MAHNOMEN SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Safe, Supportive, Learning

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT #432

Elementary: 218-935-2581 ~ High School: 218-935-2212 ~ District: 218-935-2211

WELCOME TO OUR

Quarterly Newsletter

Celebrating Progress — Preparing for the Final Week!

End of the school year is so exciting and filled with fun things! We want to remind our families that the last day of school will be May 22 and we will be dissmissing at 12 noon that day. The Ice Cream Truck will also be here to provide a sweet treat to start summer at no cost to students and staff of Mahnomen Public School.

A Heartfelt Thank You

As we wrap up another incredible school year, we want to take a moment to say thank you to everyone who plays a role in helping our students learn, grow, and succeed each day.

To our teachers and staff — thank you for your patience, dedication, encouragement, and the countless hours you give to support our students both inside and outside the classroom.

To our families and caregivers — thank you for being our partners in education, cheering students on, helping with homework, attending events, and supporting learning at home.

To our community members, volunteers, support staff, coaches, bus drivers, kitchen staff, custodians, paraprofessionals, and everyone behind the scenes — thank you for the many ways you help create a safe, welcoming, and caring environment for our students.

It truly takes a village to support a child's education, and we are so grateful for every person who helps our Thunderbirds learn and thrive each day. Your kindness, time, encouragement, and support make a lasting difference.

Thank you for being part of our school family and for helping make this year one to remember.

ISSUE #4

SPRING 2026

QUARTER 4

Inside this quarter's issue:

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MAHNOMEN DISTRICT

Dr. Simon - Superintendent

District Updates:

Student Life & School Culture

Spring has been a busy and exciting time at Mahnomen Public Schools as we close out the school year. Students have been actively engaged in spring athletics, concerts, and end-of-year activities, representing our school with pride. It has been great to see strong participation and positive energy across our programs. As we approach graduation, we also celebrate the accomplishments of our seniors and look forward to recognizing their hard work and achievements. This time of year always brings a mix of reflection and excitement for what's ahead.

Teaching, Learning & Student Support

In classrooms, staff continue their work in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), focusing on student growth and consistent expectations across grade levels. As the year wraps up, teachers are also reviewing student progress and preparing for a strong start next fall. We are continuing to emphasize student engagement, attendance, and positive behavior, while also planning targeted supports to carry into next year.

Important Dates for the District:
May 22 - Last Day of School / End of Quarter 4
May 22 - Graduation

Staffing & Recruitment

Hiring and planning for the 2026-2027 school year are well underway. We continue to focus on recruiting high-quality staff across several areas, including teaching, support staff, and activities. We are also working through leadership structure planning at the elementary level and continuing efforts to strengthen our overall staffing model to best support students.

Planning Ahead

District leadership and the school board are finalizing plans for the 2026-2027 school year, including the school calendar and programming priorities. Summer programming is being developed, with a focus on providing meaningful academic support and enrichment opportunities for students. We are also continuing conversations around long-term planning to ensure we are meeting the needs of our students and community.

Thank You, Mahnomen Community

As we wrap up the school year, thank you to our staff, students, families, and community for your continued support. The partnership we share makes a meaningful difference in the lives of our students each day.

Gratefully,
Dr. Andrea Simon
Superintendent
Mahnomen Public Schools

HIGH SCHOOL

Kevin Headstrom - Principal

Hello,
I want to thank everyone for their support of our students, staff, and school community throughout this year. The year has gone by quickly, and I would like us all to reflect on the highlights, take a breath, and begin to think about next year.

This year saw several changes. We welcomed new staff along with a new section of the building. While these changes are completed, new ones will continue. We are in the process of hiring some new staff for next year and examining the facility for areas needing updates. Our students are much the same. They come to us in the fall, grow throughout the year, and start the process again the next year. Seniors, I want to congratulate you and wish you all the best in your future endeavors. For you, the next phase of your life begins. Commencement ceremonies will be held on Friday, May 22nd at 5 PM.

