

Happenings from

THE HIVE

Spectrum's Winter Magazine

Fall 2020

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College Prep: C@SH
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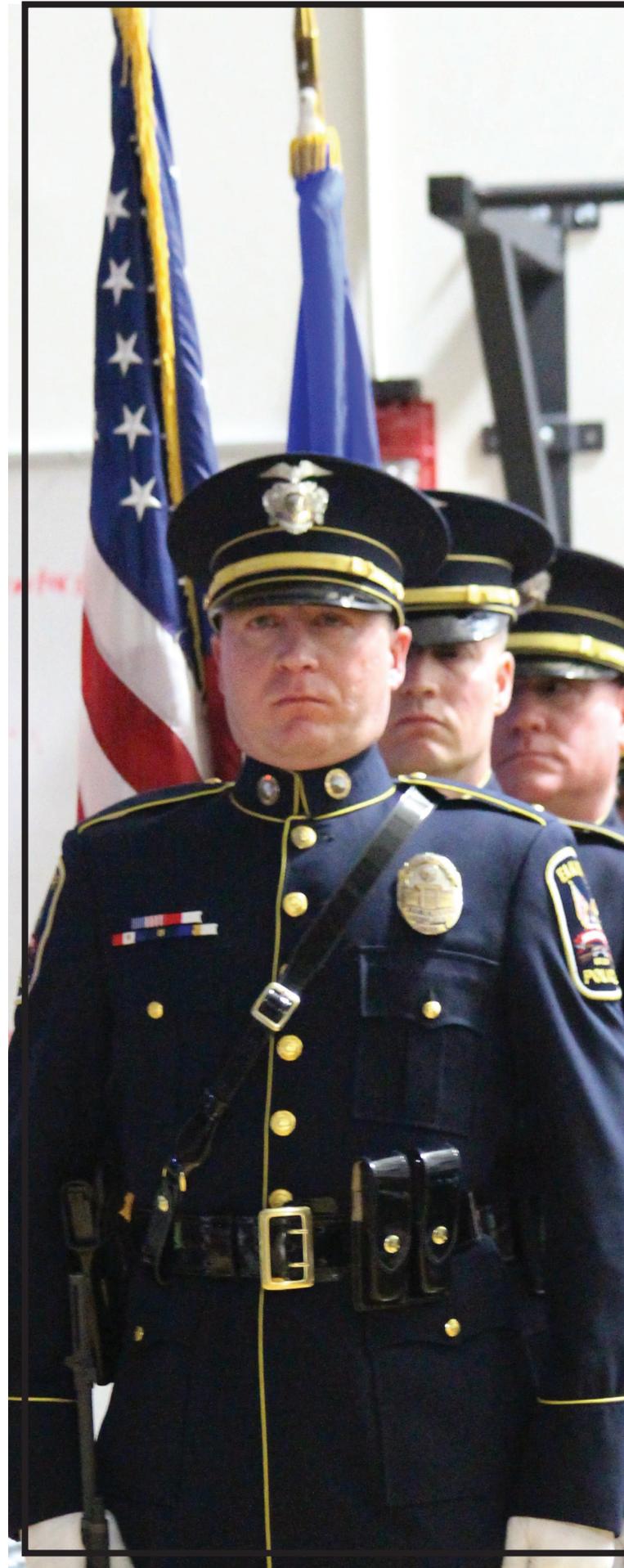
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*Elk River Color Guard during Spectrum's 2018 Veterans' Day Ceremony.
PC: B. Brown*

An Uncommon Year

Many words have been used to describe 2020, like challenging, difficult, unusual, or out of the ordinary. When contemplating a theme for this school year, the administrative team reflected on what has taken place since March and how people have come together under unique circumstances to support one another and provide quality education. The team landed on one word that is both versatile and descriptive - *uncommon*.

In addition to describing the year, *uncommon* also describes the approach we have taken as a school. With everything going on around us, our desire has been to approach and adapt to things in an *uncommonly* positive and resilient manner.

While not the original intention, we recently realised that *uncommon* also describes something that makes Spectrum stand out. We are *uncommon* as a school - meaning not like all the rest. We keep this in mind and are intentional about our choices and approaches to educating students.

Tony Dungy, Super Bowl-winning coach and #1 New York Times best selling author, speaks to the meaning of this theme in his book, *Uncommon: Finding Your Path to Significance*. Coach Dungy is revered by our culture for his success and significance. Tony has had all that, but he passionately believes there is a different path to significance, a path characterized by attitudes, ambitions, and allegiances that are all too rare, but *uncommonly* rewarding.

It is our hope that, in this all too *uncommon* year, our leaders, staff, students, and families will be intentional about doing things in *uncommon* ways - marked by character and rising above the challenges.

Strategic Planning - A Bright Future Ahead

As noted in the 2020 Summer HIVE Magazine, Spectrum's 2020 Climate Survey (parent, teacher/staff, and student) highlighted many of the tremendous things taking place that make Spectrum an amazing school offering a high quality education for our students and a place for them to connect and prepare for college and career. The article also highlighted a number of areas of focus where the community has set goals for the 2020-2021 school year.

