



# KINGSLEY CONNECTION

"A COMMUNITY OF TRADITION AND EXCELLENCE" April 2024 kingsleyschools.org

## IN THIS ISSUE



Eleven KHS Juniors Honored for High PSAT Scores.....6

District Adopts Strategic Plan Results, Identifies Goals.....5



KHS Drama Club Performs Little Women.....2

Three Student-Athletes Sign Letters of Intent.....4



Kingsley Band, Choir Earn Top Ratings in Competition.....4

Dozens of Kingsley artists on display at Crooked Tree Arts Center.....3



Teachers, Students Build Momentum after Challenge Day.....3

Kindergarten Roundup Form and Preschool Registration.....7



Stag Snapshots, Back Cover

## KINGSLEY RESEARCH STUDENTS IMPRESS AT PRESTIGIOUS FLINT REGIONAL SCIENCE & ENGINEERING FAIR



This Spring, Nancy Olenchek and six of her Kingsley High School research students headed to their first-ever science fair. All of them walked away with an award or honorable mention recognition!

Students competed at the prestigious Flint Regional Science & Engineering Fair. The annual exhibition was recognized as one of the best in the region by Nat Geo. It is also an affiliate of the International Science & Engineering Fair.

Junior Zachary Middleton was a fair finalist, taking 8th place overall for his research titled *The baseball pitch and how spin rate affects vertical movement and velocity*.

Research class is a new course offered this year. Ms. Olenchek tasked students with finding a topic and formulating an experiment around it. Congratulations to all of our award-winning research students:

**Marisa Graham, junior:** Honorable Mention: *Beauty Blender Absorbency*

**Zachary Middleton, junior:** Technology Division Certificate of Distinction and Fair Finalist, 8th Place: *The baseball pitch and how spin rate affects vertical movement and velocity*

**Alaina Mitchell, junior:** Honorable Mention: *High School Women's 5 Kilometer Race Times; Comparing Freshman to Senior Year*

**Landon Durkin, senior:** Research Fellow Award: *Basketball Arc versus Shooting Percentage: How a player's practice arc correlates to game shooting percentage*

**Anna Bauer, sophomore:** Research Fellow Award: *A comparison between stem cells created by *Cassiopea xamachana* and *Drosophila melanogaster* larvae*

**Maranda Christianson, junior:** Research Fellow Award: *Memory improvement through Memorization*

**Way to Go Students!**

KINGSLEY SCHOOLS  
402 FENTON STREET  
KINGSLEY, MI 49649

**PRSTD US POSTAGE PAID  
CADILLAC, MI PERMIT #147**

BOX HOLDER  
KINGSLEY MI 49649

# STAG SNAPSHOTS

## Third Grade Hosts Mini Society Market

This quarter, third graders learned the basics of economics, like supply and demand, scarcity, and opportunity cost. As the culminating lesson of their unit, students hosted the Mini Society market. Each student got \$1 in Kingsley Bucks to spend on products sold by each classroom.



## Wilderness Students Learn Basics of Forestry

KHS teacher Wallace Hoffelt recently completed his degree in fisheries and wildlife, and is making the outdoors his classroom! By the end of the unit, Mr. Hoffelt's students will know how to measure trees, identify them, evaluate wood lots for invasive species, animal presence, and ground cover; as well as how to assess the market value of stands of trees. During a recent lesson, Mr. Hoffelt made an exciting discovery: He found what he believes to be the largest basswood tree in Michigan right behind KHS. "I was measuring the trees to get a baseline for class. This is potentially the biggest one in Michigan, ever. And if I get this confirmed, it may even be the 50th-largest tree in the state!"

## KHS Drama Club Presents: *Little Women*

Members of the Kingsley High School Theatre performed Louisa May Alcott's classic coming-of-age story, *Little Women*, on the KMS stage March 15-17 to enthusiastic crowds. The play was directed by KMS secretary Michelle Lewis.



## Middle Schoolers Learn to Dance in P.E.

For 25 years, Mrs. King has been teaching middle schoolers dance floor staples, like the Cha Cha slide, cupid shuffle, chicken dance, YMCA, and more. Students also learn the basics of the waltz, so they can dance confident-



## KMS Students Make Masterpieces in Woodshop

Mr. Shoaff and his students have been cranking out all kinds of impressive work lately, including the brand new Lost & Found in the main entrance. Way to go!

## Teachers, Students Brainstorm Ways to Continue Momentum after Challenge Day



In February, hundreds of middle and high school students participated in Challenge Day, an extensive workshop focused on building a school culture of acceptance, empathy, and connection.

