

# falcon flyer



News and information for the Armstrong community

## Choral tradition continues at AHS



Armstrong's Concert and Cantori Choirs, under the direction of Stephanie Trump, sing the national anthem at Target Field this September. The choirs have performed the national anthem for the Minnesota Twins every year since 2002.

Armstrong's choral program has a strong tradition of participation and excellence, both of which are apparent in the 2018-2019 school year.

More than 20 percent of Armstrong's student population is enrolled in one of Armstrong's five choirs this year, with well over 400 students in grades 9-12 participating.

Two of Armstrong's choirs, Cantori Choir and Concert Choir, have been consistently selected to

perform at festivals and conferences. This year, Cantori Choir has been invited to perform for the Fall Minnesota ACDA Conference in November.

Individual musicians have also consistently received honors. This year, seniors Graham Biggar, Oliver Foreman, Abby Sobol, Jamie Anderson, and junior Sara Shiff were all selected as all-state singers, while junior Aaron Meerovich was selected as an alternate.

### School Calendar

Conferences 2:45 - 7:55 p.m.	Oct. 11
PSAT	Oct. 11
No school	Oct. 12
<i>Staff development</i>	
Conferences 2:45 - 7:55 p.m.	Oct. 15
Counselor Presentation <i>College Financial Aid</i> 6 p.m., Room 113	Oct. 15
No School	Oct. 18-19
Armstrong College Fair <i>Grades 11-12, 12:30-2:30 p.m.</i>	Oct. 30
Parent preview night 6:30 p.m.	Nov. 1
Quarter 1 Ends	Nov. 2
No school	Nov. 6
<i>Staff development</i>	
No school	Nov. 21-23
<i>Thanksgiving break</i>	
No school	Dec. 22-
<i>Winter break</i>	Jan. 6
First semester ends	Jan. 18
No school	Jan. 21
<i>Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday</i>	
No school	Jan. 22
<i>e-learning day</i>	
No school	Feb. 18
President's Day	
No school	Feb. 19
<i>e-learning day</i>	

### between the pages

ELT available for students, page 2 ... Fall conference info, page 6 ... Credit recovery option, page 7



## A call from the principal



David Dahl

*Large class of 9th grade students have shown leadership and respect as all students face larger class sizes*

We are beginning another school year at Armstrong and we are experiencing an increase in enrollment from last year. We welcomed over 500 ninth graders to Armstrong on September 4 and they have proven to be a respectful and talented class. The Class of 2019, our seniors, have demonstrated exceptional leadership during their high school career and I am looking forward to a very successful year with all our students.

Our overall class size is larger than last year given the increase in the staffing ratio so many classes are bigger than students experienced in years past. The larger class size is a result of the budget situation in the district where funding has not kept up with the cost of running the school district. Robbinsdale Area Schools is asking resident voters to approve a levy referen-

dum which will bring in additional funding to the school district.

These funds will be used to ensure appropriate class sizes across all grades and maintain programs which are vital to our students.

There is a great deal of information available regarding the upcoming referendum on our website as well as the district web page. I am also including a link to a video which describes the need for a referendum. Please access the video at <https://tinyurl.com/vote281>

You will be hearing more about the referendum from a variety of sources and there will be information about the referendum available at school events this fall. I urge you learn more about the need for the referendum and highly encourage you to vote on November 6.

## After school help available Tuesdays, Thursdays

Once again, Armstrong is offering a supervised place for students to study, do homework and get help from teachers and tutors after school two days a week.

On Tuesdays and Thursdays, Armstrong hosts Extended Learning Time, ELT, a free program housed in Armstrong's media center. The sessions, which run from 2:15 to 3:45 p.m., are supervised by Armstrong teachers, who, along with peer tutors through National Honor Society, can provide help to students in a variety of subject areas.

Students attending the program are required to complete a short registration form and get a sticker on their ID, available at the main office. Once registered, students may attend any ELT session they wish, as long as they arrive at the media center and sign in no later than 2:30 p.m. Students must also follow simple rules and expectations given by ELT staff.

