

May 2021 BlueSky Online Newsletter

Principal's Message

We're now in the final weeks of what has been an unprecedented school year. Although we have been a leader in online learning for over 20 years, this year has posed challenges we could have never imagined. Many of us have faced uncertainty, changing home environments, or the direct effects of COVID-19 illness ourselves. Our teachers and support staff have been going above and beyond to provide a compassionate learning environment that meets students where they are at and we will continue to do so going forward. We have also focused on supporting students' social and emotional needs throughout our curriculum and support services to assist students in developing their self-management, self-awareness, and responsible decision-making skills. As we approach the end of the school year it's important to reflect on and celebrate all that we have accomplished in the past year, even if it isn't where we thought we'd be or want to be.

This year's graduation ceremony will be on June 12, 2021. We are proud to have over 120 students earning their diplomas this year and invite everyone in the BlueSky community to attend. This year's ceremony will be streamed live in recognition of all students that graduated in the past year. Congratulations to the BlueSky class of 2021!

Please join me in celebrating the retirement of BlueSky's 10-12 Principal and Student Services Director, Renee Pancheta. She started working at BlueSky in 2006 and was instrumental in developing our student support model that has since been replicated in various forms by many other online schools across the country. Her commitment to compassionate, student centered education will continue to be a focus of our school, but would not be where it is today without her leadership and guidance. We thank her for her commitment and service to BlueSky and wish her the best in her next journey!

Did you know that many students and parents hear about BlueSky through word of mouth? If you are aware of someone who would benefit from BlueSky's supportive school environment please let them know about us and share your story. We are currently accepting enrollment applications for the 2021-2022 school year for grades 6-12.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to educate your child!



Dan Ondich
Principal & Assistant Director
651.642.2012
dan.ondich@blueskyschool.org



Featured Occupation:

Pharmacy Technician

Pharmacy Technicians work with Pharmacists to provide medication exactly as prescribed by doctors and with patients to ensure that they're taking the medications correctly and safely.

- **Median Wages:** \$30,020 per year median salary or \$14.86 per hour
- **Education:** High School Diploma and completion of a Pharmacy Technician Program
- **Growth:** Employment is projected to grow 9% by 2024

Counselor Corner

SAFE Harbor Presentations

Student Presentation: East Central Safe Harbor Regional Navigator Kate LePage and Special Agent Nick Ribba will be speaking on the issue of commercial sexual exploitation and how predators use online avenues to groom youth and young adults. We will discuss what online solicitation may look like, ways that youth can use social media safely, and steps youth can take if they are being harassed, bullied, or solicited online. This presentation is appropriate for students in grades 9-12. Originally scheduled for April 15th, this presentation has been rescheduled for Monday, May 24th at 10am. Students wishing to attend will need to fill out the [Registration Form](#), and then a link to the presentation will be emailed to you. Deadline to register is Thursday, May 20th (Parents/guardians are also welcome to attend this presentation.)

Parent Resources: The Parent presentation from Safe Harbor was held on Monday, April 12th. If you missed it but would like to learn more, you can watch the recording: [Recording of Parent Presentation](#). Here is also a resource for parents, provided by Safe Harbor: [Online Safety Guide for Parents](#).

ACT Testing

ACT Registration Information

High School Code: BlueSky Charter School 242228

- **Test Dates:** June 12, 2021 & July 17, 2021
- **Regular Deadline:** May 7, 2021 & June 8, 2021
- **Late Fee Deadline:** May 8-21, 2021 & June 19-25, 2021

Social Work Spotlight

With the end of the school year around the corner your social work team wants to encourage you to check out these tips to stay focused.

This time of year you may find yourself losing focus and motivation for school. Put your energy into what you can control and be intentional about planning time for school work.

Click here to access [Focus Tips](#)



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

Supplemental

Hello, Supplemental students and families. The end of the school year is right around the corner! Please be in tune with the end date of your course(s) on your Academic Snapshot. BlueSky's last day of school is June 12th, but for various reasons, some of you have earlier finish dates (here's lookin' at you, seniors).

Also, we are scheduling students for next year and would love to have you join us again. Just email us and let us know which course(s), and we'll get the paperwork rolling. You'll find a list of our course options on our [website](#).

Online Activities

Don't forget to tune in Thursdays at noon on Zoom for Lunch Bunch! Each week, a staff member will host a lunch-time hangout with a different theme. The Zoom link and themes will be on the BlueSky Student Google Calendar.



