentation following.

Seniors Last Day – May 25th with regular classes hours 1-4, graduation practice and photo to follow.

Graduation - A letter will be mailed to parents the last week of April to discuss any last minute items such as practice, etc. Graduation will be May 25th at 7:00 p.m. in the MAC.

MCA Testing will be administered online. A letter will be sent home to all families with students testing and the link to the MCA Testing Schedule can be found on our district website. I have also included the chart of dates and grades below:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>April 16 - 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>April 30 - May 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>April 23 - April 27</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>April 24 - 28</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>April 17 - 20</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Math</td>
<td>April 24 - 25</td>
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<tr>
<td>8/10</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>May 7 – 11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dates to remember:
- April 20th - MHS Blood Drive – (8:00 AM – 2:00 P.M.)
- April 22nd - Pioneer 5K Walk/Run
- April 28th - Jazz Concert
- April 29th - MHS Induction – 6:30 PM
- May 1st – 5th - Teacher Appreciation Week – thank you teachers for all you do!
- May 5th - Prom
- May 7th – Choir Concert – 7:30 P.M.
- May 9th – Academic Awards Night
- May 14th – Band Concert – 7:30 P.M.
- May 25th – Graduation Practice (after 4th hour with senior photo to follow)
- May 25th – Graduation – 7:00 P.M.
- May 28th – No School – Memorial Day
- May 30th – ½ Day of School – Last day of School

Basic skills for electrical projects
Students in Mrs. Tax’s basic “Electrical Wiring” class have lots of opportunity to learn about circuits, circuit breakers, wiring, switches, outlets etc. Pictured above are Chris Langer, Cole Nelson, and Luke Hennen as they practice wiring a three-way switch. The students also learned how to wire single pole switches, 4-way switches, receptacles, and half-hot receptacles. Students work with the National Electric Code (NEC) to determine gang box size and service entrance panel sizes.

Appreciating our bus drivers and assistants
Wednesday, February 28th was designated “School Bus Drivers Appreciation Day” in Minnesota. To celebrate the day, students at Pioneer gathered in the gym to thank those individuals who give them a ride every morning and evening to and from school. Cards were made and handed out, songs were sung, pins were received and refreshments served. In addition, the Pierz School Board presented a plaque in appreciation for what bus drivers do for our children.
Healy High Happenings

Pierz FFA shares smiles and stories with Meadow Ponds senior citizens

After school on February 21st, the Pierz FFA chapter visited residents at the local Meadow Ponds assisted living center. While there, members shared their experiences in FFA among other stories over bingo and other games with the residents. “It just makes me happy to see their smiles when we come,” one FFA member commented. FFA acknowledges that history is our greatest teacher and couldn’t be more grateful for the wisdom and experience offered by these amazing citizens. Pictured are Brandon Przybilla and Seth Winscher with resident Herb Britz and his wife Esther.

Stuckmayer and Marshik are Triple “A” winners

This past January, Kelsi Stuckmayer and Jesse Marshik were selected to represent Pierz in the Academics, Arts, and Athletics Award program at the District 19 AAA banquet at the Holiday Inn in St. Cloud. Established in 1988, Triple “A” is sponsored by the Minnesota State High School League. The purpose of this award is to recognize and honor high school seniors who have excelled in the classroom, on the athletic field and in the fine arts activities. Both Kelsi and Jesse have been active throughout their High School years. Stuckmayer was/is in Volleyball, Basketball, Track, Softball, Pit Band, Pep Band, Honors Band, Band, MHS, Peer Helping, WEB (Where Everyone Belongs), Reading Buddies, Youth Group, Youth Coach and SALT (the Pioneer Student Athletic Leadership Team). Marshik was/is in Football, Basketball, Baseball, Concert Choir, WEB (Where Everyone Belongs), Peer Helping, Youth Group, MHS, and E.P.I.C. (Encouraging Positive Influences and Choices).

Kelsi won the District 19 AAA competition and moved on to the Region 5A competition. Kelsi is the daughter of Marvin and Ruth Stuckmayer and Jesse is the son of Gregg and Kristi Marshik.

Congratulations to both Kelsi and Jesse.

Salsa Fiesta

The Pierz Spanish Club held a Salsa Night Event at the high school. Students got to make guacamole from scratch using avocados, lime juice and salt. They also made a kid friendly sangria from grape concentrate, lemon/lime soda, fresh squeezed limes and oranges. The group then sat down for a snack of fresh salsa, guac, queso (cheese dip), chips, mango, pineapple and cookies. ¡Delicioso!

