



NILES COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
DISTRICT
NEWSLETTER

May 2026



A MESSAGE FROM YOUR SUPERINTENDENT

As we close out the school year, I want to highlight what has been a great year for Niles Community Schools. Across the district, our students have continued to learn, grow, compete, perform, serve, and lead in ways that make our community proud.

This year has been filled with academic progress, student achievements, athletic accomplishments, fine arts performances, classroom celebrations, community partnerships, and countless moments that reflect the strength of our schools. None of this happens without the dedication of our staff, the support of our families, and the pride our community continues to show in our students. To our seniors, congratulations on reaching this important milestone. We are proud of all you have accomplished and excited for what comes next.

Thank you for a great school year. Have a safe and enjoyable summer.



Important Dates to Remember

May 22nd- Half Day for All

May 25th - Memorial Day Holiday, No School

May 26th - Non-Traditional Graduation Ceremony 7pm

May 28th - High School Graduation Ceremony 7pm

June 3rd- Half Day for students

June 4th- Last Day of School and Half Day for Students

Please check your school's social media and website for further up-to-date
information in real time



Northside Child Development Center

Officer Earl visited our school and read to the entire student body, creating a positive and engaging experience for students.

His visit highlighted the important role School Resource Officers (SROs) play in school communities. SROs help build relationships with students, support a safe school environment, and serve as trusted, approachable adults within the building.



A fun-filled evening at our indoor carnival offered a lively escape into a world of laughter and excitement.

From the moment you stepped inside, you were greeted by our teachers and volunteers. There was a cheerful buzz as everyone enjoyed the festivities. Rows of classic carnival games lined the hallway, inviting our young guests to try their luck at ring toss, basketball hoops, bounce houses, and many more activities.

Throughout the evening, there was never a dull moment. Friends and families gathered to share laughs, celebrate small victories, and collect fun prizes. Whether it was the thrill of the games, the joy of sweet treats, or simply the festive atmosphere, the indoor carnival created a sense of carefree fun that made the night truly special and unforgettable.

Thank you to all of the families, volunteers, and teachers for making this event so meaningful for our students!





Ballard Elementary

Ballard has joined B100 for the past 5 years to raise money for St. Jude Children's Hospital. Each year the grades compete in a penny war and the winning grade level earns a pizza party. This year Ballard raised over \$1000 and Third grade won the pizza party!



Miss Miller and Mrs. Shabazz presented at the Annual Michigan Reading League Conference on School Transformation: Berrien RESA and Niles Community Schools.

Ballard Vikings focused on respect for February to earn their ticket to the PBIS celebration. Many students chose to make slime while others enjoyed games or extra recess. All students participated in our hallway dance party!





Ballard Elementary



Students in K-3 took a small break from electronics in STEM and worked on strategy games while 4th and 5th graders designed and coded Pac Man Code maps for their ozobots creating a fun game.



March is Reading Month and Ballard joined the National Reading Month March Madness. Each day we read two books and every student voted on their favorite book. All votes were tallied and the winning book was announced the next day. The March Madness reading excitement was displayed throughout the school and students could not wait to hear which book won each morning.



Howard-Ellis Elementary



Students and staff enjoyed a week of Dr. Seuss-themed dress-up days. We welcomed many community members, as well as high school SADD Club students, as guest readers. Students also participated in Ivy and Stu's Reading Club through the South Bend Cubs, where they hit reading "home runs" toward earning a ticket to a game.



HO-EL took part in a special, community-wide shared reading event, One School, One Book! Together, we read Charlotte's Web. We kicked off Reading Month with an assembly to unveil the book. Along with their daily reading schedule, students and families answered a daily reading question on social media and were entered into a raffle to win a prize. The halls were also decorated with animals from the book.



Ms. Green, our PE teacher, goes beyond the classroom. In February, she led a food drive, teaching students about giving back to the community. In March, she guided students through the American Heart Association's Kids Heart Challenge. HO-EL students are learning to become lifesavers while continuing the fight against heart disease and stroke. The challenge culminated on Friday, March 27, when students got to silly string staff members!