This annual process of gathering feedback from students, staff, and parents is a critical element leading to the school's ongoing improvement process. In addition to this annual feedback, the Spectrum School Board and administration venture into a long-term strategic planning process every five years to think more broadly about the organization and how we can best position Spectrum for continued success over the next five years. This is the opportunity to analyze the past 15 years, the schools current work, and what education will look like at Spectrum as a high quality school of choice into the near future.

A Strategic Planning Committee, made up of students, staff, parents, and School Board members is being established for this purpose. They will gather feedback, analyze data, and discuss and consider possibilities that will lead to the development of a new 2021-2026 Strategic Plan.





Mr. Brunt is shown giving instructions to synchronous students for a class activity.

Photo Credits: C. Haley



Synchronous, Asynchronous, Hybrid - Oh My!

Teaching and learning have had to shift in extraordinary ways in order to accommodate the ever-changing guidelines and needs in light of the pandemic.

Synchronous, Asynchronous, Hybrid - Oh My! Who would have thought in 2019 that synchronous, asynchronous, and hybrid learning would become part of our vernacular only a year later? Nor could we have imagined what learning would look like - with 80% of Spectrum students learning through a hybrid model on campus in-person for two days and online for the remaining school days for the week. The other 20% would be learning fully online (also known as distance learners).

Teaching and learning have had to shift in extraordinary ways in order to accommodate the ever-changing guidelines and needs in light of the pandemic. Teachers

have adapted from full in-person teaching, to quickly developing online options in all of their classes while teaching from home, to developing a hybrid model where they are teaching 40% of their class on campus at the same time that they are teaching the rest online (and then changing to a different 40% on campus later the same week). Spectrum teachers have been amazingly resilient and adaptive. They have quickly learned new technology, teaching strategies, and new ways of meeting students' needs. In addition to learning new technology skills, students have had to develop self discipline, organizational skills to access and remain current in their classes, and quickly increase their self-advocacy skills.



While a number of support systems have been put in place to partner with students and add accountability measures, Spectrum recognizes that supports at home are a critical element to the students' success. Parents/guardians have helped their students establish routines, set up areas for learning in their homes, monitored their students' work throughout the day (or when they get home from work), and provided other supports, as needed.

We applaud the parents and guardians who have made so many sacrifices to aid in their students' academic success. We applaud our students for rising to the challenge and maintaining a positive approach. We applaud our teachers and staff for serving our students and families and giving their best every day.

Teaching and learning may look different, but Spectrum remains determined to provide a high quality education and adapt as needed to support our families and students whether through distance learning (synchronous/asynchronous) or hybrid learning.

Spectrum Service Learning

Safety of students and dedication to Community Outreach

Due to the unique nature of the 2020/2021 school year and the uncertainty surrounding the ability to connect with community organizations during this challenging time, Spectrum feels it is in the best interest of all, to pause our service learning courses for the time being.

Moving forward, Spectrum will continue to monitor the situation and follow CDC and MDH guidelines, as well as those set by executive orders. Circumstances will be evaluated on a quarterly basis to determine whether or not it is possible to modify or resume our regular service learning program.

Community Outreach remains a pillar of our system at Spectrum. During this unique new school year, be assured that service and community connection will be incorporated into our teaching and learning plan in such a way that ensures the health and wellbeing of both our students and community members.



Mrs. Johnson using apples in a writing activity in the Writing 6 class



Front table: Trystan D., Naomi O., Sam L.
Back table: Ellie P., Emery D., Sophie B.

Spectrum's Annual Meeting -- Thursday, October 22, 2020

Spectrum looks forward to the **Annual Meeting** every year where it has an opportunity to share reports on the past year's academics, finances, and facilities, and to articulate the School's future hopes and dreams, for which this year was no different, well, that is, with the exception that the event took place virtually. So, with the now familiar Brady Bunch-like style of connecting with others via Zoom, the Spectrum School Board carried on in a virtual manner. In addition to the reports listed, the *Volunteer of the Year* award was presented to an outstanding parent volunteer – Mr. John Ericson -- which provided Spectrum the opportunity to publicly thank and acknowledge him for his plethora of volunteer hours at Spectrum. In addition, the Board was extremely pleased with the number of persons who chose to attend the virtual meeting and hopes that it will spur future interest in attendance as well. All in all, regardless of delivery, it was a wonderful evening of focus on Spectrum's bright and positive future.

Spectrum District:

NEW STAFF

Mr. Belmonte
Technology Specialist

“My name is Tyler Belmonte and yes I am Italian, that’s usually what everyone asks. What do I do for fun? Well, I build fast cars, build computers, program software, snowboard, fish, etc..., I could go on all day about my hobbies but I will compress this. If something is challenging or scary, it’s probably one of my hobbies. I honestly never thought I would be working in a school, I never really liked school, but don’t be misguided, I love learning new concepts that are beneficial to my success. That’s probably why I chose the path of becoming a Technology Specialist. This is my first I.T. job and I am excited about my path with Spectrum.”



