

FALCONER NEWS

www.allendale.k12.mi.us

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

****Please continue to check our website for the most up-to-date information on events taking place****

May 1 High School Art Show, 5:30 PM – 6:30 PM, Ceglarek Fine Arts Center
 May 1 High School Collage, 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM, Ceglarek Fine Arts Center
 May 2 High School Collage, 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM, Ceglarek Fine Arts Center
 May 3 No School Young Five – 12th Grade
 May 10 Dental Smile Program, Allendale Public Schools
 May 13 Board of Education Regular Meeting, 6:00 PM, Oakwood Board Room
 May 13 Middle School Choir Concert, 7:00 PM, Ceglarek Fine Arts Center
 May 13 Middle School Art Show, 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM, Ceglarek Fine Arts Center
 May 16 Middle School Band Concert, 7:00 PM, Ceglarek Fine Arts Center
 May 16 Middle School Art Show, 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM, Ceglarek Fine Arts Center
 May 17 8th Grade Award Ceremony, 6:00 PM, Ceglarek Fine Arts Center
 May 17 Middle School Art Show, 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM, Ceglarek Fine Arts Center
 May 22 Early Childhood Center Art Show, 5:30 PM – 7:00 PM, Early Childhood Center
 May 23 High School Graduation, 7:00 PM, Allendale High School
 May 27 Memorial Day, No School Young 5 – 12th Grade

A Paw-sitive Note to Our Pet Owners!

As Allendale Public Schools' campus buzzes with activity, many in our community enjoy bringing their furry friends along for some outdoor fun. Our school grounds serve as a vibrant hub for both organized and spontaneous activities, fostering a great environment for everyone.

We kindly ask all dog owners to help us maintain a clean and safe environment by picking up after your pets. This is especially important at the AECC and our youth soccer fields, where our youngest students play during recess and on weekends.

Unfortunately we've had instances where children have encountered left-behind dog waste, which is not only unsanitary but also disrupts their ability to enjoy their playtime. Please ensure that you bring the necessary supplies to clean up after your pet so that our fields and play areas remain welcoming and clean for everyone. Let's work together to keep our campus pristine and enjoyable!

Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.



Oakwood happenings

Reading, Reading and More Reading

March is always a favorite month of the year because of the EXTRA focus on READING! Our Elementary PTO sponsors a reADing Fundraiser, there are various reading challenges throughout the month, mystery readers come into classrooms, and so much more! A group of students (top left picture) read over 750 minutes in the first three weeks of the month and earned some extra time in the gym with Mr. Rytlewski. Enjoy a few pictures from our March reading events.

Author Dana VanderLugt shared with our 5th grade students a book that she wrote titled, *Enemies in the Orchard*. The book was written about a group of German and Italian prisoners of war that work on an apple farm near Allegan, MI. Dana has personal family connections to the orchard and shared her experience about writing the book and the story itself. Several students also walked away with signed copies of the book.

A special congratulations to Alaina Vankoevering for being drawn as the winner of a Nintendo Switch, donated by our PTO, for her participation in the reading and fundraising activities. Many students earned fabulous prizes for all their hard work during the month.



Oakwood happenings

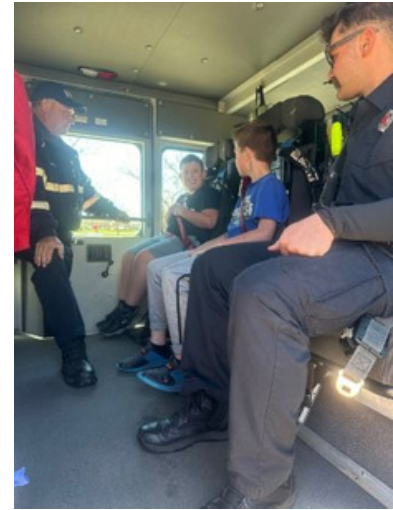
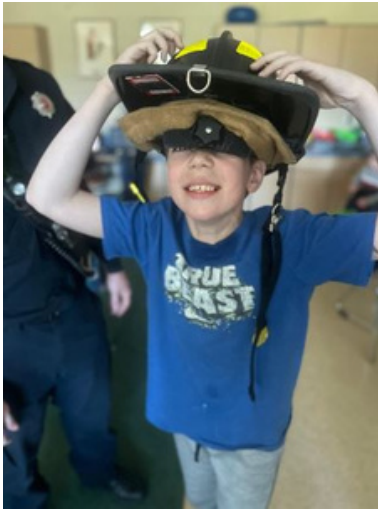
Solar Eclipse Seen By All Oakwood Classes

