SAINT PETER PUBLIC SCHOOLS
LEARNING MATTERS

School Highlights

Saint Peter Public Schools

March – June 2026

"Be brave. Take risks. Nothing can substitute experience."

– Paulo Coelho

SPHS 10th graders attend annual SCSC Career Expo







Saint Peter High School sophomores had the chance to explore future career and educational opportunities during the annual Career Expo at the Mayo Clinic Health Systems Center in Mankato on Wednesday. The event is sponsored each year by the South Central Service Cooperative.

Tenth graders from throughout South Central Minnesota attend this event annual with more than 1,500 students on hand each year for the Career Expo. Students participate in career exploration activities that are provided through:

1. Interactive Exhibits, where students may ask questions of company representatives and find out more about specific careers
2. My Story, where storytellers from area businesses share their career journey
3. Game Show, where teams of students are quizzed on career trivia and statistics to win fabulous prizes!

Celebrating an Outstanding School Year

Dr. Jon Graff, Superintendent of Saint Peter Public Schools



Graduation, held on June 5th, put the final touches on an incredible school year, my first as superintendent. As I reflect on the past ten months, my overwhelming sentiment is one of profound gratitude. Serving this remarkable school district and community is an honor, and I am deeply thankful for the partnership you have extended throughout the year.

This year's successes are marked by a National Merit Scholar, award-winning fine arts, state athletic champions, a School of Excellence designation, the completion of our 32nd student built Habitat for Humanity House, continued renovations on the Middle School/ Early Childhood Center, new curriculum purchases (to be implemented in 2027), and countless other reasons to celebrate as a community.

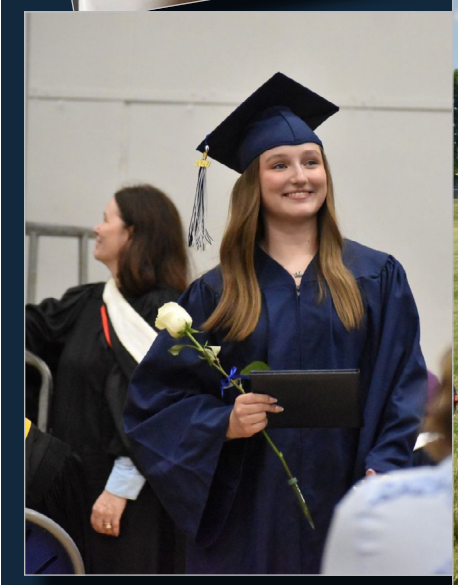
These successes belong to all of us. I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to our exceptional educators and staff, whose dedication and passion inspire our students daily. To our parents and families, thank you for your unwavering support and collaboration. And to our community partners and stakeholders, your investment in our schools strengthens us every day. Most importantly, thank you to our students, whose energy, curiosity, and achievements remind us daily why we do this vital work. To our outstanding senior class: as you enter the next phase of your journey, the future looks brighter than ever!

As we head into the summer months, I hope you all take some well-deserved time to rest, recharge, and enjoy your families and friends. I am incredibly energized by the possibilities ahead and look forward to our continued partnership when we return this fall. Have a safe, enjoyable, and relaxing summer!



















SPHS bids adieu to the Class of 2026!

Saint Peter High School hosted its annual Graduation Commencement for the graduating class of 2026 on the evening of Friday, May 30, at the SPHS gym before a near-packed house of family and friends. Right around 180 students walked across the stage to receive their diplomas!

Welcoming statements were made by Quinn DeBlieck (senior class president), SPHS Principal Annette Engeldinger, and Saint Peter School Board Chair Charlie Potts. SPHS Dean of Students Shari Karlsrud introduced the three student speakers -- Quinn Rassbach, Sam Szybnski, and Lathe Bly. SPHS Superintendent Dr. Jon Graff, who was the principal at Saint Peter Middle School when this year's seniors attended grades 5-8, was the commencement speaker.

