



**Menahga Principal's Board Report**  
Lisa Parrish and Michelle Koch  
April, 2026

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**CELEBRATIONS:**

March was a busy and joyful month at the elementary, filled with meaningful learning and memorable experiences for our students. We kicked off the spring field trip season, with Kindergarten visiting The Vault gym, fourth grade taking part in an agricultural program in Frazee, and sixth grade traveling to the Perham Area Community Center.

Our fifth graders impressed us during their Annual Interest Fair, sharing their interests and learning with confidence. As a school community, we also came together to recognize World Down Syndrome Awareness Day and to support Special Education through funds raised during the Polar Plunge. Students began their Science MCA assessments, and in between it all, classrooms were full of engaging lessons, hands-on activities, and plenty of moments that made this month special.



***Fifth graders demonstrating their research and presentation skills***

**Elementary Updates**

We wrapped up March by hosting our Kindergarten Round-Up, welcoming over 40 incoming students and their families. It was a wonderful evening filled with excitement as students explored the kindergarten classrooms, met our teachers, rode the school bus, and spent time on the playground. One of the highlights was watching our future students “officially sign” as members of the Menahga Class of 2039—we are so excited to welcome this new group to our school community!



***A sincere thank you to our teachers, paraprofessionals, and secretarial staff for their time and effort in making the evening such a success!***

*The Elementary also wrapped up Book Blast. The Book Blast program is an engaging literacy initiative designed to build students' home libraries, foster a love of reading, and strengthen family involvement in literacy. By providing access to high-quality books and encouraging daily reading habits, the program supports long-term academic success and a positive reading culture.*

*The Book Blast fundraiser is designed to be simple and inclusive for families. Instead of selling products, students participate by inviting friends and family to support their reading goals through secure online contributions. Funds raised go directly toward providing books for students, helping ensure every child can build their own personal library at home.*

*At the May Board meeting, Shelly Franklin will present on the successful implementation of the Book Blast program, highlighting its impact on student engagement and literacy growth.*

*April is shaping up to be another full and productive month. Students will participate in MCA testing for both math and reading, and we are proud of the effort they continue to show. We are also looking forward to our "Goodies for Grown Ups" event, where we will celebrate the wonderful learning happening in Kindergarten and share materials with families to support learning at home. We will close out the month with a band concert—ending April on a high note with some beautiful music.*

*As we begin looking ahead to May, it is hard to believe the end of the school year is just around the corner. We are excited for our combined elementary and 6-12 spring choir concert, which is sure to be a fun and memorable evening. Field trips will continue across grade levels, along with track and field events for families to enjoy. Teaching and learning remain at the heart of all we do, and we look forward to beginning our spring FastBridge assessments in early May. We are eager to see and celebrate the growth our students have made throughout the year.*

## **Important Dates:**

### **April**

- April 15-16 | Reading MCA Tests
- April 15 | Blood Drive (9:00 AM-3:45 PM, HS Gym)
- April 20 | Goodies with Grown Ups (2:05 PM)
- April 21-22 | Math MCA Tests
- April 21 | 6th Grade League of Women Voters Natural Resources Presentation (12:30 PM)
- April 24 | 3rd Grade Field Trip to Headwaters
- Week of April 27 | MCA Make-Ups
- April 30 | HS Band Concert (7:00 PM, HSG)

### **May**

- May 7 | Elementary Spring Concert (Grades 3-5, 6:00 PM, Elem Gym)
- May 7 | Choir Concert (Grades 6-12, 7:30 PM)
- May 7 | 2nd Grade Field Trip to Camp Shamaineau
- May 8 | 1st Grade Field Trip to Spadgenske Dairy
- May 12 | Track & Field (Grades 3-6)
- May 13 | Track & Field (Grades K-2)
- May 13 | Scholarship Night (7:00 PM, HS Commons)
- May 14-15 | WonderTrek (PreK-6, MES)
- May 18 | Kindergarten Graduation (1:15 PM)
- May 19 | 6th Grade Field Trip to the Twin Cities
- May 19 | 1st Grade Field Trip to Itasca State Park
- May 21 | End of the Year Celebration
- May 22 | Last day of school, Early Release (12:30)

