



# Chisago Lakes

SCHOOL DISTRICT 2144

## Five Chisago Lakes' Teachers Honored for Outstanding Teaching



### Teachers honored this year were:

- Diane Spychalla** – Middle School - Math Teacher  
**Laura Hoffman** – Primary School - Media Specialist  
**Deb Casterton** – Taylors Falls Elementary – 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade  
**Tami Hansen** – Lakeside Elementary – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade  
**Laura Yehlik** – High School – Science Teacher

Resource Training and Solutions recognized five Chisago Lakes' teachers for their outstanding achievements at the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Leadership in Educational Excellence Awards and Recognition Ceremony which was held in St. Cloud on Wednesday, October 24<sup>th</sup>. They were honored for their commitment to education and the high standards they set for themselves, other teachers, and the students in our district.

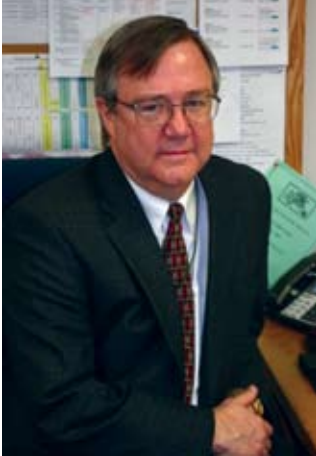
Congratulations to this year's honorees!

Chisago Lakes Area Schools  
 ISD#2144  
 13750 Lake Blvd.  
 Lindstrom, MN 55045  
 Tel. 651-213-2000

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# Letter from the Superintendent:



On behalf of the Board of Education and those of us involved in public education in the Chisago Lakes Schools, I would like to thank our school district residents for voting to approve the recent bond referendum that was before the voters.

The passage of this bond issue allows the district to catch up on some needed repairs, provide better classroom space at Taylors Falls, develop fields on the property the district owns at the high school, and have a suitable site reserved for future school district growth.

The support for the referendum involved many people, too many to thank in this brief article. To all who took the time to promote the needs of the district and participate in the referendum campaign, please accept my sincere thanks for your efforts and support.

Finally, sincere thanks as well to all who took the time to vote on this issue. Hopefully you supported the issue, but if not, we thank you for your participation in the process and for considering the school district request. We intend to act as wise stewards for the resources made available by this referendum.

It is hard to believe that the winter holiday season is right around the bend. With that comes the possibility of emergency school closing due to weather. School closings are never easy decisions to make and the district recognizes the inconvenience and difficulty that closing school can have on planning for childcare. It is the intent of the district to

hold classes when busses can safely transport students to and from school and when weather conditions appear to allow for safe operation of school programs. School will be closed when unsafe conditions exist or weather conditions appear to be deteriorating.

Closing school due to weather conditions is not an exact science and oftentimes causes concern for families. The district administrators use the best information available to them at the time when considering closing school. Please consult your school newsletters for school closing information or refer to the information found in this School Review.

Thanks to all of our staff and students for their hard work in school this year. We appreciate your efforts and hope you enjoy our winter holiday break. Please feel free to contact me if I may be of assistance and thanks again for supporting the Chisago Lakes Schools.

Mike McLoughlin  
*Superintendent*

## Cancellation of School

Cancellation of school takes place only during circumstances such as extreme weather, equipment failure or public crisis. The School Board and administration are aware of the hardship that can be caused by an abrupt cancellation. **Announcements for school cancellation or late start will be made on WCCO radio AM 830, Channel 4 TV, Channel 5 TV, Channel 9 TV and Channel 11 TV.**



# School Board Update:

The community passed the \$14.2 million dollar referendum to make facility repairs and improvements around the school district on Tuesday, November 6<sup>th</sup>.

