



# 88 MUSTANG MINUTES WINTER 2020 ISSUE



75 1250th Street  
Middletown, IL 62666

<http://www.nhm88.com>  
Twitter: @NHM88\_Supt

Phone: (217) 445-2421  
[mcampbell@nhm88.com](mailto:mcampbell@nhm88.com)

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## Dates to Remember

- Monday, December 23 — Winter Break Begins
- Monday, January 6 — School Resumes
- Friday, January 10 — 2nd Quarter Awards Program @ 8:30 am in the NH-M Gym
- Monday, January 20 — No School for MLK Day
- Friday, April 3 — 1:30 Dismissal to begin Spring Break

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## SUPERINTENDENT'S CORNER

As the holiday season ends, I hope that all of our students and families enjoyed time with their family and friends in celebration of the holidays. Now as the new year begins, it is always a time for all of us to reflect on our past year and to set some goals for the 2020.

This past year Illinois schools were challenged with what has been termed the "Legislative Storm". During the fall legislative session, the state government pass 594 of 600 proposed bills and over 100 of those laws impacted schools. Some of these changes impacted rules regarding the Open Meetings Act, Freedom of Information Act, Threat Assessment protocols and procedures in schools, and the legalization of cannabis and the resulting impact on the school environment, employee regulations, and medical requirements. The district is working hard to create and implement policy and procedures to comply with these new legislative requirements. The overarching impact will be communicated to the community through the District Parent and Student Handbook and the publication of our online Board Policy Manual.

We had some great events during the first half of the school year. We had a great turnout for Grandparent's Day with 67 grandparents in attendance and Dunkin Donuts in Lincoln donating the breakfast. During Fire Safety week we hosted a first responder's breakfast, had a medical evacuation helicopter land at the school for the students to observe, and a field trip to the Middletown Fire Station which included a

demonstration of the fire equipment. These two events combined with some of our traditional events like the Veteran's Day Breakfast and Assembly, our Holiday concert, the Halloween events, and some of our student field trips made for a fun and busy fall.

Now, we are starting the second half of the year and many things will be happening. Students will again be engaging in the required state testing which will ultimately measure the success of our school. The assessments include the Illinois Assessment of Readiness, which last year replaced the PARCC exam, and the Illinois Science Assessment, which will be given to our 8th grade, 5th grade, and for the first time our 3rd grade students.

We continue our focus in the coming months of implementing the 5 Year Strategic Plan, working on reading and math skills with the goals of getting all children performing at grade-level skills, and building structures and procedures to build a positive productive culture and climate. We invite our community to engage with the school through a variety of ways like attending school events, staying informed through social media and the school website, and finally contact your child's teachers to find out ways you can support the education process for your child.

*"Keep Calm and Mustang On!"*

Respectfully yours,  
Marc Campbell, Superintendent

## STAY INFORMED

If you are looking for information fast regarding events occurring at NH-M, information on procedures, or forms, or extracurricular activities. There are three simple things to do

- 1) Check the website at: [www.nhm88.com](http://www.nhm88.com).
- 2) Follow us on Facebook at: New Holland-Middletown ESD 88
- 3) Follow me on Twitter: @NHM88\_Supt
- 4) Google Classroom Pages: Each teacher will be maintaining a Google Classroom page which can be accessed through the district site.
- 5) One Call Now System: Throughout the year the district will be sending out approximately 25 parent updates through the robo-call system. Please make sure your phone numbers are up to date.

## NEW HOLLAND-MIDDLETOWN ESD #88 ROBOTICS TEAM RECEIVES \$500 GRANT FROM BAYER FUND

### TEAM RECEIVES FUNDS TO SUPPORT STEM EDUCATION THROUGH FIRST® ROBOTICS COMPETITION



Students at New Holland-Middletown ESD #88 have received grant funding for their robotics team as they work to enhance their skills in science and engineering. Bayer Fund, a philanthropic arm of Bayer, recently awarded a one-time \$500 grant to Mustangs Robotics Team to support their participation in the FIRST Robotics program.

The Mustangs Robotics Team will use support from their Bayer Fund grant to participate in FIRST Robotics educational programs and competitions. FIRST enables teams of students to compete with others in building, designing and programming their own robots to perform preassigned tasks, giving students a chance to get involved with real-world engineering.

“Students who participate in FIRST Robotics programming learn STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) skills and become experienced problem solvers,” said Michelle Insko, Senior Manager, Community Engagement. “Bayer Fund prioritizes the investment in hands-on learning experiences for students like those at New Holland-Middletown to encourage their development into

future scientists, engineers, and computer programmers.”

Ms. Meszar will be leading the team of students this first year as they learn the program and begin to compete with other schools. The intention is for the program to grow over time to multiple teams at our school. The organization of the team is another step in our school’s commitment to STEM education and giving our students access to technology and the ability to develop the skills to help them become career ready as they move forward in their lives.

Bayer Fund’s sponsorship of FIRST Robotics teams continues the nonprofit’s intentional support of programs that improve STEM education. Over the past five years, Bayer Fund has contributed over \$40 million to STEM outreach efforts.

#### *About Bayer Fund*

Bayer Fund is a nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening the communities where Bayer customers and employees live and work by providing funding for food and nutrition, education and community development projects.

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## STAR 360—ACADEMIC INDICATOR

STAR 360 is an assessment given to the students four times a year for both math and literacy. The assessment is completed online and takes about 30 minutes per assessment. The assessment is also adaptive. In other words, the test gets progressively more challenging for each individual child as long as they continue to answer the questions correctly. Once they begin to incorrectly answer the questions the program adapts until a progress determination can be made by the program. Ultimately, the program is designed to track your child’s growth and improvement throughout their time in school. Teachers are provided with data to identify skill deficit areas to support each individual student.

