



Mustang Musings

MORRIS CENTRAL SCHOOL NEWSLETTER



*"Tomorrow is the first blank page of a 365-page book.
Write a good one." —Brad Paisley*

January/February 2025

From the Superintendent's Desk

While it seems impossible that 2025 is on our doorstep, this school year is off to a great start at MCS. Thanks to the dedication of our staff, students, and community, this has been a season of growth, accomplishment, and collaboration.

Our capital project is advancing steadily. The exterior of the new bus garage is complete, and we're excited to announce that it's on track to open this spring. Inside the main building, major upgrades have been completed in the elementary wing, including new ceilings, flooring, and state-of-the-art HVAC systems. These updates have transformed the learning environment, and it's fantastic to see our students thriving in their newly updated spaces.

Looking ahead, the final phase of our Capital Project will bring even more improvements. The replacement of the underground oil tank near the maintenance building, playground upgrades, and enhanced outdoor security measures are all set to go out for bid this spring, with construction slated for the summer. These projects will ensure that our facilities remain safe, sustainable, and welcoming for all.

Beyond bricks and mortar, what truly makes Morris Central School special is our sense of community. It has been wonderful to see so many of you engaging with the school through monthly morning programs, the veterans breakfast, the senior citizen luncheon, open house events, parent-teacher conferences, and cheering on our teams at athletic events.

Additionally, we just secured a \$10,000 grant to support our Backpack Program for years to come. This, in correlation with the student-started Second Saturday Food Pantry and our in-school hygiene pantry, are just a few of the ways we are aiming to support the fundamental needs of all members of our school community. Your support and participation enrich our school culture and inspire our students.

Speaking of inspiration, we have much to celebrate! Congratulations to our fall athletic teams for their exceptional achievements on the field and in the classroom. Their dedication earned Morris Central School the School of Distinction designation for outstanding academic performance—an honor that reflects the well-rounded excellence of our student-athletes. Additionally, I want to commend our hardworking scholars who made the honor roll during the first quarter. Your achievements set a high standard for excellence and pride in our school.

As we move into the new year, I'm reminded of how fortunate we are to be part of such a strong and supportive community. Thank you for your continued commitment to making Morris Central School a place where students can grow, achieve, and pursue excellence.

Take care,

Mrs. Jamie Maistros
Superintendent





Morris Central School Board Members

Mary Dugan, President
Russell Tilley, Vice President
Emily Boss
Teresa DeLaurentiis
Wendy Moore

Morris Central School Administration

Jamie Maistros, Superintendent
April Vunk, Principal

Main Office (607) 263-6100

Guidance (607) 263-6116

Published bimonthly by
Morris Central School,
Morris, New York 13808

**For submissions, calendar events
or to request a printed copy,
contact Judy Matson
(jmatson@morriscsd.org)
(607) 263-6102**

or

**Julene Waffle
(jwaffle@morriscsd.org)**

Typeset and Printed by
DCMO BOCES Printing Service
Norwich, New York

NEW WEBPAGE

www.morriscsd.org

*You may have noticed MCS has
a new webpage. Please check it out.
It is full of important and useful
information.*

Three Cheers to...

- The Morning program! To the faculty and staff who organize it and to the students who have been recognized for being great!
- All the soccer and cross-country teams--great seasons!
- Thank you to Miss Deignan for joining our science team and doing such a wonderful job with our kids. And cheers to Mrs. Grant for being such a wonderful mentor.
- Thank you to Mrs. Fredette's Chemistry students for interviewing the 7th grade life skills students! It was a wonderful experience for all.
- All of the un-bee-lievable students who participated in the Junior Bee and the School Bee! Rowan Schoellig and Michael Coffyn will be representing our school at the Regional Bee at SUNY Oneonta in February! We are proud of all of you!
- Thank you to Mrs. Dugan and Mrs. Vunk for assisting Mrs. Bjorvand and Mrs. Sneddon with both spelling bees.
- Elaine Parker for making SchoolTool work the way it should.
- Mrs. Mackey for organizing The Green Golly presentation for grades Prek - 5!
- Miss Ochi for showcasing our students' talents and brightening our upstairs hallways!
- National Honor Society students and advisors planned both a Blood Drive and a Kids' Night Out last week! Both exceeded expectations, with more than 20 units of blood donated and over 50 students in attendance for Kids Night Out. Nice work supporting our community!
- Welcome to MCS, new faculty and staff!
- Thank you to Mr. Iannelli for coordinating the annual basketball tournament! Thanks to the Booster Club for being great hosts as well.
- Welcome back MCS Cheer Squad and thanks to Mrs. Kane and Ms. Alex for being the coaches.