## **High School Update:**

### **Menahga School Board Student Representative**

*Pending Board Approval: Aliah Haataja will be joining us as the Menahga School Board Student Representative, beginning with the April meeting. Aliah is a sophomore at Menahga High School and the daughter of Kara Haataja. We are excited to welcome her voice and perspective as she helps represent the experiences, ideas, and interests of our student body. Student representation is an important way for our board to stay connected to the day-to-day experiences of our students, and we look forward to Aliah's contributions in the months ahead.*

### **NHS Blood Drive:**

*Currently the NHS team has all donation spots filled! Thank you to Mrs. Lynne, Mr. Wurdock and the entire NHS crew for making this such an amazing success! This annual tradition is an important part of our community connections.*

### **Testing Updates:**

*State testing is underway at Menahga High School as we move through our spring assessment window.*

*Students will also be completing their Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCA) over the next few weeks. The Reading MCA will take place Wednesday-Thursday, April 15-16, followed by the Math MCA on*

Tuesday-Wednesday, April 21-22. Students will complete the Science MCA on Tuesday-Wednesday, March 24-25.

The week of April 27th will be used for MCA make-up testing for students who were absent during the scheduled testing days.

We appreciate the efforts of our staff and students as we work through the testing schedule while continuing to focus on strong instruction and learning in our classrooms. Lisa and I want to give a big thank you to Andria Bristow and all her hard work with our testing. I personally would ask that as we move forward, I would love to ask the board to help us encourage our students to take the MCA opportunities!

### Looking Ahead!

In the coming weeks, we will also begin the registration process for our current 8th-11th grade students. During this time, teachers are reviewing course standards, student interest data, and information gathered through SchoolLinks to help shape course offerings and opportunities for the fall. Our goal is to continue building meaningful classes that align with student interests and our established pathways.

Additionally, Hope and I will begin working closely on graduation planning. We are reviewing transcripts and student progress to ensure that all seniors remain on track to meet graduation requirements and are prepared for their next steps after high school.

Spring is an exciting and busy time, and we look forward to continuing this important work with our students and staff.



The poster features five colorful banners at the top: a grey banner with a white 'M' and 'Braves' logo, a yellow banner with a pencil and gear, a red banner with a heart and hands, a blue banner with two hands shaking, and a green banner with a leaf. Below the banners, the text reads 'CAREER EXPO' in large blue letters, followed by 'THIRD ANNUAL' in a yellow box. The event details are: 'At the Menahga High School for grades 7-12', 'Wednesday, April 1, 2026 • 10:30am-2:30pm'. Contact information includes 'PLEASE CONTACT: Hope McAdow hmcadow@menahga.k12.mn.us' and 'Randy Thompson rthompson@menahga.k12.mn.us' with the phone number '218-564-4141'. A small graphic of a booth with a sign that says 'SIGN UP FOR BOOTH' is also present.



## **Career Expo:**

The 3rd Annual Menahga Career Pathways Career Expo was held April 1st in the High School Gym for students in grades 7-12, and it was an incredible success! 🥳

Students had the opportunity to explore a wide variety of career paths, ask questions, and gain valuable insight into their futures. It was a hands-on, engaging learning experience that truly made an impact!