Ring Lardner



RLMS has had an outstanding year filled with academic, athletic, and student success. Mrs. Kuntz and her students shared their exciting work with the Growing Beyond Earth program, giving students hands-on, real-world learning experiences.

In Mrs. Gourlay's class, 6th grade students showcased their creativity during a fun and engaging robot dance contest.

Our athletic programs had an incredible year, highlighted by undefeated seasons for 7th grade boys basketball, 7th grade football, and 7th grade girls volleyball and basketball. The 8th grade boys basketball team won the Lions Club Tournament in St. Joseph and placed 3rd at the state tournament in Ann Arbor. Our track team, one of the largest in the Wolverine Conference, had many conference placers and 30 regional qualifiers.

In the arts, our combined 7th and 8th grade band performed exceptionally well at the MSBOA Band & Orchestra Festival, earning high marks from judges and demonstrating impressive musical growth and achievement throughout the event.

We also continued celebrating student growth through Honor Roll celebrations, PBIS Viking Cards, awards ceremonies, Donuts for Improved Attendance, and Pizza with the Principal. In addition, our full intervention staff worked tirelessly to support students academically and emotionally throughout the year.



Ring Lardner

CONFERENCE MEET RESULTS

5th GIRLS TEAM: **5th PLACE!**
(out of 8)

BOYS TEAM: 3rd PLACE!
(out of 8)

SCHOOL RECORDS BROKEN!

4x400m Relay: New Record: 4:00.89! (Old: 4:01.11)
4x800m Relay: New Record: 9:27.09! (Old: 9:44.31)

ALL-CONFERENCE HONORS!

<p>Shot Put: Ashton Marsh 6th</p> <p>Pole Vault: Cameron Deming 3rd</p> <p>High Jump: Tristen McIntyre 3rd, Khylin Mitchell 3rd</p> <p>Long Jump: Donell Blakemore 2nd</p>	<p>1600m Run: Caleb Carrington 4th</p> <p>400m Dash: Marquez Tamplin 2nd, Kinsley Plomb 4th</p> <p>800m Dash: Graham Beckman 4th, Tristen McIntyre 4th</p>	<p>70m: Nolan Wyant 6th</p> <p>200m Hurdles: Lakeland Russell 2nd, Donell Blakemore 3rd, Taylor Couillard 4th, Braxton Taylor 5th</p> <p>3200m Run: Caleb Carrington 2nd</p>
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RELAY ALL-CONFERENCE HONORS!

4x200m Relay: Haylei Patterson, Kinsley Plomb, Nellie Rucker, Elyah Brown 1st! (sst)
4x200m Relay: Donell Blakemore, Marquez Tamplin, Ian Johnson, Lakeland Russell 2nd!
4x800m Relay: Ian Johnson, Graham Beskman, Daniel Kami, Alexander Bennett 3rd!
4x800m Relay: Bella Brown, Autumn Billingsley, Eila Brickley, Paige Kujawa 4th!
4x100m Relay: Nyla Drake, Haylei Patterson, Paige Fry, Kinsley Plomb 2nd!
4x100m Relay: Jamarion Long, Dominic Cataldo, Lakeland Russell, Nolan Wyant 5th!
4x400m Relay: Marquez Tamplin, Ian Johnson, Marley Phillips, Braxton Taylor 2nd!
4x400m Relay: Leila Santos, Logan Reichadinter, Bella Brown, Elyah Brown 3rd!

MILES SPORTS CAMP '26

LOCATION
1441 EAGLE ST.
NILES, MI

CONTACT
(269) 683-2894

NO COST!
FREE FOR ALL CAMPS

TENNIS
Jr. High Camp | June 1st - 2nd | 3:30 - 5pm
K-6 Camp | June 8th - 9th | 9:30-11:00am

FOOTBALL
2nd - 8th Grade | June 2nd - 4th
6pm - 7:30pm

VOLLEYBALL
5yrs - 8th Grade | June 8th - 9th
9am - 10:30am

SOCCER
5yrs - 10th Grade | June 9th - 10th
5:30pm - 7pm

BASKETBALL
5yrs - 8th Grade | June 10th - 11th
9:30 - 11:30 am

SCAN / TAP TO REGISTER!

