

December 2020 BlueSky Online Newsletter

Superintendent's Message

BlueSky Parents & Guardians:

COVID Fatigue
Happy December! Our staff and students are all working hard to manage the changes that are affecting us all as we navigate working from home and keeping ourselves and others safe during this pandemic. We all are learning to be more compassionate and understanding as we work together to try and support one another. Our staff are working from home but now may have their own children to support during the school day and additional challenges with illness or changes to their routine. Our students and families may be experiencing challenges with loss of employment, change in routine of home life, and managing the additional stress that working from home with multiple family members can bring. Add to that the traditional stress of the holiday season and the approaching end of our school semester. We are acutely aware of the fatigue that is setting in as we try to make it through this high stress time. BlueSky staff provide many resources for support. We pride ourselves on being flexible and individualizing education based on the specific needs of each student and we will continue to do so, especially now. We also appreciate the patience and support you have been providing to us, as BlueSky staff. Some of you have been providing positive feedback to us in the form of an email or a comment made during a phone call which has been uplifting and gives us more energy to keep going than you may even realize. Please continue to do what you can to work with your student(s) in managing their workload and attendance as well as communicating with BlueSky staff on concerns and we will continue to provide ideas for how we can best support you and your student(s). Thank you for choosing BlueSky and for allowing us to work with you and your student(s)!

19-20 Annual Report
Each year, school districts develop a World's Best Workforce (WBWF) Annual Report, engage in an annual public meeting with stakeholders, and release the annual report publicly on district websites. Under Minnesota Statutes, section 120B.01, the annual report and annual meetings are focused on strategies and initiatives that the district engaged in to meet the goals and the progress made on those goals in the prior school year. The goals must address the following areas:

- All children are ready for school.
- All third-graders can read at grade level.
- All racial and economic achievement gaps between students are closed.
- All students are ready for career and college.
- All students graduate from high school.

In addition, WBWF legislation requires that districts submit a summary of the annual report to MDE (Minnesota Department of Education) each year. BlueSky has recently added our [19-20 Annual Report and World's Best Workforce Summary](#) to our website. Take a look at both documents to find out the results of BlueSky's goals as well as learn all about the innovative programs we have implemented as a way to support each and every one of our students.



Amy Larsen
Superintendent
651.202.2010
amy.larsen@blueskyschool.org



Counselor Corner

Featured Occupation:

- **Medical Records Technician**
- **Education Required:** Postsecondary Certificate
- **Outlook:** 23,100 new openings by 2028
- **Median Wages:** \$40,330
- For medical records technicians, coding doesn't have anything to do with HTML. These professionals are trained to translate diagnoses, procedures, and treatments to clinical codes for insurance reimbursement and data analysis.

Social Work Spotlight

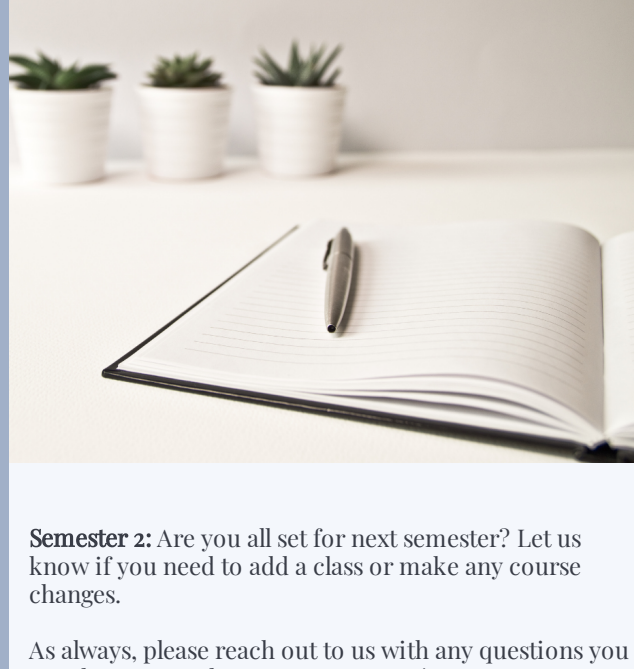
COVID Stress and Holiday Stress

As mental health professionals, we are seeing an increase in the stress level of students and in families as we continue the weeks of the pandemic. We know that acknowledging the stress and finding ways to cope in healthy ways during this time has never been more important.

Please reach out to your student's support team: Advisors, Counselors and/or School Social Workers if you or your student are needing extra support in these months. We know you are inundated with resources and links but we do feel it is critical for mental health to find strategies that help mitigate stress levels for your student and for yourself. We also acknowledge that the holiday season can be a particular time of added stress for many. If your family finds themselves in need of holiday support, there are also links to resources for those needs included in this [Social Services Resource Guide](#).



Supplemental



Semester 2: Are you all set for next semester? Let us know if you need to add a class or make any course changes.

As always, please reach out to us with any questions you may have. We're here to support you! Heidi (Heidi.Heidi@blueskyschool.org) and Jill (Jill.Hunt@blueskyschool.org)

Supplemental students, you are doing fabulous work! We feel so lucky that we get to support you.