As this year comes to an end, I would like to give a special thank you to some very dedicated staff who will be leaving us. Mitch Drobnick has been employed with us for 19 years as a Health and Phy-Ed teacher, as well as a tutor. Wanda Goodwin has been a part of the team for 4 years in the English department and as a full-time substitute. Brent Hoffner is leaving us after 34 years in our Social Studies department, and as a coach and student council advisor for many of those. And last but not least, Kim Kochmann will be leaving the FACS classroom after 30 years here in Mahnomen. She will continue to work with us in Community Ed and Experiential Learning. Congratulations to all of them as they enter a new chapter in their lives.

Our summer programming has a slightly different look this year, too. Summer STEAM programming will run for three weeks in June. Credit recovery will run for four weeks in July, four days a week. Students needing to enroll in either will be provided with the information before the end of school. Starting Monday, June 1, 2026, through Friday, August 14, 2026, office staff will be available Monday through Thursday from 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM. Offices will be closed on Fridays.

Thanks again to everyone who has made this year special, and I look forward to working with you again next year.

Kevin Hedstrom
High School Principal

25-26 School Year Good Student Award Winners
10/11/25 - Bridget Miller
2/21/26 - McKenna Bjerk
2/28/26 - Morgan Houdek
3/7/26 - Ethan Jackson
3/21/26 - Waabinoo Littlewolf

HIGH SCHOOL SCHOOL COUNSELOR

Sheila Helgeson - School Counselor



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Mandy Okeson - Interim Elementary Principal

Elementary Updates:

As we complete the final quarter of the school year, there is a great deal to celebrate at Mahnomen Elementary. Spring always brings excitement, growth, and opportunities for students to finish the year strong both academically and socially. We are proud of the hard work our students, staff, and families have shown throughout the year.

End-of-the-Year Activities and Field Trips
Our students are looking forward to several end-of-the-year activities and field trips that provide meaningful learning experiences outside the classroom. These opportunities allow students to build relationships, explore new environments, and celebrate the accomplishments they have made this school year.

Summer STEAM Camp
We are excited to once again offer our Summer STEAM Camp program. STEAM learning focuses on Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics through hands-on, engaging activities that encourage creativity and problem-solving skills. It runs from June 1-18th. Registration is still open if your child is interested please contact the elementary office for more information.

Looking Ahead to Next Year
As we prepare for the 2026–2027 school year, Mahnomen Elementary is excited to implement a new K–6 Comprehensive Literacy Program. This program will strengthen literacy instruction across all grade levels and support student growth in reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension skills. Our staff will participate in professional development and training to ensure successful implementation and provide students with high-quality literacy instruction that meets the needs of all learners.

Thank You
Thank you to our families, staff, and community members for your continued support of Mahnomen Elementary. The partnership between home and school plays an important role in student success, and we appreciate all you do to support our students each day.

– **Mandy Okeson**
Interim Elementary Principal

Important Dates for Elementary:
May 15th - Preschool Graduation
May 22 - Last Day of School / End of Quarter 4

ATTENDANCE OFFICE

Jessica Goodwin
District Attendance/Truancy

Finish Strong: Attendance Matters Through the Last Day!

As we get close to 4th quarter ending, we want to encourage all students and families to finish the school year strong. Every day counts–especially during the last months of school when students are completing final projects, taking assessments, and preparing for the next grade level.

Why Attendance Still Matters in 4th Quarter

- Final grades and credits are being completed
- State and classroom testing takes place
- Important end-of-year learning happens daily
- Strong attendance helps students transition successfully to the next grade

Daily Attendance Reminders

- Please call the school office each day your child is absent
- Send a doctor's note when applicable
- Schedule appointments outside of school hours when possible
- Communicate early if your child is struggling to attend school

If your child has reached 3, 5, or 7 absences, reminder letters may be generated automatically. These letters are meant to support families early and help prevent ongoing attendance concerns.

I want to work with and support your student and family.

If your family is experiencing housing instability, moving, doubling up with other families, living in temporary housing, or staying in a shelter, you may qualify for additional school support under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

Supports may include:

- School supplies and basic needs assistance
- Transportation support (when eligible)
- Help with enrollment or school records
- Connection to community resources
- Backpack food program support

If your housing situation changes at any time, even temporarily, please reach out. Our goal is to remove barriers so students can stay in school and succeed.

Looking Ahead to Summer

Summer is a time to rest, but also a time to prepare.

