Ellsworth School Department

DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

OCT/NOV 2025 | HALLOWEEN








Letter from the Superintendent's Office

As we head into November, I am filled with pride and gratitude for the incredible people who make up the Ellsworth School Department community.

This month, we celebrate two of our outstanding educators--Tara Mason and Matthew Downs-- who have been recognized for their excellence and impact, and are great reminders of the dedication and talent that define our district. Their recognition reflects the commitment, innovation, and heart that our teachers bring into classrooms every day, and I couldn't be prouder to see their efforts honored on a broader stage. Their success is a celebration of all who support learning—our students, families, and staff who work together to make Ellsworth an exceptional place to grow and learn.

Equally inspiring are the many examples of partnership and community engagement we've seen across our schools. From local businesses collaborating with our technical programs, to families, volunteers, and students joining together in service, celebration, and support—our collective efforts strengthen not only our schools, but our entire community.

The spirit of connection and generosity that defines Ellsworth continues to shine bright, and I am deeply thankful for the role each of you plays in helping us live out our mission of engaging and challenging all learners through excellence, growth, and partnership.



Warmly,

Amy J. Boles
Superintendent of Schools





Eagles Senior Finley Harmon shines in statewide singing competition

In the first ever season of 'Maine Teen Idol', Ellsworth's Jazz Band senior CRUSHED it — singing her way to the final weekend and impressing judges and spectators each time out!

Ellsworth's own Finley Harmon took the stage at the inaugural Maine Teen Idol and soared all the way to the finals! Out of 12 talented singers from across Maine, she finished in the Top 3—an incredible debut in her first big competition.

"***I haven't been proud of something as much as I've been proud of this," says Ellsworth High School senior Finley Harmon. "It was an incredible experience, whether I won or didn't win."***

Finley learned of the competition through recent American Idol star and Mainer herself, Julia Gagnon – Finley actually opened for her a few times with her band!

"I'm not usually a big fan of putting myself out there- I was definitely a little nervous about doing it," Harmon admits. "But once I started doing it and got the hang of it, I was okay."

It was one of the first times Finley had gone through anything like the Maine Teen Idol competition, from being the lone performer on stage, to the elimination process and the whole nine yards of a singing contest. She performed a wide range of songs- starting with Jessica Rabbit's "Why Don't You Do Right", and moving to Amy Winehouse's "Valerie", Renee Rapp's "Snow Angel", as well as selections from Adele, Lake Street Dive, and the Tedeschi Trucks Band – and says this experience helped her grow in so many ways as a singer and as a performer! Click the photo to the right to see Maine Teen Idol's recap of the Finals and the rest of the action!





Head to our website for more quotes from Finley and to find more ways to listen to her CRUSH it at the competition all in our full article!

READ MORE



MORE



HCTC Educator named Maine CTE Teacher of the Year!!

Congratulations to Mrs. Mason, our wonderful Business Leadership and Hospitality teacher! She was recognized statewide as the CTE Teacher of the Year for all of the amazing work we've seen her do right here in Hancock County every day since she joined our team.

We are so lucky to have Mrs. Mason as part of our amazing team here at HCTC, and we are so proud to celebrate this well-deserved recognition of her passion, professionalism, and unwavering commitment to student success. Read more about what makes her the Teacher of the Year on our website!!

EEMS boasts Middle School PE Teacher of the Year!

Our Teacher of the Year list got even bigger before we knew it, too!

Congratulations to our very own Mr. Downs, our jack-of-all-trades PE Teacher at EEMS! He was named the Middle School Physical Education Teacher of the Year at the 2025 Maine AHPERD annual conference. Mr. Downs is incredibly dedicated, passionate, and willing to help wherever a hand may be needed - and that shows whether he's Mr. Downs the Middle School Athletic Director or Mr. Downs the PE Teacher. His commitment to helping students grow, stay active, and build lifelong healthy habits makes a difference in countless ways.

We are so fortunate to have Mr. Downs on our team – and so proud to share this achievement with him after seeing the impact he has on our students each and every day he opens the gym doors!