Need Extra Support? These are certainly strange times, and many of you are juggling unique school circumstances - from being in school full time, to hybrid learning, to full distance learning. It can be a lot to balance. If you're at all struggling with that balance, please reach out to Heidi for some additional support in staying on track in your BlueSky classes. We can set up a Zoom meeting (how fun to actually see you!) and help you find ways to take control of your learning.

Course End Dates: Be sure to keep an eye on the "duration" column of your Academic Snapshot. Many of you have courses ending soon. If that's you, how are you doing? Are you in-the-green (green = great)? Remember that the overall "grade" percentage is going to be your actual grade. By your end date, if all of the course assignments are submitted, your "quality" and "grade" percentages should match.

Student Activities

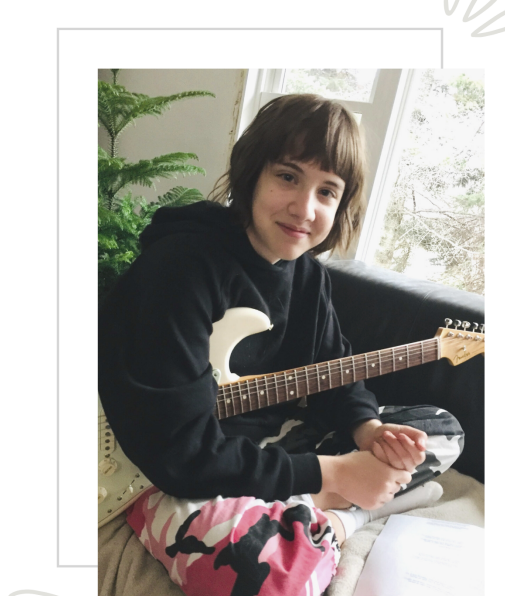
The Student Activities Committee is meeting again to finalize and put together student clubs and discuss future events! Students can still fill out the [Student Activities and Club Interest Form](#). We have had a ton of responses and interest, this will be another great year! Clubs will be virtual for now and sign-ups will be sent out soon!

Middle School Pop Up Clubs: Each Friday, our staff are putting on a pop up club for middle school students. Each week will have a different theme. Students are welcome to come and go as they please! All communications will be sent to student emails.

We are so excited to bring students together and provide fun opportunities online! Keep an eye out for emails regarding them! For any activity or event requests, please contact Jenny Rakke at jennifer.rakke@blueskyschool.org.



BlueSky Stars



Vivi A. is a BlueSky Star for a multitude of reasons. Vivi is an 8th grader who has attended BlueSky since 7th grade. She is a motivated learner who embraces new experiences with enthusiasm and curiosity. Vivi has a natural ability to make friends and build community when new students join our school.

When asked what she likes best about BlueSky Vivi said, "I like being able to set a schedule for myself."

Outside of school Vivi plays the guitar, and enjoys spending time outdoors.

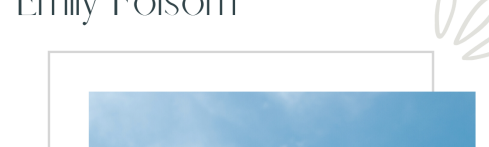
Last year she stepped out of her natural zone, being cast as the "evil person" in the 7th grade class play Big Foot. Vivi said the "The main part of school success is staying motivated even when it's overwhelming." Vivi is an all around star in my book!

- Nominated by Dawn Mensing

Shoutout to our awesome students!

Emily is featured as a BlueSky Star Student, because she is extremely hard working and always tries her best in her classes. Emily chose to attend BlueSky, because she was dealing with really bad anxiety, which made school really difficult. BlueSky offers an environment that makes her feel safer and allows her to be able to concentrate on being the best student she can be. Emily likes being able to work at her own pace, which allows her to excel and also allows her to work a little slower on topics that are harder for her. She likes that teachers and her advisor are regularly checking in on her to keep her well informed. Emily's advice for BlueSky students would be to give yourself time to adjust, because online school is very different. Set yourself a schedule to make sure you stay on track and allow you to balance your personal needs with your school assignments.

- Nominated by Sean Miller



Student Work

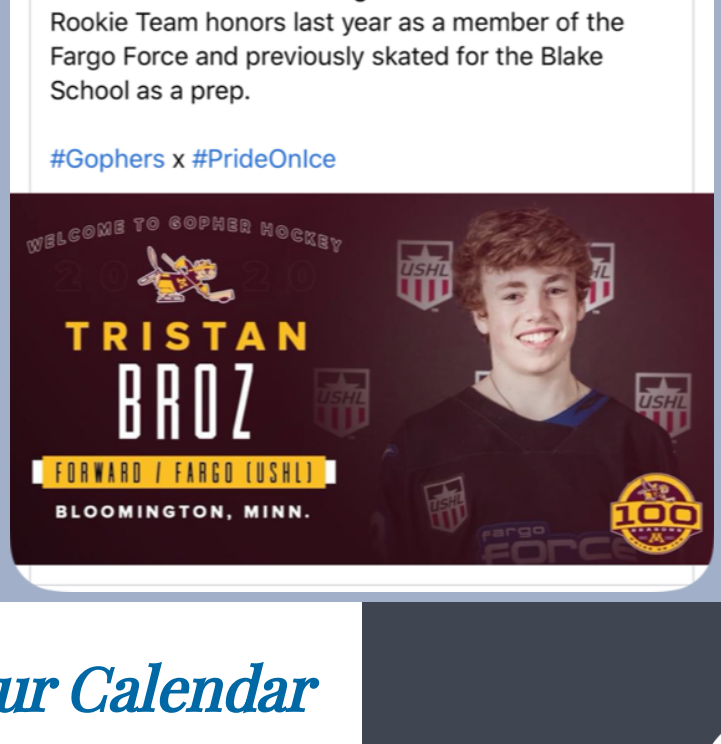
Writing in Quarantine Haiku
by Alex Galvan

