

What's Happening Around Campus - September 2026

September 23, 2026
TURTLE MOUNTAIN
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
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Below is the September edition of the "What's Happening Around Campus" update:

Administrator Meeting: is scheduled for Monday, October 5, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.

BSD#7 Board Retreat information:

The BSD#7 Board Retreat was held on Friday, September 11, and Saturday, September 12, 2026, beginning at 8:00 a.m. at the Holiday Inn in Bismarck.

The following agenda items were discussed:

1. NDSBA Board Training the Board participated in NDSBA Board Training. The training provided excellent information and valuable guidance for Board members.
2. Superintendent/AD Board Report An update was provided on campus projects, including completed projects and future projects. Information was also shared regarding student outcomes and test scores.
3. Assistant Superintendent/HR Board Report An update was provided on open, filled, and vacant positions. The Board was also updated on dual role positions, which have resulted in cost savings for the district.

Additional updates included:

- District policies are now in compliance with NDSBA.
 - Current District travel and related cost savings.
 - Redrafting of the grievance process with legal counsel.
 - Leave Without Pay (LWOP) and associated cost savings.
 - Revamping compensatory time, leave, and donated sick leave procedures.
4. ES, MS, HS, and HS Alternative School Board Reports - All departments reported increases in test scores. This progress is a wonderful accomplishment and a celebration throughout the campus.
 5. Special Education Director Board Report - the district received a State-Level Determination score of 6 for the 2025–2026 school year, placing the district in the "Meets Requirements" category. This is a significant accomplishment for the department and represents its strongest determination in at least the past seven years. School-Based Medicaid Enrollment has generated \$32,362.00 in Medicaid reimbursement. Another focus of the department is "Growing Our Own" Special Education Teachers. Currently, two staff members are completing master's-level coursework toward becoming Special Education teachers.
 6. OIS Board Report A written report was provided covering:

- Test scores
- Strategies
- School culture
- Communication
- Student success
- Attendance
- SMART goals
- Enrollment

7. Business Office Department - The Business Office provided the Board with an update on school-wide budgets, as well as funding for future campus projects.

8. TTPP An update was provided on the TTPP program, including:

- 2 classrooms with 20 students each room
- Curriculum
- Student data
- Field trips
- Health and safety
- Grants
- Special events
- Program requirements
- TTPP Graduation planning: has already been scheduled for May 18, 2027.

BSD#7 and 100-297 HS Grant Regular Board Meeting:

100-297 HS Grant RB Mtg. Tuesday, October 13th, 2026 @ 11:30 a.m.

BSD#7 RB Mtg. Tuesday, October 13th, 2026 @ Noon

BSD#7 Board of Education – Upcoming Calendar of Events:

October 1, 2026: StudentsFirst Board Member Training in Minot
October 8 & 9, 2026: NDSBA Convention

State Reports for DPI:

- We have been working on the District's MIS01, MIS03, and PER02 State Reports, which are due at the end of September.
- These reports are part of the State's K-12 school accountability requirements. The reports submitted to the State are used for legal compliance, licensing audits, and state funding calculations under the North Dakota Century Code (NDCC).
- MIS03 reports include information for teachers, principals, superintendents, counselors, and other certified personnel.
- PER02 reports include information for paraprofessionals, technical staff, business managers, custodians/janitors, food service workers, and other support personnel.
- All required reports must be submitted to the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (DPI).

Defensive Driving Course:

A Defensive Driving Course was held on September 2, 2026, for all BSD#7 staff members who operate school vehicles. Certificates will be distributed shortly following completion of the training.

This Year and Every Year, We Put Students First!

"Our greatest goal is to make sure every student feels valued, supported, connected, and inspired to reach their full potential. From the classroom to the playground, from athletics to activities, and from our youngest learners to our graduating seniors, every student matters, every voice matters, and every opportunity matters."