What a treat it was for all Oakwood students to have had the opportunity to view the Solar Eclipse, with the help of special safety glasses designed specifically for viewing purposes. What a great experience that many of the Oakwood students and staff may never see again in their lifetime. There sure was a lot of energy and excitement in the building on April 8, 2024. Even some of the APS bus drivers got in on the fun!



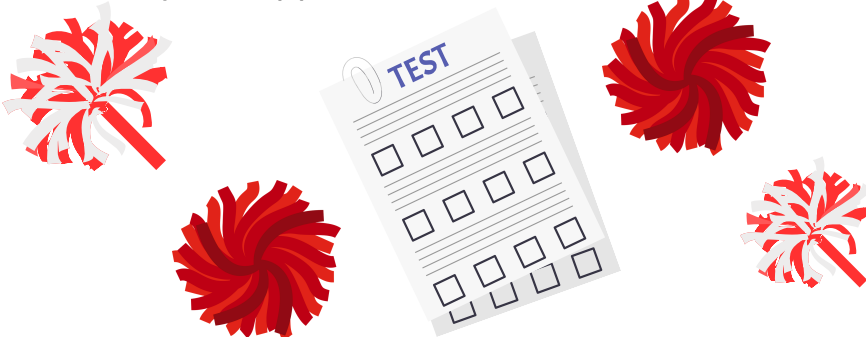
Allendale Fire Department Visits Oakwood

The Allendale Fire Department came to visit Mrs. Feenstra's class last month - and they brought a truck! The students were so excited to see them. They were able to check out all the equipment, talk to the firemen and even sit in the driver seat.



Mr. Bones - Oakwood's Biggest Cheerleader

On the morning of the first day of M-STEP testing for Oakwood's 5th graders, Mr. Bones made an appearance to encourage and cheer on all the students. We couldn't agree more - Oakwood students ARE 'smart cookies'! Thanks for your support, Mr. Bones.



Allendale Middle School and High School happenings

Allendale Middle School Robotics continues their tradition of outstanding teams! This year 2 teams were invited to the C.R.E.A.T.E tournament in Iowa. Those 2 teams also qualified for the World Championship in Texas! The middle school students going to Iowa and Texas to compete are Grady Wynsma, Jonathan Dowd, Isaac Busman, and Gabriel Wiggins. Congratulations! We are very proud of you!

Allendale Fishing club has been together for 3 years now! What once started out as a few kids just meeting up and talking about techniques and lures, has developed into a entire fishing team. There are 35 kids total in the club currently. 11 High school fishing teams and 4 Middle school teams. These kids all have a love and passion for the outdoors and Matt Reagan has created a place for them to enjoy just that. The Allendale Fishing club is currently fishing in a 3 series tournament, and just came from a 3rd place finish at Gun Lake! We can't wait to see what the future holds for this club as they gain knowledge and confidence in doing what they love.



Allendale High School happenings

Several **Allendale High School** art students were selected to participate in Debut 2024, a prestigious art show in Holland. It was a huge accomplishment to be chosen for the show and to add to that, AHS student, Paige Kirby, was awarded Honorable Mention for her painting Grand Marais! Congratulations to each of our Allendale High School Artists, as well as Mrs. Overmeyer, for inspiring our students to create and share such beautiful artwork!



Allendale High School happenings continued

WELCOME NEW GIRLS VARSITY BASKETBALL COACH MELANIE ADEMA



My name is Melanie Adema, and I am so thankful and excited for the opportunity to be the head coach of the girls' basketball program! This is my 5th year here at Allendale where I teach Middle School Social Studies and coaching high school girls' basketball as a varsity assistant and head JV coach, as well as one of the coaches for our high school track teams. I am beyond thrilled to continue coaching the girls in this program and representing Allendale Public Schools!