Our partnerships with the Ellsworth and Hancock County communities were on full display this month across all of our schools!!



We are excited to share that Ellsworth High School raised $543 as a result of Hannaford Helps Schools coupons collected and redeemed by our community and directed to our school! All proceeds go directly to our Food Pantry & Snack Program to help battle hunger in our school.

Thank you to all those who supported us during the 2025 Hannaford Helps Schools program! Stay tuned for next year – when we aim to raise over $700!!

Future Eagles Week!

From the soccer sidelines to the Friday night lights, our youth athletes showed up and showed out for Future Eagles Week this month!

Before kickoff, future Eagles joined our soccer teams, and at halftime of the football game, our youngest gridiron greats — from 3rd grade through Middle School — took the field.

It's inspiring to see how these Future Eagles look up to today's role models— thank you to everyone who came out to celebrate the next generation of Ellsworth athletics!



COMMUNITY PARTNERS





HCTC FALL ADVISORY DINNER

We welcomed more than 100 guests to HCTC for our Fall Advisory Dinner and Meeting!

Our incredible industry leaders and business partners are the backbone of our programs, and we're so grateful for the support that makes student success possible. Our incredible student volunteers shined all evening– from transforming the space to preparing and serving a delicious meal, they showed us all exactly what strong partnerships can achieve.

Here's to another year of collaboration, growth, and community impact!

2nd Annual 'Hope Day' Supports Mental Health Awareness

For the third year, HCTC proudly participated in the Yellow Tulip Project, a nationwide youth-driven initiative that aims to "Smash the Stigma" surrounding mental illness and remind those struggling that they are never alone!

We started with a school-wide presentation featuring a heartfelt testimony from Grace Robinson, who courageously shared her personal journey with mental health. Classmates followed by reflecting on what brings them happiness—reminders that hope can be found in everyday moments.

Then we got our hands dirty- planting two 'Hope Gardens' with hundreds of yellow tulip bulbs around the school – symbol of hope and happiness, will bloom in the spring—offering a vibrant reminder that healing is possible and that beauty can grow from difficult conversations. But we didn't do it all alone!

A huge thanks goes out to Julie Vittum at Machias Savings Bank, Home Depot, Hammond Lumber, Ellsworth Rotary Club, our amazing students and Mrs. Cote who helped put this together, and our wonderful custodian Mr. Scilia for all their help!!

Head to our website for more about our experience with the Yellow Tulip Project, watch our video presentation and a fun video of our Hope Gardens being planted!!







PASTA
with a purpose

The pure strength of our community when we come together was on full display this month!

At EEMS, students, families, staff and more gathered on a Friday night for a Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser organized to support a middle school student bravely battling leukemia.

Tons of people from our Ellsworth School Department community showed up and ate together – and collectively we raised over $1,950!

All proceeds from the event went directly to support our student and their family during a trying time. Our staff collaborated like a true team, collecting donations of food and supplies for the meal, while also donating their time to volunteer all night long – and we can't forget some of our EHS National Honors Society members who worked the kitchen for us, too!





Head to our website for more - and find some links to this story from local media outlets, too!

ART TEACHERS IN THE GALLERY!

Our wonderful art teachers at Ellsworth High School, Mrs. McDougall and Mrs. Olson, both had a variety of their works on display in Downtown Ellsworth for much of October!

The two of them were featured in the hART Rocks 'Makers and Mentors: The Art of Hancock County Art Educators' gallery that showcased work from art teachers all over the area. Mrs. McDougall had three separate ink paintings on display - depicting some jaw-dropping landscapes. Mrs. Olson also had a painting on display, as well as collection of ceramic flower vessels and hand-made jewelry! Both say it's super important for them to show that their artists AND art teachers – and pretty darn good ones, too!

Check out our full article for quotes from both of them and see pics of their awesome work!



SPOOKY SEASON

Haunted Trail



Even when things got really scary – like at the annual Haunted Trail Fundraiser behind the high school – we still kept our efforts up in the community! This year, our scary-movie themed Haunted Trail raised over $600! The best part - a huge chunk of that is going right to local families in need for heating assistance this winter! Thanks to all of our student groups and volunteers for all your hard work this year!!