Ms. Dillon
Language Arts

“My name is Marie Dillon, and I teach Language Arts here at Spectrum. I grew up on a farm in Zimmerman, MN, and I was part of the very first graduating class of Spectrum High School. I earned a Bachelor’s degree in English with a minor in Psychology and a Master’s degree in English with a concentration in Composition, both from NDSU (North Dakota State University) in Fargo, North Dakota. I also taught college level Composition classes while I was earning my Master’s degree at NDSU. I am currently working on writing my thesis to earn a second Master’s degree in Teaching from Bethel University. I collect fountain pens, and in my free time, I enjoy reading, writing, and crocheting.”



Ms. Genise
Language Arts

“My name is Abby Genise and I teach Language Arts here at Spectrum. I am originally from Michigan, where I grew up and attended the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. There, I got my Bachelor’s degree in English Language & Literature, and Master’s degree in Secondary Education. I have been teaching high school since I graduated in 2013 and have taught all over the United States. I taught in Washington D.C., San Diego, and Huntsville, Alabama before I settled here in Minnesota to be closer to my family. At home, I live with my cat and puppy who both of course keep me very busy when I am not at school! In addition to hanging out with them, I love staying active and being outside as much as possible. Some of my favorite hobbies are running, skiing, and playing tennis. I also love to read, write, cook, travel, and spend time with my family. I am very passionate about helping students expand their talents as readers, writers, and as individuals and am excited to bring those passions to the students at Spectrum!”



Mrs. McGorry
Instrumental Music & Beginning Band

“My name is Jean McGorry and I am the Sixth Grade Beginning Band Director here at Spectrum. I graduated from North Dakota State University with a Bachelor’s Degree in Music Education. I later attended Hamline University and graduated with a Master’s Degree in Education. In addition to teaching here at Spectrum, I am the Band Director and Classroom Music Teacher at Swan River Montessori in Monticello. I am passionate about teaching and nothing brings me more joy than seeing my students learn, create, and love music.

When I am not at school, I enjoy spending time with my family and supporting the Band Aides for Buffalo High School Marching Band. My husband and I keep busy with our 2 teenage children, attending their activities, which include marching band, jazz band, winter drumline, and figure skating. Additionally, travel (especially international) is a big part of our family life.”



Spectrum District: NEW STAFF

Ms. Angie Scott
Grade 9-10 School Counselor

“My name is Angie Scott and I am the School Counselor for 9th and 10th grade students. I graduated from Blaine High School and competed on the dance team in high school. I’ve coached high school dance in the past and even medaled at state! I completed my undergraduate and graduate studies at North Dakota State University. I went into school counseling because I enjoy getting to know students and supporting them throughout their high school career. It’s fun talking with students about what their future holds and their successes along the way! Outside of work, I enjoy spending time with my husband and our three pets (one cat and two dogs), going on walks, reading, and checking out new restaurants around the Twin Cities.”



Mrs. Toven
Spanish

“Soy Maestra Toven. This is my first year teaching at Spectrum and I’m very happy and excited. I went to college in Mexico and obtained a degree in Communications. I came to the United States in 2000. During my first years in the United States, I focused on working and trying to improve my English. I took ESL classes and forced myself to communicate in English with my colleagues. This helped me greatly.

I married my husband 14 years ago. We have three beautiful daughters; the oldest of which is in her last year of high school and will soon be going off to college!!!

I love to dance and to travel. When all is said and done, I hope to have been able to travel the world with my husband.

I decided to return to college at St. Cloud State University after having worked in a Spanish Immersion program for several years; and I made the decision that I wanted to teach and try to help those who want to learn Spanish.”



Mrs. Wiggins
Special Education

“My name is Samantha Wiggins. I am married to my husband John and we have two wonderful children, Adriana and Julian. We have a German Shepherd named Macy. I enjoy being outside with my family. I went to Minnesota State University, Mankato, where I obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Family Life and Child Development.”



2020

Foreign Exchange Students

Student Name

Elizaveta Dmitrochenko

When did you arrive to the US?

I arrived on 12th of September

What grade are you in?

Junior

What has been the most surprising thing you discovered about living in America?

People in America smile a lot. People in Russia aren't so nice.

How is high school different in America than in your home country?

Students in Russia don't wear masks at school now. We don't choose our classes. We have no lockers.

What is your home country?

Russia

Favorite American food?

Peanut butter sandwich

How long will you be in the US?

I am going to be in US until June.

What is your favorite aspect of your host family so far?

They are very nice to me and help me anytime.

What are you most excited about experiencing while in America?

The most exciting thing was visiting the pumpkin shop. I have never seen such huge pumpkins before.

What is your favorite class at Spectrum?

My favorite class is chemistry.

Do you plan to be involved with any sports or activities at Spectrum? If so, which ones?

I would like to attend Alpine ski lessons.



Spending time with my host family, the Phelps!