Though students may leave the sessions at any time to go home, the program runs until 3:45 p.m., when students who wish to take the activity bus home will be issued passes.

## Fall play runs Oct. 4-6, to feature fanciful farce

The Armstrong Drama Department will perform Noel Coward's *Blithe Spirit* this October. Join the Condomine household as they embark on an evening of entertainment that results in bringing back the

dearly departed Mrs. Condomine. The tech crew will provide backstage magic, and the production also features cabaret performers that will be singing and dancing to tunes of the 1920's - 1940's.

The show runs at 7 p.m., Oct. 4-6, with the cabaret performing at 6:45 p.m. Tickets are \$5 for students and \$7 for adults, and will be available at the door before each show.

## AP Studio Art students attend workshop at Minnetonka Center for the Arts

On Oct. 12, ten AP Studio Art students will participate in a day-long workshop at the Minnetonka Center for the Arts. Students will work with different local artists working with a variety of materials and techniques such as, clay, fused glass, painting, life drawing and printmaking.

Armstrong offers two AP Studio Art Classes. One is 2-D Design Studio Art and one is 3-D Design Studio Art. Both classes require students to complete two different portfolios of work.

The first portfolio is a "Range of Approaches" where students show their skills and techniques using various media and their understanding of 2-D design or 3-D design.

The second portfolio is called

"Sustained Investigation" where students make artworks demonstrating an in-depth exploration of a particular theme or concept. All work is photographed so portfolios are digitally sent in to the College Board for scoring (there is no exam). A score of 3-6 will earn students a college credit.

Both AP Studio Art classes are year-long classes worth two credits. No prerequisites are required for Studio Art 2-D except for sharing previous artwork with Ms. Fair prior to registering for the class. Studio Art 3-D has a prerequisite of earning an A in beginning ceramics.

If you have any questions about AP Studio Art, contact Pat Fair, Art teacher at, [pat\\_fair@rdale.org](mailto:pat_fair@rdale.org) or call 763-504-8724.

## Aoki-Sherwood, Fredrickson named Scholars

Armstrong senior Benyoshi Aoki-Sherwood has been named a National Merit Semifinalist, and Armstrong senior Jack Fredrickson has been named a National Merit Commended Scholar.

Aoki-Sherwood and Fredrickson were among over 1.6 million entrants into the scholarship program through his participation on the PSAT/NMSQT last year.

Approximately 50,000 of those students who took the PSAT/NMSQT qualified as a commended scholar, while 16,000 of those students who took the PSAT/NMSQT qualified as a semifinalist. As a semifinalist, Aoki-Sherwood will now be eligible to receive a National Merit Scholarship as a National Merit Finalist.

## Organization looking for exchange student hosts

Families are invited to "Share Their America" with a high school exchange student from one of 70 European, South American, Asian, or African countries starting second semester. These students are sponsored by PAX-Program of Academic Exchange (PAX).

PAX students are 15-18 years old, have studied English for at least three years, and are motivated to learn more about the U.S. by attending high school and living with a host family. PAX students are eager to experience American

activities - backyard barbecues, birthday celebrations, and holidays - with their host families. They are covered by comprehensive medical insurance and have their own spending money for incidentals.

Volunteer host families provide PAX students with a family, a warm and supportive home environment, and encouragement to engage in everyday American life. All types of families, from single parents to young couples to retirees, are welcome to host.

Founded in 1990, PAX is a non-profit educational organization and one of a select few U.S. Department of State designated Exchange Visitor Program's chosen to participate in its prestigious U.S. government-sponsored FLEX, YES, and A-SMYLE programs. Each year, more than 1,100 teenagers visit the U.S. as PAX exchange students.

For more information, call or email Jean Sawyer at 612-408-7172, [jeans@pax.org](mailto:jeans@pax.org) or visit [www.pax.org](http://www.pax.org)

# Counselor's Corner



*An advice and information column for  
Armstrong students and their parents*

## Seniors

**College Application Process:** Seniors received information during advisory in September. Parents, you can find the presentation on the Armstrong website under guidance. It gives detailed information on deadlines, applications, and Family Connections.