First responder (Fire/EMS training) in action! Senior, AHS student pictured here, practicing the skills she has learned this year in her classes at the Careerline Tech Center! So cool to see these kids learning such life saving, career ready skills!



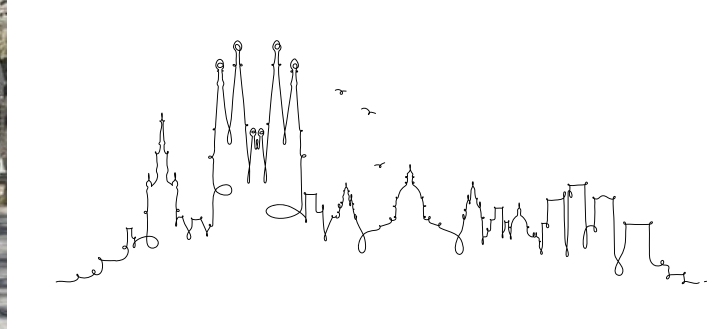
AHS Senior pictured here, training for a real-life, MVA extraction scenario.



While a group of our High School students were in Spain and attending the school there, our students put together presentations to share with the Spanish students about the US, Michigan, Allendale and AHS. Senior Liam Reynolds included the P.R.I.D.E. matrix in his presentation about AHS, explained how we use it at AHS, and how following it helps us be successful!

Allendale High School happenings continued

Spain trip, 2024! What a great experience this was! AHS took an outstanding group of students to Spain to learn more about their culture, experience what their schools are like, and share a little about our culture and schools as well! This trip was a great success, and we thank Mrs. Culp and Mrs. Sult for organizing and leading this trip!





MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH- MAY

THE IMPORTANCE OF PHYSICAL HEALTH FOR BETTER MENTAL HEALTH

APS will be celebrating Mental Health Awareness month by creating awareness around developing healthy physical habits to maintain a healthy mind. Every Wednesday in the month of May, join us in **wearing green or you "Be Kind to Your Mind" shirts** as well as creating opportunities for staff and students to dive deeper into the following themes:

May
1st

MOVEMENT/ EXERCISE

Exercise improves mental health by reducing anxiety, depression, and negative mood and by improving self-esteem and cognitive function. Exercise has also been found to alleviate symptoms such as low self-esteem and social withdrawal.

[Exercise Video](#)

May
8th

GETTING GOOD SLEEP

If you're sleep deficient, you may have trouble making decisions, solving problems, controlling your emotions and behavior, and coping with change. Sleep deficiency has also been linked to depression, suicide, and risk-taking behavior.

[Good Sleep Video](#)

May
15th

NUTRITION & EATING HEALTHY

What we're not always told is that good nutrition significantly affects our mental health, too. A healthy, well-balanced diet can help us think clearly and feel more alert. It can also improve concentration and attention span.

[Healthy Eating Video](#)

May
22nd

TIME OUTSIDE

Staff enjoy our annual "Sunshine Cart"

Nature can help decrease your anxiety levels and can help lessen stress and feelings of anger. Exercise can also help this, but it's even better when you're outside. Regular access to green spaces has been linked to lower risks of depression and improved concentration and attention.

[Getting Outside Video](#)

May
29th

HYGIENE

Good hygiene can make you feel better about yourself, improve your school life, and make you more confident and approachable in social settings. The effects go beyond physical health and socializing. Poor hygiene can cause depression or anxiety problems and make a person isolate themselves.

[Hygiene Video](#)



APS MENTAL HEALTH COMMITTEE

12th Annual

FALCON OPEN

AT

TERRA VERDE GOLF COURSE

FRIDAY, JUNE 14, 2024

9 AM - SHOTGUN START

LUNCH TO FOLLOW

COST IS \$125/GOLFER, \$500/4-PERSON TEAM AND INCLUDES GREENS FEES, CART, DRIVING RANGE, LUNCH & PRIZES

Sponsorship & Registration Forms Available at:

<https://www.allendale.k12.mi.us/district/aps-foundation/thefalconopen/>



The golf outing raises funds for the APS Foundation which has supported school programs & scholarships since 2005

APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

Special Education



Bethany Kuyper

Special Education Teacher, SXI Program

- Ms. Kuyper has been with APS 6 years.
- Ms. Kuyper is an excellent teacher. She has a lot of knowledge, creativity, and dedication to supporting students in the best way possible. Ms. Kuyper ensures that each day is engaging and students are involved in meaningful learning opportunities. She also promotes inclusion at school and in the community. Ms. Kuyper is a great co-worker. She works very well with other staff who provide services in her classroom, and she is highly respected. We are very fortunate to have her on our team!
- Ms. Kuyper's has been teaching for 12 years. She has taught in general education, resource room, self contained cross categorical and now SXI. She has a masters in ESL and is working on a grad degree in Visual Impairments. She has two kids Neriah (10) and Braylon (5) and a dog. Outside of school she likes to travel, run, and camp with her family. They love to visit National Parks.

APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

Special Education



Amber Brower and Jessica Janiszewski

Evergreen Paraprofessionals

- Jessica and Amber work hard each day to support students and staff at Evergreen Elementary. They are positive, caring, and do a great job promoting independence in the students they work with. They are both problem solvers and work well with other staff members. They are also dedicated to the students they work with and ensure that they meet their potential. We are very lucky to have both Amber and Jessica at Evergreen.
- Mrs. Brower has been with APS 10 years.
- Mrs. Brower and her husband, Robb, have 2 children. Hunter, a 9th grader, and Rachel, a 4th grader. The most important things to Mrs. Brower are faith and family. Her family teaches a Sunday school class at church and they are involved in other youth ministries. Mrs. Brower and Hunter share a love for music. Mrs. Brower achieved a goal of coaching alongside her older brother this past season. She coached Rachel's 3rd and 4th grade girls basketball team. They love hiking, kayaking, hunting and fishing. She also enjoys reading, crafting, gardening and camping with her family and extended family on their land in Big Rapids.
- Mrs. Janiszewski has been with APS 4 years.
- Mrs. Janiszewski worked as a lunch aide her first year and for the last 3 years she has worked as a Special Ed Paraprofessional. Mrs. Janiszewski and her husband, Adam, have 2 boys - Landon, a 7th grader, and Bennett, a 4th grader. They are a sports loving family, which keeps them very busy in the Spring and Fall seasons. They also enjoy spending summer days at their little place in Sandy Pines. She loves cooking/baking, painting, hiking, kayaking and traveling with her family.

APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

Special Education

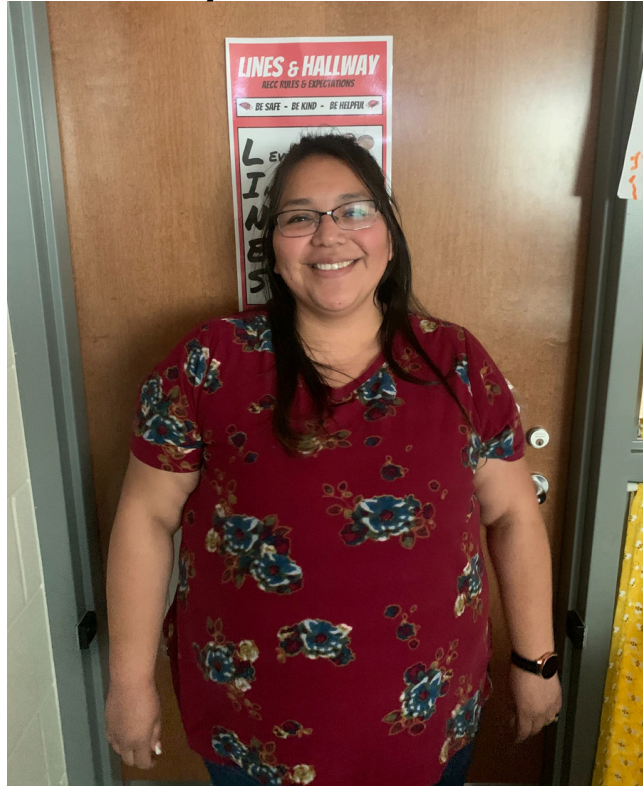


Alexa Buckland, Emily Karchon, Maria Fenicle, Ashley Suchecki
Speech and Language Pathologists

