



WILDCAT CONNECTION

ISSUE 16 • SPRING EDITION • APRIL, 2025



MATTAWAN COMMUNITY BUILDS THE FUTURE

Bond-Fueled Progress: Groundbreaking Celebration

On March 10, Pure Michigan gifted us with sunny skies and exciting times in Mattawan! An official ground-breaking celebration was held to mark the launch of the first phase of the 2024 Mattawan School Bond—kicking off major upgrades to the stadium and field! This project will bring a new turf field, track improvements, upgraded seating, and more, creating a top-notch space for students and the community.

We were excited to celebrate alongside our students, staff, our Board of Education, and our partners at AVB, TowerPinkster, and Hurley & Stewart. Support for the bond and a strong community turnout as we broke ground stands as a testament to our community's unwavering support and deep-seated passion for creating future-focused learning spaces that will ensure high-quality education for every student. So if you're traveling around our campus grounds pardon our dust, but we're kicking up some serious progress, all thanks to our amazing community's bond-fueled awesomeness!



IN THIS ISSUE

- 2 Superintendent's News & District News
- 3 School News



MATTAWAN PUBLIC EDUCATION FOUNDATION

2025 Cheers to Education Event

OUR MISSION

Partnering with our community and families, we provide the highest quality education for all students in a caring, safe, and inclusive learning environment.



Randy Fleenor, Superintendent

BUILDING FUTURES FAST! SCHOOL BOND UPDATE

Dear Mattawan Community,

Shovels hit the dirt and the future is officially underway! We're bursting with excitement as we broke ground and launched the initial projects in package one of our school bond, marking the start of a transformative journey for our students. The unwavering future-focused support of the community, means the world to our students and will empower them to thrive for generations to come – thank you! Here's what's happening:



Week 1 Stadium Work Phase 1 The project has officially broken ground, with significant progress made, including installing silt fencing, decommissioning the scoreboard, removing the south goal post, and removing the skate park, which will be relocated elsewhere in the community. Excavation of the field has begun alongside the removal of the track surface. In the coming week, the team will finalize the construction coordination schedule for subcontractors, continue field excavation, move the AYSO shed, and begin tree removal and demolition prep for the detention pond.



Week 2 Stadium Work Phase 1 Recent progress on the project includes stripping topsoil from the field, completing a compensating cut at the skate park, beginning tree removal along the AYSO field tree line, and removing the track surface. In the coming week, the team plans to conduct analytical testing for the shed demolition, complete soil removal from the football field, and have Driesinga test soils in the existing field and skate park. Additional tasks include stripping topsoil from the skate park, demolishing a small shed, and starting demolition for the future detention pond. The team is addressing key issues such as scoreboard and structure planning, foundation drawings for the bleachers, and ongoing soil studies.



Week 3 Stadium Work Phase 1 The stadium project is progressing ahead of schedule! This week, significant grading took place at the stadium site, along with property scraping just north of the ECEC, across the creek. The harvested fill from this area will serve as the foundation for the new turf. Additionally, week three saw clearing work along the southwestern property line, further preparing the site for the next phase of construction.

I am fully committed to keeping you closely informed as this exciting project progresses, and with so much more to report on the horizon, it's truly hard to contain our enthusiasm for what's to come!

Today, Tomorrow, and Future Focused!

Randy Fleenor, Superintendent of Schools

MPEF CHEERS TO EDUCATION SUCCESS!



Mattawan Public Education Foundation held its annual "Cheers to Education" event at Consumers Credit Union Headquarters. The event is always a wonderful way to thank the Mattawan community for its generous support of The Foundation's work. Superintendent Fleenor gave an update on upcoming bond work, and our corporate donors were honored with plaques to thank them for their contributions.

The Foundation's student cohort program, under the leadership of Liz Henk highlighted a new and innovative way The Foundation can better connect with the needs of students in the district. Texas Corners Brewing Company and Lawton Ridge Winery were great new additions to the event, providing delicious appetizers and drink selections; we look forward to partnering with these local businesses for many years to come. A special thank you goes to Consumers Credit Union for use of their beautiful space, and to the many hands that worked together to make this a successful evening.

