



NOVEMBER 2020

FRIDLEY ELEMENTARY STUDENTS RECEIVE DICTIONARIES FROM ROTARY CLUB



Each year, the Fridley-Columbia Heights Rotarians visit Stevenson and Hayes Elementary School classrooms to deliver a special gift - dictionaries for every third grader at Fridley Public Schools. This year, due to COVID-19 visitor restrictions at each building, the Rotarians were unable to gift these dictionaries in person. However, this did not deter the Rotarians from continuing the longstanding tradition.



"While the pandemic guidelines prevented the Rotarians from directly interacting with students about the dictionaries, we believe that by placing the dictionaries in their hands through their educators, whether at home or in the classroom, they will facilitate student growth, improve their literacy and continue to be a key life-long resource for the students' ongoing development," said Tim Blank, Rotarian and Chair of the Dictionary Project.

Hybrid model third graders received *A Student's Dictionary* during an in-person learning day, while students participating in Fridley Online Academy picked up their dictionaries during a designated time.

FRIDLEY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS INDUCED INTO MINNESOTA HONOR SOCIETY



Fridley Public Schools is proud to recognize the 36 Fridley High School students who were recently inducted into the Minnesota Honor Society (MHS), a prestigious recognition of academic excellence. Students were selected to become members based on their academic achievement, service to the school and community, leadership, and character. To qualify for the application process, students must achieve a grade point average (GPA) of 3.4 or higher.

Congratulations to the newly inducted MHS members!

Nashat Ahmed, Crystal Analco Morales, Isaac Arika, Blake Berger, Kallista Berqual, Abhinav Bijlwan, Linnea Burdick, Karina Daniels-Carlson, Eric Dean, Ryken Farr, Meadow Gillispie, Cadence Hansen, Andrew Hill, Emily Hill, Ellie Hinnenkamp, Acharie Jefferson, Kunchok Khando, Aqsa Khatoon, Sophia Kriz, Vanessa Lor, Michele Martinez, Greta McCoy, Diane Mogrovejo, Hasna Mohamed, Micah Niewald, Sophie Pehl, Rodolfo Picon-Hidalgo, Kanhaseryroath Puy, Akshay Rai, Andrew Ramirez, Devika Ramnarine, Priya Rana, Kaylee Sharpe, Andrew Stevenson, Angelina Thao, and Michael Ude.

MHS members also include: Cassady Callahan, Ellen Delp, Kimberly Escobar Cabanzo (President), Nadwa Hussein, Michael Jensen (Treasurer), Ibrahim Khan (Secretary), Kevin Lee, Donovan Lewis, Mohammed Marwa, Olivia Olivera, Mackenzie Pogue (Vice President), Louisa Schirmacher, Claire Smith, Madison Thompson and Elliot Whitcomb.



The Minnesota Honor Society virtual ceremony was held on Oct. 7 to induct the 36 new Fridley High School members.



Ten of the 36 newly inducted Minnesota Honor Society members pose, socially distanced, with their MHS certificates.

FRIDLEY PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT EARNS SCHOOL FINANCE AWARD FROM MN DEPT OF EDUCATION

Fridley Public Schools has earned the 2020 Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) School Finance Award for the fourth consecutive year. The award recognizes accurate financial reporting for the 2019 fiscal year. The School Finance Award is awarded annually by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), Division of School Finance, and recognizes districts for meeting statutory deadlines for submission of audited financial data and reporting criteria. This criteria includes: timely submission of financial data and compliance with Minnesota Statutes, district fiscal health and accuracy in financial reporting. Congratulations to the Fridley Public Schools Business and Finance department for their diligent stewardship of district funds.



OCTOBER IS COLLEGE KNOWLEDGE MONTH!

It's **College Knowledge Month** at Fridley High School! Students received college and career presentations in their homeroom/advisory classes to learn about postsecondary options, planning, and more. Seniors received College Knowledge packets, which included information on college applications and deadlines, scholarship lists, FAFSA and free applications.





FRIDLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS CAPITAL PROJECTS LEVY 2020 LEVY RENEWAL

On Tuesday, November 3, 2020, Fridley Public Schools residents will be asked to renew an **existing capital projects levy**.

WHAT IS THE CAPITAL PROJECTS LEVY?

The Capital Projects Levy is a renewable, voter-approved levy that generates funds that our school district uses for deferred maintenance and to support technology needs. More specifically, the approved levy will generate funds that will cover costs related to:

- ☐ Deferred maintenance and renovation projects at various sites and facilities
- ☐ Technology devices for teaching and learning for students and staff
- ☐ Improved technology infrastructure to support online teaching and learning
- ☐ Renovate existing spaces to better meet the educational needs and safety of students.