Soccer All-Stars

Tri-Valley League All-Stars:

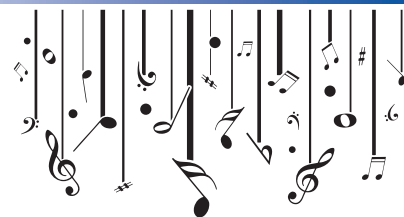
First Team: *Hannah Wist*

First Team: *Ryan Murphy and
Carter Swayer*

Second Team: *Jake Johnson
and Jonah Baldo*

Honorable Mention: *Ty Turner*

**NYS Class D Girls All-State
Team:** *Hannah Wist*



All-County All-Stars:

Band: *Kendall Gould, Brodie
Coleman*

Chorus: *Robert Hill, Brodie
Coleman, Hannah Moore, Delilah
Triolo, Sophie Myers, Hayden
Marshall, Richard Pegg*

All-State Bound: *Brodie Coleman*
made it into Area All-State this
year.

HAPPY RETIREMENT, MRS. TURNER!



Mrs. Diane Turner has worked at Morris Central School as a teacher Aide for the past 27 years. She said, "I began my career at Morris after staying home with my four children for ten years. Prior to that I worked in the accounting department at New York Central Mutual as Section Head.

"During my time at Morris I have enjoyed working with all different grades levels from K-12th. It has been wonderful watching the many students pass through each grade to graduation. I have also learned a wealth of information and techniques to help students learn from the many wonderful teachers that I have had the pleasure of working with. I will miss the interaction with students and the wonderful friendships I have made with the faculty and staff."

We are lucky as Mrs. Turner intends to "continue on for a time as Site Coordinator at CROP." This will make retiring less of a shock. She said, "This way I can ease out slowly into retirement. Test the water a bit before making a complete break from doing what I have come to love, helping students succeed!"

In retirement, Mrs. Turner intends to "spend more time with family, many living in the southern states. I am especially looking forward to spending more time with my three grandchildren. Also on my bucket list is to visit more of the many beautiful national parks here in the U.S. Cooking, gardening and kayaking are also something I enjoy doing and intend to do more of. And of course getting out and exercising more is on the list of things to do too!"

Thank you for your many wonderful and dedicated years of service to the Morris Central School District, Mrs. Turner.

NEW FACULTY AND STAFF

Emily Grover, Permanent Substitute



Hello, I live in Morris and I am a Permanent Substitute at Morris Central School. I have my Assistant Teacher Certification even though I only recently started, I am absolutely loving it. I have two amazing sons, one of whom is in Pre-K at MCS, and my other son is 8 months old. Helping children learn, grow and expand their ways of thinking has always been a passion of mine. I have worked as a substitute in a couple school districts over the past four years and I have always loved getting to know the students, staff and families. I chose to work at Morris because of the amazing staff, and the wonderful school that it is. On top of that I also have a similar schedule as my son and it's close to

home. I enjoy spending time with my family and my friends, doing arts, crafts and baking with my two kids. I look forward to getting to know all of you and making this school year a wonderful experience for our students!

BUDGET SIMULATION

On November 14, Personal Money Management and Pre-Calculus students traveled to Delaware-Chenango-Madison-Otsego BOCES to participate in budgeting simulation activities sponsored by SFCU Bank.

Pictured are students reaping the rewards of finishing the whole simulation!