Collector fishing rods?

Well maybe not collector rods, but usable ones for sure. In the Water, Woods, and Wildlife class, students had the opportunity to custom build their own fishing rods. Pictured are Jake Andres and William Reed putting some final touches on their fishing rods.

Coasta Rica, here we come!

On June 19th, Pierz Healy High School will send 25 students and 3 teacher chaperones to the Central American country of Costa Rica. This every other year trip is an 8-day opportunity of a lifetime for students who have committed to at least 3 years of Spanish language studies in high school. Zip-lining in the rainforest, white-water rafting, kayaking, hiking to the base of a waterfall, touring a coffee plantation and a chocolate factory, and snorkeling are a few of the amazing adventures this group will experience. They will also be immersed in the Spanish language and the culture of the Costa Ricans who place an extremely high value on environmental preservation and eco-friendly tourism. ¡Pura Vida! (This Costa Rican greeting can be translated, as Life is good!)
Healy High Happenings

High School Showcase/Open House

Thank you to all who were able to join us on March 14th for our 1st annual Showcase night! In the past this was a registration night and since the registration process was moved up we did not want to lose an opportunity to invite our community into our building. There are many great things happening within our high school, which you are rarely given the opportunity to see. This was our chance. I hope you were able to join us. If you weren’t hopefully you will be able to find a little bit of time next year because we will be trying it again with some of the suggestions given by you and our staff. What are some of the activities/equipment that made up the night you ask? They were: taking a Google Expedition through Virtual Reality, observing a U of M Quality 3-D printer at work, Crime Scene dioramas, Task Party, making crepes, touring a Holocaust showcase, to name a few. There were so many great things to see so again if you couldn’t join us this year please consider it for next year. This is not just for parents of current students – we would love our entire community to join us on this night!

Lunch composting program

7th graders Blake Bednar and Derek Przybilla have started a lunch composting program. The boys came up with the plan to cut down on lunchroom waste and use that to provide a healthy compost for plants grown in the school garden. They are weighing and tracking the amount of waste they collect as a measure of their success. They presented their idea to a panel of 4 judges from AdCap Youth and were awarded a $750 grant that they will use to purchase supplies as needed.

The Holocaust and Genocide Studies class recently visited the White Rose Exhibit at St. Cloud State University. The White Rose was a student resistance movement that took actions against Hitler and the Nazi party in Munich, 1942-43. The exhibit portrayed the members, their ideals, and the outcomes of organization. In a seminar with Dr. Dan Wildeson, Director of the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Education, students shared their understanding of the events and how they relate to student movements today. Front Row: Tyler Lappegaard, Abby Lucken, Duncan Osborne, Nathan Poepping, Chaise Deason Second Row: Mrs. Gruber, Taylor Cummings, Emily Hedlund, Kyle Girtz, Jordan Funk, and Brodi Jager
Hello Pioneer fans, I want to thank all of you for a wonderful winter season, it was great seeing all of your support. Our activities are definitely an extension of the school day and the students learn a lot of attributes: see the end of my article about a facebook post that was brought to my attention which hits the nail on the head. The post comes from a parent who was asked why do they pay for sports. Note: it says sports but I could say extracurricular activities. Thanks again for all your help and support with our activities and have a great spring.

2017-18 winter wrap-up:
- **FFA** - The FFA teams that qualified for state are the Dairy Team and Livestock teams. Sam Wincher has qualified for State Degree. The last competition before the state is Forestry that will take place on April 4th. The State competition is April 22-24.
- **BPA** - BPA competed in the Region 7 BPA competition at Alexandria Technical and Community College on Friday, January 26. Placing high enough to move on to the State BPA Leadership Competition in Minneapolis on March 8th were: Calvin Zapzalka, 5th Place – Business Law and Ethics; 7th Place – Administrative Support Concepts; 8th Place – Business Meetings Management. Zachary Becker, 4th Place – Banking and Finance. Simon Kroll, 1st Place – Computer Security, 2nd Place – Computer Programming Concepts; 2nd Place to Kathleen Becker and Jacob Amundson. Kami Athman, 1st Place – Fundamentals of Word Processing, 3rd Place – Basic Office Systems and Procedures. At State Kami placed 3rd in a Fundamental Word Processing and Simon placed 2nd in Information Technology Concepts and 3rd in Computer Security which qualified both of them to advance to the National BPA Convention and Competition in Dallas, Texas in May.