A HUGE thank you to all of the area businesses and organizations who took time out of their day to invest in our students and help make this event so exciting and meaningful:

Bongards Premium Cheese DNR - Wadena County Lamb Weston/RDO

MState - Workforce Development/CDL Wadena County Soil & Water US Department of Agriculture

Astera Health Wadena County Sheriff's Office & City of Menahga Law Enforcement

Central Lakes College Education MN - Menahga Essentia Health

Mahube Otwa MState - Healthcare Careers MN Army National Guard

Northwest Service Co-op - Dietary/Nutrition North Memorial Health

Todd-Wadena Community Corrections Rose Haven NDSU The College Place

TruStar Federal Credit Union Saint Mary's University Rural MN CEP DeLaHunt Media

BTD CLC - Graphic Design CLC - Machine Tool KLN MState - Design & Engineering

MState - Electrical Lineworker TEAM Industries Todd-Wadena Electric

Bergstrom Electric Brunswick/Lund

We are so grateful for your support in helping our students explore their passions and future career possibilities.

## **Menahga Principal Goals for 2025-2026**

### **Goal 1: Strengthen Literacy and Academic Achievement**

**Ensure all students achieve at high levels by implementing evidence-based reading instruction aligned with the Minnesota READ Act, closing racial and economic achievement gaps, and building staff capacity in differentiated instruction to support the diverse needs of learners.**

- Academic interventions currently happening in K-12
- Walk throughs happening in all classrooms
- Lisa Parrish and Andria Bristow are attending monthly Literacy Meetings at Sourcewell and communication updates to shape future planning for Menahga Public Schools
- Paraprofessional READ Act training completed
- Three hours of Bridges curriculum development time completed at all staff development days
- Third round of observations for probationary staff being completed
- Tenured staff cycle 3 observations are being completed
- High School READ Act Phase Two Training selected
- ADSIS year two grant work for interventionist positions in process
- ADSIS Grant documentation and end-of-year prep in process
- ADSIS Grant year 2 work in process
- Local Literacy Plan documentation being gathered
- MCA assessment in process

## **Goal 2: Expand Career Pathways and Authentic Learning Opportunities**

**Increase student engagement and readiness for college, career, and life by developing cross-curricular, career-connected learning experiences; expanding community and business partnerships; and providing authentic, hands-on opportunities such as senior capstone projects and internships.**

- The Committee met and planned accordingly for further advancement
- Expansion through “Career Play” in Kindergarten
- Expansion of 3rd Grade- Health and Human Services Focus
- Expansion of 4th Grade- Engineering, Arts and Trades Focus
- Expansion of 5th Grade- Business and Technology Focus
- Expansion of 6th Grade- Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources Focus
  - Sixth grade taking part in 2 separate Department of Natural Resources events
- 2025-2026 Career Pathways Committee Training scheduled with Sourcewell
- Career Fair held at MHS

## **Goal 3: Support the Whole Child and Invest in Staff Development**

**Provide comprehensive supports that meet the academic, social, emotional, and behavioral needs of all students, while ensuring every student has a positive connection with a caring adult. Strengthen staff recruitment, professional development, and training—including emerging tools such as AI—to sustain a future-focused and supportive learning environment.**

- New staff taking part in Sourcewell’s New Teacher Academy, moved to MPS
- New staff taking part in Mentorship with Kerry White
- AI Training for PreK-12 certified staff in November
- Capti Training scheduled for literacy teachers in 4th-12th grade in January
- Monitoring of ADSIS interventions in K-12
- ACT testing coordination in process for grades 11 and 12 (Achieved 2026)

## Menahga School District Enrollment

Grade Level	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	March	April	May	
PreK	41	41	39	39	38	38	37		
K	85	85	84	84	82	81	81		
1	62	61	60	61	61	62	62		
2	73	73	73	72	72	75	74		
3	74	73	73	74	73	73	73		
4	82	81	81	80	80	80	80		
5	67	65	65	66	66	66	66		
6	76	75	75	75	75	75	75		
7	77	75	74	73	78	73	72		
8	80	79	79	80	84	74	74		
9	76	76	75	75	74	73	73		
10	93	92	92	92	90	89	88		
11	70	65	65	64	63	61	61		
12	73	72	72	73	73	73	72		
Total	1029	1013	1007	1008	1009	993	988		
OpenEd			131	129	129	153	152		
Total			1138	1,137	1,138	1146	1,140		

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Parrish and Michelle Koch