BlueSky Stars

BlueSky Star
Tyler Stevens



11th grader Tyler Stevens is featured as a BlueSky Star Student this month as he exemplifies the qualities of a thriving online student. Tyler consistently works hard each week on his courses and maintains positive communication with his teachers and support team. Tyler likes BlueSky for many reasons, including...being able to work at his own pace, the interaction and ease of connecting with his teachers, feeling like his teachers really care about him and his progress, and having a whole team of people rallying around him! As a student that tends to procrastinate, BlueSky helps motivate Tyler to stay on track as he can always see where he is at with his progress. Tyler often tries to work ahead during the week, so he can take a Friday off sometimes! Outside of school, Tyler loves music, playing electric guitar, PC video games, fishing, and researching historical events. He also really enjoys spending time with family and visiting historical destinations, like Boston or Washington D.C. Finally, Tyler's tips for success are to "connect with your teachers often, especially if you need help and keep up with your work." We are grateful to work with Tyler on his goals and excited to see him tackle his upcoming senior year!

-Nominated by Hanna Coleman

Shoutout to our awesome students!

I'd like to introduce 11th grader Michael Larson as a BlueSky Star Student. Michael has only been at BlueSky since January and he is already a standout. He is enrolled in difficult classes and still maintains a high quality of work. Michael communicates honestly and thoughtfully and also participates in BlueSky activities and clubs. When he is not working on his school work he spends a lot of time listening to music, playing bass guitar, and tinkering with computers. He also enjoys video games and is part of the gaming club at BlueSky. He calls the club win-win, because he gets to take a break from school work, AND it refreshes him to get back to school work. Michael says BlueSky has taught him things like electromagnetism, trigonometry and also how chords can invoke feelings. His advice for other students is, "If you are struggling with an assignment, try another subject or take a break. It has helped me to do this." I am proud of Michael and lucky to be his advisor!

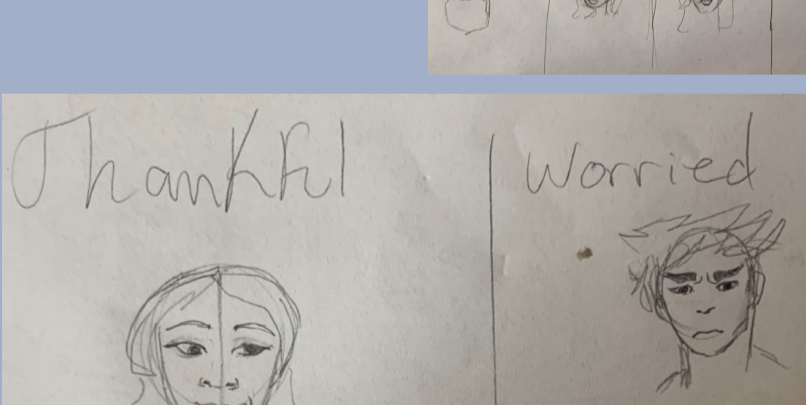
-Nominated by Kelly Hanson

BlueSky Star
Michael Larson



Student Work

These drawings were submitted by Aaris Coronado for the Work Experience Seminar course. The assignment was a soft skills activity focusing on non-verbal communication and how facial expressions can be interpreted. Students had the choice to draw, find images, or submit emblems for the various emotions.



Mark Your Calendar

- May 13-14, 2021: No school (staff only)
- May 19th: BlueSky & Baseball Class of 2021 Outing
- May 21st: Countdown to Cap & Gown Class of 2021 Virtual Party
- May 31, 2021: No school
- June 3, 2021: Last day of school
- June 12, 2021: Graduation

Check out the calendar [here!](#)

[READ MORE](#)



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 Ondich - Principal & Assistant Director
Cathy Parker - Dean of Students
Heidi van der Haven - Director of Special Education
Sara Hitz - Student Information Specialist
John Mizant - Registrar
Melissa Yane - Testing Coordinator
Sarah Miner - Admin Assistant

Counselors - scheduling and class changes

- Dawn Monague
- Grant Cameron
- Amy Chicoine
- Jennifer Anderson
- Carli Dickmann

Advisors - navigating school

- Laura Melick
- Danielle Fackler
- Dawn Nicol
- Carrie Ostman
- Sean Miller
- Jennifer Harding
- Kelly Hanson
- Hanna Coleman

Social Workers - school, family and personal concerns, well-being, crisis assistance

- Carabyn Utch
- Cassie Hammel
- Cayli Rother
- April Schamberger
- Lynn Rieche

Supplemental

- Heidi Housh
- Jill Hant

COVID-19 Updates

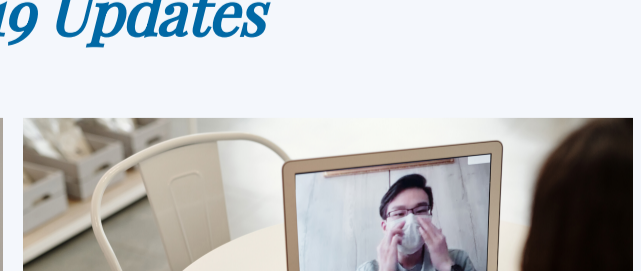


Staying Sanitary

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://mn.gov/governor/covid-19/news/>



Coming to BlueSky

There is a [form](#) on Moodle for students to fill out if you want to come 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](#)