LEVY RENEWAL FAST FACTS

- ☐ This is not a new levy. This is a renewal of an existing levy that has been in place since 2002.
- ☐ If passed, the levy will go into effect in 2022 and will be applicable for 10 years.
- ☐ No salaries, benefits, supplies or travel are paid from these funds.
- ☐ Fridley Public Schools' General Fund does not have the ability to support maintenance of facilities
- ☐ School districts are not funded 100 percent by local taxes. According to the 2019-20 FPS budget, 16 percent of the district's budget comes from local revenue, while 81 percent comes from state revenue and 3 percent from federal revenue.

In a 2019 Fridley Community Survey,

89% AGREE



Our schools are
a good investment

in the **FUTURE** of our children. 

FAQ

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: 2020 CAPITAL PROJECTS LEVY

Is this a new levy?

No, this is not a new levy. This is a request for continuation of funding already in place. The current capital projects levy, most recently passed in 2011, will expire in 2021.

Why does the district need a capital projects levy?

Funding from the capital projects levy allows the district to continue to perform regular and priority maintenance work in its buildings which average 60 years old in age. In addition, the levy funds technology devices for students and staff and technology infrastructure that supports teaching and learning.

What happens if the levy is not approved?

If the levy is not approved, the district will lose the funding it needs to support the maintenance of its aging buildings, and the funding needed to ensure that students and staff have adequate technology to access learning and teaching.

How many times has this levy been renewed?

This capital projects levy has been renewed once (in 2011) and was first passed in 2002.

How long will the renewed levy be in effect?

This is a 10 year levy. If renewed, it will be in effect until 2031.

What is the Fridley Public School District ratio of technological learning devices per student?

The ratio of devices per student is 1:1. The 1:1 ratio empowers students to access learning anytime, anywhere, including after school and when at home.

ELECTION VOTING

There are three ways that Fridley Public School District residents can cast their ballots in the 2020 General Election:

VOTE BY MAIL

Early voting by mail is encouraged, if you plan ahead. Voters should apply for an Absentee Ballot no later than 10 days before Election Day. For the General Election, your ballot will count as long as it is postmarked on or before Election Day (Nov. 3) and is received in the mail no later than seven days after Election Day (by Nov. 10).

VOTE IN PERSON

Early Voting by Absentee Ballot

You are required to complete an Absentee Ballot Application and receive your ballot by mail. You must return your ballot to Fridley City Hall or the Anoka County Government Center in person, no later than 3 pm on Election Day. You cannot drop your ballot off at your polling place on Election Day.

Vote In Person on Election Day

Fridley has 12 polling locations which will be open from 7 am to 8 pm on Tuesday, Nov. 3.



For more information on voting in the Election, please visit www.mnvotes.org or the City of Fridley website at: www.ci.fridley.mn.us



FRIDLEY SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATES

Three candidates are running for the Fridley School Board on November 3 during a special election. Residents will elect one Board member to serve in the vacant Board seat to complete the term ending in December 2021. Interim Board Member Gao Nue Xiong is seeking to retain her seat on the Board against challengers Hassan Ali and Ross Meisner.

BOARD CANDIDATE: **HASSAN ALI**

Hassan Ali, who has lived in the Fridley school district for 20 years, is running for Fridley School Board. He works as a clinical social worker at Peaceful Adult Day Center in Fridley, and said he has always had a passion for helping people. Ali has two children currently enrolled in the Fridley school district, and his oldest, Mohamed, is a recent Class of 2019 Fridley High School graduate. His children, Murtesa and Yasmin, both attend Fridley High School, and his youngest, Munir attends middle school in Richfield. Ali also raised 16 adopted children in his household, all of whom attended Fridley Public Schools. According to Ali, he is running for the Board seat because he

wants to serve the community, and believes in the importance of ensuring that every child receives a quality education to become successful. He added that he would be able to serve on the Board as an ethical, compassionate, accountable and fair member. Ali praises the incredible talent in Fridley students, and is a fan of the district's academic programs, athletics and fine arts. He added, "In a perfect world, I would like to create an environment where our students can find successful careers right here in our community. I think we would all like to see our children go away to college or trade schools, and come back here to the City of Fridley to raise their families."

Ali wants Fridley families to know that he values the voice of the community, and is always willing to listen to ideas and opinions. "It is always important that, when making strategic decisions, many ideas and opinions are considered." He added, "It is also important that we consider the perspectives of our students. It is important we understand how our work effects them and the people we want them to become."



BOARD CANDIDATE: **ROSS MEISNER**

Ross Meisner is a 20-year Fridley school district community member. He works as the Chief Commercial Officer at Basil Systems. Meisner said he was interested in running for the Fridley School Board because he has always been engaged in the community, and has been looking for additional ways to contribute to the city and its residents. "The school board is a place where many of my skills and interests intersect: I highly value public education, I have experience managing the strategy and finances of organizations, I'm committed to STEM and arts education, I have six years of prior school board leadership, and I want to help keep Fridley a desirable place to live,

work, and raise a family." He added, "My kids are teens now and I have more time available, so I'm willing to step up, apply my knowledge and energy, and help make Fridley Schools as great as they can be."

