



# Polar Express

The Northstar Newsletter

Facebook: Northstar Middle School Twitter: @Northstarmiddle #nmstpolar

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[www.ecasd.us](http://www.ecasd.us)

**November 2022**

I began Saturday, October 22 with hot coffee and time to gaze out my living room window. As I looked out at my front yard, I saw a mess of leaves, sticks, and grass that hadn't seen proper care in several weeks. A quick survey of the trees confirmed that the vast majority of leaves had already dropped for the season. I spent several hours raking and hauling leaves later in the day. By dinner time, I felt I had a lawn deserving of the 'Better Homes and Gardens' cover.

Sometimes things just don't go as planned. Sunday, October 23 brought with it sustained winds of 15 mph and gusts up to 35 mph. Those winds completely negated my previous efforts and provided me with an opportunity to spend more quality time with my rake. That defeated feeling was real in my head and my heart.

I share this story with your family in case your student feels the way I did. Sometimes our best efforts in school don't satisfy due to unforeseen circumstances or timelines. We want all Northstar students to move forward in their learning, especially when they face setbacks such as my lawn care. Our Northstar staff is here to help complete assignments, stay organized, and provide extra support. If your student feels like their educational 'leaf piles' are getting bigger and bigger, please consider the following supports:

1. Join Polar Club- Northstar's Polar Club is our after-school study club that meets each Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 2:55-4:00 pm. Students have access to our computer lab, library materials, and help from Northstar staff. It even includes a complimentary snack for each student. Have your child grab a permission form from the Student Services office.
2. Access Skyward Family Access- If you haven't already set up a Skyward account, please visit our school district's website at [www.ecasd.us](http://www.ecasd.us) and click on 'Skyward' at the top of the homepage to create an account. Skyward allows parents to access their child's grades and receive messages from teachers regarding upcoming assignments and important events in class. This helps guide your ongoing 'How was school today?' conversations at home.
3. Organize Your Child- Middle school is the first-time our students carry materials between classes. Organization is a precious skill that leads to success and confidence, especially after our many schedules and challenges of the last year and a half. Help your student organize their backpack and binder at home, and ask to see their planner each day. This will help decrease the number of lost or missing assignments and lead to their success.

On behalf of the Northstar staff, thank you for supporting our children and our school. Please give me a call at 715.852.5110 or send an email to [tskutley@ecasd.us](mailto:tskutley@ecasd.us) whenever you have a question or suggestion. I look forward to partnering with your family throughout the 2022-23 school year.

Tim Skutley  
Principal



# STUDENT SERVICES



Quarter 2

Updates!

Ms. Jennifer Schilling  
**Student Services Secretary**

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Ms. Jenni Berg  
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Ms. Lisa Sproul  
**School Counselor (Last Names K-Z)**

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Ms. Kristen Cowell  
**School Psychologist**

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**6<sup>th</sup> Grade Meet & Greet Conferences**—As mentioned in the back-to-school newsletter, individual meet and greet conferences are now taking place with all 6th grade students. The focus of the conference is based on the Wisconsin School Counseling Standards, which include the following topics: Academics, Personal/Social, and Career Development. Students will also have an opportunity to ask questions, as well as learn about resources and activities available at Northstar.

**Registration**—Looking ahead...January 2023 will mark the start of next year's registration process. Counselors will be reviewing the course selection/registration process with students during the school day starting the **first week of January**, so please mark your calendars and ask your student about their class selection/registration during that time. Topics to be covered: Things to consider when planning your future, Xello (free electronic career/education tool), and preview of high school course selection/registration process.

**Academic and Career Planning Seminar (8<sup>th</sup> grade parents/guardians)** - An Academic Career Planning Seminar will be uploaded to the Northstar website by **Friday, December 9**. This is an important step in preparing for your child's successful transition to high school. Our goal is to provide you and your student with the necessary information to link your child's academics to their future education and career goals. *Parents/Guardians and students are encouraged to view the seminar together.* Topics to be covered: Things to consider when planning your future, Xello (free electronic career/education tool), and preview of high school course selection/registration process.

**Upward Bound (8th grade parents/guardians)** - This program helps students prepare for educational and career training opportunities after high school and provides access to post-secondary opportunities free of charge to students. You can preview information about the program at the following website: <https://www.uwec.edu/equity-diversity-inclusion/edi-services-programs/upward-bound/>. Please look for more information regarding this program in upcoming newsletters.

**JA in a Day (8th grade parents/guardians)** - This two-day event represents a partnership among several groups including Junior Achievement, the Eau Claire Area School District, the Eau Claire Chamber of Commerce, and many other local businesses and organizations.

On Monday, November 14, 8th grade students will spend the morning rotating through various stations including a career fair, an entrepreneur panel, and career lessons at Northstar Middle School.

On Tuesday, November 15, 8th grade students will visit two different sites within the community. Busses will leave Northstar after 1st lunch (11:34am) and return prior to the end of the school day. Permission forms were recently sent home for an upcoming community career exposure trip on Tuesday, November 15. **Student permission forms were due on Friday, November 4.** There is no cost to families for this field trip. Please contact Jenni Berg at [jberg@ecasd.us](mailto:jberg@ecasd.us) or 715-852-5119 with questions or concerns.