The result, says KHS teacher Michelle Peterson, was connections built between peer groups and increased empathy across the school population.

Now, teachers and students are brainstorming ways to keep the momentum going. This semester, Mrs. Peterson and KMS counselor Olivia Bradford hosted a group of student stakeholders to pick their brains.

“We came up with a list four pages long of things that they want to see happen to keep our school culture or to change our school culture, to make people feel welcome in the building and in their classrooms,” said Mrs. Peterson.

The list includes ideas like...

- Putting conversation cards on lunch tables
- Assigning mentors to freshmen
- Creating safe spaces for students to use during times of feeling overwhelmed
- Holding an all-school assembly on the first day of school
- Adding more internal student recognition (birthdays, athletic and academic achievements, and more)
- Implementing lessons about stress management and mindfulness into the school day
- One-on-one teacher-student check-ins
- Putting up posters with encouraging messages

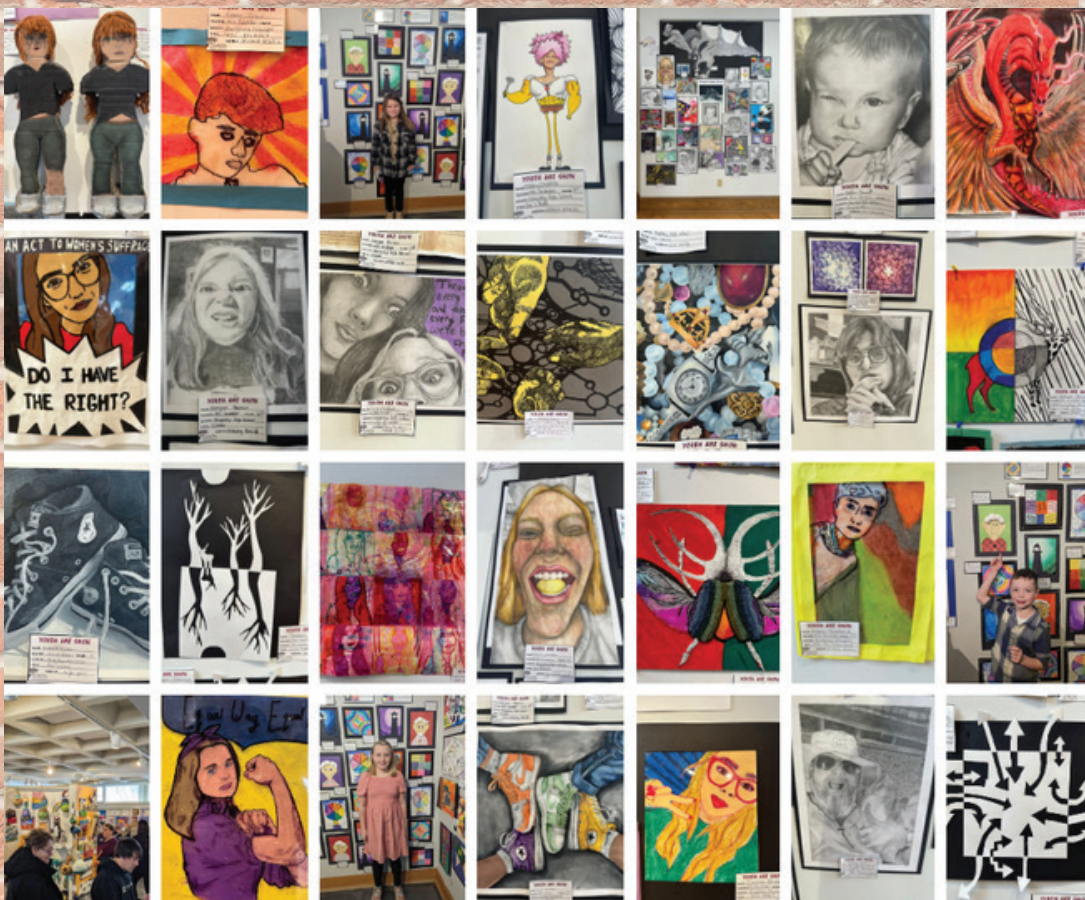
Students and teachers alike expressed their interest in hosting Challenge Day or Challenge Day-like activities in the future.

“I think it could be more of a regular thing, where we get to get out our feelings and connect with people,” said Mrs. Peterson. “I think if you can build that culture it can continue.”

