

# 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\*\***

- February 6 High School Choir Pre-Fest Concert, 7:00 PM, Ceglarek Fine Arts Center
- February 10 Winterfest Dance, 7:00-10:00 PM, Allendale High School
- February 12 MS/HS Band Pre-Fest Concert, 7:00 PM, Ceglarek Fine Arts Center
- February 15 NHS Blood Drive, 8:00 AM - 2:00 PM, Allendale High School
- February 16-19 No school Young Five - 12th Grade, Mid-Winter Break
- February 19 Regular Board of Education meeting, 6:00 PM, Oakwood Board Room
- February 24 HS/MS Science Olympiad, 9:00 AM - 6:00 PM, High School & Middle School
- February 28 Young Five/Kindergarten Information Night, 6:00 PM, AECC Cafeteria

## MILLAGE FACTS

### ELECTION DAY: TUESDAY FEBRUARY 27, 2024

#### WHY DO WE HAVE A SCHOOL BALLOT ISSUE IN FEBRUARY?

THE FEBRUARY 27, 2024 BALLOT PROPOSAL WILL ALLOW THE SCHOOL DISTRICT TO CONTINUE TO LEVY 18 MILLS OF NON-HOMESTEAD MILLAGE ON ALL COMMERCIAL BUSINESS, RENTAL PROPERTIES, VACANT LAND AND SECOND-HOME PROPERTIES. IN ORDER FOR THE SCHOOL DISTRICT TO RECEIVE ITS FULL OPERATING REVENUE ALLOWANCE FROM THE STATE, THE DISTRICT MUST LEVY 18 MILLS.

#### What is the 18 mill Non-Homestead Millage?

The 1993-94 Proposal A changed school funding and redefined how taxes on property are assessed. As a result, public schools must levy 18 mills on non-homestead properties to receive full State Foundation Grant funding. Tax revenues from this millage are utilized in the District's general operating budget. It is important to note that this is NOT a tax on homestead properties, and is NOT a new tax - it is a proposal to continue the existing 18 mill assessment on NON-HOMESTEAD PROPERTIES only.

#### What does "Non-Homestead" mean?

You do not pay this tax on your primary home. It is only paid on property that is not a primary residence such as businesses, investment property, a vacation home and rental property.

#### What is the financial impact of the renewal?

The State of Michigan provides APS the Foundation Grant Allowance less the 18 mill levy on non-homestead property. Any amount levied less than the 18 mills is not reimbursed by the State. If the millage is not renewed, the District would lose approximately \$4,950,000 per year beginning January 2025. The State will not replace this funding, and the District would be faced with finding alternative funding, or implementing steep cuts in programming and staffing.

#### What does this mean to Allendale residents?

On February 27, 2024, Allendale voters will be asked once again to vote on the state mandated 18 mills on non-homestead properties. The District is requesting a four year renewal of the non-homestead 18 mills and an additional 3 mills that may be used only to restore the 18 mills, should Headlee rollbacks occur. Without the non-homestead millage renewal, all of the District's operating millage would be reduced to zero when the current millage expires in December of 2024. If the proposed renewal is approved on February 27, 2024, homeowners will NOT see an increase in their property taxes on their primary residence. This is not a new tax, but rather a proposal of the District to continue to levy the 18 mills for the non-homestead tax as it has since 1994. Approval of the millage will give the District the continued ability to collect full State funding for its schools.

## QUESTIONS?

If you have questions regarding the Non-Homestead Millage Renewal Proposal, please contact Superintendent Garth Cooper at 616-892-5570 or [coopergar@apsfalcons.net](mailto:coopergar@apsfalcons.net)

## Reminder from Allendale Food Service



School Meals reminder: 2023/2024 School Year brings Free Breakfast and Free Lunch to each student. A meal is reimbursable only when a Fruit or Vegetable is on the tray.