- Our speech and language pathologist team is incredible. One of the other members of the team, Kellie Vaughn, was nominated previously this year for the Falconer. Their team has done a remarkable job providing services to students, supporting classrooms, and collaborating with other school staff. They are excellent to work with and their team is greatly appreciated for their insight, willingness to work together, and for improving practices across the district. They are an awesome team!
- Ms. Buckland has been with APS for 3 years.
- She loves to travel to new places. So far, she has been to 37 states and nine countries and plans to travel to Alaska this summer!
- Mrs. Karchon has been with APS for 3 years.
- When not at work Mrs. Karchon spends her time with family. She has two children, Mia (9) and Drew (6) and two crazy dogs! She enjoys playing and watching soccer and traveling to new states. If she wasn't a speech pathologist, she would own a dog and goat sanctuary!
- Ms. Suchecki has been with APS 2 years.
- This has been the best experience with the whole ancillary team! She could not have imagined a more supportive speech team and ancillary team :)
- Ms. Fenicle has been with APS for 1 year.
- She is so happy to be a part of this team! She enjoys playing pickleball and is certified to teach dance fitness.

APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

Early Childhood Center



Brenda Chavez

GSRP Lead Teacher

- Mrs. Chavez has been with APS 5 years.
- Mrs. Chavez is a dedicated member of our preschool team. Mrs. Chavez started in APS as a GSRP Associate Teacher, but has worked hard and now is a GSRP Lead Teacher in our preschool program. Mrs. Chavez does a great job with building relationship with her students and families, and she also gets her students to fall in love with learning, as this is often their first school experience. Even when there might be some unexpected behaviors inside her classroom, Mrs. Chavez does a great job of staying calm, and helping to get students regulated again. We are blessed to have Mrs. Chavez as a member of the AECC!

APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

Early Childhood Center



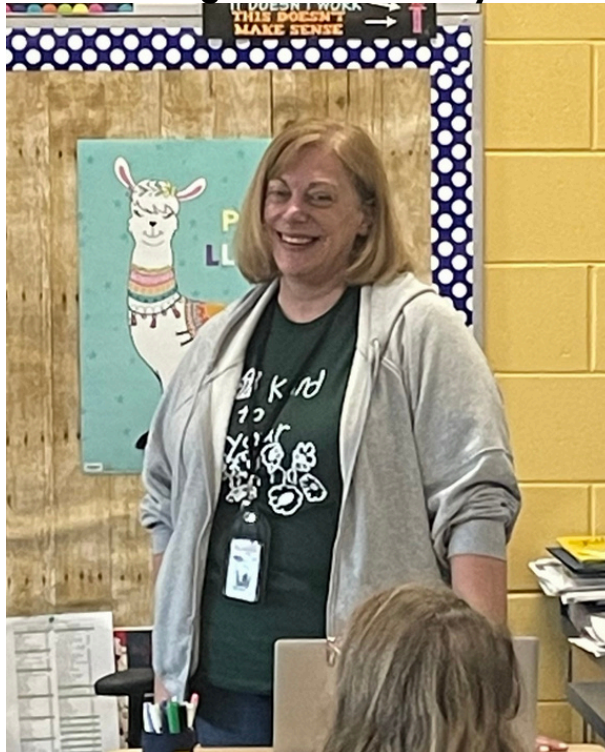
Rebekah Potgeter

GSRP Associate Teacher

- Mrs. Potgeter has been with APS 5 years.
- Mrs. Potgeter is a dedicated member of our preschool team. Mrs. Potgeter has been an Associate Teacher in our GSRP preschool program for the last five years, and she comes to school on a daily basis ready to give her all to the students inside of her classroom. Mrs. Potgeter works hard to build lasting relationships with her students and families, as her past students will often stop her for a hug or high five when they see her around the AECC. Mrs. Potgeter does a great job of getting her students to fall in love with learning, as this is often their first time being inside a classroom. We are blessed to have Mrs. Potgeter as a hard working member of the AECC!

APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

Evergreen Elementary



Martha Persak

3rd Grade Teacher

- Mrs. Persak has been with APS 18 years.
- Mrs. Persak has been a strong teacher leader in Evergreen Elementary School. She continues to serve her team, and the district, in her role of Grade Level Chairperson. In the classroom, Mrs. Persak encourages each of her students to reach their fullest potential while emphasizing the value of supporting one another in a caring community.
- Mrs. Persak's family loves road trips and camping, in fact, the Persak family has had the opportunity to camp in all of the Upper Peninsula state parks.

APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

Oakwood Intermediate



Anna Haveman

5th Grade Teacher

- Miss Haveman has been with APS 9 years.
- Miss Haveman is a 5th grade teacher at Oakwood Intermediate. Previous to her current role, she taught special education at Oakwood. Miss Haveman is attentive and aware of the unique needs and abilities of the students in her class. She creates an environment that is warm and inviting for her students. She builds relationships with them and sets high expectations while having a little fun at the same time. Miss Haveman has been a part of various learning opportunities and leadership roles such as Learning Labs, CIFT trainings, a mentor teacher, and the department chair for the K-5 Special Education team. Miss Haveman is currently enrolled in the futurePREP'd program through the OAISD and is serving on the Advanced Tiers Committee at the district level. She is a true asset to the Oakwood teaching staff and the students.
- Miss Haveman loves to travel within the states and abroad! This year she started two new hobbies: Pottery and rock climbing, and she spends quite a bit of time doing both of those outside of school. She also loves to read, cook, bake, garden, and spend time outside. Thank you for your dedication to the teaching profession and to the students at Oakwood Intermediate, Miss Haveman. We are lucky to have you!

APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

Oakwood Intermediate



Sarah Persenaire

Math and Reading Specialist

- Miss Persenaire has been with APS for 11 years.
- Miss Persenaire has spent her whole educational career with Allendale Public Schools. She has served the district as a 5th grade teacher and an interventionist. Oakwood is blessed to have Miss Persenaire currently serving as our Oakwood Reading/Math Specialist. Her flexible yet structured work ethic allows her to work with small groups of students to lead them toward math and reading success. She gathers data, analyzes it, consults with others when needed and creates the perfect learning plan for her students. She not only works with students but supports teachers in meeting the academic goals for their students as well. Not only has Miss Persenaire had the opportunity to work with students in various roles, but she has also held several leadership and committee positions in the district. She was an Elementary ELA Department Chair and has hosted and facilitated several learning labs. She has been a part of the District Improvement and Curriculum Selections teams. She is currently serving on the Advanced Tiers Team. After school hours and during the summer months, Miss Oersenaire has taught Falcon Hour and Summer Learning Camp. We are thankful to have Miss Persenaire at Oakwood supporting our students and staff.
- Miss Persenaire enjoys reading, spending time outside, visiting local ice cream shops with friends, and traveling with family.

APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

Allendale Middle School



Matthew Mullen

Assistant Principal

- Mr. Mullen has been with APS for 3 years.
- Mr. Mullen, our esteemed Assistant Principal, embodies excellence in every aspect of his role. With an unwavering dedication to fostering a positive learning environment, Mr. Mullen consistently goes above and beyond to support both students and staff alike. His compassionate demeanor and approachable nature make him not only a respected authority figure but also a trusted confidant for those in need. Mr. Mullen's leadership shines through his innovative initiatives, whether it's implementing new programs to enhance student well-being or spearheading efforts to strengthen community engagement. His commitment to academic achievement is matched only by his commitment to cultivating a culture of inclusivity and respect within our school. In every interaction, Mr. Mullen exemplifies the qualities of an exceptional educational leader, earning him the admiration and gratitude of the entire school community.
- Mr. Mullen is an avid hunter and fisherman ("avid", not "successful").

APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

Allendale High School



Ron Silvera

High School Science Teacher

- Mr. Silvera has been with APS 20 plus years.
- Mr. Silvera is an amazing colleague and educator. On a daily basis, Mr. Silvera demonstrates an unwavering commitment to the students in his classroom and the athletes he coaches. He spend tons of time and energy outside of the classroom mentoring and guiding students. His passion for teaching and coaching is evident in the positive impact he has on his students lives. Mr. Silvera's leadership and character make him an outstanding recipient for this recognition!