The Foundation has several upcoming opportunities for you to take part in to help support Mattawan Schools, including our Charity Golf Classic on June 19, and the Wildcat Road & Trail 5k on August 2. Mark your calendars for these fun events, and head to our website for more information and to register when signups become available: www.mpef.org

Y 5'S EARLY childhood



MRS. PAULSON IS A CHAMPION FOR CHILDREN Mrs. Paulson Receives Paraprofessional Hero Honors

Mrs. Paulson is a paraprofessional at the Mattawan Early Childhood Education Center. She was honored at an awards banquet for being an Educational Hero! She is dedicated to our Young 5s students, and has created a nurturing environment for them to grow and thrive. Mrs. Paulson is integral to the success of so many aspects of the day to day operations at the ECEC that provide students with a safe, organized, and loving school. In addition, Mrs. Paulson does all these great things with a smile on her face, pep in her step, and with so much joy! We are so lucky to have Mrs. Paulson at the ECEC.

100 Days of Awesome

CELEBRATING 100 DAYS OF LEARNING & GROWING!



Young 5s celebrated the 100th Day of School. The students celebrated with many different activities and centers. From building with 100 cups, to creating snacks with 100 different items, all the Young 5s students had a blast working with the number 100. In addition, all the students were on a hunt for 100 of our new mascot, Kit. By the end of the day we had found them all hidden around the classrooms. Getting to the 100th day of school is a big accomplishment for our students, but we are still counting on, and we will see how many days we are in school altogether. We are excited to be able to count so high!



MATTAWAN EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER
Growing FUTURE Wildcats

MARCH IS READING MONTH AT THE MATTAWAN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION CENTER WE'RE BOOKED WITH MYSTERY READERS



The ECEC did much celebrating in March all around reading. We enjoyed extra books, extra events, and extra fun! Our reading month incorporated many of the books by Mo Willems. These books are fun to read and encourage students to love reading. We also have many mystery readers coming in all month long along with book giveaways, dress up days, and special projects. We even had a visit from the AMAZING Antwerp Sunshine Library located right in Mattawan. I can tell our students are becoming great readers and are learning about the joy of books! Keep reading at home and don't forget to visit our local library!

EARLY ELEMENTARY

THINKLAW

Building Tomorrow's Thinkers



ThinkLaw is a program designed to teach critical thinking and problem-solving skills to students. Over the summer we sent three teachers to begin learning about the program and now the learning is growing throughout the staff. It focuses on developing students' ability to think logically, reason through problems, and make well-informed decisions. ThinkLaw helps students understand the process of reasoning and encourages them to apply that reasoning in various situations, making it a valuable tool for cultivating skills like:

- **Critical Thinking:** Assessing information, arguments, and evidence effectively.
- **Decision-Making:** Evaluating situations and making logical choices based on analysis.
- **Argumentation:** Building and defending arguments with clarity and structure.

The curriculum includes various resources and strategies for teachers to use in their classrooms, aiming to build students' cognitive skills in a hands-on and engaging way.

STUDENT HATCHING SUCCESS

Leyton's Chick Project Gets Boost from Paw Paw Tractor Supply



Leyton, a bright first grade student, had a big wish to bring more animals into his school, so he took the initiative to write a letter to the principal. In his heartfelt request, he suggested adding animals to enhance the learning experience for everyone. After discussing the idea with Mrs. Martin, the two decided that chicks would be the perfect addition. They reached out to their friends at Tractor Supply in Paw Paw, who generously donated all the supplies needed to care for the chicks. To further enrich the experience, Mrs. Chang devoted considerable time creating lessons and writing activities for Leyton, focusing on the life cycle and the process of raising chicks. This exciting opportunity turned into a wonderful learning adventure for Leyton and his classmates at EES, blending science, responsibility, and hands-on experiences in a memorable way.

SECOND GRADE GROOVES

Ms. Fletcher's Musical Masterpiece



Our second-grade students took the stage for a dazzling performance of *Movin' and Groovin'*, a musical created by Tara Fletcher, our talented music teacher. The students showcased their rhythm and singing skills with enthusiasm and energy, captivating the audience with every note. Several students made their stage debut, shining brightly under the spotlight. It was a fantastic evening that not only highlighted the hard work and creativity of our young performers but also provided a wonderful opportunity for all students to enjoy being audience members and supporting their peers. What an unforgettable experience for everyone involved!