# ☞ Polar Partnership Update ☜

Northstar is truly a special place! It is filled with students and adults who care and support one another in a way that is second to none! From teachers and education assistants who develop meaningful connections with students; to office administrators and staff who graciously navigate constant challenges in day to day learning; from custodians who tirelessly clean to ensure our school is safe; to food and nutrition staff who diligently prepare healthy meals; from parents who give of their time by volunteering, attending conferences, and serving on committees; to students who show GREAT resiliency by “showing up” with positive attitudes, ready to work and ready to learn. Northstar students, staff, and families continue to impress. #Polar Pride!

## We Need Your Help!

Volunteering benefits the students, school, and you! Have some fun, meet new friends, and support our students! We are still looking for volunteers for committee positions on the Northstar PTSA. These committees involve minimal time commitment but help our school and students in a BIG way.

- Staff Appreciation: **Thank our staff by helping to organize a couple of events**
- Concession Sales: **Sell pre-packaged concessions after school, a few times a semester**

Interested? Questions? Email [c\\_swing@sbcglobal.net](mailto:c_swing@sbcglobal.net) or [jjunker@ecasd.us](mailto:jjunker@ecasd.us)

**THANK YOU** to all volunteers who helped with fall activities: Schedule Pick Up, Back to School Night, Staff Luncheon, Fall Mile Run, Fall Polar Party, attended PTSA Meetings, Concession Sales, and more!

**We appreciate YOU!**



## Winter & Holiday Help

This is the season for thanks and celebration in many homes. It is also the season of increased heating and clothing expenses. Go to [www.ecasd.us/Northstar-Middle-School/Home](http://www.ecasd.us/Northstar-Middle-School/Home) and click on the “Holiday Help!” icon for more information on helpful programs in Eau Claire County.

Every organization has limited resources, so please make note of the sign-up dates and bring any necessary information to complete the application process.

## Coming to Northstar on Monday, November 21... the Kitchen Cupboard on Wheels!!

Sponsored by Feed My People Food Bank!



Time: 11:30 am—1:00 pm  
Place: In front of Northstar Middle School

Receive groceries drive-through style. There’s no need to leave your vehicle! No application or ID required and you can pick up for more than one household.

Fresh produce, dairy/meat, and pantry staples will be available!

## UPCOMING RESTURANT FUNDRAISERS!

What better way to support Northstar than by eating food from local restaurants! Coming alongside of our school *and* local businesses is a win-win!

**Dairy Queen:** Tuesday, December 6 and January 3  
4:00-9:00 pm at the Pinehurst location



 **Panera:** Thursday, December 15  
4:00-8:00 pm  
Use the code **FUND4U** during checkout!

**Panda Express:** Tuesday, January 17  
10:30am-9:00 pm



## Join us for our Third Annual Drive-Thru, Drop Off, Donut, and Donate Event

**Friday, Dec 16 ~ 7:00 – 7:25 am**

As a part of our **Season of Giving** program and to say **THANK YOU** to our Northstar families for all your support, we invite you to drop off your student at school in the morning and enjoy a donut. If you’d like to donate, grab some loose change—all proceeds will be given to the **ECASD Homeless Program**.

## Families Helping Families Kicks off November 14!

For the 23<sup>rd</sup> year Northstar will reach out to make this season of giving a little brighter for many. The Season of Giving begins **Monday, Nov 14 and runs through Friday, Dec 16**. This year our efforts will focus on helping ECASD families in need through support of the **ECASD Homeless Program**. There will be a packet arriving in the mail with more details. We look forward to your support as we work together to make a difference for families within our school community!

## QUARTER 2 DATES TO REMEMBER



- November 4** End of Quarter 1  
**November 7** 7:00 pm Orchestra 7/8 Concert at North High School  
**November 15** JA in a Day Field Trip—Grade 8  
**November 21** 11:30 am—1:00 pm Feed My People Pop Up Pantry  
**November 21-25** No School—Thanksgiving Break  
**November 29** Orchestra Field Trip  
**November 30** Grade 8 Guthrie Field Trip
- December 6** 4:00-9:00 pm PTSA Dairy Queen Fundraiser (Pinehurst)  
**December 9** 2:50-4:15 pm Polar Party  
**December 12** 7:00 pm Orchestra 7/8 Concert at North High School  
**December 15** 6:00/7:00 pm Band 7/8 Concert  
**December 15** 4:00-8:00 pm PTSA Panera Fundraiser  
**December 23-31** No School—Winter Break
- January 3** 4:00-9:00 pm PTSA Dairy Queen Fundraiser (Pinehurst)  
**January 9** 7:00 pm Choir Concert at North High School  
**January 10** 6:30 pm PTSA Executive Board Meeting  
**January 16** No School— Staff PD/IP Work Day  
**January 17** 10:30 am-9:00 pm PTSA Panda Express Fundraiser  
**January 19** 6:30 pm Band 6 Concert  
**January 20** End of Quarter 2  
**January 23** No School — Staff Workday  
**January 26** 7:00 pm Orchestra 6 Concert @ North High School

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