**With a total of 3,978 citizens voting, the results were as follows:**

## **YES – 2,158**

Precinct #1 – 538  
Precinct #2 – 1,171  
Precinct #3 – 449

## **NO – 1,820**

Precinct #1 – 484  
Precinct #2 – 963  
Precinct #3 – 373

**The school board would like to express their sincere thanks to all those who participated in the election process.**

The district has hired ICS Consulting to be their Owner's Representative to oversee the many construction projects going on in the district over the next 18 months. They have been meeting with district staff, architects, and engineers on the individual projects as well as working on schedules to allow for the completion of these jobs in a timely and efficient manner. Bids should be available in January or February. Please look for further detailed information on the time-line of construction and repairs in the March issue of the Review.

## Primary Students Helping Out Santa

Each year, the students and staff choose a community service project. This year, they chose to collect toys for Santa Anonymous because all of the toys collected go to local children and families in need. Hundreds of toys were collected by the boys and girls. Students then enjoyed helping load the toys into the trucks in time for Christmas delivery.



## Taylor's Falls Students Participate in "Operation Thank You"

Taylor's Falls Elementary spent November collecting items to send overseas to our service men and women, thanking them for all they are doing to serve our country. They have chosen an Army helicopter unit stationed in Iraq. The 4th grade teachers organized the collecting this year – culminating the collecting with the school's annual Veterans Day Celebration, where over 50 veterans came for coffee, cookies, and student questions!

Collected items included: toiletries, games, dry drink mixes, snack types of food, and paperback books.

## You're invited:

*The public is invited and encouraged to attend the following school concerts:*

**December 17, 7:00 pm**  
High School Holiday Choir  
Concert

Performing Arts Center  
\$4 adults / \$3 students & seniors  
\*\*\*\*\*

**December 18, 6:30-9:00 pm**  
Middle School Choir Concert  
HS Performing Arts Center  
\*\*\*\*\*

**December 18, 1:30 pm**  
Lakeside 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Winter Choir  
Concert

Lakeside Gymnasium  
\*\*\*\*\*

**February 11, 7:00 pm**  
High School Band Concert  
Performing Arts Center  
\$4 adults / \$3 students & seniors  
\*\*\*\*\*

**February 28, 1:30 & 7:00 pm**  
Lakeside 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Choir Concert  
Lakeside Gymnasium  
\*\*\*\*\*

**February 29, 7:00 pm**  
Middle School Talent Show  
HS Performing Arts Center  
\*\*\*\*\*

**March 6, 7:00 pm**  
Taylor's Falls 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Grade  
Musical  
Taylor's Falls Gymnasium  
\*\*\*\*\*

**March 6, 7, 8, 7:00 pm**  
High School Variety Show  
Performing Arts Center  
\$8 adults / \$5 students & seniors



# Minnesota Puts Focus



Minnesota recently held a *Summit on School Readiness*. The goal of this summit was to improve early childhood programs so as to increase the likelihood that all children will be fully prepared for kindergarten. Research was reviewed and concrete steps were determined in order to improve and coordinate early childhood programs. The vision for that initiative was, “**All children who enter school are ready and eager and prepared for school success.**”

## Several ideas came out of that summit:

1. Parents, service providers and the general public need quick access to easy-to-understand information on child development, child care and early childhood education.
2. Minnesota publicly funded early childhood education programs are not sufficient in duration or intensity to fully prepare children for kindergarten.
3. Educational experiences focusing on literacy, language, and mathematical thinking need to be included in ALL early childcare settings.
4. Early childhood programs need to be coordinated with kindergarten programs to provide a smoother transition to elementary school.
5. Early childhood teachers and other caregivers need to have more opportunities for training in child observation, assessment, and curriculum planning.



# on Early Childhood

## Chisago Lakes Responds:

The school district has already taken several steps in this direction.