We are proud of the progress happening across TMCS. Our staff continue to work together to strengthen the following areas:

- Academics
- Attendance
- Student Engagement
- Culturally responsive teaching
- Career opportunities
- Family and community partnerships

To Our Students:

Believe in yourself. Set goals. Ask questions. Try new things. Make good choices. Be kind to one another. Most importantly, know that you belong here and that we believe in you!

Campus Reminder:

- No smoking is allowed in front of the Derrick Dixon Event Center or any school.
- Please smoke in your vehicle and DO NOT throw cigarette butts in the parking lot.

Thank you for helping us keep our campus clean, safe, and welcoming for our students, families, staff, and community. Together, we can continue to make TMCS a great place to learn, work, and grow!

Federal Programs Officer report and Tiny Turtles Pre School Program report:

Federal Programs:

- Work with the Federal Programs Team to review federal program budgets, ensure activities are allowable, and ensure compliance issues are addressed and documented
- Work with TMCS, TTPP schools and state agencies to address homeless/foster care student needs; I have received documentation for 45 homeless students so far; 1 family denied services. We have 38 students in foster care.
- Work with St. Ann's Catholic school to ensure federal program compliance and provide supports for students and Title I teacher. Review budgets and plan activities for 2026-27 school year.
- Complete purchase orders as needed
- Attend meetings as required
- 9/18/26 – Submitted the OIE EASIE AYP report
- Upcoming training; ND DPI in Bismarck, ND -- September 30 – homeless/foster care training.
- October 1 – schoolwide training

Tiny Turtles Preschool Program:

- 9/4/26 – Early Release of students; parent pick-up
- 9/7/26 – No School/No Work – Labor Day

- 9/11/26 – No School/No Work
- 9/12/26 – TTPP report to School Board
- 9/14/26 – Vision and Physical Screenings completed by IHS Public Health Nurses
- 9/18/26 – Field trip to BDYWC, “the Dome”
- 9/25/26 – Completed Best in Class Milestone #1 and submitted to DHH
- 9/29/26 – Annual Title I Meeting: PFE activity with Waterford organization
- 10/1/26 – Field Trip to Rugby Pumpkin Patch
- 10/8/26 – Early Release of students; parent pick-up
- 10/9/26 – No School/No Work
- 10/12/26 – No School/No Work -- Indigenous
- 10/15/26 – Picture Day
- 10/23/26 – Early Release of students; parent pick up – PD for staff
- Currently have 40 students enrolled; 20 students per classroom – 2 on IEP
- 12 children on waiting list; 2–4-year-olds and 10-3-year-olds.
- Grants; Best in Class, BCBS Caring Foundation, Fresh Fruit & Vegetables
- Each classroom has a teacher, paraprofessional, and part-time paraprofessional
- Intervention services for 10 students; 8 students for Cognitive intervention and 2 students for SEL intervention.
- Conducted teacher and para observations throughout the month

Turtle Mountain Elementary School has the following to report:

- 9-2 Early Out 1:00
- 9-7 NO School Labor Day
- 9-11 No school
- 9-18 Basketball started on Saturdays for K-5
- 9-17 4th grade Pumpkin Patch 8-11
- 9-21-25 Homecoming celebration week
- 9-21 3rd grade Pumpkin patch 8:15-11:45
- 9-23 1stgrade Pumpkin Patch
- 9-28 Harlem Globe Trotter will be here for 3rd-5grade motivational speaker
- 9-28-29 Laurie Elliot training Deconstructing the Standards
- 9-29 8:30-Noon Kindergarten Pumpkin Patch
- 9-30 5th grade 8:30-12:15. Pumpkin patch
- 9-28-9-30 Smile network Dental will be here for grades K-5

Ojibwa Indian School has the following to report:

October will be a busy month at Ojibwa Indian School, with a continued focus on student engagement, assessment, safety, awareness, professional development, and school spirit.

