

# Norwalk Community School District Newsletter

October 2017

## Norwalk's Mission:

Our fundamental purpose is to create a rigorous, collaborative and inclusive learning environment for all students so each individual is empowered to pursue a lifetime of personal success in college, career, and citizenship.

### Table Of Contents

News from the Superintendent	Page 1
Lakewood News	Page 2
Norwalk ACT, Oviatt Elementary News	Page 3
Oviatt Elementary News (cont.), Band News	Page 4
ESL Program	Page 5
Transportation	Page 6

### Norwalk CSD Board Members

Rick Kaul	Board President
Maribeth Wright	Vice President
David Albrecht	Board Member
Justin Fletcher	Board Member
Dana Schuemann	Board Member



## World Class Schools for Our Students:

### NCS D Mission and Vision

*D.T. Magee, Superintendent of Schools*

One of the goals I have established with the NCS D Board of Education is to communicate more about the district's mission and vision in the new monthly newsletters that will be available to parents, staff members, and school district residents. For those of you who are not familiar with the district's mission statement, here it is:

*Our fundamental purpose is to create a rigorous, collaborative and inclusive learning environment for all students so each individual is empowered to pursue a lifetime of personal success in college, career, and citizenship.*

I am happy to report that district staff members continue to shine a spotlight on our mission and have a laser focus on student learning.

So what learning targets are students pursuing? Let's take a look at the district's vision to answer that question:

*To achieve our mission, Norwalk Community Schools will create classroom and school environments that develop:*

*Critical and reflective thinking, complex communication, creativity and innovation, collaboration and community, flexibility and adaptability, and productivity and accountability*

Learn more about the district's mission, vision, and values by accessing this link:  
<http://www.norwalkschools.org/academics/mission-vision-and-values/>

Two initiatives the district is pursuing in order to address several areas of the vision statement include Standards Referenced Grading (in grades K-12) and The Leader In Me (at the elementary). You can learn more about each initiative by accessing the following links: Standards Referenced Grading - <http://www.norwalkschools.org/academics/standards-referenced-reporting/> and The Leader In Me - <http://www.theleaderinme.org/>.

As I continue my second year as your superintendent, I am more excited than ever for the learning and growth occurring in our district. Please make sure to say hello if you see me at a school activity or out in the community and share with me your vision for our school district.

Yours in service,  
D.T. Magee

## Important Dates

- Oct. 9 No School K-12
- Oct 24 End of 1st Quarter
- Oct 31 Parent/Teacher Conferences

District Calendar:

<http://bit.ly/2fW5Ekh>

## Numbers You Should Know

### District Office

515-981-0676

### Buildings and Grounds

515-981-0917

### High School

515-981-4201

### HS Activities Office

515-981-4204

### Eastview 8/9

515-981-9655

### Middle School

515-981-0435

### Lakewood Elementary

515-981-1850

### Oviatt Elementary

515-981-1005

### Nutrition

515-981-9876

### Transportation

515-981-0016

# Lakewood News: Every Child, Every Day

*By Jill Anderson, Principal*

## Warrior Dash:

On Tuesday, September 12th, the Lakewood student body took part in the 2nd Warrior Dash. This event is organized by the PTO and proceeds go back directly to the schools. Throughout the day, the students “sharpened their saw” individually by taking part in the fitness stations and they “synergized” with their classmates by working cooperatively during some of the course. Raffle tickets were given for completion of the course. The Dash raised over \$24,000 for the elementary schools and that will go to fund initiatives and field trips throughout the year.

A special thank you to these businesses who sponsored the event:

City State Bank

Meta Bank

Kohl's

Fareway

DeRocher Chiropractic

Adventure Lighting

Douglas of Des Moines

Anytime Fitness

Remax- Aaron Mowery

Norwalk Chiropractic

Vertigo

Unity Point Clinic

Medicap

804 Main



Matt Ramthun, Lakewood Elementary 5th grade teacher, was honored on September 27 with a Golden Apple Award.

Without these sponsors, it would not have been so successful. A special thank you to the PTO for coordinating the event. It provides a great opportunity for our students to gain physical exercise and work together.

