

# np NEW PRAIRIE UNITED SCHOOL CORPORATION

*a culture of excellence*

Publication of the New Prairie United School Corporation

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## MISSION

Our purpose is to Ensure High Levels of Learning for ALL Students



## Superintendent's Message

As 2023 starts, I am excited to share some of the success we have been having this school year at NPUSC. To start, our student athletes had a fantastic fall season! Additionally, our administration and teachers have been focusing on bringing fun back to our schools post pandemic. They have done some pretty unique things alongside setting expectations for student behavior and we have already seen some great results. At the high school, our HOSA group has been pursuing the "Heart-Safe" school distinction. We have also been working on K-12 Curriculum Alignment, and we have a new board member to introduce.



NPUSC has a lot to be proud of! As always, I am happy to see students and staff thrive and love being able to share some of our stories with you.

*Dr. Paul White  
Superintendent of New Prairie United School Corporation*

## Welcome New Board Member Rich Gadacz



A special welcome goes to Rich Gadacz as he joins the NPUSC Board of Education! He is a New Prairie alumnus (1982) and went on to study at Indiana University South Bend, earning a Business Administration degree. He has spent most of his working career in Building Science and Energy Efficiency and is currently employed at Solutions for Energy Efficiency Logistics as a Quality Assurance

Manager. He is married to Kristine, and they have two daughters: Harmony who attends Marian University Ancilla College and Gretchen who is a senior at New Prairie.

Regarding his new board position, he shares, "I am looking forward to working with all NPUSC staff. My goal is to learn as quickly as possible and to be an asset to the corporation."



## Aligning K-12 English Language Arts Priority Standards

This year, K-12 teachers have been collaborating by looking at the Indiana State Standards grade level by grade level. They have identified the "must know" standards with the goal of aligning them by the quarter(s) of when they will be covered and creating common formative assessments (skill checks). Jen Sass, NPUSC's Curriculum Director, explains, "Aligning our standards (skills) throughout the grade levels and using the common skill assessments will ensure we are building our students' knowledge base skill by skill every year." She also credited teachers for their efforts, "Our teachers have embraced this large task with gusto and with a growth mindset. Their hard work and collaboration pays off HUGE for ALL of our students."

## New Prairie Middle School

NPMS has been focusing on building and rebuilding positive student-teacher relationships. After looking at research and brainstorming a few changes, teachers and staff started the school year off with a schoolwide assembly the first day of school. At the assembly, administrators went over typical topics like expectations and rules but added a fun twist for the students. They played tug of war and even had a messy egg toss in which Principal Justin Holmquest and Assistant Principal Kris Staats won. Students were both surprised and irritated to learn that the principals had been using a hard-boiled egg! Principal Holmquest used this as a learning opportunity: "During the school year, some of you might try to bend the rules or make mistakes. It is important for you to own your mistakes and learn from them. And, you might have to face consequences." He then let a student smash a couple of raw eggs on his head, which lightened the mood back up. With this small act of fun on the first day of school, the stage was set for a great year!



Additionally, in order to promote more fun and deeper relationships, NPMS has added some special events:

- Quarterly incentives for students who meet certain academic and behavior benchmarks
- An additional school dance
- Staff vs. student basketball game (raising money for NPMS's HOSA team)
- Spirit week leading up to the game

## Prairie View Elementary



PVES has been emphasizing their Bobcat BEST this year, which stands for Be Prepared, Encourage Others, Show Respect and Take Pride. Administration and staff created an introductory video specifically showing expectations for these behaviors in various locations in the

school. Along with the video, PVES now has additional signage throughout the building to help remind students. Students work to show their Bobcat BEST each week in hopes of taking home the Bobcat BEST Trophy which is awarded to classes exemplifying the schoolwide expectations. When classes win the trophy, they can also choose their own reward like an extra recess, picnic lunch with a guest reader or earning a Bobcat Buck.

Not only that, but PVES also began an attendance challenge where the grade level with the highest average attendance at the end of each quarter earns a special hands-on science lesson with the principal. The first award went to the fourth grade classes that read a story from Dr. Seuss; learned about solids, liquids and gases; and made their own Oobleck. This quarter, there will be a lesson on salt and how it's used on roads and sidewalks to melt ice. Students will also learn how it helps make ice cream!

Principal Justin Heinold shares, "Students are naturally competitive. Staff have overheard conversations from students encouraging one other to be their BEST in order to win the trophy. We also keep a display up in the cafeteria for the attendance challenge so that students can see how close they are."





# 2022 NPHS Fall Sports Recap

## Well Done, Student Athletes!

This fall, NPHS students performed well not only in their athletic endeavors but also in the classroom. Job well done to the 21 New Prairie student-athletes who earned Academic All-NIC Honors!



### Football Team Named State Runner-ups!

Congratulations to the New Prairie Football team who were named champions in IHSAA Sectional, Regional, Semi-State and Class 4A State Runner-ups! They finished the year with an amazing record of 13-2.

### Cross Country Runner Lilly Zelasko Fastest in the State

New Prairie senior Lilly Zelasko had an amazing final season this fall! She won the IHSAA Semi-State and capped off her outstanding Cross Country career by finishing 21st overall at the IHSAA State meet in Terre Haute, IN. Lilly was named an Indiana All-Star and represented Team Indiana in the Mid-East Cross Country Championships in Kettering, OH, finishing first for Team Indiana.



Both Boys and Girls Cross Country teams advanced to the IHSAA Regional while individuals Logan Thibodeau, Megan Lanchsweerd and Lilly Zelasko qualified for Semi-State.

