

# March 2024 BlueSky Online Newsletter

## Principal's Message

State testing is just around the corner. All full-time students in grades 6, 7, 8, 10, and 11 are expected to participate in statewide testing. We have to testing sites across the state. Testing will take place between April 8th and April 18th with make-up days available the following week. All students will be assigned to the location closest to where they live. Please check your emails in the next 2 weeks for more information about your child's testing location and date. Let us know as soon as possible if your child cannot make it to their assigned testing location on their assigned date so we can reschedule. You can support your child by encouraging them to get a good night's sleep the night before, and eating a healthy breakfast the day of testing. If your child is taking more than one test, consider sending a lunch that they can eat during a scheduled break.

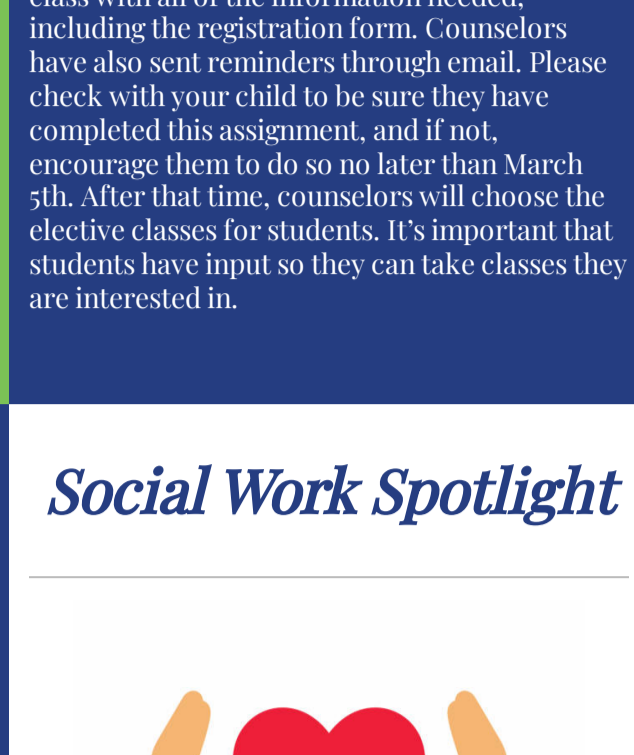
On March 21st we are looking forward to our second annual Spring Virtual Activity Day. This year we are going to focus on college and career readiness. We will be hosting a variety of career-focused activities, including over 25 guest speakers and 20 colleges and universities. Students in grades 6-8 should plan to attend three or more activities and students in grades 9-12 should plan to attend one or more activities.

We hope you are enjoying your experience with BlueSky! If you are, please make sure to share with family and friends that we are accepting 2024-25 enrollment applications. As always, thank you for allowing us to work with your student!



**Dan Ondich**  
Principal/Assistant Director  
651.642.0888  
dan.ondich@blueskyhschool.org

## Counselor Corner



**Featured Occupation: Exercise Physiologists**  
**Education Required:** Bachelor's Degree  
**Outlook:** 11.7% over 10 years  
**Median Wages:** \$62,750 per year

Exercise physiologists work to improve people's overall health. They provide health education and exercise plans to help clients improve their respiratory, circulatory, and other systems. Some physiologists work closely with primary care physicians, who may prescribe exercise regimens for their patients and refer them to exercise physiologists. The physiologists then work with these patients to develop individualized treatment plans that will help the patients meet their health and fitness goals.

**2024-25 Scheduling:** Registration for next year's classes is in progress. Each student has an assignment in the Required Career Portfolio class with all of the information needed, including the registration form. Counselors have also sent reminders through email. Please check with your child to be sure they have completed this assignment, and if not, encourage them to do so no later than March 21st. After that time, counselors will choose the elective classes for students. It's important that students have input so they can take classes they are interested in.



**Career and College Fair:**  
For the first time ever, BlueSky's Virtual Activity Day on March 21st will be a **VIRTUAL Career and Career Day!**

We have an exciting lineup of presenters, including 20+ colleges and over 25 professional speakers in various careers including respiratory therapy, HVAC installer, radio DJ, paralegal and more!!