## Did you know?

- Students will participate in the AimsWeb Plus assessment this year in both math and reading. These assessments will occur three times a year. The purpose is to help the teachers meet the individualized needs of your child in reading and math as they progress through the year.
- We will do on-line registration for conferences.

### Conference Dates:

- October 31st-4:30-7:30 pm
- November 1st- 4:30-7:30 pm
- November 2nd- 10:00a.m.- 8:00 p.m.
- Each of your students has a neighborhood that will do a community service project. The staff took part in their own when they helped out at Miracle League this fall.
- Lakewood and Oviatt have a partnership with Iowa State University on how to integrate units and use backward design models with the new Iowa Social Studies Standards.
- At least two days a week, each staff member attends a Professional Learning Community meeting. There are four questions that guide the meetings:
  - What do we want students to know and be able to do?
  - How will we know when they have learned it?
  - What will we do if they haven't learned?
  - What will we do if they already know what we intend to teach?

## Norwalk Continues to Raise the Bar on the ACT

By Amy Gage, Secondary Director of Teaching and Learning

The Class of 2017 earned Norwalk's highest ACT composite score yet, according to data released this September. The average composite score for 2017's graduating class was 23.6, a full 1.7 points higher than the state average of 21.9.

Other notable data points:

- Of the 207 graduates in Norwalk's Class of 2017, 133 (64%) took the ACT at least one time.
- Students who take courses beyond the minimum requirements in math and science see significantly higher ACT composite scores overall.
- While the overall statewide percentage of students meeting the college and career ready benchmarks is on a slight decline (31%), Norwalk's percentage continues to climb (47%).
- 29 students identified out-of-state post secondary plans while the remaining students indicated a preference for an in-state college, university, training program or career path.
- Only 27 students took the optional ACT Writing portion of the exam.

The ACT is a nationally recognized college and career readiness assessment that includes items in Reading, English, Math, Science and Writing (optional). It also includes student survey information regarding course of study, future college and career plans, and preferred post-secondary institutions. Parents or students interested in additional information on national and Iowa trends should consult ACT's annual report, [The Condition of College and Career Readiness 2017](#).



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## Oviatt Elementary News

By Sheila Taylor, Principal

### AIMSweb Testing:

Three times a year students are tested in reading and math to make sure they are on track to meet grade level expectations plus are making growth from fall to spring and year to year. These tests are a benchmark; they provide data to help us guide our instruction for what each child needs to grow and meet grade level expectations. Students are tested in the fall (September), in the winter (January), and in the spring (April). We will send home your child's report after each benchmark. The fall testing reports will be sent home the first week of October. If you have any questions about the testing or your child's results, please contact your child's teacher.

### STEM:

This year we have a new special that all kindergarten, first grade, and second grade students go to for one of their specials. STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics which is taught by Mr. Morsch. Students experience activities that incorporate all of these components. Norwalk received a grant which provides modules through Project Lead the Way (PLTW) that are engaging hands-on activities. We are excited to have this opportunity for all students.

*Kindergarten modules:* engineering design process to create a tool for a specific purpose; learning about the human body and create a cast for a broken arm

*First grade modules:* learning about light, sun, moon & stars to create a playground to protect them while playing in the sun; create a program through coding of interactive characters on an iPad

*Second grade modules:* learning about properties of matter to engineer a design to keep items cold without a cooler; using coding to create their own game

## Oviatt News, Continued

### Parent Teacher Conferences:

We will host parent teacher conferences on Oct. 31, Nov. 1 & 2. The times are listed below. In October we will send home information on how to sign up for conferences. We use an online program, but if you are not able to access the site then you can contact the office to help you set up a time. A huge predictor for student success in school is the partnership between home and school and we appreciate your support in your child's education. Students (Preschool-5th) will not have school on Nov. 2 or 3 due to conferences.