**THIS IS IT, A SPORTS THEME MUSICAL
GAME ON! 5TH GRADE MUSICAL WINS OVER THE CROWD**



Ms. Mroczek prepared our 5th graders for a wonderful music performance entitled *This Is It!* The program was a collection of songs that all revolved around a sports theme and that also showcased the musical concepts that the students have been learning in music class since January. Students displayed their talents with rhythm, tempo, melodies, and even performed instruments such as xylophones, drums, and boom whackers! We'd like to thank Ms. Mroczek and our 5th grade teachers and support staff for being so supportive of our students!

LATER
ELEMENTARY

3
-
5

LATER ELEMENTARY 3RD GRADERS TAKE FLIGHT

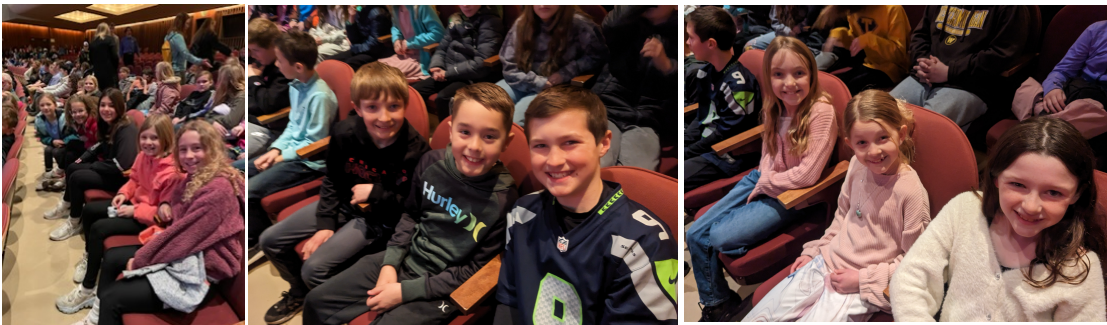
Kalamazoo Air Zoo Brings Science to Life



Third grade students had the opportunity to visit the Air Zoo in Kalamazoo. They soared into the world of aviation and space at the Air Zoo, where hands-on exhibits and immersive displays brought science to life. They experienced the thrill of a simulated space mission; students were captivated by the wonders of flight. The day was filled with wide-eyed wonder and enthusiastic questions, as well as a real sense of curiosity, inspiring future astronauts and engineers.

STAR WARS SYMPHONY

4th Grade Students Enjoyed a Galaxy of Sound



Our 4th grade students were delighted to experience the music of Star Wars at the Miller Auditorium, performed by the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra. They experienced the epic grandeur of a symphony, but with a twist: the iconic music of Star Wars filled the concert hall. Familiar themes fueled imaginations and made classical music feel thrilling. Observing and listening to the Kalamazoo Symphony instilled a deeper appreciation for orchestral arrangements. Students also learned how music can tell powerful stories, leaving a lasting impression on young minds and perhaps even inspiring a future generation of composers! We are grateful to our partners at Kalamazoo Symphony for partnering with schools and making a profound musical impact on young students.

THEY'VE HIT THE 1,000

DAY MARK

5TH GRADE CELEBRATION



Our 5th graders are 1,000 days smarter! They marked a momentous occasion: 1,000 days of dedicated learning, a testament to their growth and perseverance. Their teachers designed a day of fun to celebrate! The celebration was a vibrant reminder of the countless lessons, friendships, and experiences that have shaped their educational journey. They reflected on their progress, acknowledging the milestones achieved and the knowledge gained, while looking forward to the exciting chapters yet to unfold in their Mattawan learning journey. Congratulations to students and all of their teachers along the way! LET'S GO WILDCATS!

MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWSFLASH

Traits for Tomorrow

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS BUILDING SKILLS TO LEAD THE WAY



Mrs. Hinueber's students have been diligently working on "Leadworthy Character Traits." Focus on building empathy, self-direct skills, teamwork, responsibility, respect, kindness, courage, perseverance and integrity are woven into the Leadworthy Intermediate Course. The curriculum defines each trait and allows students to practice and grow each character trait. This initiative helps students make new discoveries about themselves and others. Further, it grows connectedness between each other and with their teacher. Students practice how to think critically and thoughtfully about situations, collaborate with classmates as a team, confidently share their thoughts, feelings, and opinions, as well as listen well to the ideas and perspectives of others. Mrs. Hinueber's students understand personal responsibility and lead with heart!



