



# THE STCS CONNECTION

A publication of Saginaw Township Community Schools, bringing the classroom to the community. Thank you for your support.

## A Saginaw Township Community Schools millage renewal will appear on the February 27, 2024 ballot. Millage information can be found on pages 5-8.

White Pine Middle School 7<sup>th</sup> graders used sidewalk chalk art to learn math aspects. Students applied different requirements to include percentages, ratios, shapes and colors to create each piece of artwork. They worked hard to make sure the designs complied with the rules their team chose!



Arrowwood Elementary students invited their family, friends, and neighbors, who are veterans or actively enlisted in the military, to celebrate Veterans Day with them. The students offered donuts and coffee, then held a school-wide assembly tribute to Veterans. They then placed hundreds of American flags outside of their building.



## STCS Welcomes New Curriculum Director

**Saginaw Township Community Schools** is pleased to announce that Jamie Hales has been selected as the new Director of Curriculum and Learning for the district. The position title was formerly known as the Director of Learning, Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment and was vacated after Jamie Kraatz was named Superintendent.

Hales comes to the district from Essexville-Hampton Public Schools where she currently is the Director of Curriculum and MTSS. She has also been a K-12 Literacy Coach for the Saginaw Intermediate School District since 2018.

Hales has 15 years of teaching experience, specifically in math and social studies and was named a Gerstacker Fellow in 2014. She obtained her Master of Education at Saginaw Valley State University.

“With an impressive background in literacy coaching, teaching and leadership, Jamie brings a wealth of expertise, passion and innovative vision to the district,” stated Jamie Kraatz, incoming Superintendent. “We are excited about the new perspectives she will bring to our curriculum development.”

Hales is a Saginaw Township resident and is married with two children, both of whom attend Saginaw Township’s Heritage High School. She assumed the Director of Curriculum and Learning role on Tuesday, December 12<sup>th</sup>.





## A Fond Farewell

**Bruce Martin - Superintendent, 2023**

As I close my 33-year career in public education, I wish to thank each of you for your support of the Saginaw Township Community Schools, your willingness to share your thoughts and feelings with me, and most of all, for making me feel so welcome in our community. The genuine warmth of the Township is noticeable and commendable, and it will be a critical tool for attracting new families to our school district as populations shift and transition in the years to come.



In retirement, I plan to devote quality time to my wife, children, and two beautiful grandkids; explore the beautiful campgrounds our nation offers; and most importantly, be truly present with whomever I happen to be with at that time -- not lost in thought worrying about a situation at school. My wife and kids have shared me with thousands of other families during my career and now it's time to give them my very best, not the "leftovers" of my energy, devotion, and attention.

I'm so excited to welcome Mrs. Jamie Kraatz into the Superintendent role as I leave. I have partnered with Mrs. Kraatz in her role as our leader of teaching and learning since July 1, 2019, and have been extremely impressed with her professionalism, passion for students, and ability to bring unity and cohesiveness to a team. Her attention to detail and drive for continuous improvement will make her a tremendous asset to STCS.

I can assure you that your children are in great hands. Our STCS staff and administrators care deeply about our students and are impressive in their credentials, expertise, and compassion. Thank you for partnering with us to give our youngsters the best education possible. They certainly deserve it. God bless.



The STCS Connections will be working with student reporters who will contribute articles to the district newspaper! Pictured here are Hemmeter 4<sup>th</sup> graders who are excited for you to read their first article on this page, titled "Second Grade Celebrates Coding with Family."

## Second Grade Celebrates Coding with Family

By Hemmeter 4th Grade Reporters Claire Saini, Dawson Schaller, & Fiona Smith

Hemmeter Elementary second grade students and teachers, Mrs. Rummler and Mrs. Kahl, held an event on December 8th, 2023.

This event celebrated computer science while using the website [www.code.org](http://www.code.org). Students invited their relatives to learn why coding is crucial to our changing world, and they also welcomed their adults to code along with them.

One parent was interviewed during the event and she said she believes coding is important to know because it provides more opportunities in life.

When Mrs. Kahl was asked why she teaches coding to her class, she responded, "We do it because it is an important skill, it is easier to do when you are younger, and it's just fun!"

Finally, a student in class, Eli L., was asked why he likes to code. He said, "I just like it!"

Hemmeter takes pride in preparing students for their future careers.





## Winter 2024 Community Education Classes

Visit [www.stcs.org/comed](http://www.stcs.org/comed) for more information



### Guided Meditation

This class includes 20-30 minute guided meditation sessions; wear comfortable clothing, bring your own floor cushion or yoga mat and a positive attitude. \*Sessions won't start exactly at 6:30, there will be a few minutes for participants to come in and get settled, but PLEASE BE ON TIME. Late-comers are disruptive, and there needs to be very minimal distractions for the benefit of the group. Instructor is Vanessa Salogar of Introspect Studio.