September Highlights & Beginning-of-Month Activities:

- September 14 – ND A+ Beginning-of-Year Assessment Window opened
- September 18 – NCEC Student Engagement Observations
- September 21–25 – Homecoming and Spirit Week
- September 21 – ND Counts Training and ND A+ Interim 1 Assessments begin
- September 22 – Pumpkin Patch
- September 23 – 504 Training and Student Council Elections
- September 30 – Every Child Matters
- September 30 – Belcourt Fire Department-Charge into Fire Safety Presentation

October School Calendar:

- Friday, October 2 – Early Dismissal at 1:15 p.m.; Staff Professional Development
- Thursday, October 8 – Early Dismissal at 1:15 p.m.
- Friday, October 9 – No School/Work – Annual Staff Work
- Monday, October 12 – No School/Work
- Friday, October 23 – Early Dismissal at 1:15 p.m.; Staff Professional Development
- October 26–30 – Halloween Spirit Week and Parade of Costumes

Student Learning & Assessment:

Teachers will continue reviewing and analyzing ND A+ Interim 1 assessment data throughout October. The assessment results will help staff identify student strengths, areas for improvement, and students who may need additional academic support.

October will include several schoolwide awareness activities:

- Fire Prevention Week
- Bullying Awareness Month
- Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- Red Ribbon Week
- Child Find activities

These activities will provide opportunities to promote student safety, healthy choices, kindness, inclusion, and awareness throughout the school community.

Student Activities & School Spirit:

Students will participate in Halloween Spirit Week from October 26–30, culminating in a parade of costumes and fun games and activities for students.

The school will also continue looking for opportunities to recognize and celebrate students and staff throughout the month. A possible caramel apple bar is being considered as a staff appreciation activity.

Staff Professional Development:

Staff will participate in professional development on the scheduled early-dismissal days. Professional development will continue to focus on strengthening instructional practices, supporting student achievement, and addressing the needs of our students.

Current Enrollment 218 students

Ojibwa Indian School is looking forward to another productive month of learning, school spirit, and community building. We appreciate the continued support of our families, staff, and community as we work together to provide a safe, supportive, and engaging learning environment for every student.

The Chief Financial Officer and Business Manager have the following report:

- All the claims from last school year are done. Now we can move on to the Title budgets with carryover and get those budgets ready for this year.
- The ND Financial Report is ready in STARS. Once it is board approved, the report can be submitted.
- The new Title I, II, and IV budgets have been submitted to DPI. We are waiting for the approval of these budgets.
- We will continue to work on the budgets and get them ready to be approved by the school board.
- We will set up meetings with the schools to go over their budgets in the next few weeks.

Construction and Renovation Activities (TMCS Business Manager):

1. Alternative School Facility (TMHS & TMMS) – Jiran Architects have been hired. TF Powers as Prime and General Contractor; Electrical sub-contractor is BJ Electric and Mechanical sub-contractor is GD Mechanical. Project cost is estimated at \$5 million. Located north of TMMS. Footing and interior floor are poured. The exterior building package (roof and walls) is erected as structural construction continues. The interior framing is complete with electrical, mechanical and plumbing running through throughout. Anticipated substantial completion by end of October 2026 with occupancy at end of December 2026.

2. Bus Barn – Jiran Architects has been retained for project design. Contractors include Industrial Contract Services (ICS) as the General Contractor, Blue Lightning Electric as the Electrical Contractor, and Lunseth Plumbing and Heating as the Mechanical Contractor. Asphalt paving improvements are also complete at the new school bus garage site. Total project cost at approximately \$5.3 million. The structure is now complete. State Fire Marshal has provided approval of the facility. Occupancy has begun to occur.