2020

Foreign Exchange Students

Student Name

Carlotta Gambacurta

When did you arrive to the US?

19th of August

What grade are you in?

Senior

What has been the most surprising thing you discovered about living in America?

The school and the different classes.

How is high school different in America than in your home country?

In Italy we don't have to move between classes and we have always the same classmates. We don't have locker and school sport teams.

What is your home country?

Italy



Favorite American food?

Hamburgers

What is your favorite aspect of your host family so far?

That they treat me like I am really part of the family



Spending time with my host family, the Disch family!

How long will you be in the US?

until January

What are you most excited about experiencing while in America?

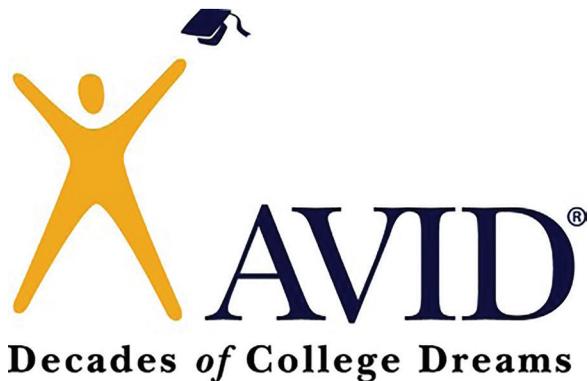
Making new friends and being part of a group

What is your favorite class at Spectrum?

Choir, Ceramics, and Forensic Science

Do you plan to be involved with any sports or activities at Spectrum? If so, which ones?

Yes, volleyball



AVID 2020 ARTICLE

Each year, Spectrum staff has the opportunity to attend the AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) Summer Institute. This conference allows teachers a chance to network with other educators teaching within the AVID framework and to learn from top notch AVID instructors who bring a wealth of knowledge and experience regarding the implementation of the AVID philosophy and educational strategies. As is the case with many situations this year, AVID went virtual in its approach to Summer Institute this past July. Six members of Spectrum’s staff were able to attend the newly launched AVID XP virtual conference.

Given the hybrid model of teaching and learning, the information presented through AVID XP provided staff with valuable AVID strategies specific to a virtual learning experience. They were then able to share these strategies with other Spectrum staff through professional development opportunities at the beginning of the year.

Staff who attended AVID XP conference will have the opportunity to be a part of virtual “focus groups” that will meet periodically throughout the year to further support teachers and staff with specific issues as they come up through the process of teaching within the hybrid and virtual model.

AVID provides a framework for rigorous learning opportunities for Spectrum students. Even in our unique circumstances, Spectrum staff continue to make AVID a part of their instructional plan so that their students receive the benefits of this proven program.

VETERANS DAY 2020

In 2018, Spectrum began a tradition of honoring our veterans and current service members with a school-wide Veterans Day program. For many, this has been the highlight of the fall semester - with involvement from the choral and instrumental music students, guest speakers, Spectrum families, and special presentations - all providing a tremendous sense of patriotism and pride in our country and honoring our veterans for the service they provided in order to obtain and maintain our freedoms.



Military personnel presenting their branch flags during the 2019 program.



Elk River Color Guard during Spectrum’s 2018 Veterans Day Ceremony.

The theme for Veterans Day 2020 is “Vision: Veterans in Focus.” All Veterans make a sacrifice to serve their country, whether physically, emotionally, or by being away from their loved ones and missing important life moments. As the saying goes, hindsight is always 20/20. The Veterans of Foreign Wars describes the theme in this way - “ Looking back on centuries of Veterans’ service and sacrifice and what we have learned from the past, we must always maintain the vision for the future of Veterans. We believe that by placing our Veterans at the center on Veterans Day we continue to honor all who served, while focusing on the needs of the next generation of Veterans.”

A special Veterans Day virtual ceremony is in the works for November 11, 2020. We look forward to a special time to unite as a community.

Spectrum SOCIAL MEDIA



What:

Spectrum High School is growing our Facebook, Twitter, Instagram & YouTube channels.

Why:

- Celebrate our students
- Keep parents, students, community, and alumni in the loop on what is happening at our schools
- Promote events and share information like concerts, no school, or fundraiser reminders
- Build an ongoing conversation of the positive impact our school is making in the lives of our students!

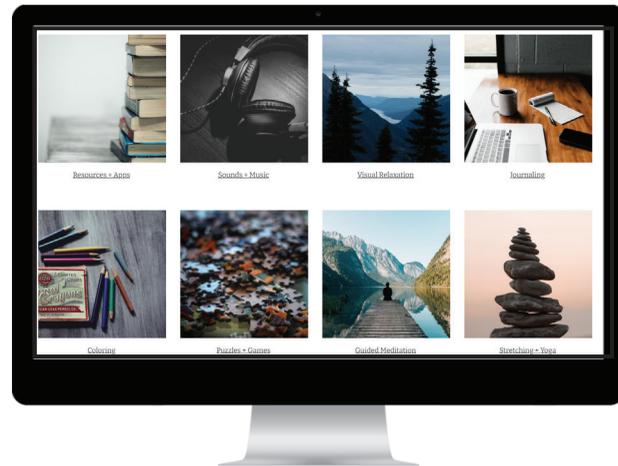
What do I need to do?