PUMPKINS! *ON THE PITCH*



As is tradition, our EHS girls soccer squad really dove into the Halloween spirit this year with their annual pumpkin night! For their 2nd to final home game of the year, each girl brought a decorated pumpkin – and every of them were incredibly well-done and creative! Our girls also had a terrific season on the pitch, too – both Varsity & JV!!

COSTUME party

At EHS, we capped off our week of Fright Fest the same way we usually do – with a super fun Halloween-themed pep-rally! We kicked it off with a costume parade and contest with all of the spooky, funny, duo and group costumes on display for our judges! It ended the way our pep rallies always do – with a few games to kick off the day! Check out our video to recap the fun!

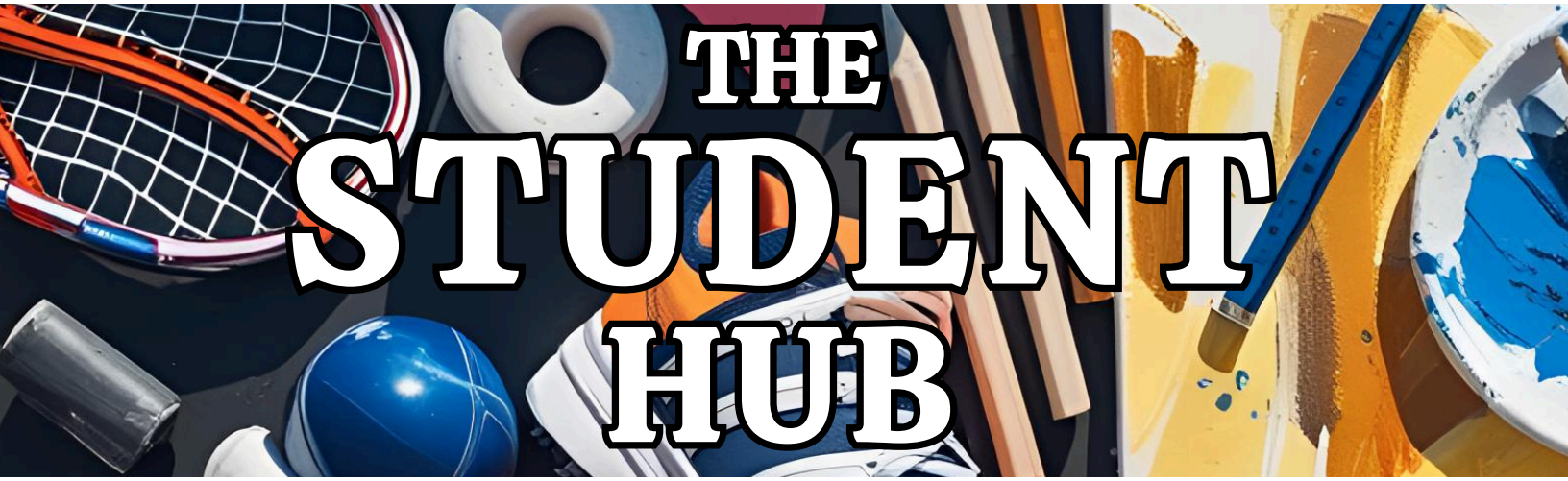
The High School didn't have all the fun, either! EEMS turned into its own little Halloweentown with everyone from our Pre-K kids to our 8th graders parading around the school in full costume! Head to our Facebook page to find your favorite costume and see some of the winners from their contest! Hit the link to see all the photos and some of the best costumes!











THE STUDENT HUB

EHS well represented at Jazz State Competition!

Last year, Ellsworth sent multiple qualifiers to the Maine All-State Jazz competition for the first time ever when two of our Eagles qualified. This time, Ellsworth is one of the most-represented schools in the state after FIVE Eagles qualified for the competition at auditions in October!



Congratulations to the following EHS Jazz Band members for all their hard work preparing for All-State auditions – it certainly paid off!