**To learn more about Challenge Day, visit [www.challengeday.org](http://www.challengeday.org).**

## DOZENS OF KINGSLEY ARTISTS ON EXHIBIT NOW AT CROOKED TREE ARTS CENTER!

The work of dozens of Kingsley artists is on display now at the Crooked Tree Art Centers' annual youth art exhibit through April 5. This year, three students earned special recognition: Eden Boudot, elementary, and high school students Isabella Bickle, who received a cash award, and Katelyn Bennett, who received an honorable mention from the Kendall College of Art and Design. Congratulations to all of our student artists!



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**for Art Attack 2024!  
April 25 | 6:30-8:30PM  
Kingsley Branch Library**

You're invited to our annual celebration of our student artists from KHS. Art Attack will feature a juried show of art of all kinds, including pencil drawings, paintings, and various kinds of sculpture.

This year's judge is KHS grad Katie Travis. Students will have the opportunity to win monetary prizes, sponsored by the Kingsley Friends of the Library.

Join us for a night of art and celebration! Light refreshments will be provided.

**Thank you to our sponsors, the Kingsley Friends of the Library!**

# STUDENT ATHLETES OF THE WEEK



**Jon Pearson:** Jon is a senior on the varsity wrestling team and had an outstanding season for the Stags with a 31-13 overall record and finishing 6th in 132-lb weight class at the Division 3 MHSAA State Finals at Ford Field. Jon amassed 124 wins in his wrestling career at Kingsley and also excelled in football and track while carrying a 3.37 grade point average.



**Gavyn Merchant:** Gavyn is a senior on the varsity wrestling team and capped off an incredible wrestling career for the Stags with a 4th place finish in the 132-lb weight class at the Division 3 MHSAA State Finals at Ford Field. Gavyn amassed 138 career wins for the Stags winning four District titles, four Regional championships, and four All-State finishes. Gavyn was also an All Northern Michigan Football Conference quarterback leading Kingsley to a Division 6 State Championship while carrying a 3.47 grade point average.



**Caleb Bott:** Caleb is a senior on the varsity wrestling team and capped off his senior year as the Mid Michigan Conference Champion at 175 lbs and Division 3 District Runner-up. Recently, Caleb signed his letter of intent to play collegiate Rugby at Davenport University. He was also an All Northern Michigan Football Conference offensive lineman for the Division 6 State Championship-winning Stags while carrying a 3.69 grade point average.

# STAGS SIGN LETTERS OF INTENT

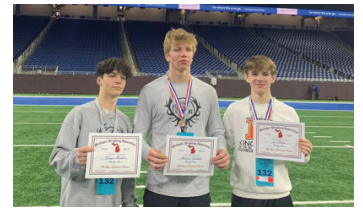


Congratulations to our Kingsley student-athletes who have committed to continue their athletic career at the college level! Chrissy Whims will play basketball at Siena Heights University and Max Goethals and Caleb Bott will both play rugby at Davenport University.



Robotics students Caylan Schaub, Darlene Wilcoxon, Adam Wilcoxon, and Tyler Miller competed in the VEX State Championship Tournament in Flint. It was their first state competition with Caylan and Darlene making it to the elimination round for team competition. Adam and Tyler had personal bests in the individual skills competitions.

# ATHLETIC & MUSIC NEWS



**Sports Roundup:** Top left: The Girls Basketball teams had successful seasons. JV 18-4 and Varsity finished 17-7. Top right: Senior wrestlers Gavyn Merchant, Jonathan Pearson and Max Goethals capped off their senior careers at Ford Field. Bottom left: Adalene Chambers became Kingsley's first ever female wrestler who qualified for states. Bottom right: The Kingsley Varsity Wrestlers at Ford Field.



# KINGSLEY BAND AND CHOIR NOTES

Kingsley Bands had a busy February and March. On February 5, Kingsley hosted 900 students from 32 schools for the Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association District II Solo and Ensemble Festival. Kingsley Students pulled double duty as volunteers and performers. Several earned impressive I and II ratings.

State Solo and Ensemble was held in Cadillac on March 16. Emma Belanger and Kaylin Mitchell earned a I on their marimba duet, and the mixed quartet of Jonny, Sid, Tyler, and Levi also earned a I. Mara VanWagner, and Natalie Sterk earned a II on their double reed duet. The middle and high school bands also performed in the MSBOA District

II Band and Orchestra Festival. They were evaluated across five categories playing music that director Lance Dubay says was "well beyond their years." Both groups of students earned I's from the judges.