#### Register by: February 5

Location: Heritage High School,  
Day: Thursday(s), Time: 6:30 -7:30p  
Class Fee: \$20  
Feb. 15: Intentional breathing (pranayama) meditation  
Feb. 22: Ujjayi breathing (pranayama) meditation  
Feb. 29: Nadi Shodhana breathing (pranayama) meditation  
Mar. 7: Surya Bhedan breathing (pranayama) meditation  
Mar. 14: Visualization Meditation  
Mar. 20: Sound Meditation (Wednesday)

### Cybersecurity and Cyber Hygiene

In today's digital age, the importance of cybersecurity and cyber hygiene cannot be overstated, affecting not only corporations but also individual community members. We propose to host a comprehensive Cybersecurity and Cyber Hygiene Training class tailored for adults to empower them with essential skills and knowledge. The class will offer hands-on experience in secure browsing, password management, and recognizing phishing scams, thereby enhancing the participants' ability to safeguard their digital footprint effectively. Instructor is Dalton Crabtree.

#### Register by: February 16

Location: Heritage High School Day(s): Tuesday  
Time: 5:30 - 8:30 PM Date(s): Feb. 27  
Class Fee: \$34

### Martial Arts for Kids Ages 6-10

These classes will focus on self-defense, fitness and discipline. Instructor is John Vasquez of Gold Medal Martial Arts who has years of experience teaching the martial arts.

#### Register by: January 25

Location: Sherwood Theater Day(s): Tuesday(s)  
Time: 6:15 - 6:55 PM Date(s): Feb 6, 13, 20  
Class Fee: \$34

#### Register by: March 21

Location: Sherwood Theater Day(s): Tuesday(s)  
Time: 6:15 - 6:55 PM Date(s): April 2, 9, 16  
Class Fee: \$34

### Microsoft Excel for Beginners

In this class, students will learn how to use basic formulas, tables and charts, filtering, and grouping of data in Excel. This class assumes that you have not worked with Excel in the past and are new to manipulating data. No additional requirements. Instructor is Gary Holik.

#### Register by: March 1

Location: Heritage High School Days: Wednesday(s)  
Time: 6-9 PM Dates: Mar.13, Mar.20 Fee: \$44

### Resin/Epoxy Pour

In this workshop we will teach you how to Resin/Epoxy Pour using alcohol ink and mica powders onto birch hardwood. The hardwood shapes are precut by laser, so the details are amazing! Rocks, crystals, shells, and other accessories are also available for a small fee at the workshop. Add-ons can also be purchased at the event, such as a 6-inch shape for \$15 or a keychain shape for \$5.

A **supply fee**, separate from the Class Fee (listed below) is payable **to the instructor** at the night of the class (cash or check only). There are three different sizes to choose from: 15 inch: \$30, 18 inch: \$36, 24 inch: \$43. (Visit [www.stcs.org/comed](http://www.stcs.org/comed) and click on Resin/Epoxy Pour to the left to see shapes).

Call in advance to guarantee your specific size/shape by Monday, March 18. Instructor: Tammy-Jenial Walton

#### Register by: March 18

Location: Heritage High School Days: Tuesday  
Time: 6:30 - 9 PM Dates: April 2  
Class Fee: \$15

### Anna Robles conducts several Yoga Sessions

#### New You Yoga - Tuesday's class - 6 Week Session

Location: Heritage H.S. Media Center Day(s): Tuesday(s),  
Time: 6:30 - 7:30 PM Date(s): Feb. 27-April 9  
Class Fee: \$57 No class March 26

#### Chair Yoga - Thursday's class - 6 Week Session

Location: Heritage H.S. Media Center Day(s): Thursday(s)  
Time: 5:15 - 6:15 PM Date(s): Feb. 29 - April 11  
Class Fee: \$57 No class March 28

#### New You Yoga - Thursday's class - 6 Week Session

Location: Heritage H.S. Media Center Day(s): Thursday(s)  
Time: 6:30 - 7:30 PM Date(s): Feb. 29 - April 11  
Class Fee: \$57 No class March 28

### Tai Chi & Qigong for Health

Tai Chi and Qigong is beneficial for good health, energy and enjoyment. Transform your quality of life with Tai Chi and Qigong as millions of Chinese have. You will get a satisfying workout emphasizing balance, joint mobility, circulation, endurance, and a sensation of energy (Chi). It is a physical activity that you can easily maintain. It is believed the slow-paced "meditation in motion" of Tai Chi is a promising addition to regular heart care as an option for those unable to engage in other forms of physical activity. Wear comfortable clothing. Instructor is Jim Bush.