The SPHS Concert Band played the traditional "Pomp and Circumstance" for the processional and "Fanfare and Recessional" to end the event. Amid the ceremony, the SPHS Concert Choir performed "Landslide" (Fleetwood Mac).

For even more photo coverage of the SPHS Graduation Commencement, go to the SPPS Facebook page!

SPHS students take part in Spanish immersion camp



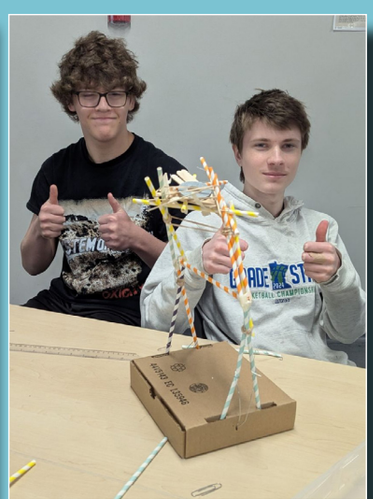
A group of Saint Peter High School students in grades 9-12 from Vero Castillo-Clark's Spanish classes traveled to the Bemidji area the weekend of April 9-11 to participate in Concordia Language Village's Spanish Language Immersion Camp. Castillo-Clark and Christian Juantos, one of Saint Peter Public Schools' cultural liaisons, accompanied the group. The camp is part of Concordia Language Villages' language immersion programs for school groups. World Language teachers organize trips during the academic year for these three- and four-day programs. Village Field Trips are programs designed for school groups to experience language and culture immersion outside of the classroom. Here is a photo of the group right before they departed!



A GREAT START TO THE LAST DAY OF SCHOOL!

On the last day of the 2025-26 school year at Saint Peter Public Schools, this group of friends at Saint Peter High School found a great way to kick off their morning with a tailgate breakfast party in the SPHS west parking lot. On the menu were bacon, eggs, hash browns, and fruit!







Ground-shaking adventures during Mr. Borslien's science class at SPHS

Saint Peter High School ninth-grade science students in Mr. Borslien's class recently had a fun experience putting their engineering skills to the test.

"Becky Dimock, from IBM in Rochester (shown above), where she works on Quantum Computers, joined our class to do some engineering," Mr. Borslien said. "The student's task was to design a cell tower that could survive an earthquake using a limited supply of resources (straws, tape, paper clips, rubber bands, popsicle sticks etc).

"Towers needed to hold 50g washers at least 12 inches above the ground. Students designed and tested their builds to see whose tower could hold the most washers during a simulated earthquake before collapsing."

The following are the winners of each block/section (and # of washers held):

First block - Kristel Castro, Eliza Fecklam, Grace Hanson and Mylah Rapking (9 washers).

Second block - Lakale Schaeffer, Paul Szybniski, Mason Welch and Gianna Wurscher (12 washers).

Fourth block - Skyla Dale, Reed Domras, Natalie Twait and Delilah Waller. (18 washers).

Here are some photo highlights from the simulated earthquake testing in Mr. Borslien's classroom.





SPMS stages "James & the Giant Peach, Jr." for two large audiences

Saint Peter Middle School's Theater program performed "James and the Giant Peach, Jr." on the SPMS theatre stage the weekend of March 6-7. This year's director was Abby Alderman, while Bri Bergstrom was the vocal director and Sam Budzinski served as the choreographer.

"We were a new directing team and were so excited to work with middle school students and help them find joy in theater!" Bergstrom said. "We had a blast, and we just tried to keep it a really fun atmosphere while sharing a childhood favorite story that everyone knows with really cool music to go with it. These kids are so talented, and we had so much fun!"