As soon as the schedule is finalized, it will be shared in the Student Commons section of Moodle and will be emailed out to all students and their parents/guardians. If you have any questions please reach out to your BlueSky Counselor.

## Social Work Spotlight



**March is National Social Workers Month!**

The symbol for a social worker is usually the image of a heart with two hands holding it. This image also symbolizes the compassion and care that all BlueSky School Social Workers provide by collaborating to support all BlueSky students. The theme for this year's Social Work Month is "Empowering Social Workers"

All students at BlueSky have a school social worker who works with students by:

- Acting as a link between community, home, and school
- Advocating for student needs
- Making referrals to community resources
- Providing a 3-tiered system of support for students
- Connecting students to outside therapy
- Leading student Mental Health Support Groups
- Counseling individual students on 1



## BlueSky Library Bookshelf

**Hello again from the BlueSky Library Bookshelf!**

With spring break coming up at the end of March, students may want to use the time to read a book. If they don't know what title to choose, the BlueSky Library is here to help! We have a form for students to fill out. [Click here](#) to fill out this helpful tool for students to use if they don't know what to read next!

**April is National Poetry Month!** The Library Committee will be sharing ideas for how teachers of all subjects can infuse some poetry into their lessons throughout the month. Here is a [sample poem](#) from our National Poet Laureate, Ada Limón.



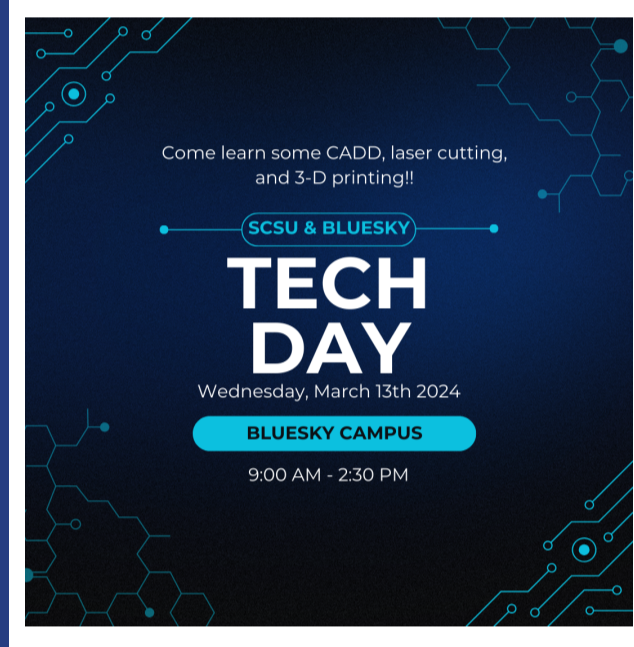
If a student would like to see a title added to the BlueSky Library, please email [librarian@blueskyhschool.org](mailto:librarian@blueskyhschool.org). Happy reading!

## Student Activities & Information



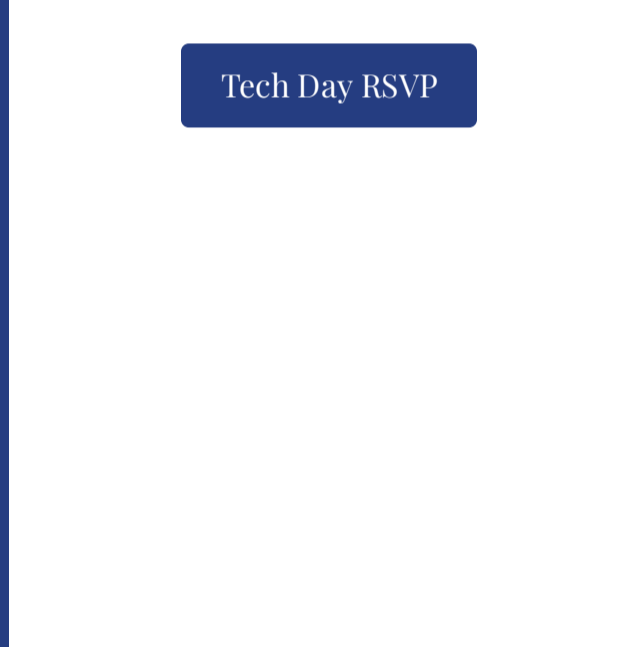
**Spring Break**  
Monday, March 25th - Friday, March 29th

Please note the BlueSky Campus office will be closed during spring break. Regular office hours will resume Monday, April 1st.