SIGN-UP NOW!

BUILD SKILLS. HAVE FUN. BE A VIKING.

Check this out



Eastside Connections

We were excited to celebrate Charlotte (4th grade), who was recognized as a winner in the Meemic Masterpieces Art Contest, “For the Love of the Automobile.” Charlotte received her prize, a Fire HD Tablet, and we could not have been more proud of her creativity and hard work. Way to go, Charlotte!



Mrs. Kane, our literacy interventionist extraordinaire, made us proud at the Michigan Reading League State Conference. She spoke about the impactful work she has been doing to increase literacy among our elementary students.

Our Middle School Band performed in Coloma at the MSBOA Band & Orchestra Festival. Earning high marks from judges and demonstrating impressive musical growth and achievement throughout the event. This was incredible work in our first year as a single, combined middle school group!



CHECK
IT
OUT





Niles High School

NHS was so proud of its talented students for delivering an amazing choir performance. Their hard work and dedication were evident throughout the evening, and they represented the school with excellence and pride.



The NHS English Department received a generous grant from Midwest Energy and Communications to enhance classroom libraries. NHS is grateful for their support and commitment to enriching educational opportunities for students.



Several members of the National Technical Honor Society dedicated part of their Saturday morning to giving back by helping clean local parks. NHS is proud of their commitment to service, leadership, and community involvement.





Niles High School



23 HOSA members represented NHS at the state competition in Traverse City, competing in a variety of healthcare-related events. HOSA is the largest student-led competitive organization in the state, with more than 10,000 members statewide. NHS is proud to share that Adolfo Sanchez-Perez earned a medal in Interviewing Skills and qualified to compete at the International Leadership Conference this June. Congratulations to all participants for their hard work, professionalism, and outstanding representation of the school.

NHS celebrated senior Audrey Brunner's remarkable achievement of First Place at the Box Factory, along with the Emerging Artist award for her portfolio. She received a \$500 scholarship and a free class at the Krasl Art Center/Box Factory to further her artistic development.



Students celebrating “good standing” enjoyed a fun-filled popcorn bar as part of NHS’s continued efforts to recognize positive choices, responsibility, and Viking pride.



Niles High School

NHS students showcased their talents during this year's Talent Show, providing an entertaining and memorable experience for all in attendance. Thank you to Dustin Cornelius, Katie Bruckner, and the amazing Student Council for organizing such a fantastic event.



Congratulations to our 2026 Agricultural Issues state winning team, the Niles FFA Chapter!





NHS
GRADUATION
CEREMONY



CELEBRATE. HONOR. ACHIEVE.



THURSDAY, MAY 28TH



7:00 PM



NHS



For more information regarding tickets, location, and other specifics, please contact NHS.



Niles High School

NHS celebrated sophomores in good standing with treats, games, and plenty of Viking pride. Students enjoyed a positive afternoon recognizing their hard work, responsibility, and commitment to success.



Allied Health and Agriculture CTE students participated in fetal pig dissections to deepen their understanding of both human and animal anatomy. This hands-on learning experience provided valuable insight and strengthened connections between classroom concepts and real-world applications.





Niles High School

The NHS honored top seniors from Brandywine, Buchanan, and Niles Community Schools at a special breakfast for the Class of 2026. Graduates shared inspiring future plans, including higher education and community service. Their ambition and resilience impressed NHS, which looks forward to their future impact.



Congratulations to the Class of 2026 Top Ten Students for their outstanding academic achievements. Recognized students included Scarlet T., Brandon H., Colton R., Audrey B., Lyla H., Brayden W., Rose B., McKenna A., Audrey K., and Erica T. NHS is incredibly proud of their dedication, perseverance, and success.