Breakfast is served at each building cafeteria when students arrive:

AECC: 8:20AM- 8:44AM

Evergreen: 8:15AM -8:37AM

Oakwood: 8:10AM – 8:28AM

Middle – 7:15AM- 7:33AM

High/New Options – 7:10AM – 7:45AM

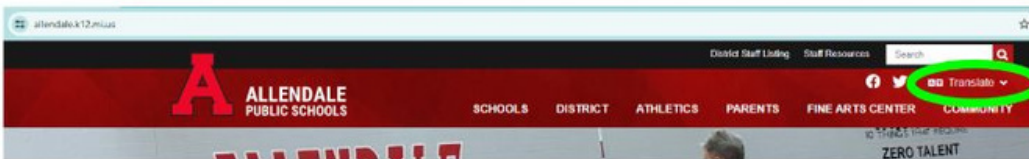
Lunch is served according to each student/class daily schedule.

\*Don't Scrape the App! Please continue to fill out the School Meals and Summer EBT application. Benefit status must be on record for the school year to qualify for other programs like summer EBT, Sports and AP testing fee reductions. It is best practice to have the application complete by February, however it is open all year. <https://allendale.familyportal.cloud>

## From the Enrollment Office



### Consejos para nuestras familias hispanohablantes.



Si hace clic en la flecha hacia abajo junto a "Translate" podrá cambiar el idioma de nuestro sitio web al español.



