



EDGAR SCHOOL DISTRICT

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

FALL 2023



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203 E Birch St.
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COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

Edgar students had a great start to the school year, thanks to help from the community.

In August, families who were eligible were invited to attend a 'Fill A Backpack, Fill A Need' event sponsored by the United Way. A total of 67 families and 123 students were able to pick up a backpack full of free school supplies courtesy of the program. Women of Hope, from a local church, also provided an additional ten free backpacks with school supplies.

And since school supplies don't last forever, a \$200 donation from the Rib Falls Lions Club was used to purchase additional school supplies to be stored at school and given to students when they run out of them.

Edgar Elementary School principal Lisa Witt said about one fourth of District families participated in the programs.

"It's expensive to get school supplies," Witt said, estimating that supplies cost \$50 to \$100 per student. "I think the families look forward to it and appreciate it."

In addition to the backpacks, the Edgar PTO also helps support students throughout the year by donating money for snacks, playground equipment and classroom field trips. They also sponsor a Family Fun Night.

With cooler weather on the way, another community based program funded by local businesses donated \$2,000 to purchase winter coats, hats, gloves and boots for students who need them. "Families need help," Witt said. "This is just taking care of our kids."



Nearly 200 family members enjoyed September Family Fun Night designed to help students "belong" to our school community!

WE EDGAR!

Edgar High School Students Have Access to Variety of Co-Curricular Programming

At Edgar, we believe that a strong involvement in both academic and co-curricular programming encourages students to challenge themselves as they are given opportunities to question, collaborate, and lead.



Students who participate in co-curricular activities are **more likely to be engaged in school** and less likely of school failure and dropping out.



Edgar High School offers **11 clubs and activities** ranging from Art Club to Ski Club to Student Council.



Edgar High School offers **9 athletic programs** for students to learn important values including teamwork and collaboration.



84% of students at Edgar High School participate in one or more activities in school.

EHS SENIOR WORKS TO RAISE MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS AMONG FARMERS

Erica Socha, a senior at Edgar High School and the president of FFA (Future Farmers of America), has an ambitious vision for her club this year. She wants to help raise awareness of mental health issues among farmers.



In the past, the club had an annual Farmer Appreciation Day where EHS FFA members bring breakfast to local farmers and help them with chores. This year, Socha plans to expand the effort over multiple days in order to provide more assistance and resources for area farming families.

Socha thought of the idea this summer when she attended The Washington Leadership Conference sponsored by the national FFA organization. The conference draws students from all over the country and focuses on

helping them to develop leadership skills. As part of the event, students develop a 'Living To Serve' plan which is meant to empower students to make a positive impact in their community.

"It was an amazing experience," said Socha. "It was really cool to see different people from all over the country."

She also appreciated learning more about major community and global issues such as homelessness and the scarcity of water in many places in Africa. She thinks the skills she learned this summer will be of great assistance in her future career. Socha plans to study student agriculture education at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls and she plans to continue her involvement with FFA after she graduates. She is hoping to become an officer in the state FFA organization.

"The leadership skills, the people skills, the communication skills I've learned will have a role in what I do after high school," she said.



"The leadership skills, people skills, and communication skills I've learned will have a role in what I do after high school."

~Erica Socha, EHS senior.



Providing Opportunities for Edgar Students: This year, 70% of Edgar students attended summer school classes which were designed to enrich and extend their learning.



MASTERING MATH IN MIDDLE SCHOOL

A math initiative launched five years ago at Edgar Middle School is proving to be a winning formula for student success.

Middle School math teacher Katie Haas said the initiative has changed the way staff teach math in order to give students a deeper understanding of concepts and principles. It has also led to an increase in standardized test scores. The percentage of 6-8th grade students scoring at the proficient level or above on the state Forward assessment has risen from 41.9% in 2018-19 to 54.5% in 2022-23.

Haas said the most recent 4th and 5th grade math scores on the Forward assessment were the highest ever for the District.

“After all these years of work, it’s exciting to see our students’ growth. It is helping our students think like mathematicians and work like mathematicians.”