#### Register by: March 4

Location: Arrowwood Conf Cntr. Day(s): Wednesday(s)  
Time: 6 - 7 PM Date(s): Mar. 13 - April 24  
Class Fee: \$38 No Class Mar. 27

**To register: [saginaw.revtrak.net](http://saginaw.revtrak.net) or (989) 797-1847**



## Saginaw Township Schools' Hemmeter Elementary Earns Top State Ranking

Saginaw Township Community Schools' **Hemmeter Elementary** has been named a U.S. News and World Report Best Elementary School. Hemmeter was ranked #15 in Michigan elementary schools and received an overall score of 98.9 out of 100. This ranking puts them in the top 1% of all elementary schools in the state (15 out of 1,272).

Hemmeter Elementary is a kindergarten to 5<sup>th</sup> grade gifted and talented magnet school with an enrollment of approximately 317 students. The school was also ranked #3 in Michigan magnet elementary schools.

Schools are ranked on their performance on state-required tests, graduation and how well the school prepares their students for high school.

"Hemmeter is excited to be recognized as one of the best elementary schools in Michigan," said Hemmeter Principal Jim Bailey. "The award is a testament to the dedication of our entire school community. I could not be more proud of our teachers, support staff, families, and students for working together to make Hemmeter such an amazing school."



Mackinaw High School students had the opportunity to learn biology and science by dissecting frogs. The lesson revealed a unique chance to explore and understand the anatomy, structure and function of various organ systems. It also provides an introduction to scientific inquiry.



Four **Westdale Elementary** classes visited Kluck Nursery Christmas Tree Farm at the end of November. They learned how trees are harvested, drilled and baled to prepare to go to homes for the holiday season. They also learned that trees can be returned after use to Kluck Nursery to be mulched!







# Saginaw Township Community Schools

2024  
MILLAGE RENEWAL  
ISSUE

## 2024 STCS Millage Renewal on Ballot

Dear Community Members,

On February 27, 2024, voters will be presented with an important school ballot question. We want to provide information so you are fully informed, as this ballot proposal has significant operational implications for our schools. This is NOT related to the recent STCS bond proposal.

The ballot question pertains to the 18-mill Non-Homestead Operating Millage that is required to be levied by every school district in Michigan to receive the full per pupil foundation allowance. This is part of the basic school funding formula enacted under Proposal A of 1994.

Saginaw Township Community Schools' current Non-Homestead Operating Millage is set to expire on December 31, 2024 and voters will be asked whether to renew it for an additional 11 years. This tax is levied on businesses, industrial, agricultural, and rental properties. It is NOT a tax on a homeowner's primary residence. The operating millage levy (or 18-mill levy) is collected as a portion of our "per pupil foundation allowance" and amounts to just over \$9.6 million annually for Saginaw Township Community Schools.

This equates to approximately \$2,132 per pupil (\$9.6m/4503 students). This operating millage is only a renewal of the millage that will expire with the 2024 tax levy.

A successful renewal would mean a continuation of the tax currently levied for applicable properties. An unsuccessful renewal of this tax would mean the loss of \$9.6 million in operational funding which is used to educate our students and would significantly impact the programs and services currently offered to STCS students. I ask that you help spread this information to your neighbors, friends and the community.

For further details on the Operating Millage Renewal, frequently asked questions and the exact ballot language for the school operating millage visit [www.stcs.org/millage](http://www.stcs.org/millage). We hope that you take the time to vote on February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

Sincerely,  
Jamie Kraatz  
Superintendent, STCS



FROM THE DESK OF  
**Jamie Kraatz**  
INCOMING  
SUPERINTENDENT

Millage Renewal:

- **Does NOT affect primary homeowners**
- **Is NOT related to the May 2023 STCS Bond Proposal**

**VOTE FEBRUARY 27, 2024**

**NO TAX INCREASE  
FOR PRIMARY HOMEOWNERS**

**YOUR VOTE COUNTS!**



# THE MILLAGE RENEWAL HISTORY AND EXPLANATION

On the ballot for Tuesday, February 27, 2024, will be an operating millage proposal, allowing the school district to CONTINUE to levy the statutory rate of not to exceed 18-mills on non-homestead property. This is not related to the STCS May 2023 bond proposal. Non-homestead properties are industrial, commercial and some agricultural property and "second homes" located within the district. It DOES NOT include a family's primary residence. This is not a new tax. In 1994, Proposal A was approved by Michigan voters, creating the structure of how Michigan schools are funded. Under the plan, Michigan schools are funded with a total of 24 mills on non-homesteads. This is made up of a state-wide millage rate of 6 mills on all property and 18 mills on non-homestead property when approved by local voters.