**Bluesky Esports**  
Watch Bluesky's Spring Esports matches live on [Twitch!](#)

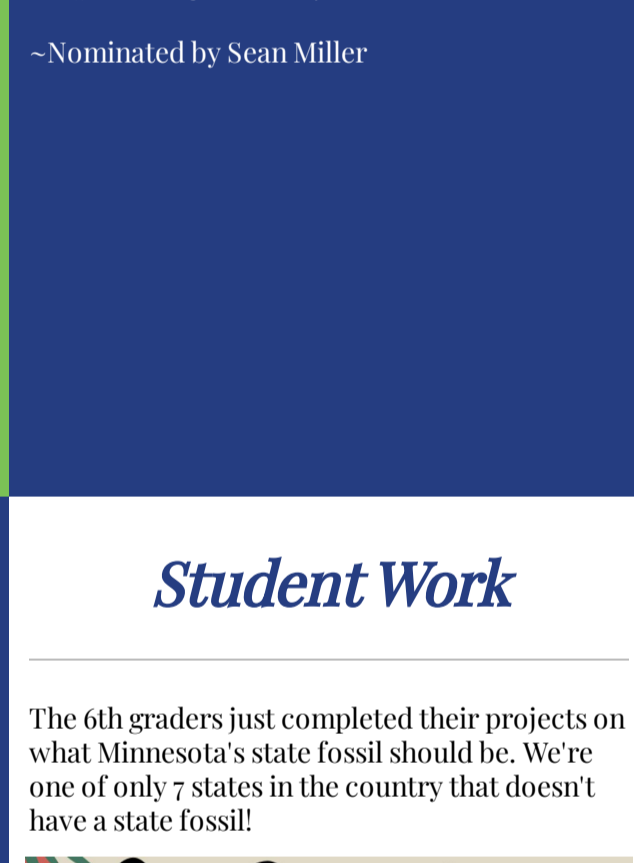
- Valorant Matches - Wednesday's at 2:00pm
- Fortnite matches - Friday's at 5:00pm



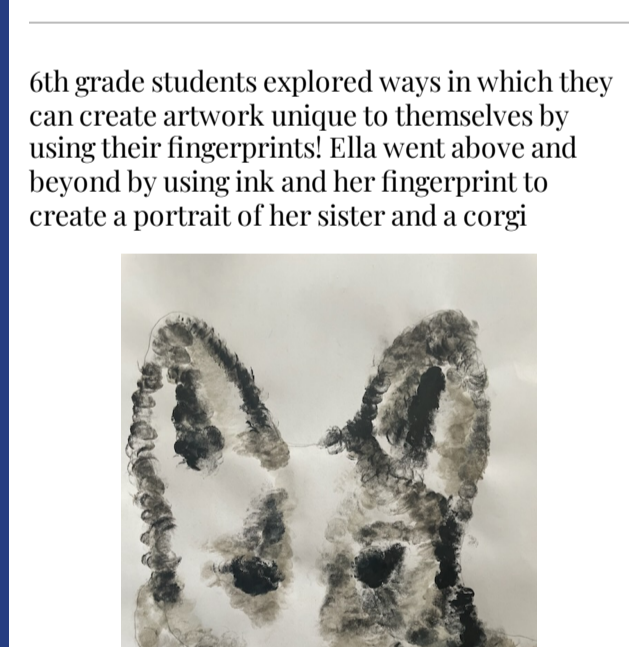
**Coming to BlueSky:**  
If there is a need to come to the BlueSky campus, please fill out the [Learning Center Registration](#) form. Once the form is filled out, someone will reach out to confirm the date, time, and other information for the learning center.



**2025 Europe trip:**  
This exciting summer adventure is for BlueSky's full-time and supplemental students, their parents -- and BlueSky alumni! A \$50 deposit reserves your spot and locks in the current price. Pricing, itinerary and enrollment information can be found [here](#). Contact [Gabria Lukin](mailto:Gabria.Lukin@blueskyhschool.org) for more information.