- If you are on these social media sites – follow us!
- Help promote the pages to your family and friends.
- If you aren't on these sites, please consider joining.

Note: The school will continue to provide communication through traditional channels.



Virtual Calming Room & Resources



As many people have mentioned, social distancing has taken a toll on some people's mental health. It has not been easy to stay at home and socially distance from each other! Because of this, the Counseling Department has created a Virtual Calming Room. The Virtual Calming Room is a free resource for students and staff through the Counseling Department's Schoology page. Within the Virtual Calming Room page, students and staff can find resources such as different calming apps to download, journal pages to fill out, coloring pages, relaxing music and much more. These are all great coping strategies for anyone at any age to help relax the mind and body during a stressful time. The Counseling Department hopes that everyone can take advantage of the Virtual Calming Room and to incorporate healthy habits into their daily routine, which will help to alleviate stress and anxiety over time. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused many changes which can be overwhelming. The Counseling Department hopes people find these resources to be helpful.

Spectrum Athletics Celebrates Two Outstanding Volunteers

Have you had a chance to check out Spectrum's Athletic Complex recently? If not, you'll want to as it's sporting, literally, some new and significant changes which will benefit Spectrum's athletic program for years to come. There you will find:

- Construction of a new JV baseball diamond
- Grading and construction of a new outdoor hockey rink
- Construction of a new west soccer field
- Grading for a new west parking lot
- Grading and construction of a new press box

These improvements would not have been possible without the dedication of two parent volunteers who contributed countless hours of planning and hard work to complete these important projects.

When Spectrum announced its plans to construct a new JV baseball field at the spring sports meeting last March, Mr. John Ericson volunteered to head up the project as he owns a tractor, bobcat, laser, and possesses exceptional construction skills when it comes to projects such as these. So, beginning last June, John, along with the help of his son, Alexander, who is a Freshman, invested hundreds of hours over the summer to complete the projects listed above. In gratitude for his service, John was recently named Spectrum's **2020 Volunteer of the Year**, which was richly deserved.

Equally as important and deserving of accolades for his countless hours of service and hard work is Mr. Scott Gangl who is a Spectrum parent, middle school teacher, and football coach. Scott designed the new press box and led the project from start to finish, resulting in a dream finally realized. Previously, game workers operated from the back of a pick-up truck or on top of the concession booth. Scott frequently was the only one at the construction site, but the project was completed and done in time for the first home football game on Friday, October 9, 2020.

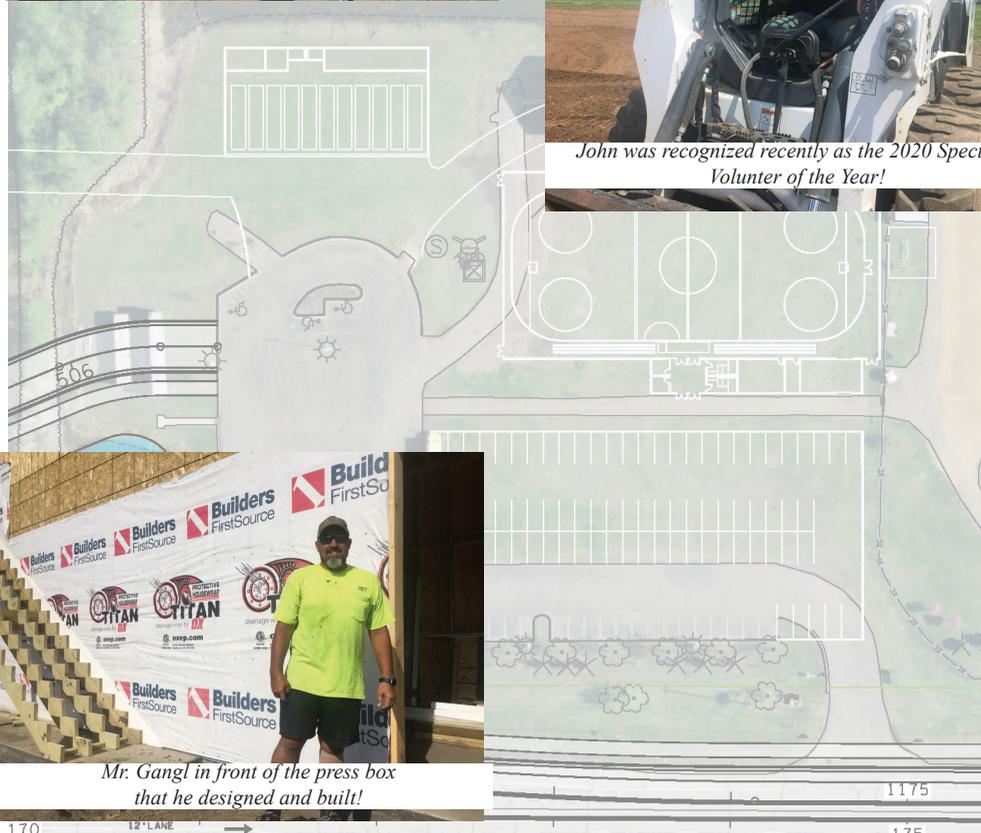
Thank you to both John and Scott for demonstrating the very best of what it means to be a volunteer, and Spectrum is forever grateful!