This structure ensures the State pays the majority of the cost, but to receive full funding of \$9,608 per pupil, schools must levy 18 mills on non-homestead property in their district.

The Headlee amendment to the Michigan Constitution caps property tax increases at 5% or the rate of inflation, whichever is less. Since the rate of growth of property values sometimes exceeds the rate of inflation, the actual tax levy decreases when this occurs. This is called the Millage Reduction Fraction (MRF). Saginaw Township Community Schools' voters have approved the 18 mill non-homestead millage every 11 years. In August of 2012, Saginaw Township voters also approved a Headlee override millage. This originally gave a combined total approval of just under 21 mills. The maximum amount the school district is allowed to levy is 18 mills. The additional mills provided cushion as the rates potentially "rolled back."

Due to the "roll back" as outlined in the Headlee amendment, the total authorized amount is currently 20.2377 mills (only 18 mills are actually levied on non-homestead properties). Due to the large increase in housing prices, this year's "roll back" is expected to reduce our level of millage below the 18 mill threshold, thereby decreasing the per-student funding from the State of Michigan below \$9,608.

This millage was originally approved by the voters in 1994. If you only own your main residence in our district, this tax does not apply.

If this millage does not pass, the State will not replace the difference in the level of funding (\$9.6 million), and Saginaw Township Community Schools will be forced to reduce or cut programs to offset the loss.



## ABOUT STCS

The Saginaw Township Community Schools (STCS) is comprised of five elementary, one middle and two high schools within Saginaw Township, Michigan, and serves nearly 4,600 students.

Arrowwood Elementary  
Hemmeter Elementary  
Sherwood Elementary  
Weiss Elementary  
Westdale Elementary  
White Pine Middle School  
Mackinaw High School  
Heritage High School

The mission of the district is to educate, guide and challenge all students to develop lifelong learning skills necessary to successfully contribute and compete in a rapidly changing global society.



## ***MILLAGE RENEWAL FAQ'S:***

Since 1994, every school district in Michigan has been required to pass a periodic renewal of an operating millage that is essential to ensure it collects all of its state funding. This millage doesn't impact the taxes of residents and their primary residences and the maximum amount any school district is allowed to levy is a state statutory 18-mills on all non-homestead property. They're not new taxes but instead an essential source of funding the district is required to secure from voters.

### **What is Non-Homestead property?**

Non-homestead property refers to commercial, industrial, rental and vacation property. It does not include a family's primary residence.

### **Is this a new tax?**

NO! This is a renewal and restoration of the 18-mills last approved by voters back in August 2012.

### **Will my residential school taxes increase?**

If the only property you own in the Saginaw Township Community School District is your primary residence, this millage will not cost you anything. The tax is levied on non-homestead properties only.

### **What will the money be used for?**

This is an operational budget for STCS. This is the funding that puts gas in our busses, keeps the lights on, pays staff salaries, keeps student programs running, etc.

### **What happens if the millage doesn't pass?**

The 18-mills assessed on non-homestead properties amounts to approximately \$9.6 million annually to support operations including instructional resources, classroom supplies, and teachers. This funding is essential to maintaining the current programs offered by the district. Should the millage not be approved, the district cannot replace this funding with any other source, and those revenues would be lost. Saginaw Township Community Schools would be required to reduce or cut programs to offset the loss.

### **What will the ballot language look like?**

*This proposal will allow the school district to continue to levy the statutory rate of not to exceed 18-mills on all property, except principal residence and other property exempted by law, required for the school district to receive its revenue per pupil foundation allowance and renews millage that will expire with the 2024 tax levy.*

*Shall the currently authorized millage rate limitation of 20.2377 mills (\$20.2377 on each \$1,000 of taxable valuation) on the amount of taxes which may be assessed against all property, except principal residence and other property exempted by law, in Saginaw Township Community Schools, Saginaw County, Michigan, be renewed for a period of 11 years, 2025 to 2035, inclusive, to provide funds for operating purposes; the estimate of the revenue the school district will collect if the millage is approved and 18 mills are levied in 2025 is approximately \$10,540,897 (this is a renewal of millage that will expire with the 2024 tax levy)?*

### **Why does the ballot language mention 20.2377 mills instead of 18 mills?**

The Michigan Constitution requires that millage rates be "rolled back" if taxable values increase more than the rate of inflation. As a result of this roll-back provision, the district is currently only able to levy 17.3466 mills instead of the full 18-mills. The ballot is asking voters to renew the 18-mills, as well as a cushion, in order to restore the millage rate back to the full 18-mills beginning with the 2024 levy. It is against the law to levy more than 18-mills for this purpose.