### Dates for Fall:

Mon., Oct. 9:	No School (teacher inservice day)
Tues., Oct. 31:	Parent teacher conferences 4:30-7:30 pm
Wed., Nov. 1:	PT conferences 4:30-7:30 pm
Thurs., Nov. 2:	PT conferences 10:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. No School for Preschool - 5th grade students
Fri., Nov. 3:	No School for Preschool - 12th grade students

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### Middle School Bands Off to a Great Start!

Norwalk Middle School's bands are starting the year at record numbers in our classroom. We've also had more students move into the district and successfully joined our band than ever before. We welcome them to our program and thank the students we've already had for the way they've welcomed the "newbies". As a band staff, we are excited by everyone's awesome attitudes and behavior during rehearsals. We can already tell this is going to be a fantastic year!

Our 8th graders have several exciting tasks ahead of them: Marching Band and Honor Band. SCIBA Honor Band auditions will be held for a select 10 students from 8th grade on October 3rd at Waukee Timberline MS. Nominated 7th graders will join the 8th graders to perform Nov. 7th @ Ankeny Centennial. 8th Grade Marching Band will be performing music from Chicago including: 'Saturday in the Park', 'Make Me Smile', and '25 or 6 to 4'. Students will perform this show at Norwalk's Warrior Stadium for the last football home game of the season, Oct. 13th and at the Indoor Marching Band Night in the High School Gym on Oct. 19th @ 7pm. We look forward to performing for a packed home crowd at both events!

6th & 7th graders will have their first concerts Oct. 12th and Dec. 5th, both beginning @ 7 pm in the Norwalk Performing Arts Center (NPAC). Jazz band auditions will be held for the 7th & 8th grade middle school students mid-late October. Their first performance will be Nov. 27th at Winter Jazz Night in conjunction with the high school jazz ensembles @ 7 pm, again performing in the NPAC.

We look forward to another great year of music making successes and fun!

Mr. Heltman, Mr. Huen, Mrs. Krupke and Mr. Menke



# ESL Program in Norwalk

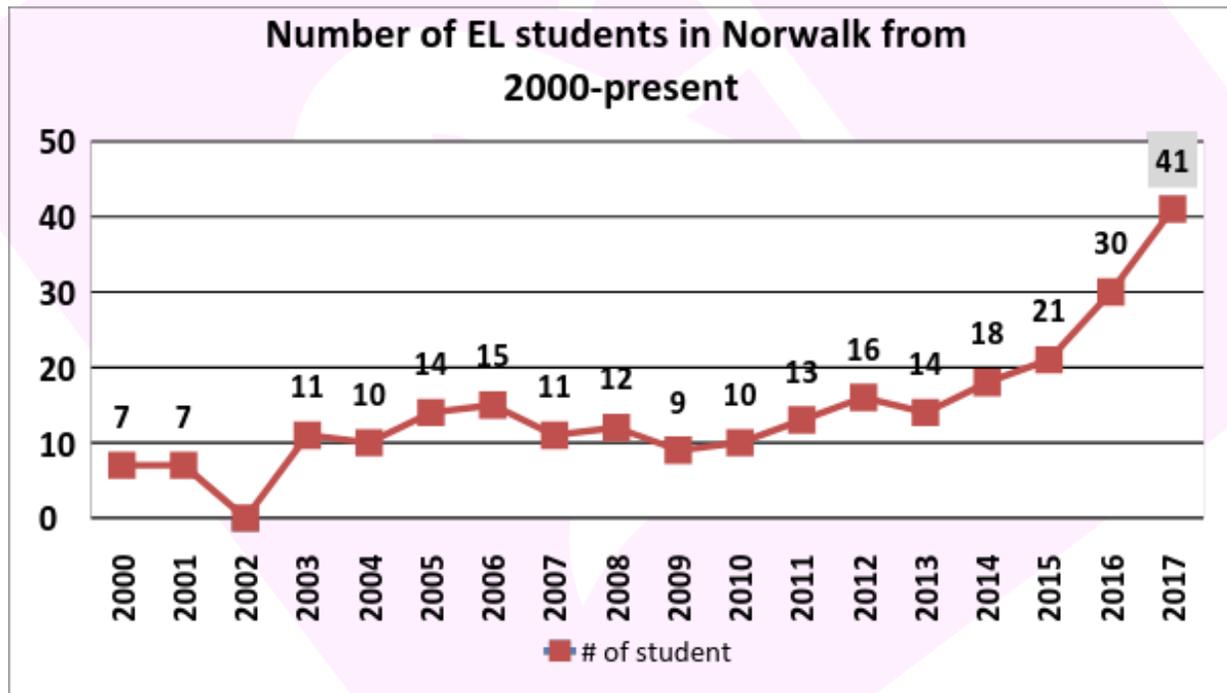
By Eric Neessen, Director of Student Services