3. TM Football Field Parking Lot and Driveway Replacement Project – The project was bid in July 2026; however, the bids received exceeded the available budget allocation from both the Belcourt School District and the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians. As a result, the project will not proceed under the current bid. The District and Tribe plan to rebid the project in fall 2026 with the goal of completing the work in spring 2027. To improve competitiveness and better manage project costs, the revised bid package will consider separating the work into two components: (1) concrete curb and sidewalk work, and (2) removal of the existing asphalt, dirt work and subgrade preparation, gravel base installation, and new asphalt installation. The District and Tribe will continue to evaluate the most cost-effective approach for the necessary improvements to safety, drainage, access, and parking.
4. Two Court Gymnasium Project on South Side of TMHS – Current facility uses shows that the TMHS gymnasium no longer meets the needs of the

school's academic and extracurricular programs. The district began plans to construct a new gymnasium.

- LSE Architects of Minneapolis, MN were selected by the school board on May 12, 2026, contingent upon ND DPI approval of project.
- ND DPI and BSD#7 School Board approved the project at a tentative budget of \$7.6 million consisting of \$3 million from construction reserve, \$4 million from issuance of certificates of indebtedness and \$600k for equipment and furnishings from TMHS Grant.
- Schematic design and planning began July 11, 2026, and was complete as of August 6, 2026.
- The project has now entered into design specification phase with anticipated completion by October 30 and bid advertising on November 5, 2026.
- Certificates are scheduled to be sold on October 13, 2026, for a total par amount is \$4,025,000 so yield will be \$4 million into the project fund after issuance costs.

Business Manager Report – School Program Areas:

1. TM Elementary School Lunch Program – Review by the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) Nutrition Programs has been completed, including menu review, and the program is back on track to receive applicable funding. The menus are currently being reviewed to determine whether serving quantities can be increased while remaining compliant with mandated portion sizes and sodium controls. Feedback from parents and students indicates that some meals are not sufficiently filling, particularly due to the quantity of preferred serving items. NDDPI intends to meet with school administration to identify potential solutions, as the concerns appear to be related more to quantity and serving portions than to the quality of the meals.

2.

2. School Average Daily Enrollment as of September 23, 2026

All Student School Wide 10 Year Summary of Average Daily Membership Using Infinite Campus Reporting												
GRADE	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	As of 09/30/2021
KG	109.15	104.75	104.75	110.81	108.91	102.16	107.78	87.40	81.78	88.81	82.01	
1	109.15	110.15	110.09	101.39	114.11	113.93	110.98	98.38	98.24	100.12	91.11	
2	122.34	122.70	122.79	108.11	89.80	101.81	102.18	118.63	99.29	101.24	98.65	
3	118.35	114.75	114.18	124.48	108.13	112.76	96.44	102.80	117.51	92.81	102.18	
4	110.01	110.00	110.80	118.15	112.27	105.88	102.08	85.72	95.94	114.03	98.91	
5	179.55	179.14	179.03	188.87	188.19	171.55	169.15	189.78	184.89	181.00	181.39	
Sub Total	887.89	886.36	888.35	872.57	845.97	842.51	819.64	880.76	891.72	819.11	800.82	
6	121.73	148.88	125.40	127.99	100.88	100.70	107.86	108.38	108.47	102.82	108.43	
7	175.34	138.83	137.88	128.78	127.84	85.88	105.11	117.66	100.87	111.13	107.88	
8	192.55	173.81	177.81	172.91	117.81	116.81	113.23	107.63	101.78	98.68	112.17	
Sub Total	390.35	392.22	379.85	378.51	305.81	318.89	322.90	329.84	307.43	309.94	329.29	
9	149.34	132.17	140.88	102.87	132.19	140.38	139.78	132.72	126.74	111.86	122.84	
10	120.55	120.10	110.83	148.88	139.82	127.82	142.47	134.84	137.48	120.89	117.82	
11	124.43	122.88	123.81	118.83	133.87	128.36	122.77	138.61	127.78	131.88	131.88	
12	127.35	127.10	132.11	121.11	109.31	127.56	119.13	137.51	112.27	119.89		
Sub Total	813.83	812.83	824.33	831.57	811.34	839.82	837.88	817.88	823.46	805.80	809.92	
TOTAL	1,696.21	1,592.61	1,592.61	1,584.81	1,495.14	1,491.42	1,492.22	1,497.14	1,431.63	1,406.46	1,291.88	

3. Statewide Enrollment Growth - North Dakota is one of eight states that gained K-12 public school students between fall 2019 and fall 2024, according to newly released data from the National Center for Education Statistics. Not only did North Dakota's public school student enrollment grow by 3.1 percent, but it also posted the largest percentage increase of any state during that period. However, it appears that the growth is primarily in the metropolitan city area as rural areas experience declining enrollment.