Helpful reminders:

- Watch for summer school opportunities
- Keep reading and practicing learning skills at home
- Update contact information with the school before the last day
- Reach out early if you anticipate housing or transportation needs for next school year

We Are Here to Help

Strong attendance is a team effort between families and school staff. If your family needs support with attendance, transportation, housing concerns, or resources, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Together, we can help every student finish the year strong and start the next year ready to succeed.

AMERICAN INDIAN EDUCATION

Desiree Linden - AIE Program Director

Building Culture, Connection, and Community

As the 2025–2026 school year comes to a close, the American Indian Education Program is proud to reflect on an impactful fourth quarter filled with meaningful opportunities, cultural celebrations, and student success.

Indigenous Youth Council College Visit Trip

This spring, our Indigenous Youth Council students participated in an inspiring college visit trip to the Duluth area. Students toured the University of Minnesota Duluth and Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College, gaining valuable exposure to higher education opportunities while exploring pathways for their futures. This experience encouraged college and career readiness while reinforcing the importance of Indigenous representation in higher education.

10th Annual Powwow Celebration

Our 10th Annual Powwow was a tremendous success, welcoming over 1,400 attendees from our school, neighboring schools, and the broader community. This milestone event celebrated culture, community, and tradition while providing students and families with an opportunity to honor and share Indigenous heritage. The continued growth of this event reflects the strength of our community partnerships and the pride we have in our traditions.

2026–2027 Powwow Royalty Announcement

Congratulations to our newly selected incoming Powwow Royalty:

- Senior Princess: Kinslee Jensen
- Senior Brave: John Leslie
- Junior Princess: Tylie Smith
- Junior Brave: Waawaate Gunderson

We are incredibly proud of these students and look forward to their leadership in representing our school and community throughout the upcoming year.

Upcoming American Indian Senior Banquet

We are excited to honor our graduating American Indian seniors at the American Indian Senior Banquet on Wednesday, May 20th at the Shooting Star Casino Event Center. This special event will celebrate the accomplishments, resilience, and bright futures of our seniors as they prepare for the next chapter of their journeys.

Looking Ahead to Summer STEAM

As the school year winds down, we are looking forward to an engaging Summer STEAM Program that will incorporate cultural activities and collaborative opportunities with White Earth Natural Resources and WETCC. These partnerships will continue to provide enriching educational experiences rooted in culture, community, and innovation.

The American Indian Education Program remains committed to empowering students through academic achievement, cultural pride, and community connection. We are grateful for the continued support of our families, staff, and community partners who make this work possible.

AMERICAN INDIAN EDUCATION

Desiree Linden - AIE Program Director

Building Culture, Connection, and Community

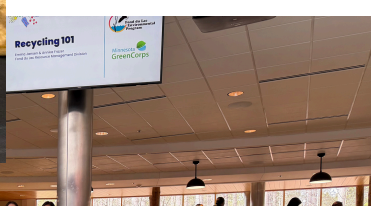


❤️ Our Mission

We are committed to creating meaningful, inclusive opportunities where students feel connected, supported, and proud of their culture. Thank you for supporting our students, families, and community!











10th Annual Powwow



AMERICAN INDIAN EDUCATION

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Congratulations to our newly selected incoming Powwow Royalty:

Senior Princess: Kinslee Jensen

Senior Brave: John Leslie

Junior Princess: Tylie Smith

Junior Brave: Waawaate Gunderson

MINNESOTA POWWOW SCHEDULE

May 16 - Rochester
May 16 - Minneapolis
May 22 - Cass Lake
May 30 - Mille Lacs
June 5 - Nett Lake
June 12 - Morton
June 12 - White Earth
June 19 - Hinckley
June 19 - Cass Lake
June 26 - S Lake
June 26 - Tower
July 7 - Red Lake
July 17 - Ball Club
July 24 - Onigum
July 24 - McGregor
August 14 - Mille Lacs
August 21 - Inger
September 11 - Cass Lake
Sepember 18 - Sugar Pt
October 17 - St. Paul