The English as a Second Language (ESL) program in Norwalk serves English Learner (EL) students who are currently learning to speak, read, write and listen in English. The program is designed to reduce linguistic barriers to the district’s instructional program and provide access to a specialized language instruction educational program for our EL students.

The ESL program has seen a tremendous growth in students over the past several years (see graph below). The languages currently represented in the district include: Spanish, Somali, German, Korean, Laotian, Nepali, Russian, Thai, and Vietnamese. There are EL students in every grade from K-12. Our EL students participate in many extra-curricular activities such as: football, cross country, volleyball, and “Heart and Sole” at the middle school, to name a few.

The district currently has one full-time ESL teacher, Ms. Kanost, and one half-time ESL teacher, Ms. Overton.

As Norwalk continues to grow, it is anticipated that the ESL program will also grow. The district will continue to look at ways to best prepare for and meet the needs of our future EL students.



# Steps for Ensuring Safe School Bus Loading and Unloading

*Kevin Williamson, Director of Transportation*

- Remove straps and ties. Make sure all drawstrings, ties and straps on all clothing and backpacks are removed. This will lessen the likelihood of them getting caught in bus doors, railings or aisles. Be especially careful of drawstrings with large knots or baubles on the end.
- Arrive at the bus stop early. Stay at least 20 feet away from the street while waiting for the bus. Do not approach the bus until it stops completely and the driver signals you to board. Enter in single file without pushing. Always use the hand-rail.
- Take your assigned seat right away. Remain seated facing forward. Keep your hands, arms and head inside the bus.
- Always listen to the driver's instructions. Follow the driver's instructions at all times.
- Be courteous to the driver and other students. You may talk quietly with your neighbors, but avoid making noises that could distract the driver or bother other passengers. Stay seated with your hands to yourself.
- To exit the bus, wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before standing up. Use the handrail when exiting the bus. Be sure to take all of your belongings. Be careful that none of your clothing becomes snagged on any part of the bus as you leave the bus.
- Stay out of the Danger Zone. This is the area close to the bus in the front, sides and back where the driver may have difficulty seeing you. To make sure that the driver sees you while you are standing on the side of the street, take 10 giant steps ahead of the bus and out of the Danger Zone. You should be able to see the driver and the driver should see you. If you can see the driver's eyes, then the driver can see you. Never crawl near, around or under a bus.
- If you must cross the street after you get off the bus, wait for the driver's signal.
  - First, make sure that the driver sees you. While you are standing on the side of the street, take 10 giant steps ahead of the bus.
  - You should be able to see the driver and the driver should see you. If you can see the driver's eyes, then the driver can see you.
  - The driver will raise his/her hand. Once the driver lowers his/her hand, it is safe to start to cross.
  - When you get to the middle of the street, stop and look both ways before going any farther. Then cross in front of the bus.
  - If your driver honks the horn, STOP right away and return to the side of the street from which you started to cross.
- Never run back to the bus, even if you dropped or forgot something.
- Never horseplay around a school bus, even if it is stopped.
- Don't stop or crawl near a school bus. Stay out of the Danger Zone at all times.
- Never go behind a school bus.
- If you drop something near the bus, don't stop or bend over to pick it up. If you dropped, lost or forgot something, ask the driver for help.
- Be extra careful if you have to cross the road to get on the bus. Look both ways before starting to cross the road. Wait until there are no vehicles. Then cross in front of the bus.
- If your driver honks the horn, STOP right away and return to the side of the street from which you started.