The BSD#7 chart shows that enrollment has been and continues to decline by more two hundred students in the last 10 years. In fact, this is the first time in the last 30 plus years in which enrollment has gone below 1,400 student average daily membership (ADM)BSD#7 continues to monitor enrollment level as the average daily membership is what drives funding... meaning declining enrollment mean decreased funding. Earl Demery has made preliminary budget projections on BSD#7 revenue versus the budget expense. If the declining enrollment trends continue, budget cuts may have to occur in the future.

TRANSPORTATION – Zonar School Bus Tracking System Installed and Running - We want staff to know that Zonar tracking has now been installed on our school buses. The system allows the district to monitor the location of buses in real time, helping us know where buses are during their routes and providing better visibility into transportation operations. Zonar will also allow the district to monitor bus speeds and driving activity, helping us identify potential safety concerns and promote safe driving practices.

Bus Fleet Summary 2026-27				
TYPE	BUS#	BUS DRIVER	SE	TYPE OF ROUTE BUS
Route	1	MacDonald, Ashley	SE	SE Bus
Route	2	St. Pious	SE	SE Bus
Route	3	Lyndee, Sherry	SE	SE Bus
Route	4	Therese, Theresa	SD#7	2024 KC 72 Pass
Route	5	Christa, St. Catharine	SD#7	2024 KC 72 Pass
Route	6	Therese, Theresa	SD#7	2024 KC 72 Pass
Route	7	Christa, St. Catharine	SD#7	2024 KC 72 Pass
Route	8	Eric, McQuinn	SD#7	2024 KRP 14 Pass
Route	9	Therese, Theresa	SD#7	2024 KC 72 Pass
Route	10	Therese, Theresa	SE	SE Bus
Route	11	Therese, Theresa	SD#7	2024 KC 72 Pass
Route	12	Therese, Theresa	SD#7	2024 KC 72 Pass
Route	13	Therese, Theresa	SD#7	2024 KC 72 Pass
Route	14	Therese, Theresa	SD#7	2024 KC 72 Pass
Route	15	Therese, Theresa	SE	SE Bus
Route	16	Therese, Theresa	SD#7	2024 KC 72 Pass
Route	17	Therese, Theresa	SE	SE Bus
Route	18	Therese, Theresa	SD#7	2024 KC 72 Pass
Route	19	Therese, Theresa	SD#7	2024 KC 72 Pass
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Route	96	Therese, Theresa	SD#7	2024 KC 72 Pass
Route	97	Therese, Theresa	SD#7	2024 KC 72 Pass
Route	98	Therese, Theresa	SD#7	2024 KC 72 Pass
Route	99	Therese, Theresa	SD#7	2024 KC 72 Pass
Route	100	Therese, Theresa	SD#7	2024 KC 72 Pass

Information Technology has the following report:

- School-wide technology support
- Ongoing cybersecurity training
- Ongoing construction
- Ongoing system implementation and support

Turtle Mountain Middle School has the following report:

- There was an early out on Friday, September 4, 2026, in conjunction with Labor Day weekend.
- No school on Monday, September 7, 2026, Labor Day holiday.
- PLC Subject level, Tuesday, September 8, 2026.
- Leadership meeting on Wednesday, September 9, 2026, 4:00pm to 5:00pm.
- No school on Friday, September 11, 2026, school vacation.
- Fastbridge assessment begins for Middle school students, Monday, September 14, thru Friday, September 18, 2026.
- Attended a school board data retreat on Friday, September 18 and Saturday, September 19, 2026, at Bismarck, ND.
- PLC, Grade level, Tuesday, September 15, 2026.
- PLC, Subject level, Tuesday, September 22, 2026.
- PLC, Grade level, Tuesday, September 29, 2026.
- 7th grade vision screening, Tuesday, September 29, 2026, 9:00am.