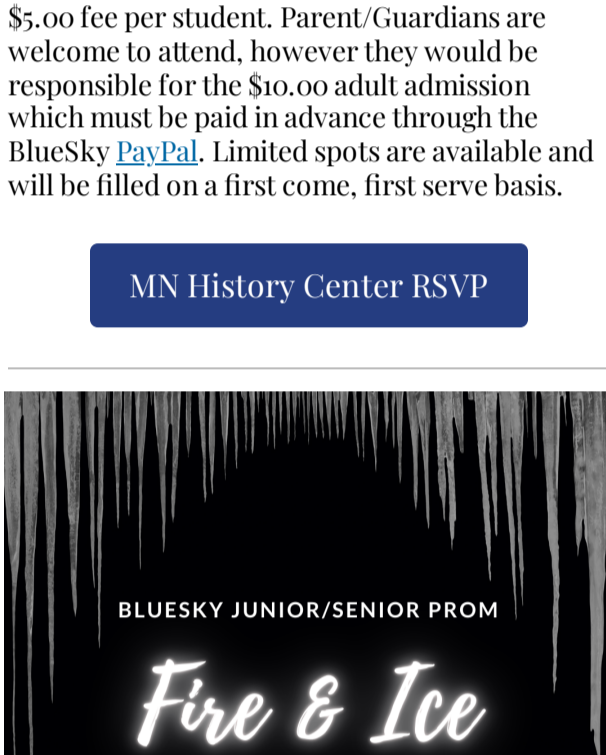
**CSCU @ BlueSky Tech Day:**  
Come join St. Cloud State University at the BlueSky Campus for an Engineering-based day on Wednesday, March 13th from 9am- 2:30pm. Students will have the opportunity to participate in a hands-on project day: learning CAD, laser cutting, and 3-D printing. Each student will have the opportunity to design a cellphone holder, ordered on a laser engraver or prototype. There is a \$5.00 student activity fee that must be paid in advance through the BlueSky Portal. Limited spots are available and will be filled on a first come, first serve basis.



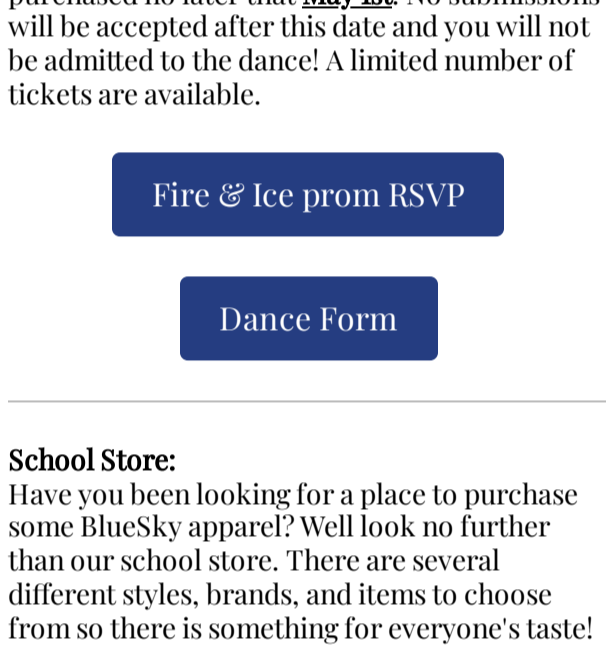
**Fire & Ice Junior/Senior Prom:**  
Join us at the BlueSky campus on Friday, May 3rd from 9pm-1am for our "Fire & Ice" Junior/Senior prom.

Tickets are \$25 per person and must be paid in advance through the BlueSky Portal. \*\*2 tickets max\*\* The [dance form](#) must be submitted prior to purchasing tickets.

The [dance form](#) must be submitted and tickets purchased no later than **May 2nd**. No submissions will be accepted after this date and you will not be admitted to the dance! A limited number of tickets are available.



**School Store:**  
Have you been looking for a place to purchase some BlueSky apparel? Well look no further than our school store. There are several different styles, brands, and items to choose from so there is something for everyone's taste!