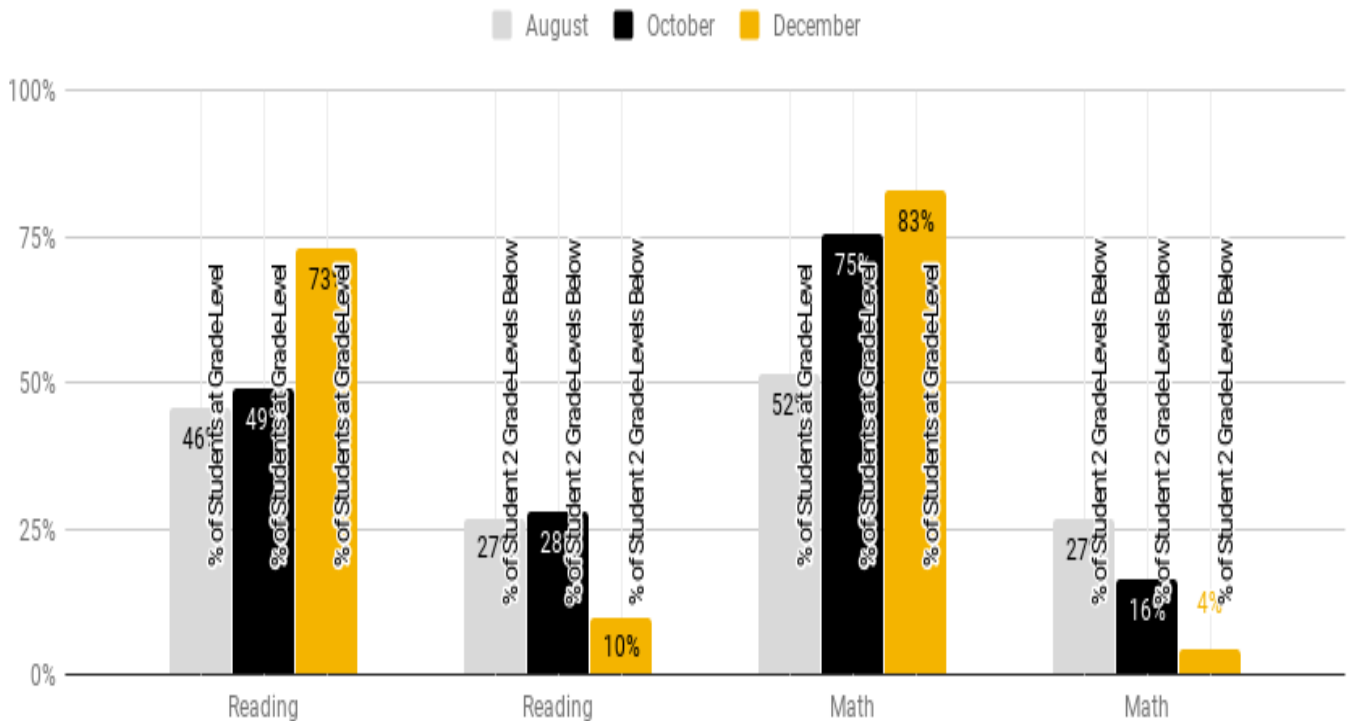
- Below is a graph outlining the academic progress of our school as measured by STAR 360 during the 19/20 school year. In August, 43% of our students were reading at grade-level as measured by STAR. In October, this number improved to 46% and then in December jumped to 73% of our students were reading at grade-level. Additionally as important, the number of students reading two grade-levels below their grade decreased from 27% in August to 10% in December. Both of these data points are trending in a positive direction.

Math has also been a point of skill growth emphasis for our school. In December 83% of our students scored at grade-level as measured by STAR 360. This was an improvement from 52% and 75% respectively in August and October. Again the same trend is observed in students performing two grade-levels or more below in math. In December only 4% of our students were two grade-levels or more below in math skills which was an improvement from 16% in October and 27% in August. Both of these data points are trending in a good direction and represents the efforts and hard work of our staff and students.

It is important to note that when we administer these assessments to students that we use this data to support and alter our academic programming at the school, grade, and individual student level. Parents should encourage their children to do their absolute best. Individual student STAR Progress Reports will be sent home with report cards in January.

## STAR 360—ACADEMIC PROGRESS DATA

Percentage of Students at Grade-Level: 19/20 SY



## UP COMING EVENTS

One of our primary goals with the newsletter publication is to notify the public of upcoming events at the school. Below is a summary of the scheduled events at this time. We hope to see you at the events.

- January 20: MLK Birthday—No School
- February 6: LCHS Music Tour & Rock Springs Nature Visit
- February 14: Valentine’s Day, Early Dismissal & Health Expo (Tentative)
- February 17: No School for President’s Day
- February 19: Board of Education Meeting in the Library at 7:00 pm
- February 20: History Fair—School Judging
- February 21: Hockey Field Trip & Solo and Ensemble Contest
- March 2: Illinois Assessment of Readiness Begins & Track Season Begins
- March 6: End of the 3rd Quarter
- March 12: 3rd Quarter Awards Ceremony in the Gym at 8:30 am
- March 9: Illinois Science Assessment Begins
- March 13: Teacher Institute Day —No School
- March 16 – 20: Arts Education Week
- March 18: Board of Education Meeting in the Library at 7:00 pm
- March 21: Regional History Fair
- March 24: Logan County Music Festival
- April 3: 1:30 Dismissal to begin Spring Break
- April 13: School Resumes



**NH-M #88**  
*Learning Is Our #1 Priority!*  
Current Resident

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