This important learning primarily occurs through discussion and group activities that are designed to help students gain insights about themselves. Their 'Reflection Notebooks' hold interactive notes and journal prompts, as well as a variety of creative and self-reflective assignments. Students engage in group work frequently as well as skits and public speaking. Mrs. Hinueber infuses standards from language arts into our lessons as well as technology.

Seen here is the "Paper Tower Challenge," with varying rounds and degrees of difficulty. Students were tasked to work collaboratively to create the tallest paper tower. Different challenges were presented to each group. The tower had to stand on its own for 1 minute. The tallest tower created was 41" tall!

CYBER SECURITY & INTERNET SAFETY

PUT TECH AWAY, GO OUT AND PLAY

As adults, we worry about security involving our bank accounts being hacked or our identity stolen. Not too many of us worry about having our pockets picked anymore like previous generations. Crime and security has shifted to the cyber world. Adults however, are not the only ones who are becoming victims of new age technology threats. Our youth is becoming targeted in many ways as well. It is our responsibility as educators to teach our students how to navigate through this rapidly changing world in a safe way.

During our student's 7th and 8th grade Exploring Adolescence classes we have updated and added curriculum to meet these needs. We have previously taught lessons on the topics of appropriate internet usage, laws and consequences related to technology, cyberbullying, digital footprint, and internet safety. With new and unfortunate trends taking place we have added lessons about online addiction, effects of technology on mental health, online enticement through social media and gaming, recognizing potentially dangerous interactions online, how and where to report inappropriate interactions as well as where to get help.

As parents and guardians it is important to be aware and involved in your student's online activities. If schools and families continue to work together, we can help our youth responsibly and safely navigate through this ever changing virtual world. Put the tech away... go outside and play!

MATH COUNTS 2025 – MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS SLAY THE SEASON!



Mattawan Middle School is proud to congratulate the 2025 MathCounts team on a great season! The 14 students on the team spanned grades 6-8, and many were returning members from last year. Ms. Furland and Mrs. Swetch hosted weekly practices, challenging the students with rigorous math problems and strategies. These strategies prepared the team for the Regional Competition at WMU, where they competed against 12 other schools in the area. We are extremely proud of the team's hard work and dedication, and a BIG shout out goes to Bradley Clark for qualifying as an individual in the State Competition at Oakland University!

We sincerely thank the MPEF for providing personalized t-shirts designed by the students, and T-Shirt Printing Plus for quick production. Please join us in applauding these students not only for their outstanding math skills, but also their commitment to the MathCounts team. Great work, Wildcats!

Team Members: Bradley Clark, Elliot Walters, Alexis Galla, Khloe Terburg, Katie Doorlag, Kade Messamore, Eli Block, Maximus Walunas, Natalie Walton, Coen Bisnett, Carter Hanson, Brooklyn Trieu, Izzy Bohms, and Colette Barrett. **Alternate Team Members:** Kayla Schaffer and Lacie McEwan. **Coaches:** Addisyn Furland and Amanda Swetch.

HIGH SCHOOL HEADLINES

Schools for Tools Mobile Field Trip

INFORMATION, TRAINING, HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE



Mrs. Johnson’s senior seminar students had the opportunity to visit a “mobile” field trip as MHS hosted “Schools for Tools”. The mission statement for School for Tools includes “Schools to Tools aims to provide students, parents, teachers and school counselors with the information, training and hands on experiences they need to make informed career decisions aware of all their options.”

CONGRATULATIONS PENELOPE CROSS

National Honor Society Scholarship Recipient

Congratulations to senior Penelope Cross for receiving a National Honor Society Scholarship! This well-deserved award recognizes Penelope’s dedication to the four pillars of NHS membership—scholarship, leadership, service, and character—and we are incredibly proud of her accomplishment. From the classroom to the community, Penelope demonstrates unwavering leadership and a profound commitment to both academic pursuits and making a difference. A true role model, she exemplifies what it means to be deeply engaged in the community, give back, and help others.