### **When is the election?**

The election is Tuesday, February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Note: this is also the Presidential Primary Election. Any person living within the school district who is registered may vote in this election.

### **Where can I vote?**

In general, residents of the Saginaw Township Community Schools district will vote in the same location for the school election as when voting in a general election. If you are unsure of your voting location or have questions about absentee voting, please contact your township clerk.

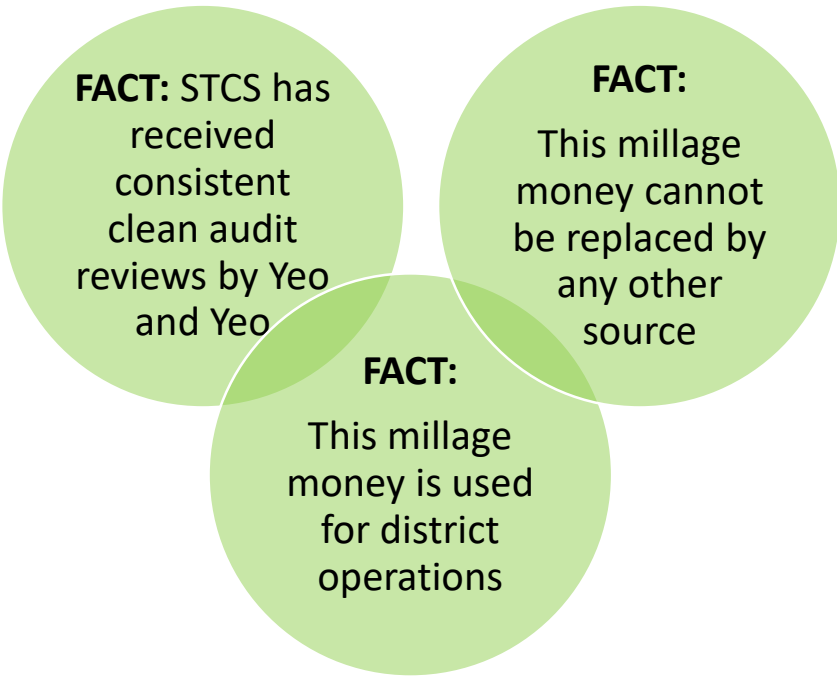


## Saginaw Township Community Schools

**A track record of  
SUCCESS.**  
**A commitment to  
EXCELLENCE.**



*White Pine Middle School was named a "National School to Watch" for the 4<sup>th</sup> straight time by The National Forum. Hemmeter Elementary is ranked #15 of all elementary schools in the State of Michigan by U.S. News & World Report. Hemmeter was also ranked #3 of all Magnet schools in the state.*



**For more information about  
the STCS Millage Renewal  
on the Tuesday, February 27 ballot,  
visit: [www.stcs.org/millage](http://www.stcs.org/millage)**

**VOTE FEBRUARY 27, 2024**

**NO TAX INCREASE  
FOR PRIMARY HOMEOWNERS**

**YOUR VOTE COUNTS!**





The **Heritage High School Counseling** Center kicked off the school year with prevention and intervention initiatives aimed to improve attendance, access to resources, social-emotional awareness, and health and wellness.



**Weiss Elementary's Ms. Woida** wrote a grant to create a wildlife sensory courtyard at the school! Thank you to Garpel Group for donating their landscaping service to make this courtyard a reality and to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for sponsoring the grant. Students planted over 500 plants and bulbs.



**Sherwood Elementary** second graders each received a bike helmet for free, courtesy of the THINK FIRST program. Heritage High School students helped to fit them. THINK FIRST is a non-profit organization that strives for quality injury prevention programs and teaches kids of all ages how to prevent traumatic brain and spinal cord injuries.





**White Pine Middle School** Intramural Sports are back! Intramural sports are free and a great way for middle school students to start off their school day. Students sign up with friends in teams and a schedule is created to play games before school in a round-robin tournament. T-shirts for the teams were provided by the White Pine Parent Council. 3-on-3 basketball was played in the first season which concluded in November. Intramural Floor Hockey is now under way and will be followed by co-ed volleyball. A possible dodgeball season is being considered as well.



**Sherwood Elementary** continues to be proud of the partnership with the SVSU College of Education. Our two entities have built a wonderful partnership in which STCS students gain additional adult mentorship and quality instruction, and the pre-service SVSU teachers get critical training time and a safe place to become fully prepared for their career! It's always hard when the teachers leave the nest. While one was more than ready to go, everyone had a hard time leaving the room... proof that this partnership is working and this program impacts everyone.