**Knowledge Bowl** - The Senior High Knowledge Bowl teams closed out their regular season by qualifying 1 of the 3 teams for the North Central Region 5 competition. The region meet was March 19th and the team finish 11th.

**Robotics** - In their 6th season, the robotics team is in VEX for their competition. The VEX Robotics Competition, presented by the Robotics Education & Competition Foundation, is the largest and fastest growing high school robotics program globally with more than 15,000 teams from 50 countries playing in over 1,350 competitions worldwide. They had a great season getting invited to state and finishing 46th out of 46 teams.

**Band** - They had the district band concert on Tuesday (3/19/18). The Senior High Band traveled to Morris on Tuesday (3/13/18) to perform at the Region 5A Large Group Contest and received a Superior Rating.

**Choir** - The Choir had their Concert on Monday (3/12/18). They performed at the Region 5A group contest on Tuesday (3/20/18) where they received a Superior Rating.

**Spring Play** - The Spring Play “The Actor’s Nightmare” and “This is a Test” were performed Thursday (3/15/18), Friday (3/16/18), and Sunday (3/18/18). The students put out an outstanding performance in these two comedies of mistake!

**Art Club** - Art Club’s Empty Bowl fundraiser on Wednesday (2/21/18) helped the Pierz food shelf and Pioneer Packs.

**Special Olympics** - S.O. competed in unified basketball on Wednesday (3/14/18) in a competition in Pierz and finished 2nd in their division. They also competed in the Aquatics Competition on Wednesday (3/28/18) in Little Falls.

**Dance** - The Pierz Pizzazz Dance team finished 7th in High Kick and 5th in Jazz at the sections on Saturday (3/10/18). Belinda will wrap up their season. In the conference meet, Detroit Lakes on Thursday (3/16/18) the Varsity got 5th in High Kick and 5th in Jazz. On Saturday (3/24/18) they had their annual Dance show in the MAC. They had their annual soup cook off on Saturday (3/31/18).

**Wrestling** - The Team won the Central MN Mennon Conference. They lost to Detroit Lakes in the Section semi’s to end their season. They finished the season with a 22-10 record. Jake Andre, Brandon Tomals, and Carson Huis made it to the State Wrestling Individual Tournament where no one placed.

**Girls Basketball** - The team received the #6 seed in the sub-section and lost to the #1 seed Sauk Centre on Thursday (3/1/18) to end their season. They finished with a 4-23 record overall and a 3-11 record in the CMC.

**Boys Basketball** - The boys team received the #8 seed in the sub-section and lost to #1 Esko on Thursday (3/8/18) to end their season. They finished with a 4-23 record overall and a 1-13 record in the CMC.

**2nd annual National Night Out** - The National Night Out was held in Paynesville on March 12 where Pierz finished 1st in the boys division.

**Speech** - The Speech team has been competing this winter at various events and having great success: they won a meet and finished 2nd in few. They hosted the CMC meet on Tuesday (3/20/18) where they finished 2nd. Their sub-section meet is April 9 in Swanville and the section meet is April 14 in Albany.

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The American Heart Association recommends that children, teens, and adults consume no more than 24 grams, or 6 teaspoons, of added sugars per day. In reality, the average person consumes almost four times the recommended amount, or 23 teaspoons, per day. That equates to over 66 POUNDS of sugar per year. So what? Who cares about all that sugar? You should. A diet high in added sugars is linked to serious health problems such as diabetes, heart disease, cancer, fatty liver disease, and obesity. In order to lower our consumption, we need to know where to look.

Added sugars are hiding in almost every food we consume; 74% of packaged foods contain added sugar. We know that cookies, cakes, candy, and soda have sugar in them, but so do breads, condiments, and “health” foods such as granola bars and yogurt. It may be difficult to spot added sugar in the ingredient lists of foods, as ‘sugar’ has at least 61 different names. Some include cane sugar, cane syrup, fructose, glucose, sucrose, maltose, and high fructose corn syrup, among many others. So what is one to do about all of this sugar? Get rid of it! Below are some tips for reducing the amount of added sugar in your diet.

- First, and foremost, read your nutrition labels, you’ll be surprised how much sugar is in chocolate milk, flavored yogurt, or the sweetening mixes. Pay close attention to the serving size, and servings per container.
- Avoid snack foods with lots of added sugar. Replace these foods with whole, healthy foods such as fresh or dried fruits, vegetables, string cheese, plain yogurt with fruit, whole-wheat crackers or pretzels.
- Cut back on sugary drinks like sodas, sports drinks, fruit juices, and those delicious coffee drinks from Starbucks and Caribou.
- Drink water!!!! Most of us do not drink nearly enough water per day. We should be drinking a minimum of half our body weight in ounces per day. A 150-pound person should have at least 75 ounces of water per day.
- Reduce the amount of added sugars used in cooking, such as honey and table sugar.
- Beware of artificial sugars, such as aspartame. These trick our minds into craving more sugar.