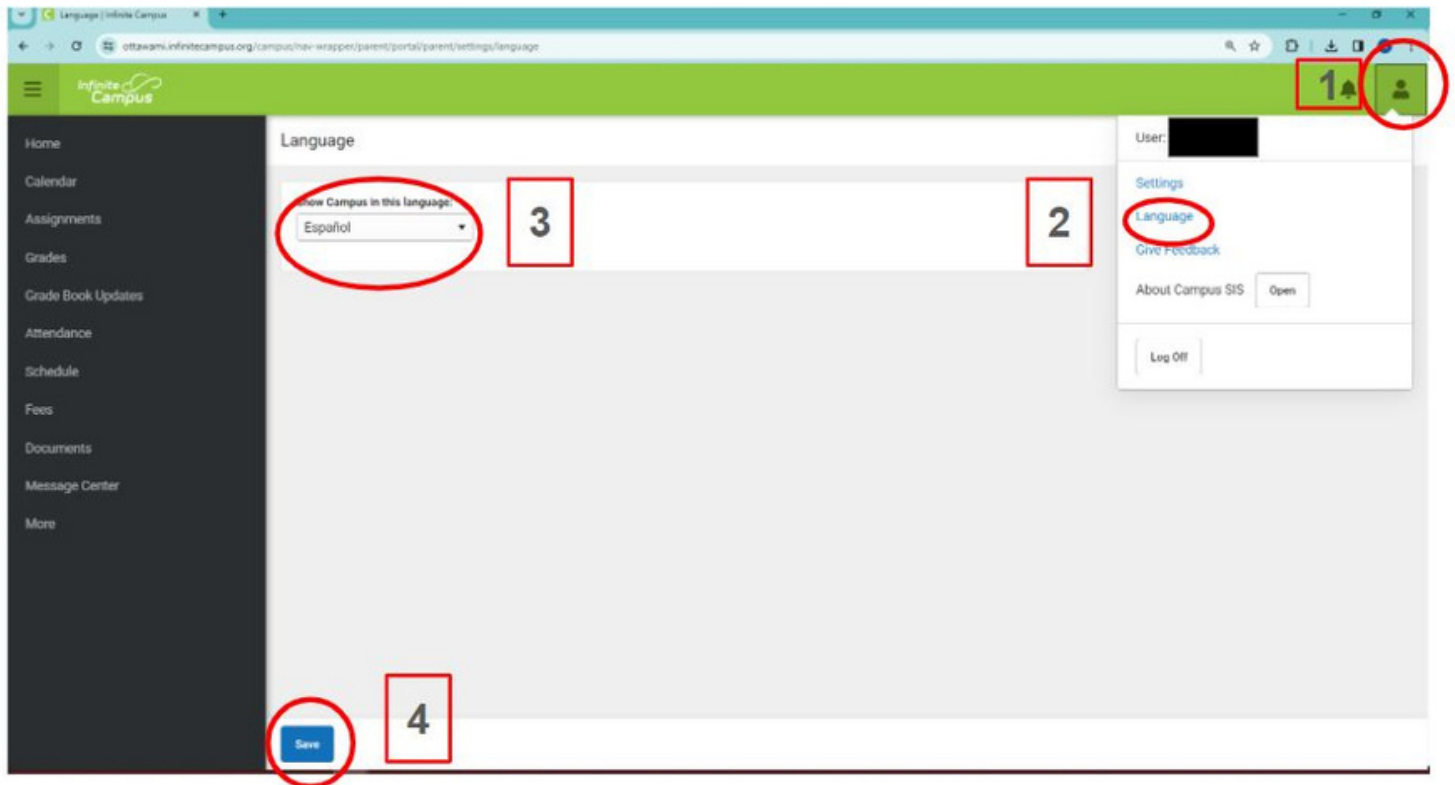
### Infinite Campus



Puede encontrar instrucciones para acceder al Portal para padres de Infinite Campus en nuestro sitio web. [www.allendale.k12.mi.us/district/technology/parentportal/](http://www.allendale.k12.mi.us/district/technology/parentportal/)

## From the Enrollment Office continued

Cuando inicie sesión en el Portal para padres, puede cambiar el idioma de inglés a español.  
(When you log in to the Parent Portal, you can change the language from English to Spanish.)



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(When you log in to the Parent Portal, you can change the language from English to Spanish.)



# Snapshot of APS 2024-25 Preschool Options

			
<b>3 Year Old Preschool</b> <b>Half Day</b> *3 hours*	<b>4 Year Old Preschool</b> <b>Half Day</b> *3 hours*	<b>4 Year Old Preschool</b> <b>School Day</b> *7 hours*	<b>4 Year Old Preschool</b> <b>School Day</b> *7 hours*
Child must be 3 years old by December 1	Child must be 4 years old by December 1	Child must be 4 years old by December 1	Child must be 4 years old by December 1
<b>Classroom Location:</b> Evergreen Elementary West Wing	<b>Classroom Location:</b> Evergreen Elementary West Wing	<b>Classroom Location:</b> Evergreen Elementary West Wing	<b>Classroom Location:</b> Early Childhood Center
<b>3 year old Preschool Classes:</b> <i>Monday/Wednesday/Friday</i> <i>Morning</i> 8:30am-11:30am  <i>Tuesday/Thursday Morning</i> 8:30am-11:30am	<b>4 year old Preschool Classes:</b> <i>Monday thru Thursday</i> <i>Morning</i> 8:30am-11:30am  <i>Mon/Wed/Thur Afternoon</i> 12:30pm-3:30pm	<b>4 year old Preschool Class:</b> <i>Monday thru Thursday School</i> <i>Day</i> 8:30am-3:30pm	<b>4 year old Preschool Class:</b> <i>Monday thru Thursday School</i> <i>Day</i> Class Time: TBD
<b>Tuition-based Preschool</b> <b>Eight Monthly Payments of:</b> TTh Morning: \$157/month MWF Morning: \$235/month 8 Payments due Aug-March	<b>Tuition-based Preschool</b> <b>Eight Monthly Payments of:</b> MWTh Afternoon: \$235/month Mon-Thur Morning: \$295/mth 8 Payments due Aug-March	<b>Tuition-based Preschool</b> <b>Eight Monthly Payments of:</b> Mon-Thur School Day: \$565/month 8 Payments due Aug-March	<b>Free Great Start Readiness</b> <b>Program preschool (GSRP)</b> FREE for families that qualify, funded by State of Michigan 