John and Alexander Ericson worked together on the project of grading for the new hockey rink!



John was recognized recently as the 2020 Spectrum Volunteer of the Year!



Mr. Gangl in front of the press box that he designed and built!

170 12" LANE 175
Photos provided by R. Peterson

SPECTRUM HIGH SCHOOL

Let's go Spectrum, go out and fight! Let's go Spectrum, show 'em our might! Always believing, ever achieving, we will always win with pride! Strong in spirit, champions are we, honor we always bring. S-T-I-N-G. Let's go Spectrum Sting!

SPECTRUM SCHOOL SONG

Homecoming: School Spirit, and School Traditions

In mid September, the decision was made to officially postpone Spectrum's fall spirit week in order to comply with the current requirements of Minnesota's COVID response plan. Pepfests and Homecoming games, dress-up days, and school colors are signature elements of a school's spirit week, and Spectrum is no exception. Over the years, and even though the school is still young, Spectrum has made great strides in its efforts to establish a culture of school spirit, which is aided by its robust athletic program. Listed to the right are a few fun facts which demonstrate Spectrum's growth in school spirit throughout the years.

Spectrum is alive and well, and even though Spirit Week and Homecoming had to be postponed, students and staff remain resilient in their commitment to school spirit. Go Sting!



DID YOU KNOW THAT...

- The school's first Homecoming king and queen were crowned in 2009? That year's king and queen were Matt Ebner & Sara Schultz.
- In 2014 the Sting mascot made its first appearance.
- In 2015, high school dances outgrew Spectrum's stage and moved to the floor of the gym.
- In 2016 Spectrum's pep band played at a football game for the first time.
- In 2020, field lights were installed and Spectrum's own era of *Friday Night Lights* began on October 9th as the football team took the field at the Spectrum Athletic Complex.
- The most popular request for dress-up days is Pajama Day, of course!



College Prep: C@SH Courses & Partnerships

C@SH is a dual enrollment program with area colleges, which allows a student to earn college credit while taking courses on Spectrum's campus. C@SH courses are taught by Spectrum teachers who are qualified through Spectrum's partnerships at various colleges (currently Anoka Ramsey Community College, Central Lakes College, Pine Community and Technical College, and the University of Minnesota). The majority of courses necessary to obtain an Associate of Arts (AA) degree are available on Spectrum's campus.



C@SH Courses offered at Spectrum:

- Writing Studio
- Principles of Microeconomics
- Introduction to Psychology



Pine
Technical
College

C@SH Courses offered at Spectrum:

- Introduction to Communication
- Multicultural Literature
- Mathematical Thinking
- American Government and Politics



C@SH Courses offered at Spectrum:

- College Writing and Critical Reading
- Intro to Literary Studies
- Environmental Science Lecture
- Environmental Science Lab
- Introduction to Statistics
- College Algebra I
- College Algebra II & Trigonometry
- Calculus I
- Modern World Civilizations I: 1500-1870
- Modern World Civilizations II: 1870-Present
- US History I
- US History II
- Intro to Information Technology
- Client Operating Systems
- Intro to Digital Photography
- Wellness for Life
- Wellness for Life- Walking Lab



C@SH Courses offered at Spectrum:

- Beginning Spanish II
- Intermediate Spanish I
- Intermediate Spanish II

THE C@SH Advantage

College credits with the following advantages –

- More individualized learning with teachers
- Easy access to course instructors on the high school campus
- Easy access to the School Counseling Department familiar with both Spectrum and college requirements (from multiple colleges) as well as college and career planning for high school students
- Easy and convenient access to participate in high school athletics and other extracurricular activities and events
- Students are able to fully experience high school with peers of their own age



College Knowledge Month

October was a busy month in the state of Minnesota for high school seniors. During the month of October, most Minnesota Colleges and Universities offered an application fee waiver, which allowed Spectrum seniors to fill out applications for free. When it came to college visits and college fairs, all of the events this year were held virtually. All through the month of October, NACAC (National Association for College Admission Counseling) hosted three large virtual college fairs where more than 600 colleges were present in different Zoom sessions and meetings. These virtual events were great opportunities for students to dig deep into the options that they have for life after high school. The Counseling Department posted weekly updates during the month of October on Schoology with different college information and links to events. This is something that the Counselors will continue doing throughout the school year as students continue to plan for their future. These Schoology college posts are a great alternative this school year because college representatives are unable to visit the high school in-person, but virtual meetings are still an option.