CAST LIST

James - Lucille Hedberg
Ladahlord- Emma Midthun
Grasshopper - Hollis Hangartner
Ladybug - Hattie Godbout
Centipede - Brennan Gerstbauer
Spider - Eva Penner
Earthworm - Logan Midthun
Sipiker - Lucy Wussow
Sponge - Jaelyn Scrabeck
Matron Nurse - Gretta Gorman
Billy Bobby Cop - Joaquim Juntilla
Bobby Bobby Cop - Maceo Kelsey Bassett
Mrs. Trotter - Dustlyn Lingen
Mr. Trotter - Harper Bass
Ensemble (Ensemble members will portray a variety of roles, including vagrants, the garden chorus, Ladies' Guardian Guild, Hollywood agents, seagulls, and sharks. Specific roles and scenes will be assigned and clarified during rehearsal.) - Maceo Kelsey Bassett, Dustlyn Lingen, Harper Bass, Claire Loula, Mallory Coe, Zoey Kukacka, Aurabella Harmon, Elizabeth Graves, Zoey Kukacka, Elise Wilker, Vivian Wilker, Brielle Matheson, Clayton Coe, Harper Bass, Tori Strand, Mae Schoper, Mirabelle Olson, Rayan Muhidin, Rivers Sikkema, Aurora Phelan, Merlaya Parrott, Olivia Rich, Brogan Humphrey.

CREW - Lucia Weisbrod, Halimahaya Muhidin, Caroline Bruns, Colton Galetka, Oscar Nielsen, Mabel Godbout, Wyatt Finch, Jack Rolfing, Brock Pugh, Aria Baune, Maya Garcia, Declan Nordstrom, Nora Callahan, Max Schlegel, Kellan Boyd, Zain Muhidin, Fiona Nordstrom, Sawyer Brancamp, Maddie Bur, Athea Olson, Tori Strand, Aurora Phelan, and Claire Albrecht.

SPMS 7TH GRADERS FARE WELL AT MINNESOTA STATE HISTORY DAY CONTEST

Congratulations to Saint Peter Middle School seventh graders (l to r) Cecilia Waller, Mallory Nelson, Brooklynn Francis, Ella Evans, and Sylvie Kuhlmanm for earning honorable mention at the Minnesota State History Day competition on Saturday, April 19th, at the Minneapolis Convention Center. There were 19,000 projects statewide, and these students finished in the top .05% of the whole state.







NORTH ASSEMBLY HIGHLIGHTS

North Elementary students and staff filled the school gym during the last hour on April 10th to take part in the fourth-quarter kickoff assembly. Students who participated in the Arts & Academics Night were recognized during the event, while Staff Shoutouts and Gratitude Sharing were also a part of the assembly.





SPPS staff speak about awareness during Child Abuse Prevention Month

The staff of South Elementary, North Elementary, and the Middle School created pinwheel gardens to raise awareness that April is designated as Child Abuse Prevention Month. The month is a time to recognize the small actions each of us can take that make a big impact on the well-being of our children.

To help spread the word and awareness, staff were invited to participate in a community initiative presented by the Nicollet County Attorney's Office to build a garden using blue pinwheels. Blue pinwheels are a reminder of the childhood all children deserve. They also remind us that everyone has a responsibility to help protect children in the community through education and awareness, support and outreach to children and families in need, and by reporting suspected child abuse or neglect.

North Elementary staff wore blue that day in support of all kids, and they are shown here gathered by the school's sign, where the blue pinwheel garden was set up.

South Elementary staff members created their own version of a blue pinwheel garden to raise awareness that April is designated as Child Abuse Prevention Month.