NILES VIKING ATHLETICS

RESPECTFUL • RESILIENT • RESPONSIBLE



**VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR SCHEDULES
AND TICKET PURCHASES:**

<https://nilesvikings.org>



**CHECK OUT THE VIKING HUDDLE
PODCAST ON YOUTUBE:**

<https://www.youtube.com/@NHSNilesNews>



**FOLLOW US ON TWITTER
FOR UPDATES!**



NILES ATHLETICS

WILL HAVE
SPORTS PHYSICALS
AT NILES HIGH SCHOOL



ON JUNE 8
5:30PM TO 7:30PM



The cost of the physicals are \$60, you can pay by cash or check. This includes the physical and a student sports pass to all home and away conference games.



You can find the physical form at nilesvikings.org. Please have the form filled out prior to the visit.



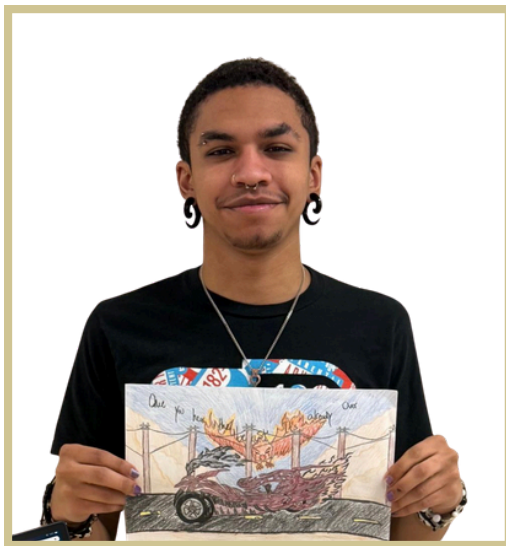
PLEASE DO NOT hand the physicals into the athletic department or secondary schools. They are to be loaded into Final Forms. **Please upload your physical right away so it doesn't get lost, we do not keep copies of physicals.**

NILES VIKINGS



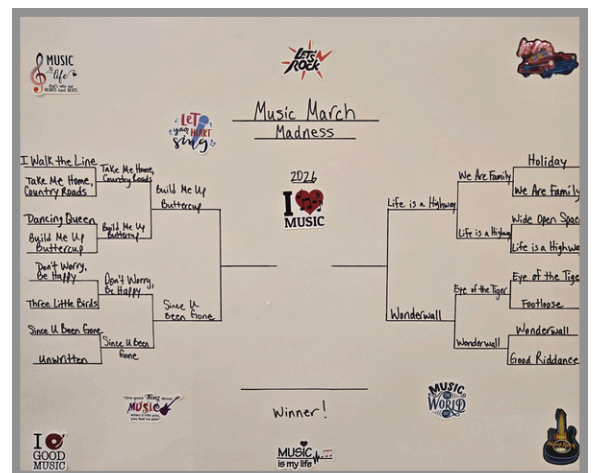
Niles Cedar Lane

Niles Cedar Lane students had a successful year filled with service, creativity, and school engagement. During the most recent Cedar Lane Gives Back project, students created more than sixty cat and dog toys that were donated to the Humane Society of Southwest Michigan.



Cedar Lane also celebrated the accomplishments of senior Derrick Murphy, who won the Meemic Masterpieces art contest, “For the Love of the Automobile.”

Students and staff also found creative ways to stay engaged during the year. Mrs. Prestine organized a Music March Madness competition, where students and staff voted on their favorite songs from a variety of genres and eras. The activity encouraged positive interaction and conversation throughout the school community while giving everyone an opportunity to share and discuss their favorite music.





KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

FOR THE 2026-2027 SCHOOL YEAR

Kindergarten Eligibility Checklist

Age: 5 years old by September 1, 2026

(or by December 1, 2026, with an enrollment application)

- ✓ **Birth Certificate:** Official copy required
- ✓ **Screenings:** Vision, dental, and hearing
- ✓ **Immunizations:** Up-to-date records needed
- ✓ **Proof of Residency:** Documentation of district residence
- ✓ **Photo Identification:** Driver's License or other state ID

Enroll Online:
nilesschools.org



Enroll at the following buildings:

Howard-Ellis Elementary: 2788 Mannix Street

Ballard Elementary: 1601 West Chicago Road

Eastside Connections: 315 N. 14th Street

Niles Administration Center: 1 Tyler Street



(269) 683-0736



SouthSide School

Southside recently celebrated Kindness Day by recognizing the incredible staff and students who go above and beyond to make our school a more welcoming and supportive place. These individuals were selected for consistently showing compassion, respect, and positivity in their daily interactions. Whether through small acts of encouragement or meaningful gestures of support, they exemplify what it means to lead with kindness. We are proud to honor their efforts and grateful for the positive impact they have on our school community each day.



South Side would like to recognize Sara Pumphrey for her outstanding work and dedication to Southside Schools. As our custodian, Sara consistently goes above and beyond to ensure our building is clean, safe, and welcoming for all.

What truly distinguishes Sara is the care she demonstrates beyond her daily responsibilities. She willingly supports staff whenever needed and takes the time to engage with students by helping them learn new skills, providing opportunities to assist with tasks, and fostering positive, meaningful interactions.

Sara's commitment, kindness, and pride in her work make a lasting impact on our school community. She does more than maintain our facility; she plays an integral role in making Southside a better place in countless ways.



Tailored Learning

FOR EVERY STUDENT:

NILES

Virtual School



Niles Community Schools is committed to providing diverse educational pathways that meet the unique needs of our families. Niles Virtual School (NVS) serves as our district's hub for flexible, high-quality online learning, offering solutions for students who need a different approach to the traditional classroom.



FULL-TIME VIRTUAL LEARNING (GRADES K-8)

For our younger learners, NVS offers a comprehensive, full-time virtual program for grades K-8. This **tuition-free** option is perfect for families seeking a home-based learning environment supported by Niles-certified teachers and a robust, state-aligned curriculum. It's the perfect blend of independent pacing and local district support.



FLEXIBLE ELECTIVES FOR ALL (K-12)

NVS isn't just for full-time virtual students! We are proud to offer online elective courses to **any student** currently enrolled in the Niles Community Schools district.

Whether a student is looking to explore a niche subject not available on their home campus or needs a more flexible schedule to balance their core classes, our virtual electives provide:



EXPANDED COURSE CATALOGS

Access to a wide variety of specialized subjects.



SCHEDULING VERSATILITY

The ability to fit extra credits or interest-based learning into a busy school day.



SKILL BUILDING

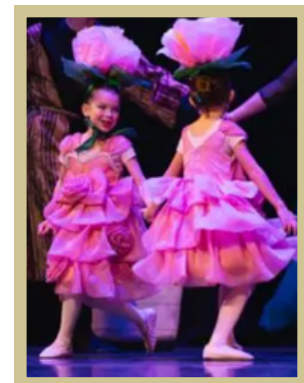
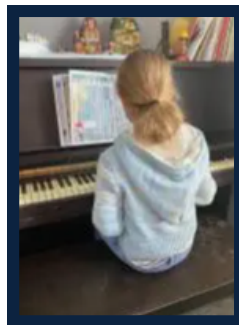
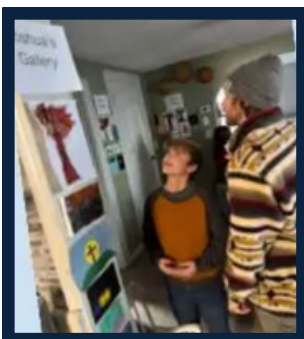
A great way for students to develop the self-discipline and digital literacy skills required in higher education and the modern workforce.



Explore Your Options: If you are interested in full-time K-8 enrollment or want to see which online electives are available for your student, please contact the NVS office or visit our district website.



Check out Niles Virtual Students engaging in various opportunities



**STRONG START,
STRONGER FINISH—
THE VIKING WAY!**



**RESPECTFUL • RESILIENT
RESPONSIBLE**