

NORTH ALLEGHENY



SCHOOL DISTRICT

Your Schools

Community Newsletter and District Report Card • 2008-2009



Superintendent's Message

District Report Card

The Financial Picture



Celebrating



Dear Residents:

This school year marks the 60th anniversary of the North Allegheny School District and we can't help but let our Tiger Pride show! This has been another banner year for the North Allegheny School District with its philosophy of "Great Expectations...The Best Is Yet to Come!" As you look through *Your Schools*, you will note the tremendous achievements of our students, across all domains...the arts, athletics, and academics. As community members, you have supported our School District in so many varied ways. Without your steadfast belief in what we can do for our children **TOGETHER**, none of these results would have been possible. Our Strategic Plan continues to guide our work and as you read through this edition of *Your Schools*, I am sure you will agree that North Allegheny is recognized as being among the best districts across the country.

You will see evidence in our annual **Report Card** that the North Allegheny students are achieving at very high levels of academic performance. In 2008, North Allegheny students surpassed the state and national mean scores by large margins on the SAT, which is an indicator of a student's ability to do college-level work. In fact, this year, they scored at the highest level in the history of the District in critical reading, mathematics, and writing. The District's composite score on the SAT for this year increased by 20 points, as compared to last year, to a composite score of 1685. The *Pittsburgh Business Times* also recognized the **high academic achievements** of NASD in its annual educational issue when it named North Allegheny as the fourth highest performing District out of 501 districts in the state of Pennsylvania. **Sustained levels of excellence** have been achieved by the District, and this year both *Newsweek* and *U.S. News & World Report* named NASH to be among the best high schools in America. None of these achievements could be possible without the full support of **YOU**, our community residents. We thank you for your continued involvement with our schools and continued support of our programs for the students.

When a school district holds great expectations and believes that the best opportunities are yet to unfold, wonderful things can happen for children. Because of the community's support, our arts and athletics programs are also hailed as **among the finest in America**. New awards and honors abounded in these areas this year. For the first time, the Presidential Inaugural Committee and the Armed Forces Inaugural Committee selected the North Allegheny High School Marching

“When a school district holds great expectations and believes that the best opportunities are still yet to unfold, wonderful things can happen for children.”

Table of Contents

Band to represent the state of Pennsylvania in the 56th **Presidential Inaugural Parade** in Washington, D.C. The band had to audition through a two-tiered process before being selected as the only band from Pennsylvania to march at the Presidential Inauguration down Pennsylvania Avenue. In addition to that honor, the NAMM Foundation reflected upon what makes a **great music program** in schools and determined that it is the entire community that builds the program. With that in mind, the NAMM Foundation named North Allegheny to be one of the **“Best Communities in America for Music Education.”** They looked at all of the available resources and support within our surrounding community and recognized that YOUR community commitment to music education sets NA apart from other districts. At the same time, *Downbeat Magazine* named the North Allegheny Senior High School Honors Wind Ensemble as the Best Classical High School Musical Group in their annual Student Music Awards program, which is an international awards program. Likewise, the NA Athletic Department won the **Management Science Associates Sports Cup Quad A Championship** for having the overall best athletic program in Western Pennsylvania. This represents the fifth consecutive year that NA has achieved this status, a feat not attained by any other District.

As you read through *Your Schools*, you will also note that NA takes fiscal responsibility very seriously. For the second consecutive year, North Allegheny **reduced the millage rate** for the community, while at the same time being able to provide the most exemplary educational opportunities for our children. If we do not need to ask the community for additional funding, we feel it is our obligation and responsibility as **good fiscal stewards** to return the funding to the community, which is what the Board of School Directors did for the last two years in reducing taxes.

When I reflect over the past year and think about what makes a good school district a GREAT school district, I recognize that it is “people”...people like you who, over the 60-year history of North Allegheny, have supported us and contributed to our success in so many ways. **Our successes are YOUR successes**. YOU are part of the North Allegheny Family that is now entering its 61st year of excellence. With people like you supporting us in the community with Great Expectations...The Best Is Still Yet to Come!

Thank you for 60 years of excellence as part of our North Allegheny Family.