- **Finley Harmon (Senior) - highest alto voice score in the state!!**
- **Harper Turner (Junior)**
- **Jovi Nightingale (Senior)**
- **Juliette Hiatt (Sophomore)**
- **Ella Johnson (Freshman)**

These five will have their talents on display again when they return for the All-State competition in January – and this time, they're coming to bring some Gold back to the EHS trophy case!

37 EAGLES JOIN NATIONAL HONORS SOCIETY IN FALL CAPPING CEREMONY



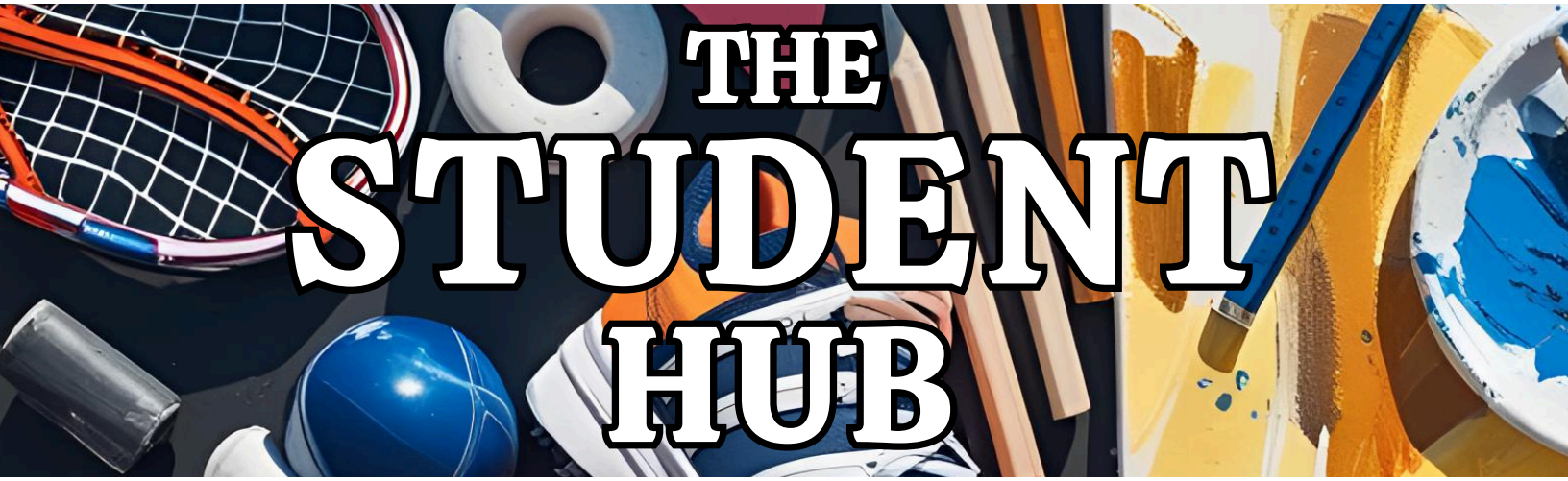
Congratulations to Lilly Ball, Allie Bivins, Sydney Carey, Maddie Carrier-Emerson, Gracelyn Carter, Katie Clark, Camryn Clough, Carter Crosthwaite, Angelo Dellosa, Brooke Downing, Dawson Easler, Belle Fronczak, Emma Frost, Hannah Frost, Adrianna Herrick, Eli Holler, Olivia Larson, Sydney Mason, Nora McDevitt, Noah McGruder, Porter Merrill, Emily Morse, Bria Nightingale, Baleigh Pothier, Violet Ray, Alexander Robinson Jr., Quwayne Robinson, Grace Robinson, Leah Salsbury, Alyxa Sawyer, Alexis Smith, Avalon Tate, Sophie Trenholm, Harper Turner, Valedah Vaillancourt, Boden VanDorn & Oliver Wood!

READY, SET ... CRUNCH!