—Mrs. Teresa Kane,
Secondary Math

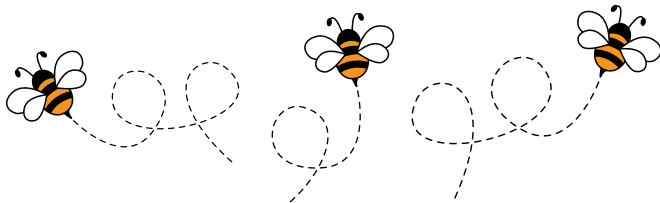


WHAT'S NEW AT NEW VISIONS HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONS

New Visions Healthcare Professions is a program that allows high school seniors to observe the work of different departments in the hospital. Morris sends two students, *Hannah Wist* and *Madison Moore*, to New Visions everyday. NV students complete their hospital rotations and schooling at Bassett in Cooperstown. Each week, Three out of five of the days at Bassett are spent watching physicians and healthcare providers in different specialties. We are expected to wear professional attire and take notes while on rotation. After each week's rotation, we complete an assignment explaining what we learned. This program has allowed me to watch multiple surgeries, such as the removal of a gallbladder and a shoulder replacement surgery. The work is definitely more college-based and rigorous. Even though it's a challenging program, it has provided me with great experiences so far and is better preparing me for my future!



—*Madison Moore*, Senior New Visions Student



SPELLING IS ALL THE BUZZ?

On November 26, Morris Central School held a Junior Spelling Bee and a School Spelling Bee. The Junior Bee featured select students from the third and fourth grade classes. The students representing their classes were Hunter MacPherson, Chloe Bailey, Owen Perkosky, Lily Gray, Remington Neubauer, Danny Pasternak, Leland McKnight and Piper Sherwood.

Winning the Junior Bee was Leland McKnight and the runner up was Owen Perkosky. We are so proud of these young spellers!

Following the Junior Bee, representatives from grades 5-8 participated in the School Spelling Bee. Competitors included Bella Marino, Keller Baker, Fia Burdick, Sofia Baio, Rowan Schoellig, Rylee Thompson, Lucas Galesky, Eden Boss, Hollin Stabler, Kendall Gould and Michael Coffyn. Representing Morris Central School at the regional competition at SUNY Oneonta will be our winner Rowan Schoellig and our runner up, Michael Coffyn. Mrs. Sneddon and Mrs. Bjorvand are very proud of everyone who participated! MCS

—*Mrs. Julie Bjorvand*, Fifth Grade



LIFE SKILLS IS FUN

Mrs. Masciola's Life Skills class worked on team building skills in class this fall. Building spaghetti houses and dancing were among the many fun activities they did around Halloween.

In November, the class practiced the skills needed to interview adults and peers. Several spoke with teachers and they practiced interviewing Chemistry students too.



EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT



Levi Waffle ('25), a senior at Morris Central School, is also a boy scout. He is currently working on his Eagle Scout project. This fall he started his Eagle Scout project: to honor veterans and current service people by hanging banners in town that recognize them and their service. Although the process was challenging at first, as each

project should be, *Levi* made inspiring progress.

The banners and hardware to hang them were a bit pricey, but he organized fundraising through donations and the sale of Country Meats smoked meat sticks and he collected donations for people who needed help. He also organized a dedication ceremony involving veterans and many community volunteers. The ceremony will hopefully be in January when the printer finishes making the banners.

Levi said, "I am thankful for all the help I got. People were really generous and supportive. The Village Supervisor and the Village Clerk were especially helpful and the Mayor and Village Board were very supportive." *Levi* is also thankful for his scout troop and National Honor Society friends for helping too.

The service of the roughly fifty (so far) veterans from the Morris Central School District spans from the Civil War era to today. He, with the help of the Village crew and NYSEG, will be honored by hanging their banners on telephone poles in town this spring.

What inspired *Levi* to do this project was his grandfather and other family members who served in Vietnam and WW II. *Levi* knows that our veterans are very important people and he feels that they are not appreciated, nor recognized as much as they should be. He felt it was important to honor these brave men and women.