### Important Dates: Seniors

**Oct. 1:** FAFSA Application is open

**October:** College Knowledge Month - many colleges will not require an application fee

**Oct. 15:** Financial Aid Presentation at AHS during Parent/Teacher Conferences

**Nov. 1:** University of Minnesota and St. Thomas University, early action deadlines

**Dec. 1:** University of Minnesota, Duluth and Morris, priority deadlines

Our advice is to know the deadlines and apply early. We recommend students get their

applications completed by Thanksgiving.

## Juniors and Seniors

Registration deadlines are approaching for those students wishing to take the ACT and SAT tests. The Nov. 3 SAT registration deadline is Oct. 5. The Dec. 8 ACT deadline to sign-up is Nov. 2.

This year, in accordance with a state mandate, all juniors will be taking the ACT on April 2, 2019. The fees for the exam will be paid for by the state.

### Important Dates:

## Juniors and Seniors

**Oct. 30:** MnACC College Fair at AHS Juniors and seniors will have an opportunity to attend the fair and meet with admission representatives from 4-yr, 2-year, public & private colleges.

**Oct. 24:** The National College Fair will be held from 5 - 8 p.m., Oct. 24, at the Minneapolis Convention Center. The fair will provide parents and students the opportunity to meet with recruiters

and pick up printed materials from over three hundred colleges across the nation. The types of colleges represented at the fair will include 4-year public colleges and universities, 4-year private colleges and universities, 2-year community colleges, vocational schools, and military institutions.

## Sophomores and Juniors

The PSAT will be administered on Oct. 10. This test is a pre-SAT assessment, and for students who score very well, a National Merit scholarship qualifying assessment. The test is available to sophomores and juniors, however only juniors are eligible to qualify for the National Merit Scholarship.

## Freshmen

Welcome to AHS! In September, school counselors will be presented in freshman science classes, introducing themselves and sharing important high school information.

*-Submitted by guidance staff*



## Who do I call?

Counselors are assigned based on student last names

### Ali Wilson

A-Da 504-8825  
Ali\_Wilson@rdale.org

### Arianna Crosby

Db-H 504-8822  
Arianna\_Crosby@rdale.org

### Marilou Exner

I-Mi 504-8837  
Marilou\_Exner@rdale.org

### Jamie Dukowitz

Mj-Sc 504-8824  
Jamie\_Dukowitz@rdale.org

### Antiwan Easley

Sd-Z 504-8823  
Antiwan\_Easley@rdale.org

### Wanda Brown

Registrar 504-8819  
Wanda\_Brown@rdale.org

## Marching Band puts on a show



Armstrong's 130-member Marching Band performs at the State Fair in August. Students in grades 9-12 participate in the band, which marches in seven parades and at four home field shows this fall. This year's theme is "Rock through the Decades," featuring music from Robert Randolph and the Family Band, the Beatles, Santana, Ed Sheeran, and Pharrell Williams. Over 200 students play in Armstrong's band program.

## Board requests operating levy increase

Robbinsdale Area Schools have made nearly \$17 million in cuts over the past two years. To avoid additional cuts of up to \$11 million over three years, the school board has unanimously decided to place a school funding request on the November 6 ballot.

If approved, the funding from the referendum will help the district maintain programs including the arts, co-curricular offerings, Advanced Placement courses, and programs that support students' social-emotional needs.

If the referendum is not approved, the budget cuts will affect the district's ability to maintain current programming. This could result in cuts to Advanced Place-

ment offerings, elective course offerings, arts and co-curricular programming and activities, while increasing class sizes and reducing the district's ability to attract and retain quality staff.

If approved, the operating levy would increase by \$515 per student, bringing in nearly \$6 million in additional annual revenue.

The levy would last for ten years, with annual inflation adjustments, and would have an estimated tax impact (based on a \$223,000 home) of less than \$12.50 per month.