## Preschool Information Continued

<b>\$60 Non-refundable Registration Fee</b>	<b>\$60 Non-refundable Registration Fee</b>	<b>\$60 Non-refundable Registration Fee</b>	<b>\$0 Registration Fee</b>
Child must be toilet trained	Child must be toilet trained	Child must be toilet trained	Toilet trained is encouraged
<b>3 Year Old Preschool Half Day</b> *3 hours*	<b>4 Year Old Preschool Half Day</b> *3 hours*	<b>4 Year Old Preschool School Day</b> *7 hours*	<b>4 Year Old Preschool School Day</b> *7 hours*
<b>Snacks:</b> Provided by family	<b>Snacks:</b> Provided by family	<b>Snacks:</b> Provided by family <b>Lunch:</b> Provided by APS Food Service OR family can send student "cold lunch", students/teachers eat together in cafeteria	<b>Breakfast, Lunch, 1 Snack:</b> Provided by APS Food Service at no additional cost to families, students/teachers eat together in the classroom
<b>Transportation:</b> No APS Transportation. Families are responsible for getting their children to and from Preschool and/or Wrap Care.	<b>Transportation:</b> No APS Transportation. Families are responsible for getting their children to and from Preschool and/or Wrap Care.	<b>Transportation:</b> No APS Transportation. Families are responsible for getting their children to and from Preschool and/or Wrap Care.	<b>Transportation:</b> APS Transportation (school bus and/or school van) is possible if pick-up and drop-off locations are within the APS District transportation boundaries.
<b>Wrap Care:*</b> The Wrap Care Room is located next to the preschool classrooms in Evergreen Elementary West Wing! Preschool and Wrap Care staff work in tandem to get preschool students to and from their classrooms.  *Families must register for Wrap Care separately.	<b>Wrap Care:*</b> The Wrap Care Room is located next to the preschool classrooms in Evergreen Elementary West Wing! Preschool and Wrap Care staff work in tandem to get preschool students to and from their classrooms.  *Families must register for Wrap Care separately.	<b>Wrap Care:*</b> The Wrap Care Room is located next to the preschool classrooms in Evergreen Elementary West Wing! Preschool and Wrap Care staff work in tandem to get preschool students to and from their classrooms.  *Families must register for Wrap Care separately.	<b>Wrap Care:*</b> The Wrap Care Room is located in the Evergreen Elementary West Wing. If a free preschool family needs Wrap Care, the student will have APS Transportation to/from Evergreen West and the ECC.  *Families must register for Wrap Care separately.





# ALLENDALE PUBLIC SCHOOLS REGISTRATION 2024/2025



(All registrations are online)

**TO REGISTER** for Kindergarten or Young 5's children must be 5 years of age on or before September 1, 2024 to attend for the 2024/2025 school year.

Parents of children turning 5 between September 1st and December 1st, 2023 may submit online registration, Allendale Public Schools will make every effort to consider your child's registration.



## ★REGISTRATION DOCUMENTS NEEDED:★

1. Birth certificate (county issued) (original or copy)
2. Proof of residency (utility bill, lease/mortgage work best)
3. Complete up to date official immunization record or valid waiver (DPT, Polio, MMR, Varicella, Hep B)
4. Health appraisal form completed and signed by a physician dated 2023 or newer
5. Proof of vision, hearing and dental screening

**The above items are not required at the time of registration, but must be provided BEFORE your child can attend school.**

*PARENTS/GUARDIANS: If you have questions about Young 5's or Kindergarten classes please attend our informational meeting on February 27, 2024, at 6:00 PM, in the Allendale Early Childhood Center cafeteria. You may also watch the informational video on our website <https://www.allendale.k12.mi.us/district/enrollinginaps/> or scan the QR code above.*

**PLEASE VISIT** our enrollment page to register your child. (Use the link or QR code listed above.) We look forward to partnering with you for your child's education. For additional information, contact Allendale District Office 616-892-5570 or Allendale Early Childhood Center 616-892-5580.