**Westdale Elementary** Kindergarten teachers, Mrs. Stec and Mrs. Fry, as well as their students, joined an 'ABC Exchange' this year. There are 26 classes across the country in the exchange, one for each letter of the alphabet. Each class was assigned a letter to decorate and send to the other 25 classes. The class has exchanged letters with preschool and kindergarten classes from Arkansas, Georgia, New York, Wisconsin, and 15 other states. They displayed and mapped out where each letter came from. The students have enjoyed receiving letters and learning about other classes and places in our country.





## 2023-2024 School Year Calendar

August 2023				
Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23FD	24	25/X
28	29	30	31	

FD = First Day of School  
X = No School

September 2023				
Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri
				1X
4X	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

X=No School - Labor Day Break

October 2023				
Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri
2PDx	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18PTC	19PTC	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

X = No School - PD Day 10/2 - ALL STAFF  
PTC - students attend AM only  
PTC: Oct. 18 - HS/Elem. Conferences 1-5 pm  
PTC: Oct. 18 - MS Conferences 1:30-5:30 pm  
PTC: Oct. 19 - Elem. Conferences 2-7 pm  
PTC: Oct. 19 - HS/MS Conferences 3-7 pm

November 2023				
Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri
		1	2	3ERW
6	7/PDx	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22X	23X	24X
27	28	29	30	

ERW=Elem Record day; students AM  
-(HS/MS has full day with students)  
X = No School - PD Day 11/7  
X = No School - Thanksgiving Break

December 2023				
Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21X	22X
25X	26X	27X	28X	29X

X = No School - Winter Break

January 2024				
Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri
1X	2X	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12RWx
15PDx	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30	31		

X = No School - Winter Break  
RWx = Record day (full day) No school  
X = No School - PD Day 1/15

February 2024				
Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9ERW
12	13	14	15	16
19PTC	20PTC	21PTC	22	23X
26	27	28	29	

ERW=Elem Record day; students AM  
-(HS/MS has full day with students)  
Parent Teacher Conferences: Feb. 19 - 21  
\*Feb. 23- snow day makeup if needed

March 2024				
Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25X	26X	27X	28X	29X

X = No School - Spring Break

April 2024				
Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri
1/X	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			

X = No School - Spring Break 4/1

May 2024				
Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri
		1	2	3 1/2
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27x	28	29	30LD	31RW

X=No School - Memorial Day 5/27  
LD = Last Day with students

### Professional Development Days

Full Days  
10/2, 11/7, 1/15

Half Day 5/3

## STEP BY STEP PRESCHOOL CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Step by Step is a developmentally appropriate preschool program for children ages 3-5 years old, located at Arrowwood Elementary.

- It is licensed by the State of Michigan.
- Hours are 7am-6pm year-long (closed holidays).
- Children must be toilet trained.
- Enrollment is limited to 30 students.
- Minimum 4 days per week.
- Weekly rates: 5 days \$150, 4 days \$120.
- Visit: [www.stcs.org/comed](http://www.stcs.org/comed) for more details and enrollment forms.

The Open House for the 2024-2025 Step by Step Preschool Center will be in April. The date and time will be announced at a later date at: [www.stcs.org/comed](http://www.stcs.org/comed) or call 989-797-1847 after March 31<sup>st</sup>.



### 2024 Board of Education Meetings

The Board of Education generally meets on the 2nd and 4th Monday. Agendas are posted at the Board of Education office, on the district web site, and are available at the meetings. Meetings start at 7 pm at the Arrowwood Conference Center, 5410 Seidel Road. Board of Education members are: Marianne Bird, Jan Collison, Jenean Coughlin, Michele DeShone, Anthony Duncan, David Jaffe, and Arik Smith. The meeting schedule is as follows:

January 15  
January 29  
February 12  
February 26

March 11  
March 18  
April 8  
April 22

May 13  
May 28  
June 10  
June 20



SCHOOL BOARD



**Arrowwood Elementary** was awarded a second 'Building Healthy Communities-Step Up for School' wellness grant for Quality Physical Education. Arrowwood was one of four schools in the state awarded this grant.

"We are always seeking ways to support our students' health and well-being for life," said Principal Rebekah D'Haene. "Getting the Eagles active with the Building Healthy Communities grant is a great way to build lifelong skills and receive additional materials to support our physical education program is a wonderful first step to this." Arrowwood will receive coaching, ideas and items to provide students with active play to release energy and reduce stress, both of which help improve attention in the classroom and decrease disruptive behavior.



**Weiss Elementary** 4th grade students had a wonderful time at Camp Hartley/Hartley Outdoor Center in Saginaw County. Students were able to experience survival training, pioneer living, candle making, archeology, and more. Since its opening in 1975, Hartley's 300 acres have educated approximately 250,00 students.