Meisner has two children, Anna and Samuel, who currently attend Fridley High School. He comes from a family of educators, and with two children enrolled in the district, he said he is motivated to ensure every child, with their unique needs and goals, gets a high-quality education that will prepare them for success in life. Additionally, Meisner said on top of economic troubles and coro-

navirus fears, the community may be worried that education can be disrupted. Recognizing that teachers are jumping through hoops every day to prepare for a school year unlike any other, Meisner said he will apply his technical and healthcare and business background to help analyze all options and ensure that the district continues to do everything possible for students.



INCUMBENT INTERIM BOARD MEMBER: **GAO NUE XIONG**

Gao Nue Xiong was selected by the Fridley School Board to serve as its interim Board member until the end of December 2020. Xiong said she was interested in running for the Fridley School Board because she is passionate about public education and wants to help the Fridley school district to fulfill its priorities by contributing her voice to school policy and procedure decisions. She is a four-year resident of the school district, and said that her variety of perspectives contribute to her ability to serve on the Board. She has three children who are enrolled in Fridley schools - two children, Penelope and Wyatt, attend R.L. Stevenson Elementary and her oldest, Tristan, attends Fridley Middle School. Her youngest, Luna, will be attending Fridley Preschool in September 2021.

Xiong works as an academic advisor at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, where she serves students who are enrolled in the elementary and arts teacher education programs. Through her career, Xiong brings an understanding of the process that teachers go through in order to teach our children.

Xiong strongly believes in educational equity, and she knows that it is vital work to close opportunity gaps and afford equitable opportunities to all students. She approaches the work of supporting student achievement by continually asking: "Are we utilizing best practices in our policies and programming to give each student an equitable chance at succeeding and excelling in school?" Xiong values the benefit of having multiple perspectives at the decision-making table, as this leads to more

equitable policies and procedures, which can better serve the increasingly diverse student body.

"I do not take this role lightly, and I will do my best to serve our community," said Xiong. "I will honor and listen to all voices. I will work in partnership with our administration to make the best possible decisions to support our students, staff, and families. I am honored and humbled for the opportunity to serve as interim school board member, and I look forward to serving long-term, if given the opportunity."





FRIDLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS DISTRICT BULLETIN

International Baccalaureate World Schools

NOVEMBER 2020

FRIDLEY HIGH SCHOOL KEY CLUB HIGHLIGHT!

FHS Key Club continues its mission to serve the community



Building care, compassion and character, the Fridley High School Key Club is continuing its efforts to brighten the days of community members through service. On September 22, the Key Club students made fall-themed door decorations for local nursing home, Landmark of Fridley. Students put together 65 decorations with autumn "leaves" and fall greetings. The students decided to continue this project every month for local nursing homes.

"It was nice to do some hands-on craftmaking, and to be able to do something to help add some great color to the Landmark of Fridley and brighten up its residents' day!" said Key clubber and FHS junior Andrew Stevenson (pictured above).

The Key Club is a student-led organization that works to make a positive impact as they serve others in their schools and communities. Throughout the month of October, the students have several projects planned, including highway clean-up, collecting pop tabs, virtual Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF and football clean-up.



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UPCOMING DATES

NOVEMBER 3

NO SCHOOL FOR ALL STUDENTS

Staff Development Day, Election Day

NOVEMBER 11

NO SCHOOL FOR ALL STUDENTS

Evaluation/Planning Day

NOVEMBER 26-27

NO SCHOOL FOR ALL STUDENTS

Thanksgiving Holiday Break

STAY UP-TO-DATE!

Check out the District's Online Calendar for up-to-date events and information. Visit www.fridleyschools.org > navigate to: STUDENTS & FAMILIES > CALENDAR



ELECTION DAY: NOVEMBER 3RD

Remember to vote on or before
November 3, 2020!



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- ▷ The Capital Projects Levy is a renewable, voter-approved levy that generates funds that our school district uses for deferred maintenance and to support technology needs.
- ▷ This is a renewal of an existing levy and not a new tax.
- ▷ This levy has been in place since 2002.

SEE INSIDE FOR MORE INFORMATION

FRIDLEY SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION



Hassan Ali



Ross Meisner



Gao Nue Xiong

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Read more about our candidates inside!

FHS STUDENTS INDUCTED INTO MINNESOTA HONOR SOCIETY

Congratulations to the 36 Fridley High School students who were inducted into the Minnesota Honor Society, a prestigious recognition of academic excellence!

**SEE INSIDE FOR
THE FULL STORY!**