For more information regarding added sugars and its dangers please visit the following websites. www.heart.org/sugar
http://sugarscience.ucsf.edu
https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines2015/guide-lines - Robyn Skwira

### District 484 staff members take the plunge for Special Olympics
21 staff members (paras, teachers, custodians, and even a principal!) from Healy High School and Pioneer Elementary School jumped in the freezing waters of Mille Lacs Lake to raise awareness and money for Special Olympics. There were 12 “first-time” plungers this year! The group raised $3,664.61. Half of the money raised stays local for our Pierz Special Olympics students. This will be used to buy jerseys, warm-up, food for after competitions, etc. They are also looking into taking a field trip to Camp Confidence in the spring. The rest of the money goes to Special Olympics MN. Activities that our students are involved in include: bowling, swimming and track & field. Pierz currently has 13 students who train for the Special Olympic activities.

### Sugar Shock

The information about sugar and its impact on health.

http://sugarscience.ucsf.edu
www.heart.org/sugar
https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines2015/guide-lines - Robyn Skwira
Hello Pioneer Fans!

First off, we just want to say a huge thank you to all those who support the band program in everything we do and congratulations to all winter activities and sports on successful seasons! The Pierz Pep Band has wrapped up their season along with the winter sports teams. Thank you to everyone who supported us and to everyone participating at the events! Thank you to our seniors for pouring their heart and soul into these events for the past 6 years.

Megan Gauvoin - My favorite memory is every year going to contest and feeling the music click. All the practice and hard work pays off when you can hear everyone in the band putting their heart into that song. It is an experience that I hope every student is able to experience.

Taylor Kimman - My favorite band memories are going to Disney and performing at the National Anthem at the Twins game.

Kelsi Stuckmayer - My favorite band memories are going to Duluth for Jazz band, pit band rehearsal and performances and Aaron’s drumset solo.

Maddie Broyer - My favorite band memory was pouring their heart and soul into these events to see how far we have come with the difficult music and to see how much we are able to accomplish.

The Senior High Concert Band participated in Large Group Contest at Melrose High School on March 13. This year, we played “October” by Eric Whitacre and “Drums of the Saamis” by Samuel R. Hazo. We worked hard every day on each of these challenging pieces. Solo and Ensemble Contest for 9-12 students will take place on April 12 at Foley High School. We have students competing in duets, trios, quartets, quintets and our larger percussion group. There are many opportunities like playing football makes it there. You get to go on the band trip, get into the Twins game on their U.S. Bank Stadium if football makes it there.

Taylor Kimman - My favorite band memories are going to Disney and performing at the National Anthem at the Twins game.

The Pierz Jazz program has had some exciting events and more exciting events approaching! Jazz I travelled to the UMD Jazz Fest for the second year in a row on March 17. This year we are also attending the Jazz Fest in Eau Claire, Wisconsin on April 21. While we are there, we will perform three pieces in front of judges and receive scores. At Eau Claire, we will also be competing against other schools our size and will receive a rank at the end of the day. We are excited to compete in this nationally recognized festival! We also have the opportunity to hear professional jazz bands and other high school bands play throughout the day.

New this year, the Pierz Music Department is hosting the 1st Annual Night of Jazz at the Pierz Ballroom. This performance will feature music by the Pierz Jazz Ensembles (6th Grade, Jazz II, Jazz I and Jazz Choir) and our headliner, the Loras College Jazz Ensemble. The event will take place on April 28th at 7 PM at the Pierz Ballroom. Tickets are presale: $20 for adults and $10 for students and then at the door $25 for adults and $10 for students. Included in your ticket price will be hors d’oeuvres and there will be a cash bar. There will also be a silent auction, 50/50 raffles and much more throughout the night. This is a night out you won’t want to miss! Tickets can be purchased through the Music Department or in the District Office.

Our Band-O-Rama Mass Ensemble Contest for 9-12 students will take place on April 12 at Foley High School. We have students competing in duets, trios, quartets, quintets and our larger percussion group. There are many opportunities like playing football makes it there. You get to go on the band trip, get into the Twins game on their U.S. Bank Stadium if football makes it there.

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