Turtle Mountain Community High School Report:

It has been a busy and exciting start to the school year at Turtle Mountain Community High School. Students are taking part in experiences that connect academics with culture, wellness, career exploration, agriculture, and community. This week, Homecoming has brought plenty of school spirit to campus, and we look forward to the parade on Friday, September 25.

Growing, Harvesting and Learning:

Our outdoor garden is being harvested, and the greenhouse is being planted for another growing season. Produce from campus has made its way into Nutrition and Food Prep and Culinary classrooms, where students have prepared cabbage rolls, stuffed jalapeños, stuffed pepper soup, and chocolate zucchini cake. Growing and preparing food gives students a chance to see their work from planting to harvest to the table.

The greenhouse will keep these learning opportunities going through the North Dakota winter. TMCHS also re-

ceived an approximately \$32,000 Orchard Grant to expand agriculture and land-based learning. NDSU is working with us to help develop future agriculture classes.

Career and Academic Opportunities:

Our CTE Department has been visiting partner schools for the Turtle

Mountain Area Career and Technical Education Center, strengthening the relationships that help us offer students more career pathways. Nathan Davis is meeting with administration to explore CareerViewXR, a platform that could give students realistic views of work in different industries.

NDSU guest speakers are visiting our Health Sciences classes, while Dr. Stacie Blue is helping students explore research and extended learn-

ing. Across campus, teachers continue to work on Standards-Based Instruction and Canvas to support learning in their classrooms.

Culture Civic Learning and Wellness:

Alternative School students are taking part in a tribal candidate forum, allowing them to hear from candidates and engage in the civic process. On September 10, TMCHS staff and students traveled to Washington, D.C., for the Department of the Interior's Native Languages and Education Forum. They connected with Tribal representatives from across the country and shared the Ojibwe language revitalization work taking place at our school.

During Suicide Prevention Week, activities focused on connection, awareness, and reminding students that they are valued and supported. Shanda Poitra and James DeCoteau are also presenting to all ninth-grade Health students on self-defense and personal protection.

Our new Equine Center is already being used to provide equine-assisted services for students. We are looking ahead to adding Equine Studies to the CTE Department next school year, which would create hands-on opportunities in equine care, management, health, horsemanship, and related careers.

Beyond the School Day:

Minong/21st Century Community Learning Center programming continues to offer academic support, cultural activities, and enrichment after school. Families can find the current list of sessions on the TMCHS Facebook page.

We also hosted our first family engagement night, the Trucker Hat Throwdown. Students, families, and staff came together to show their Braves pride and make school-themed hats. Events like this give us time to build connections between

home and school while enjoying our school community.

Family Reminder:

Families of 12th-grade students who still need their second meningococcal conjugate vaccine dose are asked to provide vaccination documentation to the school nurse by September 30, 2026. We encourage families to contact the school nurse with questions about their students' documentation.

From Homecoming and family events to research, gardening, cultural learning, and career exploration, there is a great deal happening around campus. These experiences help students discover their interests, strengthen their sense of belonging, and prepare for what comes next while staying connected to our culture and community.

Special Education and Section 504 Report:

NDAA Interim Assessment (Fall Window)- The NDAA Interim Assessment Fall testing window is open through December 18, 2026, for students in grades 3–10 who participate in the alternate assessment. Staff responsible for testing should ensure required training is completed and assessments are administered within the testing window.

CPI Training & Student/Staff Safety- Additional Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) training sessions are being scheduled throughout our TMCS. This training will strengthen staff skills in prevention, de-escalation, safe intervention, and respond to challenging situations while supporting the safety and dignity of both students and staff.