Although his official project will not be finalized before Christmas, as he hoped, the project will continue to grow as he chose a local printer (Prolifiq) who can print banners any time they are needed. Orders can be placed for years to come by e-mailing villageofmorris@yahoo.com for more information.

Levi claimed that the process went very well. He said, "I feel great about this project, and I think it will be greatly appreciated. I'm very glad I am able to give back to our community in this way. I hope that our veterans and their families will get to see these banners and feel pride in what they have done for our country."

—*Grace Schiller*, Senior

WRITING LIKE POE

In English 11, during October, students studied short stories by Edgar Allen Poe and a poem entitled “*The Raven*.” In addition to learning Poe literary terms such as grotesque and arabesque (the physical and mental suffering of something), they also discussed allusion, symbols, and theme in depth. They discovered that Poe typically wrote about similar themes in all of his works: insanity, death, and revenge. However, they also found in “*The Raven*” the theme of lost love. They even discovered one story with an atypical “happy” ending for a character in “*The Pit and the Pendulum*.”

Students enjoyed studying Poe in depth and enjoyed writing their unit-ending short story that they wrote. Their final assignment in the unit was to pretend they found an old trunk in an attic with stories they could prove were lost Poe stories.

To get inspiration for their stories, the classes went to Hillington Cemetery. There they learned about uniquely Morris cemetery history and were able to respectfully explore the grounds. They discovered unusual headstones, unique names, and stones dating back to the early 1800s.

Robert Hill said, “I liked the trip to the cemetery to get ideas for the Poe story that we made.” *Ryan Murphy* said, “My favorite part of it was finding similar patterns throughout all of his books and then going to the cemetery to analyze graves and connect that to Poe’s writing.”

All in all, it was a spooktacular adventure.

—Mrs. Julene Waffle, Secondary English



THE ART OF WRITING

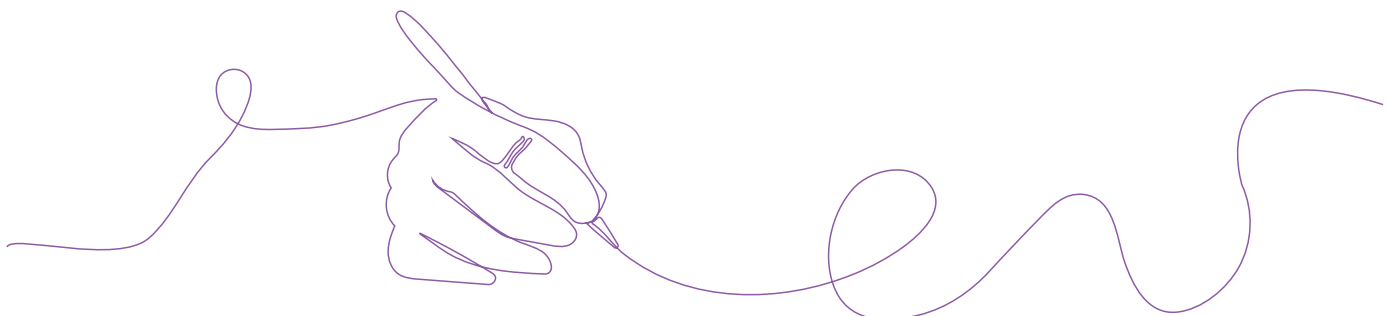


College English students studied the art of writing reviews before Thanksgiving. They had the awesome opportunity to meet via Zoom with Linda Lowen, a well-known book reviewer in the Syracuse area. She writes for Publishers Weekly, The Syracuse Post-Standard, and Reader's Digest. She is also the author of several Syracuse travel books: *100 Things to do in Syracuse Before You Die* and *Secret Syracuse: A Guide to the Weird, Wonderful, and Obscure*. She gave students pointers about what they should put into a review and how they should tackle writing one. After a great question and answer session, students were charged with writing their own review. At first they thought they would review a movie, but they could not agree on which movie to watch, so they decided to go out to eat. They enjoyed breakfast at The Latte Lounge in Oneonta on a day off. Generally, the food was good, but the atmosphere and The Green Toad Bookstore next door were even better, they said.