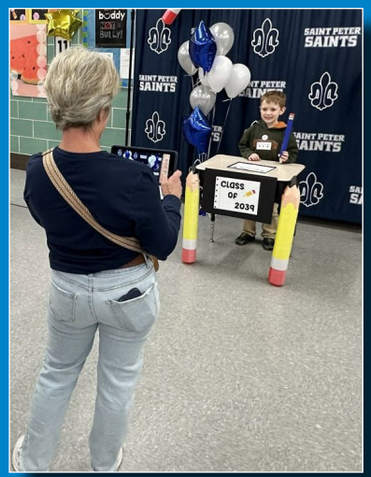






North & SPMS kids take part in Bike & Roll event

On May 6, several students at North Elementary and Saint Peter Middle School took part in a morning Bike & Roll to School event to kick off the school day. This event encouraged active commuting while fostering a strong sense of community and school spirit. SPPS School Resource Officer Jon Hughes organized the event, with representatives from the St. Peter Police Department and the Nicollet County Sheriff's Office helping out, including St. Peter Police Chief Matt Grochow and Nicollet County Sheriff Aaron Petersen. North Principal Darin Doherty and SPMS Principal Jessi Buttell also greeted students to hand out stickers. At the same time, Superintendent Dr. Jon Graff made the rounds on his bike to show support for the kids. Local bike enthusiast Mark Plotz of the Region Nine Development Commission was also there to perform maintenance checks on students' bikes. Here are some photo highlights from the event!







SOUTH HOSTS KINDERGARTEN OPEN HOUSE

A large group of future kindergarten students who will be attending classes at South Elementary this fall, and their family members, took part in the annual Kindergarten Open House event on March 5th. Attendees had the chance to tour the building, meet teachers and staff, and participate in a variety of hands-on activities. Here are some pictures from the kindergarten open house! You can also enroll your child in kindergarten and find more information at https://www.saintpeterschools.org/page/enrolling-in-saint-peter-schools

South first graders host book release party

Chelsea Klaphake,
SPPS Communications Coordinator

Students in Mrs. Wenner's first grade class at South Elementary had the opportunity to take part in a book release party on Friday (April 10) with family and friends on hand for the big event.

"Every year, I have my class create and publish a book through Studentreasures Publishing," Mrs. Wenner said. "For the last five years, I have done the theme 'My First Grade Me.' Each student writes a little about themselves, and then to celebrate all our hard work, we have a publishing party where we walk down the red carpet, and the students each take a turn reading their page to the audience, and then we celebrate with cookies and coloring some bookmarks!"

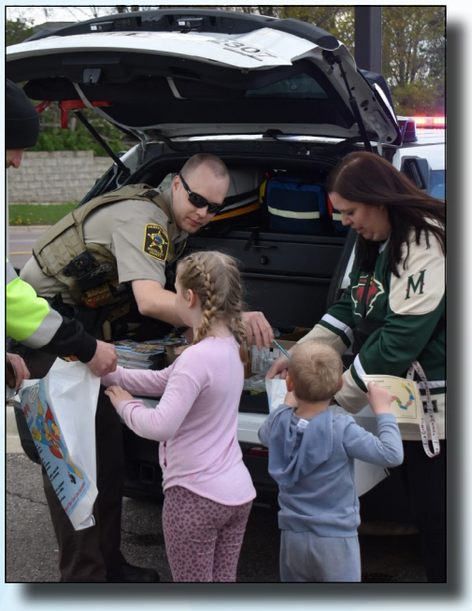














ECFE VEHICLE FAIR HIGHLIGHTS

Saint Peter Early Childhood Family Education's annual Vehicle Fair was a big hit for local families as a large crowd turned out for the event in the Saint Peter Early Childhood Center parking lot, just off Broadway Avenue. Here are some photo highlights from the fun time!



Drama Kids Take 2 presents Cinderella

Ages 7–14. Step into a magical world where a hardworking girl with a heart of gold dreams of a life beyond her dusty fireplace. With the help of a little bit of magic and a pair of very special slippers, she finds herself dancing the night away at a grand royal ball. With a full cast of characters, this classic tale of kindness and courage proves that even the smallest feet can leave a giant footprint on the world! This is a full-day camp. Auditions will be held on Monday. Friday performance day will start at 1 p.m. Students will need to bring their own lunch, snacks, and a water bottle each day.

Drama Kids staff

Mon.-Thu., Jul. 13-16, 9 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Fri., Jul. 17 rehearsal 1-4:30 p.m.
SPHS Performing Arts Center

Register at https://dramakids.com/mankato-st-peter-new-ulm-mn/camps-events/

Performances Fri., Jul. 17, 5 & 7:30 p.m.



