

Minnesota North
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Minnesota North Star Academy



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UPCOMING EVENTS AT NORTH STAR

Tues., Oct 28th
5:30—7:00 p.m.
France Meeting

Thurs. & Fri.,
November
6th and 7th
Parent/Teacher
Conferences

Friday, November
7th
NO SCHOOL

Tuesday, November
11th
6:30—7:30 p.m.
Parent/Teacher Group
Meeting

Tuesday, November
11th
7:30—8:30 p.m.
Deaf Duckling Play

Monday, November
17th
6:30—9:00 p.m.
Board Meeting

Wednesday, Novem-
ber 26th—Friday,
November 28th
Thanksgiving Break
NO SCHOOL

From the Executive Director's Desk

Greetings! It is hard to believe that we are into our eighth week of the 2008-2009 school year. Things are progressing well here at Minnesota North Star Academy. Our total student count currently stands at 34.

Sports: The girls' volleyball team participated in the East Metro Athletic Conference tournament this week. Their volleyball season is coming to a close. Kudos to Liz Anazagasti and Ronda Jo Miller for coaching! I have attended several volleyball games and I have seen vast improvement since last year. I am already looking forward to next year! Basketball season will begin mid-November.

Transition: North Star has been focusing on improving

transition services for our students. All of our students receive 80 minutes of school-wide transition related class twice a month in addition to 40 minutes weekly with his/her case manager. Recently, our juniors and seniors went to St. Paul College to take college placement exams. Also, a college recruiter from Rochester Institute of Technology visited North Star last week, and this week, a college recruiter from Gallaudet University will visit. Please do check the calendar on our website for transition-related events on Fridays. You are always welcome to attend transition-related events.

MNSA/MDS: The merger discussion with Metro Deaf School is still very much alive. Both board are dealing with the state

department of education to see what needs to be done in order for both schools to merge. A general contractor has been selected, final schematics of the gymnasium and classrooms are being drawn up, due diligence is being conducted/reviewed by both school's attorneys, and both schools are close to securing financing. A membership vote will occur once both boards have approved the agreements. The goal is to have a membership vote by the end of November. It is all very time consuming yet exciting! Stay tuned...

Online Grades

All of North Star's students' grades are now available online for each parent/guardian to view. As teachers input students' grades, they will be available immediately for you to view. You will be able to check grades for class assignments and homework as they are available, and keep track of your child's performance in this way.

Brein McNamara, North Star's technology coordinator, has sent an email to each one of you giving you your username and password. If you have not received a username or password, please email Brein at bmcnmara@mnnorthstaracademy.org

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Ronda Jo Miller

A memo was sent out to the North Star community earlier this week announcing that Ronda Jo Miller has been inducted into Gallaudet University Hall of Fame!

Ronda Jo Miller is currently North Star's Physical Education and Electives teacher. She is also a coach for North Star girls' volleyball and basketball teams.

Ronda Jo attended Gallaudet University this past weekend to attend the Hall of Fame

induction ceremony for her excellence in basketball. She played for Gallaudet University from 1997-2000. Ronda Jo scored 2,656 career points which currently tops Gallaudet's all-time scoring list. Her 2,656 points also puts her in the third spot on the Division III all-time scoring list. Ronda Jo also set CAC (Capital Athletic Conference) marks for career rebounds (1,545) and field goals (1,090). Within the conference, she earned 1997 Rookie of the Year, and was

named Player of the Year for three consecutive seasons (1997, 1998 and 1999). Miller also participated in two NCAA tournaments, with the 1997 trip going to the first round and the 1999 season seeing a Sweet 16 appearance. Additionally, Ronda Jo was the first deaf woman ever to break into the ranks of the WNBA. She played briefly with the Washington Mystics in the pre-season of 2002.

We extend our congratulations to Ronda Jo!

Please check our website at www.mnnorthstaracademy.org For lunch menus, school events-related information, and many more!



Junior NAD

Minnesota North Star Academy is going to create a Junior NAD local chapter which will be similar to the concept of student council. However, Junior NAD offers tools and resources for deaf, hard-of-hearing, and deafblind youth networking opportunities and additional resources that North Star does not currently have.

The Junior National Associa-

tion of the Deaf is an organization consisting of chapters from junior high to high schools nationwide. Through individual chapters, members learn and practice leadership, teamwork, and responsibility, and develop self-confidence. Junior NAD offers its members opportunities to meet other deaf youth from all over the country.

John Fechter and Beth Keller,

both of whom are deaf, have agreed to volunteer their time to serve as advisors. John Fechter is currently a regional manager for Hamilton Relay Service. He is a board member at Metro Deaf School, where his two children attend school. Beth Keller is a program coordinator at PepNET. I am thrilled to have both of them serving as deaf adult role models for our students.

Paris, France

Currently, we have 11 students (juniors and seniors) who have signed up for the school's trip to Paris, France. Students, staff, and parents will leave on Thursday, March 19th for a week long trip to Paris. For the remainder of this school year, students will have after school monthly meetings

with Heidi Ernst, Anthony Ritz, Susan Boinis, and myself to discuss culture, language, history, food, and other topics related to Paris, France. Students will be researching information related with Paris, France at home doing independent projects. Once the information has been gathered,

students will present it to the student body later in the school year. Our first France meeting will be on Tuesday, October 28th from 5:30—7:00 p.m.

The Deaf Duckling Play

Mixed Blood Theatre's **The Deaf Duckling** will come to North Star on Tuesday, November 11th at 7:30 p.m.

The Deaf Duckling intertwines the familiar fairy tale with the story of a deaf child born into a hearing family. With great tenderness and humor, it reveals the child's growing awareness of the possibilities that come with inclusion in a vibrant but often overlooked culture. The talented cast of one deaf and two hearing actors Nic Zapko,

North Star's athletic director, will play the part of the Deaf Duckling. This innovative play fully integrates American Sign Language (ASL) into the performance—there is no ping-ponging from actor to interpreter and back again.

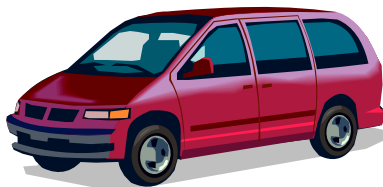
The money from ticket sales will go towards the extracurricular activities fund. Flyers will be distributed by early next week. Please do consider attending this event. This event will take place after North Star's Parent Teacher

Group meeting at 7:30 p.m. PTG meeting will last from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. I hope to see you at **The Deaf Duckling Play!**

Check out
www.deafmd.org
A great website
for our students
to use when
looking up
medical—related
information.
Please browse
the website!!

TYPE III Drivers

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 organi-



zations are currently working with Mary Harnett, executive director of the Commission of deaf, Deafblind, and Hard of Hearing Minnesotans (MCDHH). MCDHH will

work with all schools and community organizations and members who are affected, the Department of Public Safety,

legislators, and other stakeholders to help to change the bill next session so there is a waiver in place for drivers who are deaf and hard of hearing who transport students who are deaf, hard of hearing, and deafblind. In the meantime, North Star employees, deaf and hearing, will not be allowed to use the minivans to transport our students. This will have an effect on how we plan our extracurricular activities. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Fall Parent/Teacher Conferences will take place on Thursday, November 6th from 4:00—8:00 p.m. If Parents/Guardians are not able to attend the conferences on Thursday evening, they will

have another opportunity to meet with their child's teachers on Friday, November 7th from 9 a.m.—2:00 p.m. More information regarding Parent/Teacher conferences will be sent home later this week.