—Mrs. Julene Waffle, English



Bryden Wyckoff enjoyed raking leaves for his reward time. He liked to help rake the leaves for our maintenance staff, Tim Utter and John Tol. He also liked to rake piles for students to jump into.



SENIOR ENGLISH: *Workshopping and Reading*

In November, Mrs. Waffle's Senior English class studied short stories. To end the unit, they researched how to write microfiction and had the chance to use their creativity to write a microfiction story of their own. After their stories were written, students shared their stories with a group of other classmates to workshop them. While sharing their stories, classmates were able to critique the microfiction giving the author's positive feedback about what worked in their stories and constructive criticism about how they might make it better. *Sera Lentz* ('25) said, "I liked sharing my story with classmates and seeing how I can make it better and more interesting." Many other students liked the idea of getting their work critiqued by other classmates because it gave a different perspective on their writing.

In December, the seniors also actively read the book *The Things They Carried* by Tim O'Brien. The book was a collection of stories about different experiences for soldiers during the Vietnam War. After reading each chapter they had to bring a picture that represented what happened in the chapter or that represented the themes they read about in that chapter. They then glued their images and words on a big poster of a soldier's helmet. By the end of the unit the whole paper was full of images and important thematic words. *Delaney Coveny* ('25) said, "I enjoyed the idea of bringing pictures in because it showed how other people viewed the story and it gave us some things to talk about." The seniors liked the book because it allowed them to see how the Vietnam War affected the soldiers and it showed them the stories they had.

—Brooke McKinney, Senior



AT THE FINISH LINE

Madison Moore found her passion in running a few years ago. She started running local 5ks and joined the track teams and the cross-country team. Since she started, she has found great success, and she is always improving. This year, she finished her cross-country season strong with a second place finish at the Section IV Class D Championship and she was the second highest local finisher at the State meet. At states she finished 25th out of 112 runners from all over the state. Nate Lull noted on X that *Maddie* is the first female in MCS history to qualify for the state meet in cross-country. *Maddie* said, "The send off at school I got before states was awesome and greatly appreciated it. The experience itself was amazing. I was happy to finish well and make Morris proud!"

Maddie's success wasn't finished with states either; to end her running in competition for the fall, she finished first in Norwich's Turkey Trot for her age and gender group. For her class and state success, Nate Lull awarded her the honor of Athlete of the Week. *Maddie* is excited for Indoor track this winter and spring track to follow that. Next September, *Maddie* will run for Misericordia University.

Maddie said, "What I love most about running is that it has made me mentally stronger. Running requires hard work and dedication, but also being mentally tough. It has taught me to push even when my brain is telling me to quit."

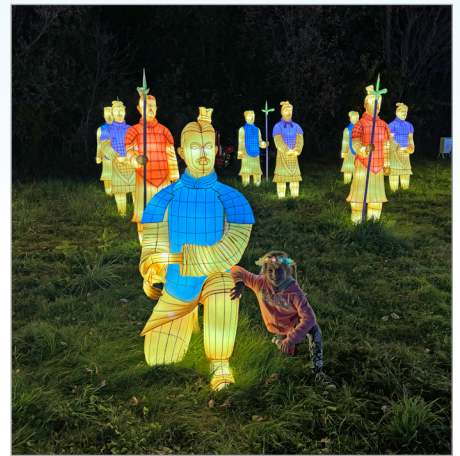
Great job, *Maddie*! MCS is proud of you!

—Mrs. Julene Waffle, English

GLOW FESTIVAL PRIZE

On Friday, October 25, 2024, ten Fifth Graders went to the Autumn Glow Festival Rotterdam Junction, NY, with Mrs. Deysenroth as part of the Outdoor Club. They attended in collaboration with the art department. The art department held an art contest for a project they were doing in their unit. Five students were chosen from each homeroom as winners by the art teacher and the advanced high school art class. The festival featured a huge display of beautiful lit sculptures and an impressive acrobatics performance which MCS students enjoyed from the front row. Students attending were *Bella Marino, Colten Ritchey, Eden Boss, Ira Pegg, Sadie Jacoby, Sofia Baio, Evan Brown, Roman Turek, Montana LaTour,* and *Liam Hoosock. Faith Schiller* also qualified but was unable to attend.