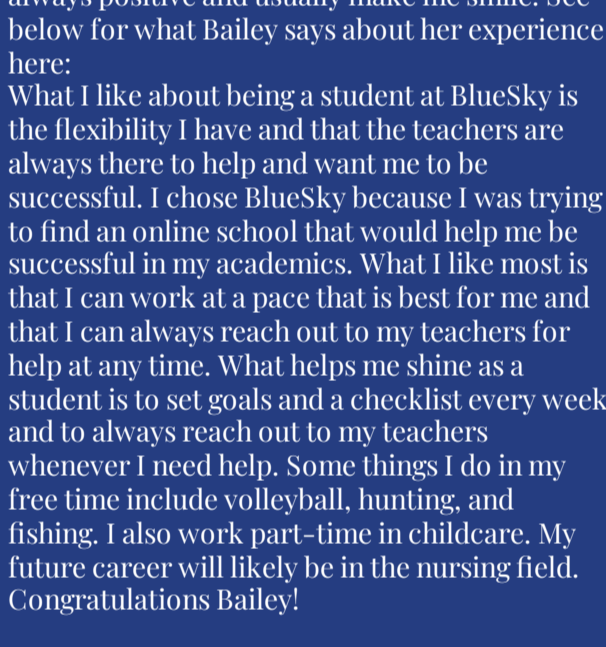


**Fire & Ice**

Join us at the BlueSky campus on Friday, May 3rd from 9pm-1am for our "Fire & Ice" Junior/Senior prom.

Tickets are \$25 per person and must be paid in advance through the BlueSky Portal. \*\*2 tickets max\*\* The [dance form](#) must be submitted prior to purchasing tickets.

The [dance form](#) must be submitted and tickets purchased no later than **May 2nd**. No submissions will be accepted after this date and you will not be admitted to the dance! A limited number of tickets are available.

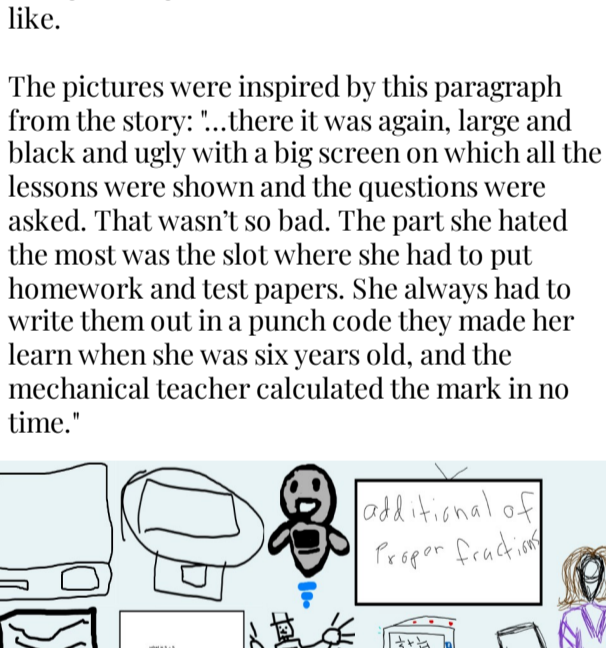


**Shoutout to our awesome students!**

Bailey Bastyr, a new 10th grade student to BlueSky this year, is featured as this month's BlueSky Star because she is a shining example of a well-rounded student. She is engaged in her schooling and works hard to stay on pace and does well in all her classes. She always enjoys her responses to my communications as they are always positive and usually make me smile. See below for what Bailey says about her experience here:

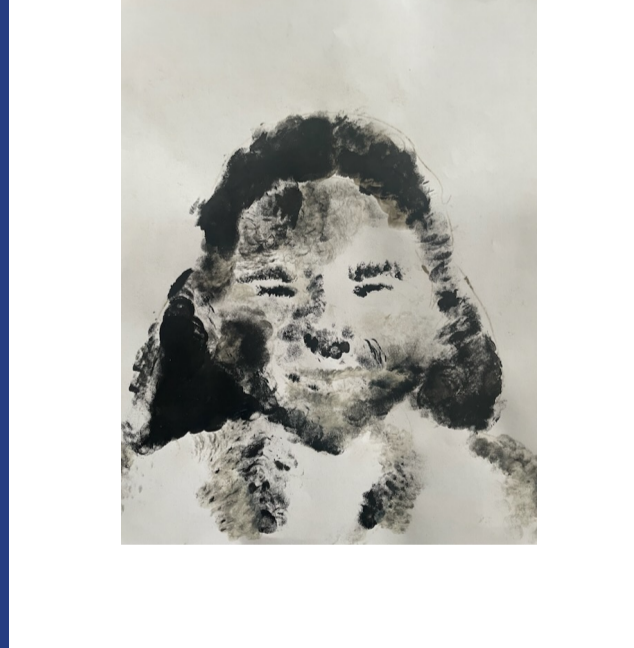
What I like about being a student at BlueSky is the flexibility I have and that the teachers are always there to help and want me to be successful. I chose BlueSky because I was trying to find a private school that would help me be successful in my academics. What I like most is that I can work at a pace that is best for me and that I can always reach out to my teachers for help at any time. What helps me the most as a student is to set goals and a checklist every week and to always reach out to my teachers when ever I need help. Some things I do in my free time include volleyball, hunting, and fishing. I also work part-time in childcare. My future career will likely be in the nursing field. Congratulations Bailey!

-Nominated by Dawn Nicol

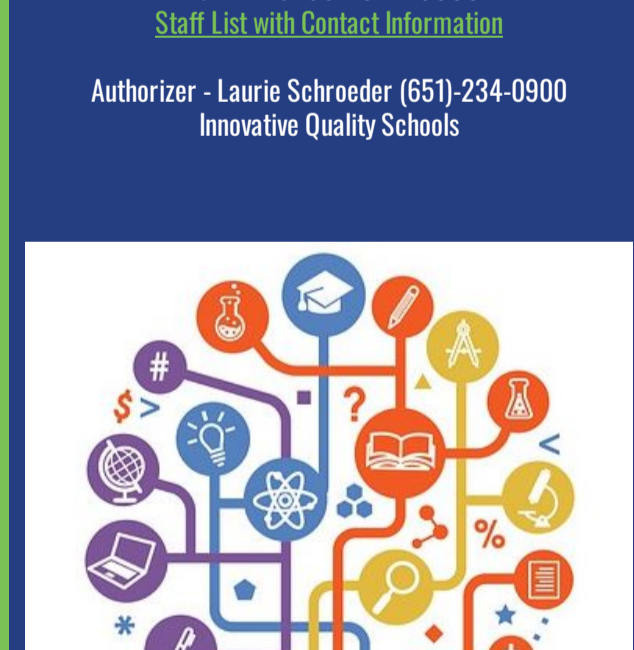


## Student Work

The 6th graders just completed their projects on what Minnesota's state fossil should be. We're one of only 7 states in the country that doesn't have a state fossil!