2020-2021 C@SH Teachers



Mrs. Faatz



Ms. Hamernick



Mrs. Hewitt



Mr. Hyde



Mrs. Johnson



Ms. Kemnitz



Mrs. Mackereth



Mrs. Mollet



Ms. Pickar



Mr. Roddin



Mr. Blake Mayes, the 11th and 12th grade Counselor, visited the 12th grade Advisory classrooms at the beginning of October to discuss the college application process, and even held a Common App Workshop for seniors on October 12th. During this virtual workshop, seniors had the opportunity to start their Common App college application with Mr. Mayes by watching him go through the process and asking questions. This information was posted on Schoology after the event for all seniors to access. Throughout October, Mr. Mayes met with each individual senior to discuss plans for life after high school.

Spectrum's virtual Financial Aid Night, to be held on November 18, will give families even more information on how to navigate the college experience from a financial perspective. The FAFSA (Federal Student Aid) application opened up October 1st and can be completed at any time.

HIGH SCHOOL LINK Crew: Connections during COVID

Spectrum High School's LINK Crew mission has seemingly never been more poignant than it is now:

To provide a smooth transition to the high school environment via student leadership, and to cultivate our welcoming culture through positive mentorships that lead to students helping students succeed.

LINK Crew is all about making positive and personal connections between students for which 2020 has been especially challenging. However, even the COVID-19 pandemic won't stop Spectrum's amazing students from finding ways to connect.

In August, both the leader training and freshman orientations were held virtually, with 32 junior and senior LINK leaders mentoring the largest freshman class at Spectrum to date (141 students). To keep it small and personal, the leader training was broken into three groups who were trained by the LINK Coordinators of Mr. Ott, Ms. Hamernick, and Mrs. Mattheson. Leaders were first taught to set up, schedule, invite, and lead a Zoom meeting, which culminated in virtual orientations for groups of 8-10 incoming freshmen students. In addition, group leaders were aligned to be on campus the same days as their freshmen orientation students.

The orientation focused on getting to know the group members and leaders through activities, explaining details important for the first week of school, and wrapped up with "What Every Freshman Should Know", which is a list compiled by the previous year's LINK Leaders as guidance in working with friends, academics, teachers, and parents.

To keep in touch with group members, leaders have had to be creative in finding ways to connect virtually, as well as to make sure to give a wave or an "air five" in the halls when on campus. Not having the opportunity to meet face to face has made it somewhat tricky in recognizing one another, but everyone remains committed to the mission of creating a welcoming culture. Each month, leaders meet with their coordinators to share successes, challenges, ideas, and plan upcoming events such as small group lunch gatherings and online movie and game nights. Through these endeavors, LINK Crew at Spectrum has been impactful in cultivating a welcoming culture where positive mentorships ultimately lead to students helping other students find success.



Photo credit: J. Kemnitz

Yearbook staff spent time in a brainstorming session for ideas to cover in the 2020-2021 Yearbook.



COVID 19 **Zachary Knapp**
Spectrum High School Senior
OCBSN MINNESOTA **LIVE**
Broadcast students Aric Randolph and Zachary Knapp were interviewed about their press conference with Gov. Walz on Friday, October 2nd.

Photo via WCCO

NOISE News & The Accolade Bring in Awards

The Yearbook and Broadcast Journalism students have had a busy year with attendance at two virtual conferences. The Minnesota State High School Press Association held its fall conference in October and students were able to attend virtual sessions as well as compete in a variety of journalism competitions. The Yearbook staff earned a Silver All State Award and 4th place in the Best of Show competition for their 2019-2020 Accolade yearbook. The Broadcast students earned a 2nd place Best of Show award for their September 30th Noise News show. *Emily Dopp*, a NOISE News producer, earned a 3rd place Gold Medallion for her news story on COVID essential employees. Jostens is also pleased to recognize Spectrum High School as a National Yearbook Program of Excellence for the 7th consecutive year.

Two Broadcast Journalism students were also selected to participate in a press conference with Governor Walz. *Zachary Knapp* and *Aric Randolph* went to the state capitol on Friday, October 2nd with great questions which were later featured on [WCCO's news program](#).

Yearbook and Broadcast students will next take their talent to the National High School Journalism Convention, which is also virtual this year. They will again have the opportunity to attend a variety of journalism sessions hosted by professional journalists on topics such as reporting, filming, design, ethics, and law. Many students from both Broadcast and Yearbook have submitted to the national contests and will hear whether they have won awards on Saturday, November 21.

Despite the challenges of hybrid and distance learning, teachers are seeing a new level of engagement and depth to these budding journalists. The students are excited to cover this year's activities and are confronting the challenges of interviewing and photographing remotely.



Broadcast anchors Emily Dopp and Preston Pinz are shown above relaying NOISE news in unconventional ways in the award winning September 30th show.

Photo provided via NOISE News YouTube Channel



Mason F. and Andrew S. collaborate in Mr. Steensland's Grade 6 class.