—Mrs. Maria Deysenroth, PE



NHS AND STUDENT COUNCIL KEEPING BUSY

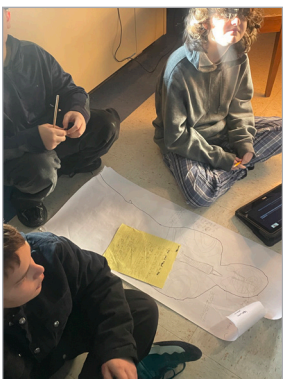
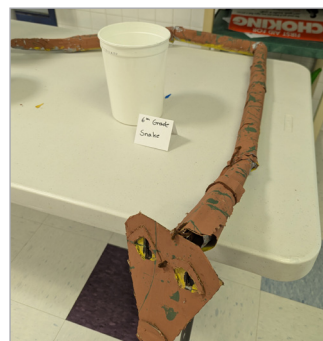


From selling candy grams during the holiday season and running food drives, to collecting winter hats and dusting the trophy case, the NHS and Student Council members have been busy serving our community. Here are just a few highlights:

- Ran a successful Red Cross blood drive that collected 20 units of blood
- Won grant money for the Second Saturday Food Pantry in Morris from Student Choices Student Voices Program
- Ran the Second Saturday Food Pantry every month
- Hosted a Kids Night Out for over 50 children in December
- Collected hats and gloves for people who needed them
- Ran a food drive in November and collected over 380 items
- Started our recyclable plastics campaign in December
- Dusted the trophy case in December
- Had an International Hat Day fundraiser
- Working with elementary students for projects
- Thanksgiving greeting card campaign for folks in rehabilitation homes
- Helped people at concerts and Superintendent's Conference Day and worked at other events at the school
- Served, played instruments, sang, set up, or cleaned up at the Veteran's Day Breakfast and the Senior Citizens' Brunch

SCULPTURES

Students from Grades 6-8 worked hard on making cardboard sculptures with the theme of "animals" using several different "connection methods" they learned in art ranging from utilizing pipe cleaners, paper fasteners, duct tape, and hot glue to connect pieces or techniques such as scoring and bending to create organic and rounded shapes. Bonus points were given to the groups that created animals native to New York! The cardboard sculptures will be up in the cafeteria until Friday for students to vote on their favorite.



SCIENCE OR MUSIC

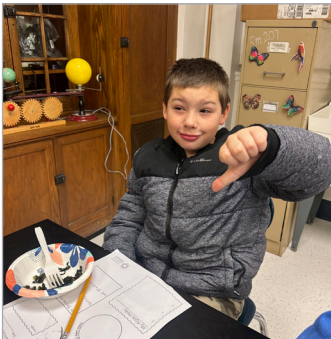
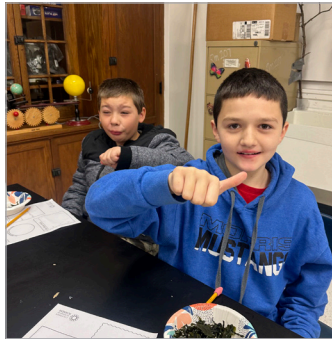
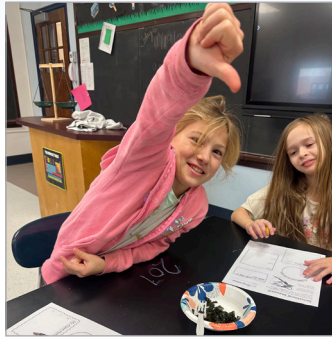
Seventh Graders were hard at work in December doing research on the different parts in the vocal tract and what functions they have to aid in sound production.