**Mackinaw High School** students have been busy enjoying events and learning opportunities. Their 'Cooking with Kern' series featured learning how to cook steak, mashed potatoes and handmade gravy. They also participated in cleaning up afterward and will continue to learn how to make easy dishes for themselves and their families. The evening of October 30th was Mackinaw's Halloween event! Staff and students volunteered and invited Sherwood and Westdale Elementary students to Mackinaw to play games, enjoy snacks, face painting and trick-or-treating. The students enjoyed a field trip to Saginaw Field and Stream for archery lessons. Saginaw Township Officer Lyle accompanied the group as they received a unique, 2-hour experience.

**Heritage High School** students held the 'Amazing Race.' This is an annual event that raises money and pits classes against each other for who can raise the most in a small amount of time. Students race to turn in their money to count. This year's event raised \$5,935.80 and over the course of the 20-year race, \$159,337.36 has been given by Heritage as charity!







## White Pine Middle School: Transitioning from 5th to 6th grade

The annual process of transitioning 5th graders to WPMS will begin in February.

On February 1st, the 5th graders will visit WPMS for the "Extravaganza!" Students will learn about the elective classes and explore the campus. The STCS Foundation is generously providing the bussing to make this visit possible!

Then, during the week of February 5th, the middle school principal will hold a parent meeting at each of the district elementary schools that have 5th graders. Parents are welcome at any of the meetings and can pick the one that best fits their schedule.

During that same week, the 6th grade counselor will visit the 5th grade classrooms to share information, answer questions, explain the scheduling process and scheduling sheets will go home to parents.

The White Pine Parent Council will offer 5th grade parents the opportunity to order White Pine Hawk gear and swag. These items can be worn on the day they visit White Pine and will start their collection of White Pine items!

These activities will provide information for students and parents to make scheduling decisions and get connected to WPMS. These events are planned in advance of the elementary school conferences, so parents can discuss class placement with their child's current teacher(s).

In the Spring, we invite all of the 5th grade students and parents to come to the 5th grade Family Fun Night usually the first week of May (date and time TBD). There will be food, tours, and a brief informational session run by 6th grade teachers.

Before school begins in August, we will have the new 6th grade students join us for an Orientation led by the 8th grade W.E.B. leaders. The students will see campus again, get their schedule and have a chance to 'Walk the Schedule' so they can feel confident about finding their classes on the first day.

### Dates to Remember:

- Feb. 1: Extravaganza! 5th graders visit WPMS
- Feb. 6: 5th grade Parent meeting @ Hemmeter 6 p.m.
- Feb. 7: 5th grade Parent meeting @ Arrowwood 6 p.m.
- Feb. 8: 5th grade Parent meeting @ Weiss 6 p.m.
- Feb. 19-21: Elementary Conferences
- Feb. 23: Scheduling sheets due - turn them into current elementary school
- May TBD: 5th grade Family Fun Night 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. @ WPMS
- Aug. TBD: 6th grade Orientation @ WPMS



## WHY HEMMETER ELEMENTARY?

- National Blue Ribbon School
- A U.S. News and World Report Best Elementary School
- Advanced and accelerated curriculum designed to challenge gifted and talented learners
- Extra-curricular opportunities such as Destination Imagination, Math League, Art Club, Violin Club, History Bee, Computer Coding, German Club, Lego Club, and Chess Club

## SIGNS OF A GIFTED LEARNER

- Expresses curiosity about many things
- Asks thoughtful questions
- Has extensive vocabulary
- Solve problems in unique ways
- Has a good memory
- Is a fast learner
- Shows talent in making up and telling stories
- Displays early interest in reading
- Discusses and elaborates on ideas
- Exhibits wit and humor
- Not easily bored, mind is consistently active

*We are now scheduling for the 2024-2025 school year.*

*To schedule an appointment for free testing, call Lisa at 989-797-1832*



## STCS RETIREES

These ladies have a total of 515 years of service feeding the students and staff of Saginaw Township Community Schools and Swan Valley School District. The STCS Nutrition Services retirees met together at Timbers Restaurant for a luncheon (one they didn't have to cook or serve)!





# Join us for... An Evening of One Act Plays



**Tickets \$5**  
Available online at  
[STCSDRAMA.LUDUS.COM](http://STCSDRAMA.LUDUS.COM)

**February 8th 7:00pm**  
White Pine Middle School  
Auditorium  
Featuring actors from Heritage  
High School

## A MONSTER CALLS

Based on the novel by Paul Ness

There will be a brief intermission between shows  
Families with elementary-aged children may  
choose to leave after finding nemo. A monster  
calls is written for a middle school audience.



**Ready? Set! Kindergarten!**  
Saginaw Township Schools Welcomes Your Family

## KINDERGARTEN INFORMATION NIGHT!



LEARN HOW TO REGISTER YOUR LITTLE ONE FOR THE 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR!