- ✓ We have a literacy based preschool open to children ages 3-5 which focuses on pre-reading, writing, and social conversation skills.
- ✓ We have a two-day per week school readiness program for parents and their children, ages 3-5 designed to help them develop the skills and behaviors needed for future success in school.
- ✓ We have an Early Childhood- Family Education program that offers support, encouragement, and information for parents and their children, ages birth to 5. Parents and children attend weekly classes together. Classes provide time for parent-child interaction, as well as separation time when parents participate in group discussion while children stay in the classroom with early childhood teachers.

## What's New?

1. An early childhood task-force has been formed to review our efforts in school readiness. **The goals of this task force are:**
  - Investigate the expansion of the Little Wildcat Preschool program in Taylors Falls
  - Investigate a limited Pilot Program of All Day / Everyday Kindergarten for the 2008-2009 school year.
  - Offer training on early literacy & math skills to families and daycare providers
2. We have set up regular meetings between our early childhood teachers and our kindergarten teachers to better align those two programs.
3. We are adding a new program called, Steps Ahead, which is a collaborative effort between Kids Club and The Little Wildcat Preschool, designed to give an “orientation to kindergarten”. This will be a special offering at the Primary School during the summer for kids who will be entering kindergarten.
4. Informational sessions for parents and daycare providers are being planned for:
  - Reading – **Tuesday, March 25** - 6:00-7:30 pm
  - Math – **Tuesday, April 15** – 6:00-7:30 pm

*\*\*More information on these events will be coming*



# Is Your Pre-School Child Ready for Kindergarten?

*\*The following is a list of suggestions to help make the transition to kindergarten easier for children:*

## Early Reading Skills:

- ✓ Name the letters in their name, and be familiar with other letters
- ✓ Recognize that letters make sounds
- ✓ Be able to hear and say words that rhyme (ie, bat and cat)
- ✓ Given a word, come up with a word that starts with the same sound (ie, bear and ball)
- ✓ Be able to name objects or pictures of objects
- ✓ Be familiar with different types of print
- ✓ Be able to listen while a story is read



## Early Math Skills:

- ✓ Know 10 basic colors (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, black, brown, white, pink)
- ✓ Know 4 basic shapes (circle, square, triangle, rectangle)
- ✓ Match pictures
- ✓ Count objects to ten
- ✓ Sort objects into similar groups such as by color, shape, or size

## Early Social Skills:

- ✓ Take turns and wait for others
- ✓ Follow simple directions
- ✓ Independently use the bathroom
- ✓ Independently put on outdoor clothing
- ✓ Express needs & ask for help when necessary

## Early Writing:

- ✓ Experience using crayons, markers, and pencils with correct grip
- ✓ Experience using play-dough
- ✓ Use scissors to cut, using correct grip
- ✓ Experience using glue and glue sticks
- ✓ Practice writing letters from the TOP down
- ✓ Be able to write their name starting with a capital letter

**Children entering kindergarten need to be five years old by September 1<sup>st</sup>.**

**If you have concerns about your child's readiness for kindergarten, you can contact Karen Manske, the Family Center Director, for a free early childhood screening. (213-6865)**

# District-Wide Calendar Art Selection

Each year, the art teachers select student artwork to include in the district-wide calendar. This past year, we were able to go to a full-color calendar which included many examples of the excellent artwork created by Chisago Lakes' students. **This is the process used to select and include artwork in the calendar:**

Calendar art is collected every year for the following year's calendar. Colorful artwork and works in graphite or ink will be chosen from levels K-12. Works of art will be selected at the end of each calendar year by art instructors. Every grade is represented in the calendar. No specific themes are requested, and no specific grade will be represented by any specific month. All works presented in the calendar will have been created by our students.

Calendar art collected will be digitally photographed by the students' instructors and presented to the calendar committee. The calendar committee will select which works will

illustrate the various months. Additional works will be chosen to complete the calendar. These additional works may be found within the blank days of the calendar, or the cover or the back of the calendar. All works presented are considered of equal value. These works will be arranged on the calendar at the discretion of the calendar committee.