Days seem all the same
Thoughts stop singing in my brain
Words just don't feel right

Travel Scandinavia Website
by Brayden Hayford

In our Travel Scandinavia course, Brayden has built a beautiful website filled with tours, photos, and information about these countries. [Check out his hard work so far this semester!](#)

We all congratulate Tristan Broz on his amazing accomplishments and future endeavors at the University of Minnesota! Our students have bright futures ahead of them, and we love to celebrate everyone's achievements!



Mark Your Calendar

- November 26-27, 2020: No school
- December 24, 2020 - January 1, 2021: No school
- January 21-22, 2021: No school (staff only)
- January 20, 2021: Last day of second quarter
- January 25, 2021: First day of third quarter
- February 15, 2021: No school
- February 26, 2021: TBD Field Trip/Social Event
- March 11-12, 2021: No school (staff only)
- March 26, 2021: Last day of third quarter
- March 26, 2021: Half student day
- March 27, 2021 - April 2, 2021: No school
- April 5, 2021: First day of fourth quarter
- May 11, 2021: No school
- June 3, 2021: Last day of school

[READ MORE](#)

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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
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Resources

Contact Information for Questions and Resources
Main Line: 651-642-0888
[Staff List with Contact Information](#)



Office - enrollment, transcripts, record requests
Amy Larsen - Superintendent/Executive Director
Dan Orlich - Principal & Assistant Director
Bence Fackler - Principal & Student Services
Directors
Cathy Fackler - Dean of Students
Heidi van der Haegen - Director of Special Education
Soree Her - Student Information Specialist
John Mizant - Registrar
Melissa Yant - Testing Coordinator
Jenny Bekke - Admin Assistant

Counselors - scheduling and class changes
Dawn Mensing
Grant Cameron
Amy Chicoine
Jennifer Anderson
Earls Dickmann

Advisors - navigating school
Laura Weleck
Danielle Fackler
Drew Nicol
Carrie Ostman
Sean Miller
Jennifer Hilling
Kath Hanson
Hanna Coleman

Social Workers - school, family, and personal concerns, well-being, crisis assistance
Carubyn Dusch
Cristie Hummel
Carly Hultner
Ariell Schambert
Jynn Riche

Supplemental
Heidi Hunt
Jill Hunt

COVID-19 Updates

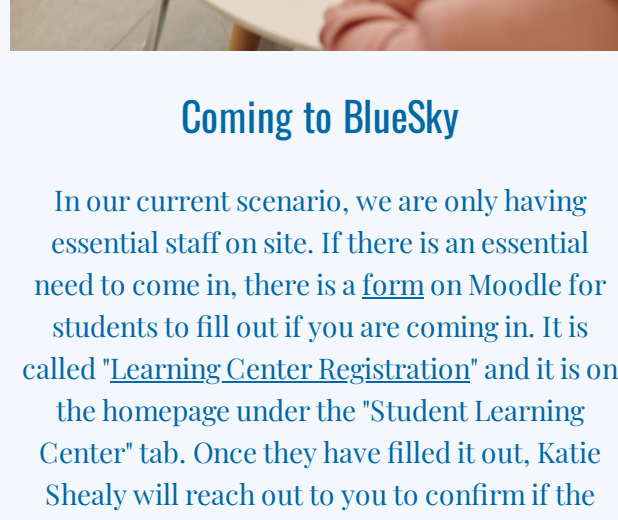


Staying Sanitary

Staying healthy and safe is our number one priority for staff, students, and parents and guardians. At the office, we are practicing social distancing and keeping surfaces and offices sanitary.

Remember to check the CDC's guidelines and Governor Walz's regulations to stay safe!

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>
<https://www.govt.com/covid-19/news/>



Coming to BlueSky

In our current scenario, we are only having essential staff on site. If there is an essential need to come in, there is a [form](#) on Moodle for students to fill out if you are coming in. It is called "Learning Center Registration" and it is on the homepage under the "Student Learning Center" tab. Once they have filled it out, Katie Shealy will reach out to you to confirm if the time and date will work. Katie will also send out a reminder of the COVID protocols and other information for the learning center.

We will be requiring masks, sign-ins, and pre-screening for symptoms for everyone's safety!

[BlueSky 2020-2021 COVID-19 Plan](#)