They created a drawing that shows these parts and included recycled items that represent them as well. The hallway was full of awesome art/music/science body projects. Some included bubble wrap, empty toilet paper rolls, medical gloves blown up and many more recycled items.

—Brianna Thompson, Vocal Music

TRYING SEAWEED

After Thanksgiving, Fifth Grade tried a version of algae. You can really tell who was a fan and who was not!



BALLOONS

What a busy time it has been for Fifth Graders! We took a break from learning about early civilizations in Mesoamerica to prepare for our Morning Program presentation on perseverance. We made connections about never giving up from our own lives, as well as how some famous people were motivated to persevere. KFC anyone?! If you attended November's Morning Program you may have also heard some examples about how people can demonstrate perseverance in their daily lives. Mrs. Bjorvand and Miss Harrison were both extremely proud of how well both classes performed and demonstrated their learning. After our presentation, we went on to learn about the history of the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade by completing several virtual field trips. We completed this project by creating our own parade balloons! As one student put it, "It was so neat to watch the parade this year and watch the floats and know about all of the history and hard work that goes into making a balloon!" Now we are headed back to ancient civilization, where we will learn about the Aztecs!

—Julia Bjorvand, 5th Grade



FOURTH GRADE SCIENCE

Mrs. Foster, (*Roman and Mason Turek's*) grandmother, came to teach a science lesson on lab equipment and lab safety. The class had a great time and so much was learned.

—Ms. Kathy Bechtold, Fourth Grade

HOLIDAY CONCERT

Pre-K through Third Graders had a wonderful holiday concert in December. It was full of fun songs, engaging dialogue, and adorable acting and dance moves.



MORRIS CENTRAL SCHOOL 1ST QUARTER • 2024-2025

HONOR ROLL

7th GRADE

Cameron Bankowski
Kent Bankowski
Maximillian Schott

8th GRADE

Landen Atcher
Kristena Barringer
Aubree Canfield
Michael Coffyn
Owen Wagner

9th GRADE

Aniya Kogut

10th GRADE

Nathan Gregory
Ryan Townsend
Jason Valentine
Timothy Wood, Jr.

11th GRADE

Zandra Aliya
Natalie Barley
Ryland Boss
Shiloh Jones
Ty Turner

12th GRADE

Zeithan Dunham
Jayden Kolka
Benjamin Newell



HIGH HONOR ROLL

7th GRADE

Annaleen LaTour
Alexander Parker
Hollin Stabler

8th GRADE

Jordan Ard
Noah Baldo
Hailie Brown
Sierra Coyle
Tomas Fernandez
Mark Johnson
Bryden Wyckoff

9th GRADE

Kylee Canfield
Chloe Ross
Delilah Triolo

10th GRADE

Josiah Dugan
Kara Hand
Hayden Kolvik
Johnathan LaTour
Lucas Waffle
Kiarra Walker
William Weber

11th GRADE

Evelyn Burke
Hailey Canfield
Zackary Chase
Luis Cruz
Robert Hill
Katrina Romano

12th GRADE

Delaney Coveny
Georgia Kolka
Emmy Lentz
Jackson Ross
Levi Waffle



PRINCIPAL'S LIST

7th GRADE

Isaiah Jones
Isaac Moore
Kendra Smith

8th GRADE

Julia Barrett
Ethan Fallon
Brenan Fraser
Kendall Gould
Charles Kolka
Aurora Kopp
Hannah Moore

9th GRADE

Julia Barrett
Brodan Connally
Alanna Davies
Richard Pegg
Samuel Schillerr

10th GRADE

Savannah Coyle
Lainey Fraser
Jacob Johnson
Jacob Knapp
Gabriel Melius
Ella Moore
Matthew Schiller

11th GRADE

Makenzie Hoyt
Jonah Baldo
Brodie Coleman
Alisandra Farmer
Ryan Murphy
Amira Ross
Michael Saggese
Carter Swayer
Grace Wing

12th GRADE

Leah Gregory
Makenzie Hoyt
Sera Lentz
Mason Linton
Matheus Martins
Brooke McKinney
Grace Schiller

