

Minnesota North Star Academy



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Minnesota North Star Academy
1669 Arcade Street
Saint Paul, MN 55106

From the Executive Director's Desk

Greetings! I hope that each one of you is staying warm in this cold weather. It is hard to believe that the year of 2009 is well underway.

Basketball season started last November. We currently have 16 students involved in girls and boys basketball. Both teams travelled to Illinois School for the Deaf—January 28th—February 1st. Deaf Schools from Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio participated in this tournament.

Another piece of news is that 11 students (juniors & seniors) will travel to Paris, France during the

week of March 19th—26th. These students have been meeting on a monthly basis since October with Heidi Ernst and myself learning about the French culture, history, language, and much more! We cannot believe that it is approximately six weeks before we embark on our trip to Paris! We are very much excited about visiting Paris for a week! We will post pictures from the trip on the school's website when we return.

Stay warm! Hope to see you at the next Parent/Teacher Group meeting on Tuesday, February 10th at 6:30 p.m.!

Please check
our website
at
www.mnnorthstaracademy.org
for lunch
menus, school
-related
events,
merger-
related infor-
mation, and
many more!

End of 1st Semester

First semester ended Friday, January 23rd. Teachers had record keeping day on Monday, January 26th to complete grades and IEP progress reports. Report cards and IEP progress reports will be

mailed out to families during the week of February 2nd. Please contact your child's teacher if you have questions about your child's grades. As for IEP progress reports, contact your child's case

manager if you have questions as well. Second semester begins on Tuesday, January 27th.

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Special points of interest:

- February 10—Parent Teacher Group Meeting 6:30—8:00 p.m.
- February 13th & 16th—No School
- February 19—School Board Meeting 6:30—9:00 p.m.

Merger with Metro Deaf School

More than a year ago Minnesota North Star Academy and Metro Deaf School began discussing and planning for a merger of the two schools. Financing has been secured and the design is close to being finalized. On December 15th of 2008, both boards have approved the merger agreement and the membership was invited to an informational meeting on December 16th followed by voting by the membership. The majority of votes from

both schools' membership were in favor of the merger so it passed! In Fall of 2009, MNSA and MDS will become a Pre-K–12th grade program serving D/HH students across the Twin Cities and western Wisconsin. Our enrollment will be approximately 110 students.

MDS' current gym space and storage area will be demolished in April, with construction happening

throughout the summer. We expect the high school classrooms and new gym to be ready by mid-August. You can see updated designs on the school's website.

Dyan Sherwood, MDS's Director and I will be co-directors for 2009-2010 school year. We are looking forward to a great, collaborative effort with a large staff and student body.



Allison Porter, North Star junior, testifies at the Senate hearing.

Type III Driving Requirements

As most of you know, there was a new law that prevents deaf and hard of hearing employees and other people with disabilities from transporting students. The law also adds many other new requirements for school employees who drive Type III vehicles (cars and minivans). Minnesota North Star Academy, Metro Deaf School, and Minnesota

State Academy for the Deaf along with other schools and community organizations are currently working with Mary Harnett, executive director of the Commission of Deaf, Deaf-blind, and Hard of Hearing Minnesotans (MCDHH). Recently, North Star had the opportunity to testify at a Senate hearing pertaining this issue. Allison Porter, North Star junior,

was asked to testify at the hearing. Allison did a wonderful job testifying at the hearing sharing her experience about how this new legislation has impacted her and other students at North Star. Congratulations Allison for doing a fine job representing North Star!

Cody Norton

Cody Norton, North Star senior, currently received an award (Student of Distinction Award) from Dakota County Secondary Technical Center for his excellence in Graphic Communications. He currently takes classes in the morning at Dakota County Tech-

nical College and attends North Star in the afternoon. He will graduate this coming May and will continue his education at Dakota Technical College. Congratulations Cody for receiving this recognition!



Cody Norton