

# HARPER CREEK COMMUNITY SCHOOLS *Newsletter*



EDUCATE • EMPOWER • EQUIP  
**Students for Life**

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**SCHOOL DISTRICT CONTACT INFORMATION**

7454 B Drive North  
Battle Creek, MI 49014  
Telephone: 269.441.6550  
Fax: 269.962.6034  
Website: www.harpercreek.net  
Facebook: Harper Creek Schools  
Twitter: Harper Creek Schools

**NEWSLETTER CONTACT INFORMATION**

Rebecca Schneider  
schneiderr@harpercreek.net

## Message from Superintendent Rob Ridgeway



At the end of the school year, we celebrate the accomplishments our students, staff, and school district have accumulated during the school year. I am proud of Harper Creek Community Schools. We dealt with a global pandemic by educating our students every day in a manner that honored both family and choice. There were many lessons learned and changes that occurred over the past two years, but we have emerged from this unique time in history stronger. There is still lots of work to do – working on learning loss, helping our students and staff with social and emotional health, and understanding the unique behaviors that have emerged due to isolation and lack of socialization. I know we as a community are up to the challenge.

Of course, we need to recognize our graduating seniors. Congratulations! Graduation from high school is a huge milestone along your journey in life. As you walk across the stage on the evening of June 3rd, know that all of us, your parents, your teachers, and the community believe in you. You can accomplish anything that you put your mind to. Learning a skill or a trade, joining the military, attending community college, or a four-year university are all noble pursuits. Find something you love, and you will never work a day of your life.

2021-2022 has been a unique school year. Let us take a few minutes to reflect and celebrate the great things that are occurring at Harper Creek Community Schools as we Educate, Empower, and Equip Students for Life.

## Beadle Lake Elementary



## Flex Farm Fun

By Julie Simonds, Third-Grade Teacher, Beadle Lake Elementary

Spring is here and do you know what that means? Buds will soon be out on trees and flowers will begin blooming. It also means many people will begin planting their own gardens. Did you know many students in Harper Creek have already **been** gardening throughout the cooler fall and snowy winter months? Classrooms have been learning about gardening using a hydroponic growing system called a Flex Farm. Hydroponics is the practice of growing plants without soil. Instead of soil, another substance is used. This system uses rockwool and is also vertical, with water tanks underneath. Electricity powers a water pump that pushes water up through hoses where it rains over the roots of the plants. An LED light gives plants the “sunlight” they need to grow big and healthy. This system is also on wheels, so it can be moved to receive natural sunlight too. Students have enjoyed growing, harvesting, and eating some different types of lettuce and basil. They've been amazed by some of the massive root structures they've seen during harvest. Chef John Ruemenapp, our Food Services Director for Harper Creek was responsible for applying for the grant that was used to purchase these growing systems. We're looking forward to learning more and growing more next year!



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# Stop the Summer Slide at Wattles Park Elementary

By Brent Swan, Principal, Wattles Park Elementary

As the 2021-2022 school concludes, the Wattles Park Elementary staff is gearing up for summer opportunities for learning and fun. Many of our students will be attending Discovery Camp and going to Sherman Lake YMCA Camp. All our students will have online resources to keep growing academically. Every student will be receiving books for their home libraries. Students are being challenged to spend at least 30 minutes per day reading or working on other academic resources, and 60 minutes of active play every day.

## Wattles Park Elementary



## Sonoma Elementary

# Learning, Growing, and Having Fun

By Shalen King-Short, Principal, Sonoma Elementary

This year has empowered all of us to think, learn, and collaborate in ways we never thought possible. As a building team, we are so excited about moving into the end of our school year, taking our learning to jumpstart the 2022-2023 school year. A big thank you again to families and the community for supporting all of us through this interesting year. Our Sonoma family continues to embrace changes, have a heart for all people, and learn through our experiences. Partnering with each other in the building and community has been a big part of who we are working to become. Pictures say 1000 words. These smiles, staff and students having fun, and experiencing new learning, show how Sonoma has grown in so many new ways, continuing to adapt to the needs of all of our diverse learners.





# Harper Creek Middle School



## At Harper Creek Middle School We are LEADers

	CLASSROOM
<b>LEAD RESPECTFULLY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clean up your area</li> <li>Listen attentively</li> <li>Prepare for learning</li> </ul>
<b>ENCOURAGE KINDNESS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use manners and kind words</li> <li>Use appropriate language</li> <li>Encourage and support others</li> </ul>
<b>ACT RESPONSIBLY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow individual classroom expectations</li> <li>Follow time schedule</li> <li>Do your own work</li> </ul>
<b>DEMONSTRATE SAFETY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walk</li> <li>Keep hands, feet, property to self</li> <li>Follow teachers directives</li> </ul>



## Coach Studer Inducted into Wrestling Hall of Fame

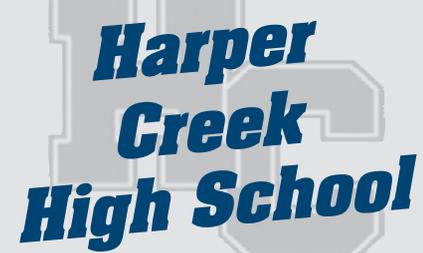
By Ed Greenman, Athletic Director

On Saturday, April 24, 2022, the Michigan Chapter of the National Wrestling Coaches Hall of Fame held a banquet in Ann Arbor to honor wrestling coaches that have impacted the sport of wrestling in a positive way with their lifetime service to the sport and the kids that they serve.