**THURSDAY,  
MARCH 14TH**  
DOORS OPEN @ 5:30P,  
PROGRAM STARTS @ 6P

### Learn about:

- Transportation ✓
- Nutrition Services ✓
- After school programs ✓

**Arrowwood Elementary  
Conference Center  
5410 Seidel Road**

See you there! Questions? 989-797-1800



In October, members of the **Heritage High School** orchestra, Laurance O'Neal-Thomas, Ainsley Himm and Micah Dunn, were chosen to perform with the Central Michigan University Honors Orchestra. In November, Mya Parks was chosen as one of only 100 students in the state to perform with the Eastern Michigan University Honors Orchestra.

On December 2<sup>nd</sup>, the following members of the **White Pine Middle School** Band and Orchestra gave award winning performances at the Michigan State Band and Orchestra Association Solo and Ensemble Festival! Zariah Simon and Myles Murray- Duet, Julia Cannon and Noel Wickman- Duet, Lily Bloedel and Hurley Coleman- Duet and Colton Lynn- Solo





Heritage High School



Athletic Association

# HAWKCTION

SUPPORTING HERITAGE HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS

*Please Join Us!*

**Friday, February 16, 2024 • 6pm • Saginaw Country Club**

**\$65** per person      **\$120** per couple

Dinner & drinks included • Silent & live auctions  
50/50 drawing & cash boards • Show your **EXTREME HAWK PRIDE**  
by wearing school colors of blue and green!



Scan for online ticket purchases.

Interesting in sponsoring or donating? Email us at [hhsaa@stcs.org](mailto:hhsaa@stcs.org)



Heritage High School Athletic Office: 989-797-1809 • [www.stcs.org](http://www.stcs.org)

*Go Hawks!*





For fun & daily happenings at all of our schools, check us out on social media:

Saginaw Township Schools & @WeAreSTCS



It is the policy of STCS that the district will not discriminate against any person based on sex (including pregnancy, gender identity or sexual orientation), race, color, national origin, religion, height, weight, marital status, disability, handicap or age in its programs, services or activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: Director of Human Resources & Labor Relations, STCS, PO Box 6278, 3465 N. Center Rd, Saginaw, MI 48608. Phone 989-797-1800.



In this 6-hour SAT seminar, students will:

- Learn tips to improve scores in all subtests
- Practice strategies to eliminate wrong choices
- Take short practice tests that mirror the real test experience
- Reduce test anxiety and gain confidence
- Receive extensive materials for home practice

Our strategy intensive seminar is the perfect companion to content-based test-preparation your student may be utilizing.

**Register by February 9**

Location: Heritage High School Media Center

Date: Saturday, February 17, 2024

Time: 9 am-3 pm (Doors open at 8:30am; close at 8:50am)

Seminar Fee: \$110

Register at [www.doorwaytocollege.com](http://www.doorwaytocollege.com) or call **877-927-8378**

**Annual Family Dance for Valentine's Day!**

K-5 girls & boys: invite your special adult for a night of music and dancing! Cost includes a DJ, refreshments and a photo booth!



Heritage High School Cafeteria  
Friday, February 16, from 6:15-7:45 pm  
\$29 for one child; \$19 for additional child

The event is limited to first 80 couples, so please register early!

**Register at [saginaw.revtrak.net](http://saginaw.revtrak.net) or call 797-1847**

Saginaw Township  
Community Schools  
3465 N. Center Road  
P.O. Box. 6278  
Saginaw, MI 48603

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**ECRWSS - EDDM  
POSTAL PATRON**

**ALUMNI CORNER  
Jacob Starke Class of 2022**

**What have you done since graduating?**

I enlisted in the Marine Corps, went through Boot Camp then departed to Marine Combat Training. I then went to MOS school and am now stationed at Camp Lejeune working as a Landing Support Specialist.

**What are some challenges you've faced since leaving high school?**

I would have to say one of the most difficult things after graduating high school was seeing who were your real friends that stuck together after school and who you more so lost contact with overtime. I had to deal with a long medical process just to get accepted to MEPS (Military Entrance Processing Station). That in and of itself took me months of getting medical documentation for medical issues in the past. Anybody who has ever tried to get into the military with some current or past issue knows the struggle of it. For me although it took 10+ months to get actually accepted and able to raise my right hand and enlist into the Marines. A good way I overcame these obstacles was through my faith and also dedication to an extreme level.

**What experiences at Heritage helped you to your current path?**

Some of my favorite teachers that always encouraged me to try and never give up. I also appreciate the higher staff in the school giving me the opportunity to engage with the Marines when they come and work with them! The school has a great positive environment from the years I was there.