On March 12, four middle school musicians participated in the MS-BOA District Honor Band, comparable to an all star team.

Middle school choir earned a first division rating at MSVMA district festival and will perform at State festival this spring. High school earned a second division rating at district festival.

# District Adopts Strategic Plan Results; Identifies Core Goals

**“I think the most exciting part is this strategic plan was built on the thoughts and ideas of our community, which is something that hasn’t been done in a long time.”**

After months of community input sessions, planning retreats, and internal meetings, Kingsley’s strategic planning process is complete. The Board of Education adopted the Michigan Association of School Boards’ (MASB) summary results at the March 11 meeting.

Penny McWilliams from the MASB synthesized input from several hundred internal and community stakeholders to identify five key focus areas: Academics & Programs, Learning Environment & Culture, Communications & Community Engagement, Operations & Finance, and Personnel.

Within those focus areas are 15 objectives, which are listed below. District administrators, along with KAS’s business manager Nadia Hoover further narrowed the list by identifying four objective focuses for this year. Those focus objectives are in bold:

## *Personnel*

Goal Statement: Kingsley Area Schools will build trust through open communication, mutual respect, and collaboration to provide efficient operations that support success.

Objectives:

- Develop guidelines and procedures for onboarding staff.
- Attract and retain staff, teachers and administrators**

“We want to provide a really comfortable work environment for everybody. In the last, probably, five years with COVID, and some other factors, people weren’t super excited to come to work. We want a comfortable learning environment of collaboration. It’s a culture effort,” said Superintendent Rothwell.

## *Learning Environment & Culture*

Goal Statement: Kingsley Area Schools will be a safe and collaborative learning environment for students and staff.

Objectives:

- To execute Professional Learning Community (PLC) with fidelity.**
- Acclimate new and current stakeholders to the Kingsley Area Schools community.

- Create a plan for Positive Behavior Intervention & Supports (PBIS) implementation districtwide.

## *Operations & Finance*

Goal Statement: Kingsley Area Schools will be fiscally responsible in meeting the needs of students and staff through alignment with the Strategic Plan.

Objectives:

- Collaborate development of budget.
- Develop methods to communicate department and building budgets.
- Monitor expenditures to ensure fiscal responsibility.
- Evaluate growth to determine needs for future expansion.**

Right now, Kingsley is undergoing a facilities study that will be finished the week of April 22. Superintendent Rothwell says the results of that study will help identify the greatest areas of need in terms of infrastructure. A future ballot initiative to fund these projects is something that will be considered.

## *Academics & Programs*

Goal Statement: Kingsley Area schools will increase engagement and opportunities to enhance student achievement.

Objectives:

- Provide time and opportunities for staff improvement.
- Align curriculum in grades K-12 to provide students a guaranteed viable curriculum.**
- Utilize district and state data to identify trends and inform decision-making.

“Curriculum purchases over the last number of years have been very inconsistent. Right now, we’re focused on aligning our language arts curriculum,” said Superintendent Rothwell.

## *Communication & Community Engagement*

Goal Statement: Kingsley Area Schools will consistently communicate to engage students, staff, parents and the community.

Objectives:

- Implement intentional positive communication to celebrate success.
- Create partnerships with local businesses and organizations to support the district.
- Maintain and strengthen parental involvement in school community. ”

**“Now, we’re going to put these thoughts and ideas into action for improvement.”**  
-Superintendent Rothwell

## Board of Education Seeking Three Candidates for Upcoming Vacancies



Over the past four months, the board and administration came together to outline a three- to five year Strategic Plan. During this time, community members, students, staff, administrators and board members worked together to create new district goals and objectives, as well as a new mission and vision for our district.

President Vivien Snyder says,

*“This is an opportune time for anyone who may be considering a board position with new goals in place for our district.” Being an advocate for Kingsley Area Schools and public education at large is so important at this time.*

*Running for a board position should not be taken lightly. I will be honest, there is more time involved than a monthly meeting. The key to being a productive board member involves a few things: good listening skills, communicating with respect, being prepared to address agenda items, understanding the different roles of a board member and superintendent, becoming familiar with policy and procedures, and educating oneself on what is new and changing in the world of public education.*

*As board members, we all need to collectively work together and make the best decisions possible for the district. We are individuals but when the board speaks (votes) it is with one voice. Regardless of our individual position we support the decision as a whole moving forward. With that said, I find this is one of the most rewarding things I can do to give back to the students and the district. We have a great school with many moving parts that make it that way and I thank each and everyone of them.”*

This year, there will be three open seats on the Kingsley Board of Education. There are two full 6-year terms (ending in 2030) and one 2-year partial term (ending in 2026) on the November 5, 2024 ballot. Board president Vivien Snyder invites all interested community members to consider running for one of the positions.

