



## Menahga Principal's Board Report

Lisa Parrish, Michelle Koch, John Hedstrom  
November, 2025

### CELEBRATIONS:



October flew by with fun and meaningful activities, including fall classroom parties and our 5th grade Cardboard Challenge. November continued at a fast pace with fall conferences and our Veterans Day program. We were truly honored to take part in this special event, with our elementary students serving as flag carriers and showcasing their artwork throughout the school to express our patriotism and gratitude for those who have served and continue to serve our country.

**Pictured: Mrs. Novak's Class Winning the Golden Tray Elementary Update:**

Fall conferences took place earlier this month, and we were pleased with the strong family turnout. The Elementary staff had some great turnout, and enjoyed sharing updates on student progress over the first quarter of the school year. We are grateful for the ongoing partnerships with our families, which help make our school a safe, engaging, and joyful place for learning.

November continues to be an exciting and action-packed month. Elementary students were invited to take part in Career Pathways learning opportunities during the High School's special week, November 17th-21st. Classroom teachers were given the chance to sign up for a variety of events designed to spark curiosity and help students begin thinking about their future interests and possibilities. In addition, our elementary students will have the opportunity to participate in an Engineering Challenge focused on airplane construction, where they explore concepts such as lift, thrust, drag, and gravity through hands-on learning. We are excited to expand and offer new opportunities to bring the important work from the high school down to our younger Menahga students.



**Having fun on Halloween**



Elementary hallways were adorned with decorations celebrating the season and recognizing the service of our Veterans this month. We continued with the long-standing tradition of our students being flag carriers. We also added the fifth grade choir contributing the our Veteran’s Day community program, and is was a wonderful addition.



**Left: Our fifth grade students performing at the Veteran’s Day program under the direction of Mrs. Carney.**

**Below: Flag carriers, and a packed red, white and blue audience.**



**High School Update:**

**Menahga National Honor Society 2025 Induction Ceremony**





CONGRATULATIONS to our newest members of the National Honor Society! Addison Aho, Anaya Aho, Claudia Aho, Steven Bidlow, Melodie Dillon, Connor Foley, Christina Hofer, Fordyce Johnson, Sophie Johnson, Macie Josephson, Claire Kapphahn, Corynn Parrish, Juliet Schilling, and Matthew Treinen.

We are incredibly proud of our inductees and current members; Olivia Aho, Yana Aho, Alexis Davidson, Kyah Jantz, Ethan Lake, Alan Skare, Mitchell Weaver, and Skye Wofford.

### **Veterans Day Program Reflection**

Our Veterans Day program was a truly meaningful event, and I want to thank everyone who helped make it happen. Staff who planned and participated put great care into the program, and it showed. Their work created a respectful and heartfelt tribute to our veterans.

I also want to recognize our students. Their behavior during the program was outstanding. They were attentive, respectful, and truly showed that they understood the importance of the day.

Thank you to all who contributed. It was a special moment for our school community, and I'm grateful for the efforts and respect shown by everyone involved.



### **High School Conferences Reflection – November 13**

Our conferences on November 13 went very well. Our 7th and 8th grade teachers had a strong turnout, averaging about 50 visits each. Attendance for grades 9-12 was lighter, but the conversations we did have were positive and meaningful.

Overall, it was a great day of supporting our students and families, and I'm grateful to our staff for their time and care.

### **AI Training Reflection – November 14**

Our AI training with William Grube on November 14 was a valuable and energizing learning experience for our staff. William provided practical strategies, clear examples, and hands-on guidance that helped us better understand how AI can support our daily work, streamline tasks, and enhance learning for students.

The session was engaging, approachable, and focused on tools we can use right away.

We are grateful for William's expertise and for the openness and curiosity our team brought to the training. Our focus was on ChatGTP and Magic School. This session was a strong step forward in helping us use AI responsibly and effectively in our school.



### **Career Pathways Week Nov. 17-21**

Thank you to our Career Pathways team for all their hard work and planning for our 2025 Career Pathway week and activities! 🇺🇸 National College & Career Week

**Monday (11-17)** - College and Military

**Tuesday (11-18)** - Engineering, Arts, and Trade

**Wednesday (11-19)** - Healthcare

**Thursday (11-20)** - Ag, Food, and Natural Resources

**Friday (11-21)** - Business and Technology (School Store)

### **Second Semester Planning**

We are actively working on getting the 2nd semester ready to roll. This process includes reviewing student interest inventories, SchoolLinks data, and staff surveys to ensure we are aligning student needs and preferences with our strategic plan and our CTE goals. Our aim is to build a schedule that supports meaningful pathways, meets student demand, and strengthens our overall academic program.