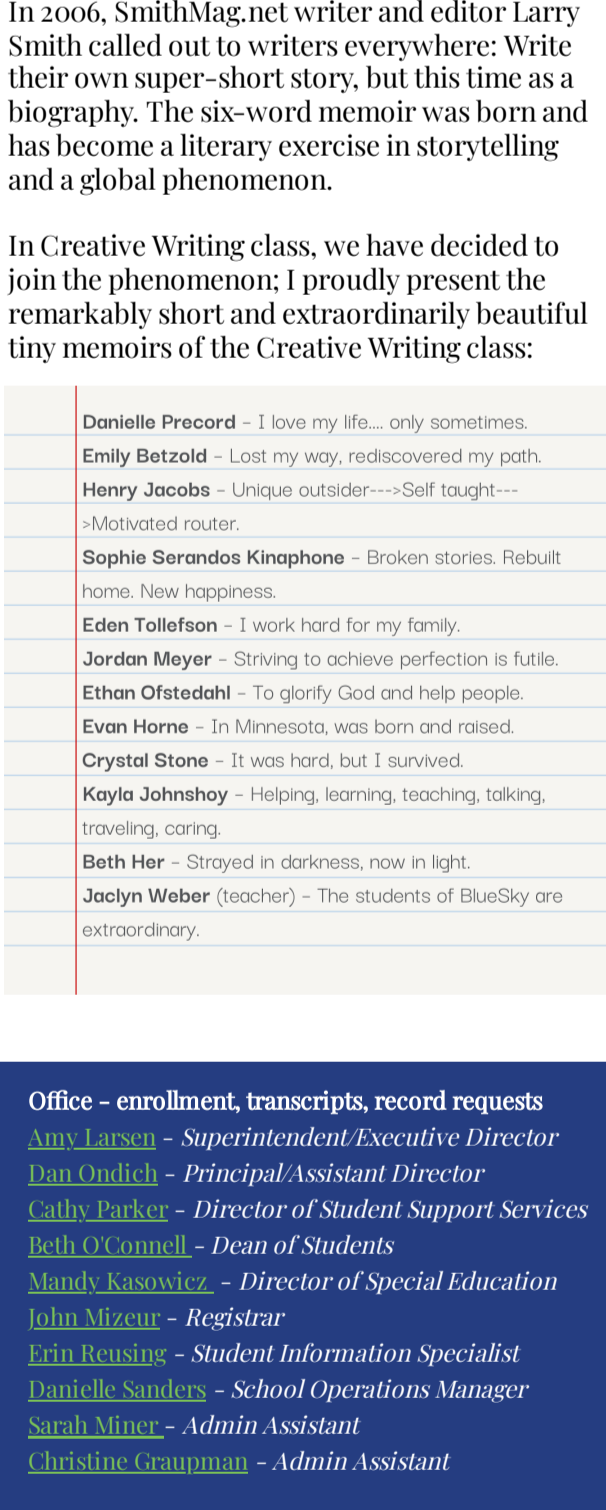
The students voted at the end of all presentations and the Ancient Bison won with 40% of votes!



6th grade students explored ways in which they can create artwork unique to themselves by using their fingerprints! Ella went above and beyond by using ink and her fingerprint to create a portrait of her sister and a cog.

Students in Language Arts 7 read a short story by Isaac Asimov called, "The Fun They Had".

The story is set in the year 2155, and it's obvious school has changed a bit. After reading the story, students drew pictures in Moodle of what they thought Margie's mechanical teacher looked like.



The pictures were inspired by this paragraph from the story "...there it was again, large and black and ugly with a big screen on which all the lessons were shown and the questions were asked. That wasn't so bad. The part she hated the most was the slot where she had to put homework and test papers. She always had to write them out in a punch code they made her learn when she was six years old, and the mechanical teacher calculated the mark in no time."

In 2006, Smithsonian writer and editor Larry Smith called out to writers everywhere: Write their own super-short story, but this time as a biography. The six-word memoir was born and has become a literary exercise in storytelling and a global phenomenon.

In Creative Writing class, we have decided to join the phenomenon! I proudly present the remarkably short and extraordinarily beautiful tiny memoirs of the Creative Writing class:

- **Danielle Prosser** - I see my life... only sometimes.
- **Emily Bateman** - Last my solo, rediscovered my path.
- **Henry Jensen** - I miss my dad - Jeff taught me.
- **Minotaur** - I'm not a monster.
- **Stephanie Sarantou-Kinghorse** - Broken stories, broken hearts.
- **Kevin** - I see happiness.
- **Eden Tolstoun** - I work hard for my family.
- **Jordan Meyer** - Striving to achieve perfection in life.
- **Oliver Christensen** - To gently care and help people.
- **Evan Horne** - In Minnesota, we're born and raised.
- **Cyrilene Stone** - It was hard, but I survived.
- **Keaton Lawton** - Helping, learning, teaching, talking.
- **Travis** - coming.
- **Beth Her** - Strayed in darkness, now in light.
- **Shayne Walker** - "Astronomy" - The students of BlueSky are extraordinary.