### Girls' Golf Coach Bruce Watson Named Coach of the Year

The Girls Golf team had an outstanding year posting a 21-2 record during the regular season. The team advanced to the Lake Central Regional and looks forward to a great core group of returning golfers heading into 2023. Congratulations to Head Coach Bruce Watson on being named NIC Girls Golf Coach of the Year!



### Volleyball Wins Another Championship!

The New Prairie Volleyball team has been labeled Sectional Champions for five straight years in a row now! This year they finished the season with an overall 25-9 record after falling to NorthWood in the Regional Championship. Go Cougars!

### Boys' Soccer Coach Daniel Reffo Named Coach of the Year



Congratulations to Coach Daniel Reffo on being named NIC N-S Division Coach of the Year! This year, the Boys Soccer team saw much improvement from previous seasons and finished with a record of 11-5 with a 3-0 loss to SB Adams in the 3A IHSAA Tournament.

### Girls Soccer Team Takes Leaps and Bounds

In only their third season, the Girls Soccer team improved over the course of the year and continued to build on the total number of wins for the season. They ended with 7-11-1, making it to the 2A IHSAA Sectional hosted by Kankakee Valley.

### Boy Tennis Compete in Sectional Championship

New Prairie Boys Tennis completed their season in the Sectional Championship match losing to La Porte 5-0 after advancing by beating Michigan City Marquette 5-0 the night before. The team finished 11-11 in Head Coach Jared Emmons's first year.

## Rolling Prairie Elementary

RPES has been bursting with fun this year! Here are just some of the examples:

- Grade level attendance competition with a pizza party served personally by Principal Moore as the reward. Well done fourth grade and third grade for winning the first and second nine weeks accordingly!
- Weekly "Puppy Pack Award" given to two classrooms for excellent hallway behaviors. The prize is a certificate and a fun game with Principal Moore.
- "Top Dog Award" where students are daily recognized for their B.A.R.K. behavior and receive a reward.
- Bulldog dog tags weekly rewarded to two random "Top Dog" students.
- Quarterly schoolwide assemblies where students get to dance to "Who Let the Dogs Out."
- Quarterly themes like "Glow and Grow" focusing on Practice makes Progress and "Ring in the New Year" to reflect on goals.
- Handwritten birthday cards and pencils to every student from Principal Pamela Moore.
- Staff playing team building games during their staff meetings.
- Family Game Night with a Candyland theme.
- Staff v. Students basketball and volleyball games
- STEM Day

- Bingo for Books Night
- Camp Read-a-lot
- Superheroes for Math Night

Principal Moore shares, "It truly feels like we are a family. We believe in each other, we support each other, we celebrate our accomplishments, and we focus on the positive and know we are in this together. Through this, students view their teachers as their biggest cheering squad."



## You're Invited

You are invited to attend meetings of the School Board of NPUSC. These meetings are generally conducted at 6 p.m. CST on the fourth Monday of each month in the Superintendent's Office, 5327 N Cougar Rd., New Carlisle, IN, unless otherwise advertised.

## School Board

Phillip King..... President  
 Jason DeMeyer..... Vice President  
 Jill Smith..... Secretary  
 Dale Groves..... Member  
 Rich Gadacz..... Member

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 Prairie Elementary..... (574) 654-7258  
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 Rolling Prairie ..... (219) 778-2018

## Our Website

[www.npusc.k12.in.us](http://www.npusc.k12.in.us)



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 2022-23 School Calendar



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## HOSA Group Pursues Additional "Heart-Safe" Designations

NPUSC's HOSA-Future Health Professions is an extracurricular academic team for students who have an interest in pursuing a career in healthcare. This group has many opportunities to learn, lead, serve and innovate including attending the Indiana state leadership conference and competing against other students in selected events.



One more recent opportunity has been pursuing the Heart Safe School Designation through Project ADAM.



This organization focuses on preparing schools and communities to prepare for a cardiac emergency, the leading cause of death of students at school. To achieve a designation, schools must evaluate their facilities on AED placement, staff/student training, establish a cardiac emergency response plan and practice a cardiac emergency drill at least twice a year. In 2021, NPUSC was the first school in the entire state of Indiana to be named a Project ADAM Heart Safe School! Now, New Prairie Middle School and Rolling Prairie Elementary School are receiving their designations in February 2023.



Mark Mayfield

This initiative started with the unfathomable. In 2017, NPUSC senior Mark Mayfield lost his life after suffering sudden cardiac arrest during an intramural basketball game. In 2019, Tonya Aerts, PLTW Biomedical Science Teacher and NPUSC HOSA Advisor, discovered the Project ADAM organization and worked tirelessly to establish an affiliation in Indiana and to secure NPUSC as the first Indiana designation. Aerts shares, "This mission continues to provide multiple opportunities to students who want to get involved on a different level. We started with a campaign of awareness and have grown into a quest for change. This is because of students who want to take a chance at something they have never done before and grow in their leadership skills to something they never imagined. We will never be 'done' with our mission to educate others on sudden cardiac arrest and empowering others to act if someone needs help." Not

only has NPUSC been greatly affected by Project ADAM, but the program is growing across the state.

Aerts also reflected on this journey, "Our school experienced a student death to sudden cardiac arrest. That is our history and a reminder that sudden cardiac arrest can happen to anyone, anytime, anywhere. Mark Mayfield may have lost his life to sudden cardiac arrest at New Prairie High School, but he inspired a movement to save lives across Indiana."

## Bringing Back the Fun at School After the Pandemic

For the 2022-23 year, NPUSC administration and teachers have focused on bringing fun back to the school year post pandemic. Each school has done unique things within setting expectations for student behavior. Additionally, all three elementary schools are working on the state designation of family friendly school which allows them the opportunity to reflect and grow.