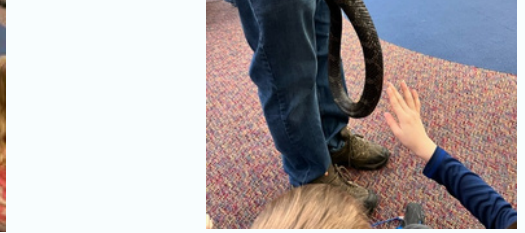
## ◆ REGISTER SOON: ◆

- Receive communication regarding the upcoming school year
- Schedule Young 5's screening for students with birthdays after May 1st (screenings take place in June)
- Register for bussing (available with student ID after registration is processed)
- Schedule a school tour (available in May)

### Parents/Guardians of current 2022/2023 Young 5's/Kindergarten students at APS

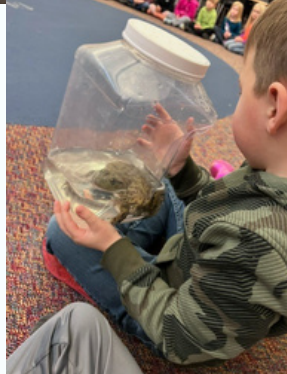
There is no need to submit a new registration for your child. If your child is currently attending Young 5's or Kindergarten at Allendale Public Schools they are expected to continue for the next school year.

## Evergreen Elementary Happenings



On January 22, the Outdoor Discovery Center came to Evergreen Elementary to help our first graders learn about Michigan vertebrates (animals with backbones). The First graders learn that different animals use their body parts in different ways to see, hear, grasp objects, protect themselves, move from place to place, and seek, find, and take in food, water and air. The presentation involved students getting to "meet" and learn about a Michigan native frog, turtle, snake, owl, skunk and a domestic rabbit. Children were able to ask and answer questions as well as touch some of the animals.

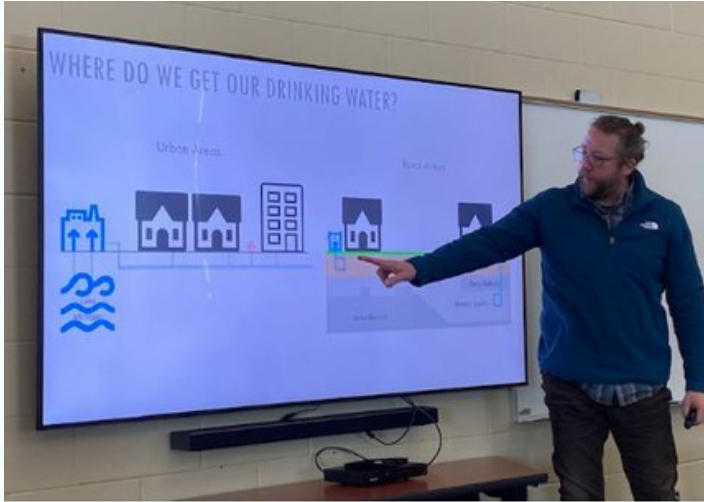
Many of the children asked the presenters about seeing the animals again . Great news the Outdoor Discovery Center has programs and opportunities for children and their families year round! You can learn more about planning a visit or participating in a program on their website at <https://outdoordiscovery.org/>.



## Oakwood Happenings

### Ottawa County Water Conservation Work

In January, Mr. Paul Sachs from the Ottawa Conservation District came to Oakwood to kick off a science unit on the water cycle and conservation. Mr. Sachs shared with students about how the ground water supply is being impacted by growth happening in Ottawa County. Students in 5th grade will be creating PSAs to share with residents in Ottawa County about how their water consumption could help decrease the impact on our groundwater supply here in Allendale.



### PTO Boots and Bling Family Dance

What a fun night!! Thank you to all of the families who supported the Allendale Elementary PTO by attending our first PTO Family Dance at Allendale High School in mid-January. Everyone who attended seemed to have a great time! Over 600 people attended. Kudos to our Allendale Elementary PTO for their support of our students and staff in Allendale! We are so thankful for all they do and the great family opportunities they offer.