It was Maine's first ever "Apple Crunch Day" and EEMS joined schools from all over the state! Our student body gathered and simultaneously took a 'crunch' out of an apple, highlighting the importance of local produce while supporting our Maine Apple Farmers. Hit the arrow to see our video highlighting the fun and check out all the photos on our website!







Ellsworth XC runners shine all fall!

It was a great Cross-Country season for runners at both Ellsworth High School and EEMS!

Starting with the Falcons – their boys team took 1st place at the Penobscot Valley Conf. Large School Championships, and the girls were right there, too, placing 2nd as a team! Two runners from each team placed in the top-10 of that meet, too! In the Coastal Championship race, both the boys and girls finished in 2nd place. MORE INFO





The Eagles had a successful season, too! Over the course of the year, every team member improved their times – and two runners qualified for the state championship meet! Congratulations to Maddie Kane (9) and Darion Wescott (11)! Both finished in the top-20 of the Class B North Championship Meet and represented the Eagles in states.

more SPORTS!



Congratulations to Ellsworth High School Varsity Volleyball! The Eagles finished as the No. 3 team in Class C, and made it all the way to the Divisional Championship round, where they took home the runners up plaque to the eventual state champs from MDI. Awesome season, ladies + Coach Dyer!! Check out our video from their QF win over Medomak Valley!

After terrific senior seasons on the soccer pitch, boys soccer stars Haven Cotroneo and Cooper Mitchell were voted to the Class B North All-State team by the Maine Soccer Coaches Association! Congratulations, boys!





Former EHS soccer coach, tennis coach, and PE Teacher Brian Higgins was voted to be inducted in the inaugural class of the Maine Soccer Hall of Fame! Coach Higgins taught for 46 years at EHS, and coached the Eagles to a state record 566 total wins to go along with 19 regional titles and 4 Gold Balls! Congrats, Coach!!

IT'S SHOWTIME!!

You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown!







Starting on Black Friday and running through the first week of December, the Ellsworth High School Theatre of the Mad Jesters presents 'You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown' for their Fall Musical for 2025! Directed once again by Ms. Ireland, the cast is a great blend of experienced upperclassmen and talented newcomers and they can't wait to take the form of your favorite *Peanuts* characters when they take the stage! Led by senior Gage Pelaggi as Charlie Brown - Ellsworth's accomplished theater program is excited to put on another performance filled with emotion, great songs, tons of laughs, and odes to some of the classic Charlie Brown moments we've come to know and love! The musical opens Nov. 28, and will run on the 29th, 30th, and the following weekend - Dec. 4, 5, and 6!

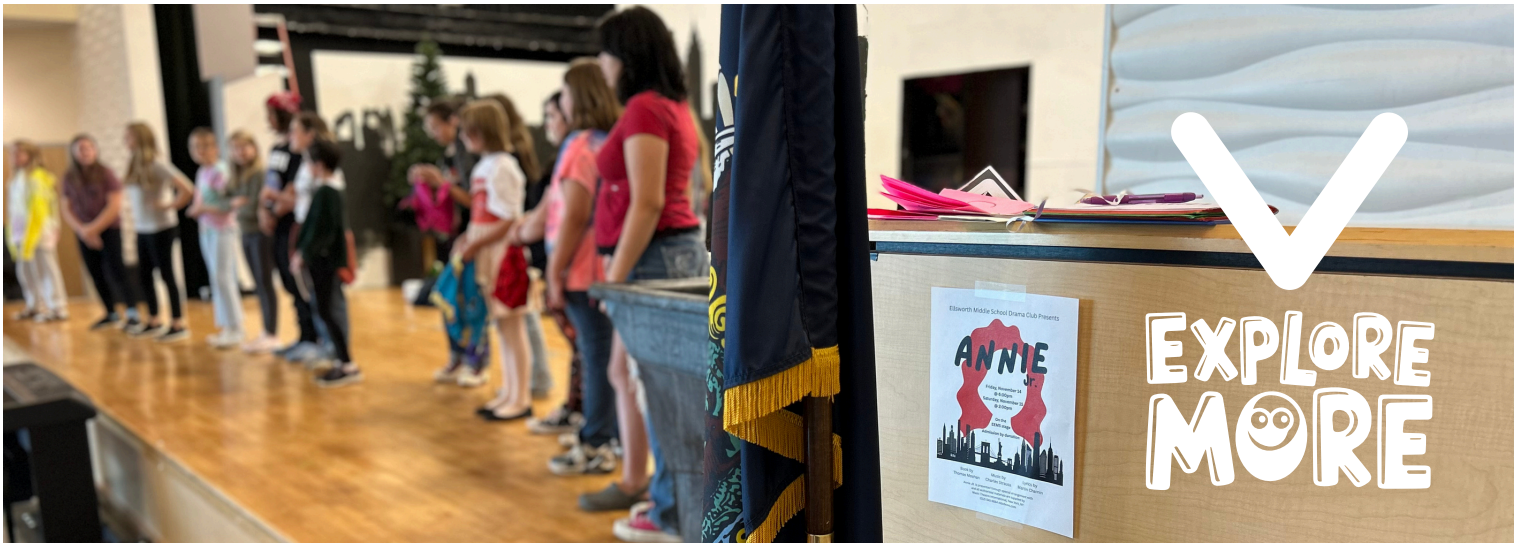
We sat down with Charlie Brown, Sally Brown and Snoopy for our full preview of this year's fall musical – hit the link above to see more!