~Katie Haas, Middle School math teacher



A NEW, SAFE PLACE TO PAINT AT EDGAR HIGH SCHOOL

New this year in Edgar High School’s Technology Education Department is a large well-ventilated paint booth where students and staff can safely work on finishing wood and metal projects.

Agriculture teacher Matt Reinders, who shares the space with Technology Education teacher Greg Streit, said before the paint booth was installed, there was limited ventilation ability in the facility. Painting and finishing was done outdoors or indoors behind a plastic curtain with a portable device to remove particulates from the air. Neither method was highly effective. “Our concern was for the safety of students and staff,” said Reinders, adding that improved ventilation had been one of the department’s top budget requests for several years.

The project was one of the capital improvement items included in the District’s successful April 2022 operating referendum. The 24 foot by 24 foot booth was installed this summer and cost approximately \$230,000. The booth has a heated air exchanger and also vents out the side. Reinders said students and staff are excited about the new booth.

“It allows us to work together and it will improve the quality of the projects,” he said.

Efforts to overhaul the math program began after Haas received a state Herb Kohl Teacher Fellowship and grant in 2017. Teachers began by meeting monthly to go through the curriculum and its strategies and identify ways to broaden student understanding by adding real life applications and manipulatives, among other things. Coaches from the Mathematics Institute of Wisconsin worked with teachers during training sessions in the summer of 2019.

During the 2019-20 school year, teachers met monthly to identify specific math teaching practices. The Mathematics Institute also continued its coaching sessions.

The initiative continued with implementation of a new math curriculum that was accompanied by additional teacher training. The middle school was the first to be introduced to the new curriculum three years ago followed by elementary students. This is the first year of implementation for the kindergarten through first graders.

A key to the initiative’s success has been students’ receptiveness. “It’s exciting to see the deep rich conversations we’re having in the classrooms,” said Haas.

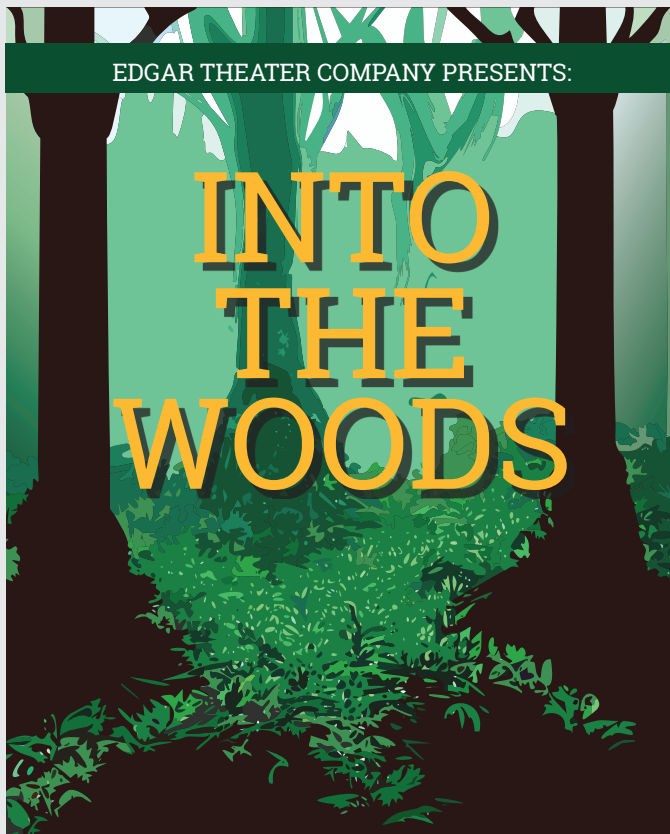




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203 E Birch St | Edgar, WI 54426
www.edgar.k12.wi.us

The Edgar School District provides a safe and positive environment and is committed to continuous improvement for all students, staff and community members.



INTO THE WOODS

November 9, 10, 11
at 7 PM

November 12
at 1 PM

Edgar High School Auditorium

Dinner option available at all shows (one hour before curtain)

Show Only Tickets

Adults \$10 | Children \$5

Dinner & Show Tickets

Adults \$25 | Children \$15

Music and Lyrics by: Stephen Sondheim; Book by: James Lapine
Originally directed on Broadway by James Lapine;
Orchestrations by Jonathan Tunick.