YOU'RE INVITED TO OUR

# Blizzard Ball

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10

STARTS AT  
7PM

**\$10** ENDS AT  
TICKETS 10PM

## WinterFest Dance, Blizzard Ball!

This years WinterFest Dance is being held on February 10, in the AHS Cafeteria. It will be "formal" with a theme of Blizzard Ball. The dance is 7-10pm. Guest forms are due February 7th.

## High School Happenings Continued

# THE WIZARD OF OZ

ALLENDALE  
HIGHSCHOOL

Thursday March 7-  
Saturday March 9, 2024

JOIN  
US!



We're off to see the Wizard! Allendale High School presents The Wizard of Oz March 7, 8 & 9! Over 75 APS students in grades 3 - 12 are involved in this production. You don't want to miss it!

Evening performances are scheduled for March 7 and 8 at 7 pm, and a matinee performance will be held on March 9 at 3 pm. All performances will be held at Allendale High School's Ceglarek Fine Arts Center.

For ticket information, please visit [allendalefinearts.ludus.com](http://allendalefinearts.ludus.com). See you at the show!



# APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

## Special Education



### **Stephanie Torp**

Special Education Teacher - High School

- Mrs. Torp is in her 11th Year at APS.
- Mrs. Torp does an excellent job providing meaningful and quality academic and functional living instruction to students at Allendale High School. She is well respected by her peers, parents, and students. She has a positive attitude, is creative in providing instructional opportunities, and puts the students first. Her dedication and care for students leads to students being able to learn skills that will help them be successful after high school. She works great with other staff, is a team player, communicates very well with students, parents and administration. Mrs. Torp is a vital part of the success of the students she works with.
- Fun Fact: When Mrs. Torp started at Allendale, she split her day between middle school and high school working with a variety of needs including implementing Social Thinking classes as well as continuing the CBVI program at the High School. She loves teaching at the high school level, and working with students to develop their personalized plans for life after high school, whatever that may look like. In our classroom, we are family.

# APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

## Special Education



**Kellie Vaughn**

Speech Pathologist - various buildings

- Mrs. Vaughn is in her 4th year with APS.
- We have an awesome speech team at APS and Mrs. Vaughn is one of the reasons why. Mrs. Vaughn has been very helpful and supportive of the needs at APS. She volunteers to assist when needed and has taken on extra responsibilities many times. Mrs. Vaughn works incredibly well with other staff members and students. She makes speech fun for the students and engaging. She collaborates very well with others, and has a very positive attitude. She is also a wealth of knowledge and provides top notch services to students. Mrs. Vaughn does an excellent job all around and is greatly appreciated.
- Fun Fact: Mrs. Vaughn's favorite things about working at APS are the awesome staff and students! Outside of work she loves reading, being the world's best cat mom, and hanging out with her husband. She is also learning how to knit!

# APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

## Special Education



### **Anna Bussis**

ASD Paraprofessional - Oakwood

- Mrs. Bussis is in her 1st year at APS.

### **Teyha Sowers**

ASD Paraprofessional - Oakwood

- Ms. Sowers is in her 2nd year at APS.

- Mrs. Bussis and Ms. Sowers have gone above and beyond this school year to ensure that their classroom and student's needs are met. With the regular classroom teacher (Mrs. Feenstra) being on maternity leave, and the classroom being short staffed, Mrs. Bussis and Ms. Sowers have worked hard to ensure that the students are receiving the support and education they need. Mrs. Bussis and Ms. Sowers' work ethic, dedication to the students, collaboration with each other and other staff, and positive attitudes are excellent and we are fortunate to have Mrs. Bussis and Ms. Sowers on our special education team.

# APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

## Allendale Early Childhood Center



**Andi Lee**

Young 5's Teacher

- Mrs. Lee has been at APS for 12 Years.
- Mrs. Lee is a dedicated member to our Young 5's teaching team. Mrs. Lee serves as the Young 5's grade level chair, as she is a leader in her hallway and also inside of the AECC. Mrs. Lee has taken part in many building and district initiatives, and is respected by her peers. Mrs. Lee does a tremendous job with building relationships with her students, families, and co-workers. She will often have her old students and families stop by to see her even though she is no longer their classroom teacher. We are blessed to have such a leader and talented educator inside our Young 5's program!

# APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

## Allendale Early Childhood Center



**Jill VanSolkema**

Young 5's Classroom Aide

- Mrs. VanSolkema has been with APS 5 years.
- Mrs. VanSolkema is a dedicated member of our Young 5's team, as she is always willing to do whatever it takes to help support the students that she works with. Mrs. VanSolkema does a great job building relationships with the students that she works with, and helps them realize that learning can be fun and exciting. There is no job too big or small that Mrs. VanSolkema cannot handle, as she goes above and beyond to make sure that her teachers are prepared to teach on a daily basis. We are blessed to have Mrs. VanSolkema as a member of the Young 5's team, and also the AECC!

# APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

## Evergreen Elementary



### **Megan Sampson**

1st Grade Teacher

Mrs. Sampson is in her 17th year at APS.

- Throughout her teaching career, Mrs. Sampson has looked for opportunities to serve her students, her fellow staff members, and the community of Allendale. She currently serves her team in the role of grade-level chairperson and will be a mentor teacher this spring for a university student in the teaching program. The Evergreen community is grateful for the dedication Mrs. Sampson has shown to her students and the community of Allendale!
- Fun Fact: Mrs. Sampson's youngest daughter is in volleyball, basketball, and dance and her oldest daughter is in club volleyball so she, and her husband, spend many nights and weekends cheering on their passions for sports. Their family also enjoys watching sporting events together and they are thrilled about the University of Michigan and Detroit Lions' huge accomplishments this year!



# APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

## Evergreen Elementary



### **Monica Cervantes**

Custodian

- Mrs. Cervantes has been with APS for 11 years.
- Mrs. Cervantes works tirelessly to maintain a clean and safe environment for Evergreen students and staff members. She pays attention to the details that may go unnoticed by others. No matter the request, Mrs. Cervantes always has a positive attitude and a friendly demeanor which makes a significant impact on the overall atmosphere at Evergreen Elementary. Thank you Mrs. Cervantes!
- Fun Fact: Mrs. Cervantes likes to travel with her family and visit National Parks.

# APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

## Oakwood Intermediate



### Jennifer Mendes

Student Support Specialist/504 Coordinator

- Mrs. Mendes has been with APS for 18 years.
- Mrs. Mendes brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to both her roles in the district. She was a special education teacher for 16 years and brings that expertise not only to her role working with students at Oakwood, but also to the 504 Coordinator role for students and staff in grades K-8th grade. Mrs. Mendes enjoys the challenge of working with students with diverse needs and truly enjoys getting to know the students at Oakwood. She is funny and engaging and loves to stay connected with the students by visiting classrooms and the cafeteria during lunch time. Thank you, Mrs. Mendes, for the role you play not only at Oakwood, but throughout the district.
- Fun Fact: Mrs. Mendes enjoys reading, baking, music and going to the movies. Her daughter, Madeline, is in 7th grade and attends Allendale Middle School.

# APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

## Oakwood Intermediate



**Rebecca Lehman**

Oakwood Media Aide

- Mrs. Lehman has been with APS 6 years.
- Mrs. Lehman does an excellent job motivating and getting students excited about and engaged in reading books of their choice. She provides opportunities for students to learn about new genres and book choices. Under Mrs. Lehman's direction, the media center is well organized. She encourages students to reach their full reading potential and she is consistently challenging them to read and truly enjoy books. Mrs. Lehman is an avid reader herself and can often be heard engaging in conversation about a specific book with a student. Mrs. Lehman partners with Indiana Bones (our school mascot) to show students what life at Oakwood is like. We are thankful for Mrs. Lehman's encouragement and support of reading at Oakwood!
- Mrs. Lehman has a wide variety of interests including reading (not just saying that, she's read 100 books a year for the last 15 years), watching baseball, cooking, crafting, and being outside with her family. Her favorite thing to do is look for rocks at any Michigan lakeshore. Mrs. Lehman is married with 4 kids, 2 dogs, 2 guinea pigs and a bearded dragon.

# APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

## Allendale Middle School



### **Hanna Rose**

Middle School Science Teacher

- We would like to recognize Mrs. Rose. Her dedication to crafting engaging and hands-on lessons has significantly enhanced the learning experience for her students. Mrs. Rose's commitment to making science interesting and accessible is evident in her innovative teaching methods. Each Friday she brings an extra layer of fun to her classroom by running trivia with her students. Mrs. Rose's enthusiasm for education is inspiring, and her impact on students goes beyond the curriculum as she fosters a dynamic and interactive learning environment for all. Congratulations!
- Fun Fact: Mrs. Rose has the same middle and last name! Hannah Rose Rose!

# APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

## Allendale Middle School



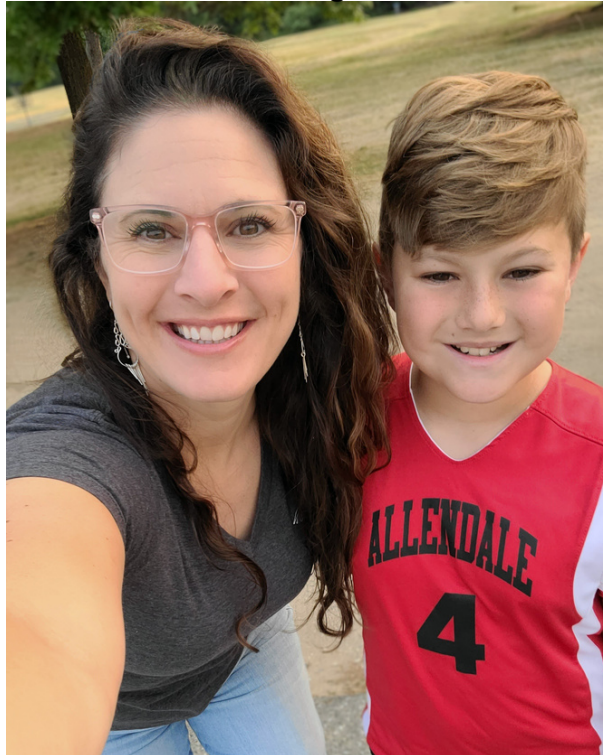
**Erin Berens**

Middle School Secretary

- Mrs. Berens has been with APS 4 years.
- Mrs. Berens is in her first year as secretary at the Middle School. The three years prior she worked in the Middle School kitchen. She's worked hard to understand and master every aspect of this new role. Mrs. Berens greets all office visitors with a smile and tirelessly helps all students. Her efforts have made a positive impact, and she's become an indispensable part of our school community. Congratulations to Mrs. Berens for her outstanding work!
- Fun Fact: Mrs. Berens did hair for 20 years before coming to APS!

# APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

## Allendale High School



### **Audra Murphy**

High School Principal

- Ms. Murphy is in her 16th year with APS.
- Ms. Murphy has shifted into the Interim Principal position at the High School for the rest of the 2023-24 school year. Before being in this role, Ms. Murphy served as High School Assistant Principal, 6-12 Academic Coach, Middle and High School math teacher, and Varsity Volleyball Coach. Ms. Murphy is passionate about inspiring others to achieve and go after excellence. She believes that the best educational experience and achievement for our students will be a result of a productive environment, respectful relationships, and a mindset of putting the needs of the students first.
- Fun Fact: Ms. Murphy loves reading, learning about health, sunshine and fresh air, and spending time with family and her son Kirk, who is a 4th-grade student at APS.