IT'S SHOWTIME!!

GET READY FOR ANNIE JR. !!







Starting in a few weeks, the EEMS Drama Club is bringing Annie Jr. to the stage! With first-time performers stepping into the spotlight and Ms. Dwyer directing her first musical, the cast of Annie Jr. is ready to bring the stage to life at Ellsworth Elementary-Middle School this month. From Lena Pazereckas tackling the tough role of Ms. Hannigan to Jaylin Burpee reflecting on her final middle school show, alongside newcomer Claire Newman as Annie, the cast has grown into a dedicated, tight-knit ensemble ready to shine - and their hard-work and collaboration is paying off!

Catch our full preview with behind-the-scenes stories and quotes from the cast—including Annie, Ms. Hannigan, Grace Farrell, and Director Ms. Dwyer - just click the button above to read more, find the show dates, see all our photos, and even hear a sneak peak!

Congrats to our October "High Five Award" winners!!

Let's give a big "High Five" to Beverly Macy, Cody Wiseman, and Tara Mason! These three were honored at our October board meeting with our second round of High Five Award recognitions of the year.

These staff members were chosen for their extraordinary dedication, their above-and-beyond compassion, and the impact they've had and continue to have on our students and community. Read more about their stories and don't forget to submit your nomination! >>> MORE



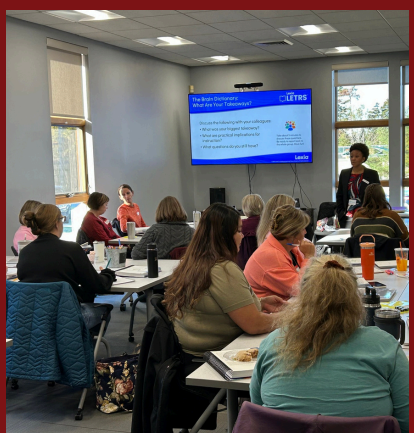




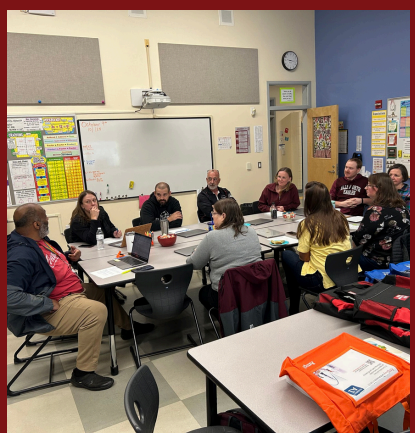
Our Staff Never Stops Learning!

This past month brought our first in-service day of the year! All staff district-wide participated in several professional development opportunities. From Pre-K teachers to our Adult Educators, our staff was in action across Ellsworth and even some in Augusta and Lewiston!