Polls will be open from 7 a.m. - 8 p.m., Nov. 6. Early voting is available using an absentee ballot starting September 21.

## Cap and gown orders to be placed early

During a senior advisory meeting on Wednesday, Oct. 24, students will receive order forms and website information regarding orders of caps, gowns, rings and invitations.

Students will then be asked to bring orders and payment (\$39 for cap and gown) to the Jostens booth set up in the lunch room during all lunches on Friday, Nov. 2.

Students unable to place orders Nov. 2 should order their cap and gown for the same price online or by phone by Nov. 18. Cap and gown cost will increase to \$49 on Nov. 19. All cap and gown orders must be placed by December 31.

## On-site help available for struggling students

Through a community partnership with People Incorporated and a grant from the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Robbinsdale Armstrong High School will again this year have an on-site school based mental health therapist.

If you have questions or concerns about your child's social-emotional behavior and wish to access school based mental health services, please contact your school counselor or our People Incorporated therapist, Carla Sachiko Wilson directly at 763-504-8821.



# APA News

## *Armstrong Parent Association News*

The Armstrong Parent Association (APA) welcomed students and families at the community picnic, orientation, and the Homecoming Parade and Tailgating on Sept. 21. We had a great turn out at all of our back-to-school events and welcomed many new parents at our September meeting. The APA meets on the second Thursday morning of each month from 7:30 - 9 a.m. in the AHS Media Center. Principal Dahl gives a Principal's Report at the beginning of each meeting and is open to questions. Armstrong Mental Health Student Support joined us in September and shared their roles, responsibilities, challenges and how students find their way to them. Each of our meetings feature guest speakers providing additional knowledge of our dedicated faculty, staff, and student groups. We appreciate new views and ideas, and our discussions are always lively and engaging.

APA works intentionally to reach members through events during the year and to support our community and building. We maintain a separate contact list to communicate directly with you regarding upcoming events, meetings, and volunteer needs. We also have an active Facebook page where we share photos, celebrate community, and request participation in events. This year we increased our contact list by more than 60 members and

our Facebook community by more than 35 members. That is awesome, but we have around 500 new 9th graders, so we know we are missing a few of you. Register for our emails by finding the APA under the Parents tab at [ahs.rdale.org](http://ahs.rdale.org), and like our Facebook page after you read this.

As the volunteer coordinator, I have the best role in the association. Month after month, I ask and members deliver. We provide amazing meals to teachers during conferences and, wow, do they appreciate it. We distribute and collect Chromebooks, produce a parade and a tailgating picnic for Homecoming, and support the Armstrong community in so many ways. You are our community, our workforce, our support system and we are grateful for your time, your donations and your generosity.

The APA is a Minnesota 501c3 Non-Profit. We rely entirely on donations to fund our activities, scholarships, and special projects. Our t-shirt sales, parade and tailgating are structured with a very low profit margin to keep them affordable and cost-neutral. All donations are tax-deductible and can also be submitted by you to employers who have company matching programs. Check out the APA website, found under the Parents tab at [ahs.rdale.org](http://ahs.rdale.org) to see all that we do and to donate.

*- Submitted by Leslie Gentner,  
APA Volunteer and Membership  
Coordinator*

## **Fall conferences Oct. 11, 15**

Arena-style parent-teacher conferences will be held from 2:45 to 7:55 p.m., on Thursday, Oct. 11, and Monday, Oct. 15.

At these conferences, most teachers will be available for individual meetings in either the cafeteria or media center.

Though walk-ins are welcome, parents who want to guarantee meeting teachers should sign up for conference times online using the website [SignUpGenius](http://SignUpGenius). A list of all teachers with links to their sign-ups is currently available on Armstrong's website.

## **New club partners with Special Olympics**

Armstrong's new Unified Club was formed this year for students with and without intellectual abilities who wish to attend school activities and events, celebrate our differences in a positive way, make new friendships, and become more involved with the school community. The Unified Club will work with the Special Olympics Unified Schools program to offer events such as dances, sporting events, plays, concerts, special guest classes, indoor/outdoor activities, and fundraising like the Polar Plunge.