Patricia P. Green, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Letter from
 Our Superintendent 2

The Good News 4

NASD Report Card
 2007-2008 6

Class of 2008
 Making Us Proud 15

Distinguished Achievement
 Awards 2007-2008 16

A Timeline - 60 years 17

Budget Highlights
 2008-2009 18

Annual Notices 20

- Special Education
- Pupil Services
- Location of Records
- ESL Program
- AHERA
- Diversity Policy
- Release of Info to
 Military Recruiters
- Pesticide Use
- Smoke-Free Policy
- Dog Walking

School Board Meeting
 Schedule 24



Cover photo taken by Roslyn Munsch

The Good News is getting around . . .

In other sections of this publication, you will find information about the remarkable academic achievement of North Allegheny School District students at every grade level, the outstanding overall performance of the graduating class of 2008 and the wide range of individual accomplishments of students as celebrated by the School Board's Distinguished Achievement Awards Program. Here are a few of the highlights of the year in terms of other accolades and honors for the District and our programs...

NA Named Best Community for Music Education

The North Allegheny School District was recognized as one of the 2008 "Best Communities for Music Education" by the NAMM Foundation, the charitable branch of the Association of the International Music Products industry. Only 110 school districts across the U.S. were recognized on the 2008 list. Those that were included "exemplify community commitment to include music education as part of a quality education for all children."

In conducting their annual search for the best communities, the NAMM Foundation is joined by advisory organizations in the fields of music and education: Americans for the Arts, League of American Orchestras, The Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation, The Metropolitan Opera Guild, Music for All, Music Teachers National Association, National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts, National PTA, Yamaha Corporation of America, and VH1 Save The Music Foundation.

NA High School Marching Band Selected to Represent Pennsylvania in the 56th Presidential Inaugural Parade

The North Allegheny High School Marching Band proudly represented the state of Pennsylvania in the 56th Presidential Inaugural Parade in Washington, D.C., on January 20, 2009. "A New Birth of Freedom" was the theme for the Inauguration. The theme commemorated the 200th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth. The parade took place on Pennsylvania Avenue, starting at the Capitol and ending at the White House.

It was reported that nearly 1400 applications were received by the Inauguration Committee for the honor of participating in this event. The North Allegheny High School Marching Band was the only high school marching band selected from Pennsylvania and one of only 19 marching bands in the entire parade.

"We are very proud of the fact that our band was selected to represent Pennsylvania. This is an enormous honor," said Dr. Patricia P. Green, Superintendent of Schools. "It was a wonderful experience for the students in our band to be a part of this historic time – one they will remember their entire lives. It also reinforces once again that the substantial, ongoing investment that NA has made in its music and fine arts program has created one of the top programs in the country."

31st Annual Student Music International Awards Program

The North Allegheny Senior High School Honors Wind Ensemble was named the High School Classical Group winner in the 31st Annual Student Music Awards Program sponsored by *Downbeat Magazine*, an internationally recognized publication for music that is issued on a monthly basis. Schools from around the country, Canada and Austria submitted entries for this year's program. An experienced and sophisticated panel reviews each submission, considering the following criteria: overall sound, presence/authority, interpretation of idiom, improvisation/creativity, technique, intonation, phrasing, dynamics, accurate rhythm/time and material. A winner is not guaranteed in this competition. If the panel feels that no submission has adequately met the defined criteria, there is no declared winner. This fact ensures that only the finest bands in the world are recognized.

What Parents Want Award



The North Allegheny School District received its 17th consecutive *SchoolMatch* 'What Parents Want' Award in 2008. Only sixteen percent of the nation's 15,571 public school districts have been recognized with this award for meeting the needs of families choosing schools.

SchoolMatch, an independent, nationwide service, helps corporate employee families find schools that match the needs of their children. To assist in the collection of the data used to evaluate school districts, more than seven million parents accessed *SchoolMatch* services. The parents used a variety of website locations including national, regional and local real estate firms; various multiple listing services; chambers of commerce; economic development offices; and other family oriented sites.

Criteria used for award selection include competitive academic test scores, national recognition for excellence, competitive teacher salaries, above average instructional expenditures, small class size and a variety of programs offered at the secondary level.

NA'S 2007-2008 SAT Composite Score is Highest Ever!

NA's mean composite SAT score (critical reading, math and writing) for 2007-2008 is 1685, indicating an all time high combined score for our District. This score is 20 points higher than the 2006-2007 score.

The SAT is an important and valued indicator of student achievement because nearly every college in America accepts the SAT as a part of its admissions process. While high school grades are a very useful indicator of how students will perform in college, there is great variation in grading standards and course rigor within and across high schools. The SAT is the benchmark standardized assessment of the critical reading, mathematical reasoning and writing skills that students have developed over time and that they need to be successful in college. NA's students continue to demonstrate a high level of academic achievement through their exceptional performance on this nationally referenced exam.