Since its inception, the NHS Scholarship program has awarded over \$2 million to exceptional student leaders like Penelope Cross. Her success is a true testament to the guidance and support of Mattawan’s NHS adviser Kate Galla, and Terra Shockley Co-adviser, whose selfless dedication helps shape the next generation of leaders. Penelope is the Mattawan student to win a National Scholarship in 6 years, impressive.

BRAVO SOPHIE ROBERTS!

MATTAWAN HIGH SCHOOL 2025 NATIONAL MERIT FINALIST



It is with immense Mattawan pride that we announce senior student Sophie Robert’s exceptional achievement as a National Merit Finalist. This prestigious recognition places her among the nation’s most academically talented students, and we extend our heartfelt congratulations. Over 1.3 million juniors in about 21,000 high schools entered the 2025 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the 2023 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®), which served as an initial screen of program entrants. The nationwide pool of Semifinalists, representing less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors, includes the highest-scoring entrants in each state. To become a Finalist, the Semifinalist and a high school official must submit a detailed scholarship application, in which they provide information about the Semifinalists academic record, participation in school and community activities, demonstrated leadership abilities, employment, and honors and awards received. A Semifinalist must have an outstanding academic record throughout high school, be endorsed and recommended by a high school official, write an essay, and earn SAT® or ACT® scores that confirm the student’s earlier performance on the qualifying test. We are thrilled to celebrate Sophie Roberts becoming a National Merit Finalist! This incredible accomplishment is a testament to her hard work, dedication, and intellectual curiosity

GO WILDCATS



MHS SPORTS REPORT

WINTER SPORTS WRAPPED UP WITH SOME EXCITING HAPPENINGS!

- For the 4th consecutive year, the Boys Mattawan/Paw Paw Ski team won Conference Championship
- Girls Mattawan/Paw Paw Ski crowned Conference Champs (3 times out of the last 5 seasons)
- Wrestling is sending 4 wrestlers to the State Finals: Dylan Putman (senior), Elyse Morales (junior), Shylah Twyman (Senior), and Anna Williams (Senior)
- Coaches Nico Lopez and Guy Williams were named Coach and Assistant Coach of the Year

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF OUR STUDENT ATHLETES! WELL DONE!

Mattawan Consolidated School
56720 Murray Street
Mattawan, MI 49071



WILDCAT CONNECTION

MCS Unified Family Resources



SUPPLIES FOR SUCCESS www.supplies-for-success.org
Supplies for Success assists students and families in need at the Mattawan Early and Later Elementary, Middle and High Schools with new and gently used clothing. Supplies for Success is a volunteer organization whose purpose is to provide appropriate school clothing. By caring for their basic needs, we encourage self-esteem and promote academic success. Our goal is to give these children the confidence they need to succeed and to relieve economic stress on their parents.



DONATE NOW



WILDKPAKS www.wildpaks.org

Wildpaks is dedicated to building a stronger Mattawan community, one student at a time. Wildpaks is a nonprofit organization which supports students who are at risk of going hungry over the weekends throughout the school year in the Mattawan Consolidated School District. We directly serve over 200 students (and counting) among the ECEC, Early El, Later El, Middle School and High School. Every Friday each participating student receives a food pack filled with healthy, kid-friendly meal and snack items that provide nutritional support on the weekends.



DONATE NOW



MATTAWAN AREA PANTRY www.mattawanareapantry.org

Neighbors helping neighbors by providing food assistance to families in need who reside in the Mattawan school district. The Pantry is a non-profit organization that relies on volunteers and the generous donations of this community to serve a growing number of Mattawan area families experiencing food insecurity. Distributions are held the 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month from 8:30 am to 11:15 am.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

2024.2025

Ted Roethlisberger, President
Shari Magrath, Vice President
Mark Noffsinger, M.D., Secretary
Vickie Mabin-Herzberg, Treasurer
Marika Hawes-Ruhrup, Trustee
Rick George, Trustee
Onur Arugaslan, Trustee

Randall Fleenor, Superintendent
Jay Larner, Assistant Superintendent

2024.2025 DISTRICT CALENDAR

APRIL 2025

7 Classes Resume
16 ½ Day – Staff PD

MAY 2025

23 ½ Day - Staff PD
26 No School - Memorial Day

JUNE 2025

3-4 Final exams – ½ days for 6-12 students only
5 ½ Day Students - Last Day of School