Photo Credit: C. Haley

SPECTRUM MIDDLE SCHOOL

Student Advisory Team meet to help make decisions for the middle schools

In the 2018-19 school year, the student advisory team, affectionately called “SAC” or “The Crew,” began. According to Russell J. Quaglia, Executive Director of the Quaglia Institute School for Voice and Aspirations, “Students have plenty of opinions when it comes to school, and they’re not all about free ice cream in the cafeteria.” When adults take the time to listen, we find students’ aspirations and perspectives that can drive schools toward exciting new goals and strategies. “And when students know they’re being heard, they develop self-worth, engage meaningfully in their own academic success, and become purposeful in their education.” This is what is happening at Spectrum Middle School (SMS), and the feedback is especially critical in the context of COVID.

Oftentimes adults make decisions for students without asking them what they think or how they would feel once that decision has been made. There certainly are times when this is necessary, but as someone with a passion for elevating student voices, Mr. Heinecke notes that this avenue to include students in those decisions is one way to help students belong and have ownership. These student-leaders not only grow themselves, but at the same time, they help all students to be heard and to feel that Spectrum is a great school. They have shared that they “want to make an impact at their school.”

Again this year “The Crew” will be 15 members strong, five from each grade, meeting twice a month during Sting Time to discuss how to positively impact the school. They are charged with creating action steps to transform the school, and their goal is to increase student voice from participating to partnering with school leadership. They provide feedback that Mr. Heinecke shares with the teacher-leadership. The results could be as simple as validating students being heard or students receiving more information for greater understanding. It could also lead to changes, like how we support students. One significant example from 2019-2020 was the development of a full semester of Life Skills for all sixth graders, addressing social-emotional development (topics like bullying or anxiety) and academic support (topics like homework practices and studying). This year they would like to be



Photo Credit: C. Haley

An apple in Mrs. Johnson's class aids as a great writing prompt!

Supporters for their peers during Sting Time and maybe even create a podcast to share tips and tricks. There are many possibilities.

Research has shown that students that are provided leadership opportunities are more engaged in their learning communities, in learning itself, and in sharing leadership opportunities with others. They develop confidence, advocacy and leadership skills, engage more deeply in their learning, and achieve at higher levels.

“I am very excited to have SAC at SMS and always look forward to its annual development and growth. As I often share, I am proud to be a part of Spectrum and particularly of these student-leaders, helping to create a culture that makes Spectrum Middle School such a great place to learn.” Mr. Heinecke, Spectrum Middle School Principal

MIDDLE SCHOOL Student Council

No one would be surprised to learn that this year’s Middle School Student Council is operating a bit differently than in years previous. And although different, it isn’t stopping the enthusiasm and creativity of these young enterprising students who meet on the 1st & 3rd Monday of each month via Zoom to plan events, which celebrate middle school classmates in new and innovative ways. Marin Burg, 8th grade, is leading this year’s Council as President, and alongside her is Mariah Algaard, 7th grade, who serves as Vice President.

One of the main goals is to ensure that all middle school students have the option to participate in celebrations, regardless of in-person or distance learning. The first celebration of the year will be a costume contest where students will submit a photo of themselves in their costume of choice. They will then be voted upon and 1st through 3rd place will receive a prize.

Student Council Presidents



Marin Burg
President



Mariah Algaard
Vice President



WIN Leaders Lead

WIN (What I Need) is a program at Spectrum Middle School to help 6th grade students make the sometimes challenging adjustment from elementary student to middle school student. A WIN group consists of an 8th grade WIN Leader and five to eight 6th grade students. WIN Leaders begin the year by working with 6th graders at the 6th Grade Orientation. The goal of the 6th Grade Orientation is to help incoming 6th graders feel comfortable and prepared for their first day of middle school.

At this year’s Orientation, the WIN Leaders worked with their 6th graders on some practical skills such as setting up their binders, using their Chromebooks, and becoming familiar with the learning management systems of Schoology and Infinite Campus. Students also played some games to help them get to know their fellow 6th graders.

In a usual year, WIN Leaders would meet once a month during Sting Time with their groups, but this is not possible due to the restrictions of hybrid learning. The WIN Leaders have brainstormed some inventive ways to overcome these challenges. They have created Flipgrid videos, emailed, and met virtually with their WIN groups. During their latest meeting time, WIN Leaders and their group members met on Google Meets. They were able to play a game and check in with each other about how the year is going. The 6th grade students really benefit from having an older peer mentor to talk to and learn from and the 8th graders learn strong leadership and communication skills. It’s a win-win for all!

LOOKING TO DISCOVER MORE?



Vision Statement

The vision of Spectrum High School and Spectrum Middle School is to be a leader in fostering academic and personal excellence through a program emphasizing high academic standards in a small-school setting.

Mission Statement

The mission of Spectrum High School and Spectrum Middle School is to encourage students in attaining their maximum potential through a 3-dimensional strategy emphasizing:

- College preparatory curriculum;
- A technology-integrated environment; and
- Community-based outreach

Authorized By Volunteers of America-Minnesota. *Stephanie Olsen, Senior Manager.*

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