Staffing, Communication & Collaboration- Like many districts, we are experiencing special education staffing shortages in some of our schools and programs. During these times, communication and collaboration become even more important.

Special education is not a stand-alone program; it takes the combined efforts of special education staff, general education teachers, paraprofessionals, related service providers, administrators, and families to successfully support our students. Open communication regarding student needs, accommodations, schedules, services, behaviors, and concerns allows teams to solve problems early and use available resources effectively. By working together and maintaining consistent communication, we can continue providing students with meaningful access, support, and opportunities for success even when staffing is challenging.

IEP vs. Section 504 & the Role of

MTSS- Reminder: An IEP and a Section 504 Plan are not interchangeable. An IEP is provided to eligible students who require specially designed instruction under IDEA, while a Section 504 Plan provides accommodation and support to ensure students with disabilities to have equal access to their education. It is equally important to remember that not every student who is struggling or has a diagnosis requires an IEP or 504 Plan. A strong Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) provides the foundation for identifying needs early, implementing targeted academic, behavioral, and social-emotional interventions, monitoring progress, and making data-informed decisions. MTSS, Section 504, and special education are distinct systems, but each plays an important role within our continuum of student support.

Thank you to all of our staff for continuing to communicate, collaborate, problem-solve, and step in where needed. Supporting students with disabilities is a district-wide responsibility, and strong partnerships

across programs and buildings make a meaningful difference for our students.

Strategic Planning and Community Engagement:

Spring 2026 ND A+ Summative results:

The Spring 2026 ND A+ Summative results reflect continued academic progress across Turtle Mountain Community Schools and provide a strong foundation for future growth. Across Grades 3–8 and Grade 10, approximately 44% of students were Proficient or Advanced in ELA and 40% in mathematics. Several grade levels showed encouraging results, including Grades 3 and 8 in ELA at 54% Proficient/Advanced, with Grade 8 performing above the state average, and Grade 3 mathematics at 53% Proficient/Advanced. Current same-year scale scores provide additional context, with TMCS averaging 490 in ELA compared with 517 statewide and 481 in mathematics compared with 512 statewide. Finalized statewide proficiency percentages are not yet available for a direct percentage-to-percentage comparison. Overall, these results highlight areas of strength, continued growth, and clear opportunities to build on the progress already being made across the district.

This work is being driven by our School Board, Superintendent, district and building leadership, teachers, and staff, in partnership with the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE). Through Students First, our cooperative work with BIE, and Cognia's Strategic Thinking & Planning Process, we are using data to identify priorities, strengthen instruction, monitor progress, and adjust as needed. This work continues to strengthen alignment from the school board to the classroom while keeping

student success at the center of our improvement.

Professional Development (PD):

This year, Laurie Elliott will continue providing professional development in Standards-Based Instruction (SBI) across our schools. This work began in February and will continue throughout the school year as part of TMCS's continuous improvement efforts to strengthen consistent, standards-aligned teaching practices. The PD will support teachers in using priority standards, planning around clear learning expectations, checking student understanding, and using data to adjust instruction. Classroom observations and walkthroughs will also support implementation, provide feedback, and help identify areas for continued growth. Together, these efforts are helping TMCS build a common understanding of SBI and strengthen instruction across the district.

Priority Standards and Vertical Alignment:

As a district, TMCS has completed the development of our Priority Standards and Vertical Alignment in ELA and mathematics to provide a clear, consistent instructional focus across grade levels. This work identifies the most essential standards students need to master and shows how those skills build from one grade to the next, supporting stronger Standards-Based Instruction and greater alignment across our schools. The completed documents have been shared with school administrators by email for distribution and use with teachers, leadership teams, and PLCs as they plan instruction, review student data, and support continuous improvement throughout the school

What are Standards-Based Instruction:

Standards-Based Instruction (SBI) is a way of teaching that makes it clear what students are expected to know, understand, and be able to do at each grade level. The standards provide clear learning goals, while teachers use different strategies and support to help students reach those goals.