Harper Creek High School is proud to announce that Dave Studer, our coach for the past 56 years, was one of the recipients. Coach Studer has made a profound impact on our school, community, and specifically the boys and girls that he has coached. It is amazing that one person can touch the lives of so many people for over half a century! He has done it with class and dignity and has created a culture rich with pride and tradition.

What we have known locally for so many years has now been recognized at the national level. Dave continues to inspire and enrich the lives of our kids at Harper Creek and we are thankful for all he does.

Congratulations, Coach Studer...looking forward to several more years of your love and passion for our kids and the sport of wrestling!





# Harper Creek High School

## Spring Break in Europe

Harper Creek High School teachers, Mr. Brian Herr and Mr. Elliot Brinker, traveled to Europe over spring break with seven students and three parent-chaperones. While touring they visited France, Spain, and Italy. The group saw Saint Peter's Basilica in Vatican City, learned to make paella in Barcelona, Spain, and toured Carcassonne a medieval walled town in the south of France, among other picturesque visits. HCCS is grateful to have educators dedicated to extending learning far beyond our schools' walls allowing our students to see the world.



## Be a Lifelong Learner!

By Dennis Anthony, High School Principal

*"An investment in knowledge pays the best interest."* Benjamin Franklin

At Harper Creek High School, we aim to both model and nurture a love of learning that extends not only beyond the school day, but also beyond the school year and the graduation stage. As another school year ends, I think about how much the world has changed over the last few years, and how important it is to view ourselves as continuous learners, including the summer time, and even after graduation.

While looking for inspiring messages and examples to use in motivating our learners here, I often come across words of wisdom, like those above from one of our Founding Fathers. I recently landed on an article by Bud Bilanich, a "career mentor." Bud states to "Learn faster than the world changes. In a world that never stops changing, you can never stop learning and growing."

Bud's perspective is shared by some of the greatest thinkers that have ever existed, as they too appear to have held a belief that lifelong learning is a key to success. Arguably, it's never been more important than in today's fast-paced world. Bud plainly believes, "if you don't keep learning, you're not standing still, you're falling behind."

So don't fall behind this summer! Whether you are a current student, recent grad or parent, *keep learning*. View yourself as a lifelong learner and nurture learning in others. Some tips to consider for encouraging your student to keep learning this summer (and beyond):

- seek opportunities and activities that focus on critical thinking and problem solving. Make learning fun as you examine circumstances around the house or yard that could be viewed as opportunities for learning.
- Make books readily available and encourage their use. Start a family book club, and/or make reading and discussing the same things (books or articles) an expectation.
- Be "intellectually curious." Model learning and openly share that you find learning fun, interesting and stimulating.

This June 3rd, the Class of 2022 will complete its academic journey at HCHS. We look forward to great success in their future learning endeavors, this summer and beyond.

### HARPER CREEK COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

#### Schools of Choice

Limited Enrollment for grades 1 - 12  
May 18, 2022 – June 17, 2022 at 4:00 PM

Unlimited Enrollment for Kindergarten  
May 18, 2022 - July 29, 2022, 4:00PM

Application materials and information on Schools of Choice will be available May 18 at [www.HarperCreek.net](http://www.HarperCreek.net).

For more information call

269-441-6571 or email [burkhardt@harpercreek.net](mailto:burkhardt@harpercreek.net) weekdays between 7:30 AM and 4:00 PM

### Countdown to Kindergarten

Countdown to Kindergarten is a one-hour monthly evening program for children who will be attending kindergarten in the fall of 2022 and their parents or guardians. Enrolling kindergarten students must be 5, on or before September 1, 2022.

Wednesday, May 18 • 6:00 - 7:00 PM  
Call for more information:

- Beadle Lake Elementary .....269-441-3250
- Sonoma Elementary.....269-441-7800
- Wattles Park Elementary.....269-441-5850

[www.HarperCreek.net](http://www.HarperCreek.net)



All of us can be the eyes and ears of the community and ensure that our children are safe. Everyone—students, staff, parents, and community members—is encouraged to report potentially harmful or criminal acts using OK2SAY.

To submit a confidential tip:

- Call 855-565-2729
- Text 652729 (OK2SAY)
- Email [ok2say@mi.gov](mailto:ok2say@mi.gov)
- Download the Mobile App search OK2SAY
- Visit the OK2SAY website at [www.ok2say.com](http://www.ok2say.com)