Day listed is the start date of the powwow



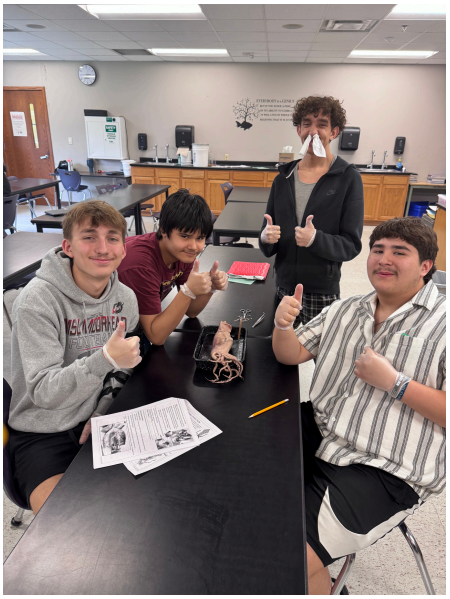






STUDENT HIGHLIHGTS

10th grade biology dissecting Squid







2nd grade went on a field trip last week to the dairy barn. We had SO much fun!!







STUDENT HIGHLIHGTS

Third Grade end of year field trip

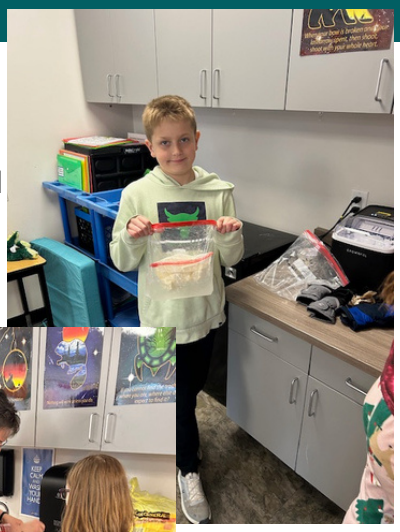


Mr. Andrew Johnson's Civics 8 classes had 3 guest speakers representing the local government of the area. They included Taylor Guenther (City Administrator), David Oakland (Marsh Creek Township Clerk) and Curt Uran (Mayor of Mahnomen). Earlier this spring the 8th graders learned about the types of local government in America. The speakers will share what they do in their various positions.

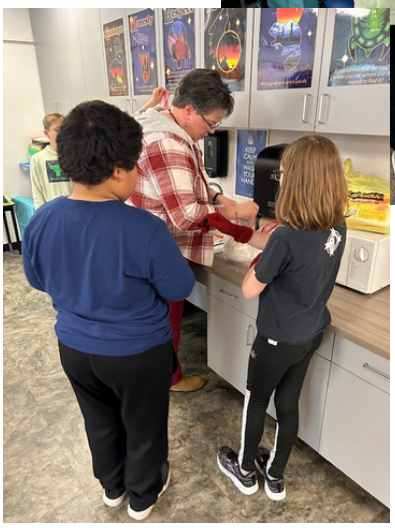


STUDENT HIGHLIHGTS

MRS. KANGAS AND MS. WINTERS' 5TH GRADE WIN GROUPS MADE "ICE CREAM IN A BAG" AFTER READING AN ARTICLE ABOUT ICE CREAM!





















5TH GRADE HAS HAD THE PRIVILEGE TO WORK WITH THE INTERNATIONAL WATER INSTITUTE AND BE APART OF THE RIVER OF DREAMS PROGRAM. STUDENTS READ “PADDLE TO THE SEA”, LEARNED ABOUT THE WATER CYCLE AND THE WATER SHED THAT WE LIVE IT. STUDENTS EACH RECEIVED A CANOE TO DECORATE AND WROTE A DREAM FOR THEIR CANOE. STUDENTS LEARNED THAT THE WATER IN THE WILD RICE RIVER WHERE WE LAUNCHED OUR CANOES, WILL FLOW TO THE RED RIVER AND FLOW NORTH. THAT MEANS THAT OUR CANOES CAN POSSIBLY END UP IN LAKE WINNIPEG IN CANADA, WITH THE END GOAL OF OUR CANOES REACHING THE ATLANTIC OCEAN!
YOU CAN CHECK OUT THE STUDENTS CANOES OR DREAMS AND STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO TRACK THEIR CANOES AND WHERE THEY ARE ON RIVEROFDREAMS.ORG