That's Community Ed!
Saint Peter Public Schools – ISD 508

Saint Peter Community & Family Education

600 South Fifth Street, Suite 207
(507)934-3048 ext. 7002 | stpeterschools.reg.eleyo.com

CHILDREN & YOUTH CLASSES

Activity — *Completed grades:*	Gr. K	Gr. 1	Gr. 2	Gr. 3	Gr. 4	Gr. 5	Gr. 6	Gr. 7 & up	Date of activity	Day(s)
Fruitopia *Kids' cooking with Jackie M.*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		Jun 24	W
Sun-Catching Fun: Window Clings *Kids' crafting with Laura Maki*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Jul 1	W
COR Robotics: RC Wars				X	X	X	X	X (7-9)	Jul 6-8 AM	M-W
COR Robotics: Merch Lab			X	X	X	X	X	X (7-8)	Jul 6-8 PM	M-W
Summer Beginning Band Lessons *Days / Times depend upon instrument played*	***Completed grades:***					X	X		starting Jul 6	M, Tu
COR Robotics: YouTube Creator				X	X	X	X	X (7-9)	Aug 3-5 AM	
COR Robotics: Minecraft Olympics			X	X	X	X	X	X (7-8)	Aug 3-5 PM	



2026 Summer Beginning Band Lessons

Incoming 6th and 7th graders can jumpstart their band journey with three fun, 45-minute lessons! Learn to produce a great sound, play your first notes, and practice effectively before the school year begins. Most students will have chosen an instrument by 5th grade, but if you haven't, no worries—it's not too late! Attend all three sessions if you can, but missing one isn't a dealbreaker. (Summer lessons are optional for joining the band.) Each lesson will be in a small group of like-instrument players in the St. Peter High School Band Room.

Mon. July 6
9:00-9:45 am Flutes
10:00-10:45 am Clarinet
11:00-11:45 am Saxophones

Tues. July 7
9:00-9:45 am Trumpets
10:00-10:45 am Trombones/Baritones
11:00-11:45 Percussion

Mon. July 13
9:00-9:45am Flutes
10:00-10:45 Clarinet
11:00-11:45 Saxophones

Tues. July 14
9:00-9:45 Trumpets
10:00-10:45 Trombones/Baritones
11:00-11:45 Percussion

Mon. July 20
9:00-9:45am Flutes
10:00-10:45 Clarinet
11:00-11:45 Saxophones

Tues. July 21
9:00-9:45 Trumpets
10:00-10:45 Trombones/Baritones
11:00-11:45 Percussion

Prior to lessons, students should have an instrument and a Yamaha Advantage book 1 for their instrument. If you require help securing an instrument for financial reasons, please contact Mr. Haugh (dhaugh@stpeterschools.org) at least two weeks before the start date. **Register with Saint Peter Community Ed by June 29, $50. (507-934-3048 ext. 7002, or stpeterschools.reg.eleyo.com)**

School Board

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Tracy Stuewe, Board Member, 507-380-0339
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High School Dean of Students
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Shea Roehrkasse

Alternative Schools & Programs Administrator
South Elementary Principal
Jana Sykora

Middle School Principal
Jessica Buttell

Middle School Dean of Students
Steve Alger

North Elementary Principal
Darin Doherty

Special Programs Administrator
Ytive Prafke

Community & Family Education Director
Tami Skinner

Technology Director
Gus Sorbo

Operations & Maintenance Supervisor
Seth Putz

Business Services Director
Megan Gracia

stpeterschools.org

The school district newsletter, *Highlights*, is distributed monthly through the office of Community & Family Education. Any questions or suggestions regarding *Highlights* should be directed to:

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tskinner@stpeterschools.org

Is your family on the school census?

The Saint Peter School District keeps a record of all families in our school district. Being on the school census ensures:

- You will automatically receive ECFE mailings.
- You will be notified of Early Childhood Screening.
- The elementary school will be expecting your child when it is time for kindergarten.
- That maximum funding is received by our district from state/local government.

Please call 934-3048 ext. 2018 if you are new to the district or your family has grown with additional births or adoptions!