

Points of Pride

2011-2012

▪Central and Northern High Schools were named to the America's Best High Schools list by the Washington Post.

▪The new Central High School opened in time for the 2011-2012 school year. More than 1,000 parents, students, teachers, alumni, and community members attended the grand opening event in August.

▪The District debuted, "The Portage Connection," an alumni electronic magazine. The publication is one of the first public high school alumni magazines in the state and one of few of its kind nationwide. As of June 2011, the first two issues have been viewed more than 60,000 times.

▪High School science teacher Daniall Poulsen was recognized as the 2011 Outstanding Earth Science Teacher by the Michigan Earth Science Teachers Association.

▪With the approval of a grant that has the potential to be worth \$600,000 from the Confucius Institute at Western Michigan University, PPS becomes the first district in Michigan to have officially authorized Confucius classrooms, offering students at the elementary and high school levels early exposure to Chinese language and culture.

▪Northern High School's Directed Learning Room was awarded by the Ready, Set, Success recognition program for the successful strategies implemented by the school improvement team. The Ready, Set, Success program is made possible by the Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals and MEEMIC Insurance Company.

▪The District Business Office received the Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 6th consecutive year by the Association of School Business Officials and the Certificate of Achievement in Excellence in Financial Reporting from for the 5th consecutive year by the Government Finance Officers Association.



2010-2011

Faculty Achievements

▪Laurel Scheidt, Portage Northern forensics coach, was chosen as "2011 Coach of the Year" by Michigan Speech Coaches, Inc.

▪Kathy Mirakovits, Northern High School science teacher, won the "2011 Distinguished Service to Physics Education Award" from the Michigan Section of the American Association of Physics Teachers.

▪Northern High's retired teacher and current assistant Forensics coach Jim Menchinger was inducted into the National Forensics League Hall of Fame.

Student & School Achievements

▪More than 90% of our high school seniors pursued college immediately following graduation.

- Northern High School's Forensics team took the State Championship for the 10th consecutive year, and the 13th state title in the history of Northern's forensics program, more than any other Class A school in Michigan. This title brought the District's state championship total to 49.
- Northern and Central High Schools had 4 students selected as National Merit Finalists.
- Northern High School's Media Center was selected as the top school library in Michigan, and among the top 35 nationwide by the American Association of School Libraries.
- Two teams from Central Middle School placed 2nd and 3rd at the 2011 National Transportation and Civil Engineering Bridge Building Competition sponsored by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials.
- West Middle School was ranked in the 98.9 percentile statewide based on math and English scores on state assessment tests administered from 2007-2009.
- Central Middle School won national recognition for a third year in a row for its Character Counts Program by the National Forum for Education.

District Achievements

- Parents gave the District a 95% approval rating for academic reputation.
- MEAP scores remained high; over 90% of students in grades 3-8 tested proficient in reading and math.
- The new Lake Center Elementary opened in time for this school year, featuring a public dedication on September 9. The two-story school shares the same design as 12th Street Elementary which opened in the fall of 2009.
- “The Commons” at Northern High School was completed in time for the start of the 2010-2011 school year. The new multi-level space features the new entrance to the school, state-of-the-art cafeteria, administrative offices, and a “commons” space for students to gather. Renovations and construction at the school were completed in August 2011.



- The District began weekly Spanish language classes at all eight elementary schools this school year.
- Instructional initiatives included:
 - Implementation of Professional Learning Communities, Differentiated Instruction, and Response to Intervention which are capacity-building frameworks and strategies to ensure that all students learn at the highest level possible.
 - Identification and training of District-wide Differentiation Trainers and Data Coaches at each school.
 - Implementation of K-9 Literacy training, interventions, and programming.
- Academic programs and curriculum implemented include: Y-5 mathematics and reading program, Elementary Spanish and Chinese, K-7 Science curriculum, K-12 Media curriculum, K-8 Social Studies curriculum, and expanded summer school programming to include reading and math grades K-8.
- The District's two foundations, the Portage Education Foundation and the Portage Athletic Foundation, provided more than \$67,000 to support academic and athletic programs for which there were no District funds.