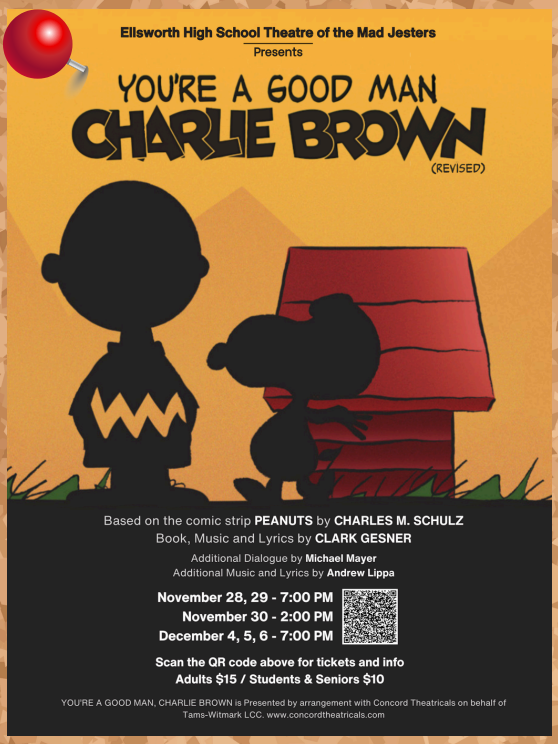
We heard from guest speakers, collaborated with colleagues, and built new strategies that we can't wait to bring back to their students!
A huge thank-you to our staff for their dedication, collaboration, and commitment to students—it's what makes our district shine!







The Bulletin Board







Lock in your memories 📸 – Order your EHS Yearbook today!

Theme: *Scrapbook*

Where: Room 214 (cash or check) or online

[Click Here for online order]

Price: $75

SENIOR PICS ARE DUE BY DEC. 1!

Questions? Email Mr. Hiatt → jhiatt@ellsworthschools.org







Congratulations to our EHS Athletes of the week from October! Maddie Kane, Jordin Mann, Spencer Seavey, Kaylee Bagley, Sophie Beal, Chelsea Knight, Darion Wescott, and Grace Robinson each wore the new Eagles Hype Chain for their hard work!



Want to work for an awesome department with great people?

Good news: ***We're hiring***! We've got open positions for several roles.

Click on our logo above to check out our employment page and find your best fit!

HELP!

Ellsworth School Department needs YOUR help!

We are looking to boost our storytelling and shine a light on all of the fun, positive things happening in our schools every day!

Know of a student, teacher, or anyone else who deserves a bit of spotlight? Fill out one of our "Good News, Ellsworth!" Submission forms and let us know about it!

PARENT LINKS

- District Calendar
- Infinite Campus
- Bus Schedules
- Lunch Menu (EHS)
- Lunch Menu (EEMS)
- Tech Help



GOOD NEWS, ELLSWORTH!

NOVEMBER DATES

NOV. 10
EHS - Parent-Teacher Conference

NOV. 11
No School - Veterans Day

NOV. 13
EEMS - Parent-Teacher Conference

NOV. 14 & 15
EEMS - Annie Jr. Fall Musical

NOV. 20
EEMS & EHS - Parent-Teacher Conferences

NOV. 24-28
No School - Thanksgiving Break

NOV. 28, 29, 30
EHS - You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown Fall Musical



Ellsworth School Dept.

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Asst. Superintendent: Nicole Chan

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Ellsworth High School

Principal: Dan Clifford

Asst. Principal: Rebecca Wright

Main Office: 207-667-4722

Ellsworth Elementary/ Middle School

Principal: April Clifford

Asst. Principal: V. Alvelo, M. Wibberly, L. Corson

Main Office: 207-667-6241

Hancock County Tech. Center

Director: Bill Tracy

Administrative Asst. Elizabeth Conners

Main Office: 207-667-9729

Ellsworth Adult Education

Director: Ann Sargent

Administrative Asst. Michelle Dawson

Main Office: 207-664-7110