North Allegheny Senior High School Honors Wind Ensemble



Pittsburgh Business Times Applauds NA's Academic Achievement

PITTSBURGH BUSINESSTIMES

2007-2013

One of the primary reasons that *The Pittsburgh Business Times (PBT)* initiated an annual *Guide to Western Pennsylvania Schools* in the spring of 2006, according to feature editor Ethan Lott, is to help parents considering a move to the region sort through the myriad of information available about the schools in this area and to provide them with a way to measure the performance of individual districts and schools based upon several formulas and rankings. The *PBT* acknowledges that other factors besides test scores need to be considered to understand a district's overall performance, but they start with a hard look at student achievement as reflected by scores on the required Pennsylvania System of State Assessments (PSSA) tests.

The North Allegheny School District is very proud of its rankings in every edition of this publication since its inception. Highlights of the most recent edition included these accolades for North Allegheny:

- NA was recognized as being #4 out of 105 school districts in the seven-county region of western Pennsylvania;
- NA ranked #8 out of 498 school districts statewide;
- NASH (grade 11) ranked #5 out of 123 local high schools;
- NA middle schools (grade 8) ranked #2 (IMS), #4 (MMS) and #12 (CMS) out of 140 local middle schools.

Newsweek and U.S. News & World Report Rank NASH Among the Elite

There are two annual periodicals published on the national front that evaluate the nation's high schools, seeking to determine the best of the best based upon their individual sets of criteria. To rank highly on either one of these lists is a coveted honor.

NASH was recognized by *Newsweek* as being one of America's 2008 "Best High Schools." *Newsweek* considers the schools on their list to be the top five percent of the country's public high schools.

In addition, NASH ranked in the top three percent of all high schools when it received a Silver Medal from *U.S. News & World Report* on their annual list of "America's Best High Schools." A total of 18,790 schools from 40 states were evaluated on three criteria: state proficiency standards, measuring of benchmarks, and degree to which they provide college preparation.

NA High Schools Recognized by Several Outstanding National Programs

In the North Allegheny School District, great things happen every day in every school. It is the consistently outstanding learning experiences that students enjoy throughout their K-12 years that culminate in the kinds of honors and accolades that have recently been bestowed on programs at NASH and NAI:

- NASH was recognized – for the second year in a row – as one of the nation's "Top 100 Schools" in speech and debate activities by the National Forensic League. NASH ranked 68 out of 2,700 schools nationwide.
- Both the NASH Student Council and the NAI Student Council were recognized by the National Association of Student Councils in their 2008 National Student Council Awards Program. Only five Pennsylvania High Schools, including NASH and NAI, have achieved recognition in the 2008 program. The NAI Student Council was also awarded the 2008 *National Gold Council of Excellence Award*. NAI is one of only fifteen schools in the U.S. to achieve this award for two consecutive years.
- NASH has earned a National Distinguished Unit Award for the academic year 2007-2008. The Distinguished Unit Award recognizes Air Force JROTC units that have performed above and beyond normal expectations and have distinguished themselves through outstanding service to their school and community. It is limited to the best of the best of our nation's 879 Air Force Junior ROTC units. This is the fourth consecutive year that NA has won this award.
- The Pennsylvania School Press Association (PSPA) has again honored the NASH Yearbook, *Safari*, with an All-State Award. The All-State Award is the highest honor that the PSPA presents to member publications. This is the fifteenth consecutive year that *Safari* has received this prestigious award. In addition, *Safari* received a 2008 Silver Crown from the Columbia Scholastic Press Association. Only thirty-one high school yearbooks from across the United States were recognized by Columbia this year.
- For the fifth consecutive year, the NA Athletic Department won the Management Science Associates Sports Cup Quad A Championship for having the best overall athletic program in the Western Pennsylvania Quad A classification.

Our Mission . . .

. . . is to educate and develop all students to become confident, life-long learners and responsible citizens within a changing, global society by delivering an outstanding educational experience through a comprehensive array of opportunities in the pursuit of excellence.

Our Vision . . .

. . . is to be a safe and student-centered community partnership marked by high expectations, a challenging curriculum, and a shared commitment to educational excellence through rich and varied learning experiences.