Interested candidates must file with the County Clerk by July 23, 2024. Community members would vote for the new members in the November 2024 election and they would take office in January 2025.

## 11 Juniors Recognized for Outstanding Test Scores



Eleven juniors from Kingsley High School were recently acknowledged for their exceptional performance on the Practice SAT (PSAT) and National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (NMSQT).

Their scores place them within the top 10% of the entire state of Michigan, representing rural populations and select demographic groups.

"I'm proud of them. This changes the trajectory of what their future looks like. These awards speak to their grit and their ability to see the opportunity to get a good education here and take advantage of that," said KHS Principal Chris Rapes.

These awards provide students with an opportunity to showcase their academic prowess to colleges and scholarship programs seeking diverse talent.

Congratulations to the following students, who are now eligible for awards in the following categories:

Madelyn Wares, National African American Recognition Program; Tyren Delk, National First-Generation Recognition Program; Mason Glazier, National First-Generation Recognition Program and National Rural and Small Town Recognition Program; Isabella Paroskie, National First-Generation Recognition Program; Korbin Bedford, National Indigenous Recognition Program and National Rural and Small Town Recognition Program; Other National and Small Town Recognition Program eligible students are Sayla Bender, Lucas Buning, Logan Face, Zachary Middleton, Nathan Peters, and Natalie Sterk.

These awards reflect not only the hard work and talent of the students but also the concerted effort of the entire district to improve test scores at Kingsley High School.

Last year, KHS science teacher Nancy Olenchek noted that neighboring schools with similar populations were outperforming Kingsley on the PSAT. She believed that her students' scores did not accurately reflect their potential.

She aggregated all of their individual test results to create a statistical model that painted a picture of what went wrong.

"I broke down the data by domain and analyzed the performance of each student. I realized that many of them lacked test-taking strategies," said Ms. Olenchek.

Ms. Olenchek discovered that some students struggled with time management, often missing easy points due to lack of strategy. She collaborated with math teacher Michelle Peterson, who had initiated a math intervention hour, to introduce additional test preparation programs. Along with teacher Robin Lewis, they implemented three programs aimed at familiarizing students with test formats and mastering content areas.

These programs include: In-class lessons on the PSAT's digital format, with Mrs. Lewis teaching students how to utilize the online graphing calculator for math and science sections. Weekly quizzes reviewing test content. A new math intervention hour to provide additional support and practice for small groups of students.

Additionally, academic counselor Lori Heitmeyer organized free PSAT prep workshops on Sundays this past winter.

The culmination of their efforts speaks for itself as practice test scores are already rising across the board.

"It validates all of the good things our teachers are doing. We have outstanding teachers. I can't tell you how many times I just walk into a classroom to tell them 'you're amazing, you're a rock-star' because it is incredible to work around people who are constantly trying to raise the bar." said Mr. Rapes.

These achievements not only celebrate the success of individual students but also highlight the commitment of Kingsley High School to academic excellence and student advancement.

## Meet our New Staff



**Wallace Hoffelt**  
**KHS Science Teacher**  
Mr. Hoffelt is an Illinois native who spent every summer visiting the Traverse City area, which is where his love for the wilderness began. He graduated from LSSU last year and student taught under Mr. Boone Scharp before joining KHS.

"I think Michigan is one of the greatest outdoor classrooms that is available anywhere."



**Trea Merchant**  
**KHS Phys. Ed. Teacher**  
Mrs. Merchant was raised in Traverse City and played basketball and softball at Albion College. She has an athletic family of three Kingsley Stags and her husband coaches football. She is the Varsity softball coach.

"I love getting to know my students and being in the same building as my kids."



**Nicole Wierman**  
**KMS Special Ed**  
Born and raised in Kingsley, her dream of teaching started while she was a KHS student in Teachers Academy. Now, seven years later, she works with middle schoolers she used to see as preschoolers way back when.

"It is a full-circle moment, and I know this is my calling."