## Resources

Contact Information for Questions and Resources  
Main Line: 651-642-0888  
Start List with Contact Information

Authorizer - Laurie Schroeder (651) 234-0900  
Innovative Quality Schools



**Office - enrollment, transcripts, record requests**  
**Amy Jantz** - Superintendent/Executive Director  
**John Duda** - Principal/Assistant Director  
**Julia Duda** - Director of Student Support Services  
**Michelle Lantz** - Parent of Students  
**Maia Kautzke** - Director of Special Education  
**Edna Muzzu** - Reception  
**John Muzzu** - Student Information Specialist  
**Danielle Sanders** - School Operations Manager  
**Samir Muzic** - Admin Assistant  
**Christina Schramm** - Admin Assistant

**Counselors - scheduling and class changes**  
**Erin Mendenhall**  
**Erin Lantz**  
**Erin Lantz**  
**Amy C. Hocking**  
**Erin Mendenhall**  
**Erin Mendenhall**  
**Erin Mendenhall**

**Advisors - navigating school**  
**Erin Mendenhall**  
**Danielle Sanders**  
**Danielle Sanders**  
**Erin Mendenhall**  
**Erin Mendenhall**  
**Erin Mendenhall**

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

**Supplemental - Students taking up to 50% of their courses at BlueSky**  
**Erin Mendenhall**  
**Erin Mendenhall**

## MCA Testing

We are quickly approaching Minnesota's annual testing window for the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs). Testing will take place between April 8th-26th at sites across Minnesota. If additional testing is needed, makeup sessions will be scheduled at our Bloomington, MN campus between April 22nd- April 23th.

Your students testing site information will be emailed and mailed by the second week of March. If for any reasons you cannot test at your originally assigned location, please reach out to [rschell@blueskyhschool.org](#).

**Scheduling MCA Testing**

The following is grade level specific information:

- Students in the **6th & 7th grade** take reading and math. Both reading and math tests can be completed in one day. Students wishing to complete testing in two days should reach out to [Danielle Sanders](mailto:Danielle.Sanders@blueskyhschool.org) no later than a week prior to the testing date.
- Students in the **8th grade** take reading, math and science and are recommended to test over two days but can be completed in one day. Students wishing to complete testing in one day should reach out to [Danielle Sanders](mailto:Danielle.Sanders@blueskyhschool.org) no later than a week prior to the testing date.
- Students in the **10th grade**, one day of testing for reading test. Students currently enrolled in Biology II will also need to take the science test. Both reading and science tests can be completed in one day.
- Students in the **11th grade**, one day of testing for their math test. Students currently enrolled in Biology II will also need to take the science test. Both math and science tests can be completed in one day.

**Testing Dates & Locations**

Please bring the following items with you:

- Headphones (can be used for Math and Science tests)
- Calculator (**11th grade students only**)
- Pencils
- A snack, if you would like (must be consumed outside of test room)

You will receive attendance credit for testing. Please remember you are still responsible for keeping up with your classwork for the week and maintaining your proper number of assignments.

Cell phones are not allowed in the testing center. You may bring your phone with you, but you will be required to leave it on silent. We reserve the right to prohibit that you give your phone to the proctor upon arrival. It will be returned to you when you complete testing.

As of right now, the United States Department of Education is requiring states to proctor state testing. BlueSky strongly encourages your child's participation for this test but recognizes that each family will need to make the decision to test at a personal level. Before making a decision on if your child will be participating in the MCAs, please consider the following:

- The results from these tests provide detailed information to your child's teachers that helps guide instruction and improve your child's learning. Teachers and support staff frequently use assessment data to make informed decisions about how best to meet individual student needs; not participating in statewide testing limits the academic information available.
- The results also provide you with information on your student's growth and progress. Test scores are a good indicator of your child's College and Career Readiness. Recent legislation also requires Minnesota State Colleges and Universities to utilize MCA reading and mathematics scores as a factor in determining course enrollment. This means your student could bypass course placement testing when registering for classes. Eighth grade students may not be eligible to participate in Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PEOs) in 10th grade if they do not take the MCAs.
- Assessment scores are used by our authorizer and the State in determining the effectiveness of our programs. When students don't participate in state testing our results may become invalid due to low overall participation or district wide results that do not accurately reflect BlueSky's student body. Students that don't participate are scored as not proficient, having a significant negative impact on BlueSky's performance measures. This can potentially impact our ability to meet established school goals and result in our school not meeting contractual obligations with our school authorizer.

Please contact [Danielle Sanders](mailto:Danielle.Sanders@blueskyhschool.org) if you have any questions.