Registration for the program is free, and available at [goo.gl/sZ6K29](http://goo.gl/sZ6K29). Additional information and signups are on the website, at [ahsunifiedclub.wixsite.com/friends](http://ahsunifiedclub.wixsite.com/friends). Register today to stay informed of events.

## Parents, stay connected: Infinite Campus and Schoology contain a wealth of student information

According to studies referenced by the Responsive Classroom, “Parent involvement in education is crucial. No matter their income or background, students with involved parents are more likely to have higher grades and test scores, attend school regularly, have better social skills, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school.”

There are two simple ways parents can become involved with their students’ education at Armstrong:

### 1. Infinite Campus



Infinite Campus is used for attendance, transcripts (final course grades and credits), transportation, health, and behavior information. Visit [campus.rdale.org](http://campus.rdale.org) and log in

with your Parent Portal username and password to access the web version of Infinite Campus. Parents can also download the Infinite Campus App (called Mobile Portal).

### 2. Schoology



Schoology is used for assignments, grades, classroom updates, and some calendar events. Visit [learn.rdale.org](http://learn.rdale.org) and log in with the same Parent Portal username and password to access the web version of Schoology. Schoology also has an app available. When you log in to the app, choose “Username Login” and search for Robbinsdale Area Schools.

The settings for receiving information on your students via

Schoology can be customized once logged in to the program.

For most parents, Parent Portal accounts were created when students first enrolled in the district.

If you are unsure if you have Parent Portal access to log in to Infinite Campus and Schoology, or if you would like to create a Parent Portal account, follow the links on [rdale.org/Parents/Parent\\_Portals](http://rdale.org/Parents/Parent_Portals). Information and links are available at this site to both create a Parent Portal account and set up the Infinite Campus and Schoology apps.

Parents can call or e-mail Gretchen Cleveland at 763-504-8060 or [gretchen\\_cleveland@rdale.org](mailto:gretchen_cleveland@rdale.org) if you have any questions about your Parent Portal.

## Family preview night to be held Nov. 1

Families with 8th grade students considering Armstrong as a school choice for the 2019-2020 school year are invited to Family Preview Night, held Thursday, Nov. 1, at Armstrong.

The event is a great opportunity to meet teachers from various departments, meet Armstrong Principal David Dahl, learn about activities and sports, as well as find out the secrets to success both in and out of the high school classroom.

The event will begin at 6:30 p.m., when students and families will have the opportunity to meet

Armstrong faculty representing the varied departments and programs offered at Armstrong.

A formal program will follow at 7 p.m. in the auditorium, with a presentation about Armstrong and its unique program options for students, including Advanced Placement (AP) and Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID).

There is no need to register for the event; all families considering Armstrong as a high school option in the 2019-2020 school year are welcome.

## Credit recovery option available

Students missing credits have the option to recover them through the credit recovery program.

The program, which started Oct. 1, offers credit recovery in a number of subject areas. Sessions are held after school Mondays and Wednesdays in the media center. Attendance is required at least once a week.

Students interested in this computer-based program should speak with their counselor to register prior to attending the sessions.

Armstrong High School

10635 36th Ave. North  
Plymouth, MN 55441  
Phone: 763-504-8800  
Attendance line: 763-504-8810  
ahs.rdale.org

Robbinsdale Area Schools  
Robbinsdale Armstrong High School  
4148 Winnetka Avenue North  
New Hope, MN 55427-1288

Non-Profit Org.  
US Postage Paid  
Permit No. 3027  
Minneapolis, MN

The *Falcon Flyer* is published five times an academic year and serves as a communication tool between Armstrong High School and its parents and students. Editor of the publication is Amy Buchholz. For submission information, e-mail amy\_buchholtz@rdale.org. Deadline for the December *Falcon Flyer* is November 16.