**Spring testing is right around the corner. Please avoid making appointments during the following testing times:**

**SAT/PSAT Testing (Freshman-Juniors)**  
Tuesday, April 9, 2024

**MSTEP: Juniors Only**  
Wednesday, April 10, 2024

**Workstep: Juniors Only**  
Thursday, April 11, 2024

**AP Lit & Comp Exam**  
Wednesday, May 8 | 8:00AM

**AP Calculus Exam**  
Monday, May 13 | 8:00AM

## 2024-2025 Preschool Application

### GSRP: Free State Funded Preschool

To apply for a GSRP slot parents will need to email Kristin Goethals at kgoethals@kingsleyschools.org or go to NMCAA.net to set up an appointment and indicate Kingsley Preschool Program as their first choice of schools. The appointments are done in collaboration with NMCAA for Kingsley GSRP and Hannah Headstart slots. The GSRP slots are for students who are four years old by September 1 st 2024. GSRP slots will be offered to qualifying at risk families based on a series of risk factors including low family income. Families qualifying for GSRP after their appointment will be asked to designate a first choice and second choice of program locations. Students may also be offered a Hannah Headstart slot if they qualify. The state qualifies students through June and acceptance letters are mailed at that time. Hours of operation are 8:30-3:15 Monday through Thursday with the option to add a paid day on Friday. (Limited spots) ALL students who will be 4 need to complete this application due to the state language around possible universal preschool for next year.

### Tuition Preschool

The tuition based program is open to any family whose child is 30 months of age up to school age, and is poty trained. There are no income qualifiers to be accepted into the program, and the cost is \$33 per day (for the 2023-24 year, subject to change). The \$33 per day includes lunch, a morning snack, and an afternoon snack. Program options include Tuesday/Thursday, Monday/Wednesday/Friday, or Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday/Friday. Space is limited. Filling out a preregistration form does NOT guarantee enrollment. Letters will be mailed in May verifying acceptance. Hours of operation are 7:45 am to 3:45 pm. Please complete the form below and return it to:

Kingsley Elementary School Attn: Kristin Goethals  
311 Clark St.  
Kingsley, MI 49649

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Names \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address (if different) \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\*Tuition Paperwork mailed in April. \*GSRP: NMCAA.net, Early Childhood Tab, Application, Pre-Application  
Please note your preferred preschool method.  
\_\_\_\_\_ Tuition Schedule: \_\_\_\_\_ (days of week)  
\_\_\_\_\_ GSRP (State Funded Free Preschool for Monday through Thursday, Friday add on available)

# Coffee Chats

With Superintendent  
Joshua T. Rothwell

Every third Thursday  
of the month 8:30AM to  
9:30AM at the Kingsley  
Branch Library.

Next Coffe Chat:  
Thursday,  
April 18  
All are welcome!



## Kindergarten Information

If you have a child that will be five years of age on or before September 1, 2024, and you plan to enroll your child in Kindergarten for the 2024-2025 school year, please complete the form below and mail to Kingsley Elementary School, Attn: Erin Lefler, 311 Clark Street, Kingsley, MI 49649.

Join us for Kindergarten Round Up!  
June 17 th & 18th , 8:30AM – 2:30PM

## Kingsley Kindergarten Roundup 2024-2025

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Names \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address (if different) \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ Work/Cell Phone # \_\_\_\_\_



# Stag Snapshots



## Spotted: Mrs. Wagner!

Former middle school secretary Kay Wagner retired from KAS after 40 years in the district in 2023. Now, she's a loving volunteer at our elementary!



## Kindergarten Beach Day

Kingsley Kindergarteners enjoyed the annual "Beach Day" on a sunny February morning. Teachers taught students about all things sun, sand, and surf on the special theme day.



## Historical Fiction Day

Mr. and Mrs. Taylor and Mrs. Trowbridge donned their best throwback outfits for Historical Fiction Day at the Middle School, which celebrated March is Reading month with spirit days.



## Thing 1 & Thing 2

This year's March is Reading month theme at the elementary was Dr. Seuss. Above, secretary Erin Lefler poses with another student dressed as a "Thing."



## ELA Curriculum Updates

A representative from the ISD presented different high school and middle school ELA curriculums that our teachers will look into in an effort to arrive at a cohesive 6-12 English curriculum.



## Stags in the Arts

Kingsley students Eden Ruby, Jillian Crockett, Eloise Crockett, and Cora Dunham performed in the Northwest Michigan Ballet Theatre production of *Whither Thou Goest: The Story of Ruth*. Bravo!



## Fourth Graders Explore the Dunes

Kingsley fourth graders explored the Sleeping Bear Dunes. The field trip included a walk up the epic dune climb and a trip to the visitor's center to learn about the plants and wildlife of the area.