In simple terms, SBI helps answer three important questions: What should students learn? How will we know if they learned it? What will we do if they need more help or are ready for more?

With Standards-Based Instruction:

- Teachers plan lessons around important grade-level standards.
- Students understand what they are learning and why it is important.
- Teachers regularly check student learning through classroom work, assessments, and progress monitoring.
- Students who need additional help receive reteaching and support, while students who are ready receive enrichment and additional challenges.
- Teachers use student results to adjust instruction throughout the year.
- Learning builds from one grade level to the next to prepare students for future success.

Standards-Based Instruction does not mean every student has to learn in the same way. The learning expectations are consistent, but teachers can use different strategies, activities, cultural connections, and support to help each student succeed.

For TMCS, Standards-Based Instruction is about creating clear expectations, consistent instruction, and stronger alignment across our schools. From elementary through high school, we are working together to help students build the knowledge and skills they need for the next grade level, graduation, and future success. North Dakota Education Content Standards

<https://www.nd.gov/dpi/districts-schools/north-dakota-education-content-standards>

Belcourt School District Federal Title Team Update:

The Belcourt School District's Federal Title Team consists of five members: Debbe Poitra, Paula Keplin, Symone Morin, Claudette Gourneau, and Earl Demery. The Team continues to meet bi-weekly to ensure that the Belcourt School District's Federal Title programs remain in compliance with North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (DPI) requirements.

The Team has been working collaboratively on the district's 2026-2027 Federal Title budgets within the online WebGrants platform. The Team is carefully reviewing each budget to ensure that all expenditures and planned activities are allowable and in compliance with Federal Title requirements and DPI guidelines.

Team members are also maintaining continuous communication with each school's administration to ensure that all required Title program documentation, procedures, and compliance requirements are in place for the upcoming months.

Several Team members attended Federal Title training in July to strengthen their understanding of current requirements and program expectations. Team members will also attend another required Federal Title training on October 1, 2026, in Bismarck, North Dakota.

The Federal Title Team remains committed to working collaboratively with District and school administration to ensure that all Federal Title programs are implemented effectively and remain in compliance with state and federal requirements.

Paula Keplin, Data Coordinator/Federal Title Lead

Athletic Directors Report:

School spirit and Brave Pride have been evident all fall. We have had some promising outlook to our fall schedules. To top the list, we have qualified a Brave for the 1st time since 2020 with our girl's golf athlete Autumn Trottier punching her ticket to state. The other teammates have been proving themselves to be tough competitors as we are getting ready for the regional tournament to be held in Bismarck next week. This is the first time in a while that our girls golf team is making a run at the tournament as a team.

The boys football program is 0-4 heading into the Homecoming game vs. Carrington this upcoming weekend. The Braves look to rebound from their outing last week against the Langdon Cardinals.

The girls Volleyball team has a couple conference wins headed into the conference schedule. While we are looking for our very young team to find its groove, we have seen some of our younger athletes step up and find their niche as the season gets going. We hope to build on our historic season from last year and qualify our team for post season play this year.

Other notable activities held this month include our annual Cross Country meet at the Anishinabe Learning Center, the football and basketball jamborees held the past weekend, the homecoming activities this week at TMCS and the Hall of Fame honoring at the Event Center September 23rd.

The following HOF inductees will be enshrined Wednesday:

- Mr. Derrick Dixon
- Mrs. Kathy Dixon
- Mr. Terry Hajicek
- The late David Gourneau Sr.
- The 1990 TMCHS Braves Football

Team, coached by the late Danny St.
Vincent

**Reminder, we have migrated to
Arbiter Sports scheduler this fall
2026. The new website address is
arbiterlive.com.**

*Sincerely,
Shane M. Martin, Ph.D.,
Superintendent
Athletic and Activities Director
Turtle Mountain Community School*