Students will not be guaranteed placement in the calendar, and no specific winners will be announced. Some works collected may not be included in the calendar; however efforts will be made to include all works selected. Extra pieces are to be submitted simply to allow more students to gain recognition. The calendar committee will choose additional options as space allows.

Calendar artists will be recognized by including their names near their artwork on the calendar. Please encourage your blossoming artist(s) to continue to create wonderful works of art that so winningly illustrate our full color calendar.

## Save the Date

<b>December 17</b>	TF Parents for Education 7 pm
<b>December 21-January 1</b>	<b>No School / Winter Holiday</b>
<b>January 3-4</b>	Early Childhood Screening at FC
<b>January 7</b>	HS Parent Advisory Meeting 6:30pm
<b>January 10</b>	OSOR Meeting 6 pm at MS 121
<b>January 14</b>	TF Parents for Education 7 pm
<b>January 18</b>	PTO Meeting 3:45 pm at LS
<b>January 21</b>	<b>No School/Staff Development, Martin Luther King Day</b>
<b>February 12</b>	PTO Meeting 6:30 pm at LS
<b>February 15</b>	District Wide Early Dismissal
<b>February 25</b>	TF Parents for Education 7 pm
<b>March 3</b>	HS Parent Advisory Meeting 6:30pm
<b>March 6</b>	OSOR Meeting 6 pm at MS 121
<b>March 9</b>	Daylight Savings Time Begins
<b>March 11</b>	PTO Meeting 3:45 pm at LS

## District Calendar Corrections:



*Left:* Jade Wilson's art was featured in the January page of the calendar, but the wrong name was listed next to it.

*Right:* Artwork by Erin Sandell, Taylors Falls Elementary



## 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Students Take on Service Learning Project

Students in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade Jaguar Core at the middle school decided to have an annual Community Service Day after the success of the Arbor Day project they participated in last year. They decided that they wanted to spend their time making contributions to the school and their local community.

On September 28<sup>th</sup>, these students spent an absolutely perfect day planting over sixty trees at IG Long Park, Water Tower Park and Moody Park

Center to help their community. Students also collected and delivered over 204 pounds of food to the Lindstrom Food Shelf.

In an effort to help their school, 7<sup>th</sup> graders planted trees, built a fence, and landscaped around the lower entrance to the middle school where high student walking traffic has worn away the grass. It has helped to keep students on the sidewalk, keep dirt out of the building, and make that area of the school



a beautiful reminder of their dedication.

As a wrap-up, students were asked to describe how each of the “High Five” character traits, Respect, Responsibility, Integrity, Commitment, and Compassion, came into play during their activities.

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## High School Students Take Action



High school students in the new social studies elective course called, Social Problems, decided to get involved when teacher Karen Barthol began her unit on genocide. The unit included a study of the genocide in Rwanda, Darfur and the Holocaust.

As students began to hear about the genocide in Darfur, Sudan, they were surprised to hear that these types of things were going on in the world

today. They learned that over 400,000 people in that country were killed and many more were displaced from their homes. They “wanted to

*take action and build awareness,”* according to senior Teresa Kemp.

Ms. Barthol began to brainstorm ideas for getting involved with the students. They broke their brainstorming down into short and long-term goals, then came up with the idea of making a video that could play during their school news broadcast and possibly on cable television. Students divided into teams and began doing research, making post-

ers, writing letters, and finally filming and editing.

*“Students want the public to know that innocent people are dying right now while the United Nations has been arguing over whether or not this is genocide.”*  
**Teacher Karen Barthol**

The video begins with photos from our lives in comparison with photos of life in Darfur. Facts and statistics on the genocide are blended with the photos to create a stark contrast for viewers.

**The video will soon be available for public viewing at [http://chisagolakes.mn.schoolwebpages.com/education/staff/staff.php?sectiondetailid=1767&sc\\_id=1194030001](http://chisagolakes.mn.schoolwebpages.com/education/staff/staff.php?sectiondetailid=1767&sc_id=1194030001)**