### **AVID Goal Reflection: Organizational and Study Skills**

Our AVID team met with Susan from Sourcewell to review our current goal on strengthening organizational and study skills for our 7th- and 8th-grade and 9-12th AVID Elective students. By using binders, focused note-taking strategies, and calendars, we are working to help students develop habits that support their academic success across all classes.

The intended student outcome is for students to become more independent, organized, and confident in managing their schoolwork. We want them to not only keep track of assignments and materials, but also to understand *how* to study and engage with learning in a more purposeful way.

We are working on collecting data through surveys and work samples.

## **Advisory Hour**

On Tuesday, November 25, we will hold our second Advisory Hour (during 3rd hour). Teachers will use this time to review school-wide expectations, guide students through SchoolLinks activities, and continue with Brave Connections – our program designed to support student well-being and strengthen emotional intelligence skills.

## **The Thankful Season**

Looking ahead, our Student Council will be hosting **“The Great Gratitude Week” from November 24–26**, featuring fun activities to celebrate thankfulness throughout the school. They are also planning an Activity Day for the 26th.

- **Important Dates:**

- a. Nov. 17–21st- Career Pathways Week
- b. Nov. 21st- Substitute Educator’s Day
- c. Nov. 26th- Early Release at 12:30PM
- d. Nov. 27th, 28th- No School, Happy Thanksgiving
- e. Dec. 2nd- Special Education Day
- f. Dec. 16th- High School Band/ Choir Concert, 6:30PM High School Gym
- g. Dec. 18th- Elementary Christmas Concert, 6:00PM High School Gym
- h. Dec. 23rd- Early Release at 12:30PM
- i. Dec. 24th–Jan. 2nd- Winter Break

## **Menahga Principal Goals for 2025–2026**

**In alignment with the District Strategic Plan, we would like to collectively propose the following goals for the 2025–2026 school year.**

### **Goal 1: Strengthen Literacy and Academic Achievement**

**Ensure all students achieve at high levels by implementing evidence-based reading instruction aligned with the Minnesota READ Act, closing racial and economic achievement gaps, and building staff capacity in differentiated instruction to support the diverse needs of learners.**

- **Academic interventions currently happening in K-12**
- **Walk throughs happening in all classrooms**
- **Lisa Parrish and Andria Bristow are attending monthly Literacy Meetings at Sourcewell and communication updates to shape future planning for Menahga Public Schools**
- **Capti Training is scheduled for literacy teachers in 4th–12th grade on January 19th, 2026**



## **Goal 2: Expand Career Pathways and Authentic Learning Opportunities**

*Increase student engagement and readiness for college, career, and life by developing cross-curricular, career-connected learning experiences; expanding community and business partnerships; and providing authentic, hands-on opportunities such as senior capstone projects and internships.*

- *The Committee met and planned accordingly for further advancement*
- *Expansion through “Career Play” in Kindergarten*
- *Expansion of Entrepreneurship in 5th Grade- Coffee Shop*
- *Career Pathways Week in November, including Elementary*
- *2025-2026 Career Pathways Committee Training scheduled with Sourcewell*

## **Goal 3: Support the Whole Child and Invest in Staff Development**

*Provide comprehensive supports that meet the academic, social, emotional, and behavioral needs of all students, while ensuring every student has a positive connection with a caring adult. Strengthen staff recruitment, professional development, and training—including emerging tools such as AI—to sustain a future-focused and supportive learning environment.*

- *New staff taking part in Sourcewell’s New Teacher Academy, moved to MPS*
- *New staff taking part in Mentorship with Kerry White*
- *AI Training for PreK-12 certified staff on November 14th*
- *Capti Training is scheduled for literacy teachers in 4th-12th grade on January 19th, 2026*
- *Data meetings and coaching cycles being implemented with Teaching and Learning Coordinator*
- *Monitoring of ADSIS interventions in K-12*
- *ACT testing coordination in process for grades 11 and 12*

## **Menahga School District Enrollment**

<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Sept.</b>	<b>Oct.</b>	<b>Nov.</b>	<b>Dec.</b>	<b>Jan.</b>	<b>March</b>	<b>April</b>	<b>May</b>	
<b>PreK</b>	41	41	39						
<b>K</b>	85	85	84						
<b>1</b>	62	61	60						
<b>2</b>	73	73	73						
<b>3</b>	74	73	73						
<b>4</b>	82	81	81						
<b>5</b>	67	65	65						
<b>6</b>	76	75	75						
<b>7</b>	77	75	74						
<b>8</b>	80	79	79						
<b>9</b>	76	76	75						
<b>10</b>	93	92	92						
<b>11</b>	70	65	65						
<b>12</b>	73	72	72						
<b>Total</b>	1029	1013	1007						
<b>OpenEd</b>			131						
<b>Total</b>			1138						

**\*Pre K numbers not included in total**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Lisa Parrish and Michelle Koch**