

The Ramblings

Paid for by McBain Rural Agricultural School

MCBAIN RURAL AGRICULTURAL SCHOOL

SPRING/SUMMER 2024

TITLE I READING BUDDIES



The Title 1 program started Reading Buddies this year. We had 11 fifth graders who came and tutored 11 first grade students. They worked on sight words and reading fluency. They were always excited to come down and worked hard with their buddy! So proud of how much these fifth graders were willing to step in to help our first graders!

Gifted Books from the Marines and the Toys for Tots Program

McBain Elementary was the recipient of a literacy grant that provided a book for every child in our building! Toys for Tots, which is run by the Marines, contacted the school about the grant, and provided 500 books from Scholastic. The books included fiction and nonfiction, books of varying reading levels, books in Spanish, and a lot of high-interest books. They were sorted and delivered to classrooms where teachers gave one to each child. We are incredibly appreciative of the generosity of Toys for Tots and their support of literacy.



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McBain Schools
107 E. Maple St.
McBain, MI 49657

Superintendent .. 231.825.2165
Elementary 231.825.2021
Middle School 231.825.8041
High School 231.825.2412

A MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



Hello McBain,

As we are in the middle of summer and preparing for the next school year we are excited to share updates and plans. There are a lot of exciting things happening this summer. Please cross your fingers and send your prayers and well wishes that everything goes smoothly.

Track Replacement

This summer, we are replacing the track. The new track will provide a safer facility for our student-athletes and community members who enjoy running and walking. Our new scoreboard will also be installed and will be ready for the football season. We thank our Athletic Boosters, who raised \$70,000 for the scoreboard. That is just amazing!

New High School Office and Secure Entries for our Middle and Elementary School Offices

We are excited to announce the construction of a new high school office. This new space will improve our existing office and provide students, parents, and visitors with a welcoming environment. All of our school offices will be located on Roland Street. We are also installing secure entries at our middle school and elementary school.

Middle School Gym Floor Replacement

The middle school gym floor is getting a much-needed replacement. We will be replacing the original floor from 1959. The new floor will offer a safer and more enjoyable surface for our physical education classes, sports practices, and community events.

Grant-Funded Weight Room Expansion

Thanks to a grant, we are expanding our weight room. This expansion will provide more space and equipment, promoting health and wellness for our students.

As we prepare for these exciting changes, we also want to celebrate and recognize the dedication of our retiring staff members. Their years of service have impacted our district, and they will be greatly missed. Please join us in thanking:

Mary Beth Hill - Elementary Administrative Assistant - 24 years of service

Tasha O'Malley - Elementary Teacher - 31 years of service

Melissa Thompson - Elementary Teacher - 30 years of service

Heather Wiggins - Band Director - 20 years of service

Sheila Johnson - Middle School Teacher - 24 years of service

Danita Carpenter - Bus Driver - 10 years of service

We also want to extend a warm welcome to our new hires who will be joining us in the fall. We are thrilled to have them as part of our Rambler Family and look forward to the fresh ideas and energy they will bring to our schools:

Becky Rodnebaugh - High School Principal

Jenny Eisenga - Little Wheels/Rambler Time Director

Kim Lauterwasser - Elementary Teacher

Kathy Booker - Elementary Teacher

Rose Clark - Elementary Teacher

Adam Good - Band Director

Tracey VanHaitsma - Library Parapro

Katiane Myers - Bus Driver

Kasey McQuestion - Elementary Administrative Assistant

We will keep you updated on the progress of these projects throughout the summer. Thank you for your continued support and involvement in our school community. These projects and our district's success would not be possible without the support of our community. Together, we are making our community an even better place.

Have a wonderful and restful summer!

Blessed to be a Rambler,

Mr. Scott Akom

Superintendent

scott.akom@mcbain.org

A MESSAGE FROM THE ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL



As we finish the 2023-2024 school year, I'm thankful for the staff, students, and families that we have in the McBain community. We are truly blessed to have the best of everyone in our district, and I'm thankful for the opportunity to work with all of you.

We finished out our year with significant student growth in all academic areas, field trips to various parts of the state, beautiful weather for Track and Field days, and exciting surprises to finish the year capped by a visit from one of our local fire trucks.

With summer upon us, I hope it's a time for you and your family to relax from a busy school year, reconnect as a family, take a trip or two, and enjoy all that we have in this community. I look forward to seeing everyone again in August as we prepare for another great school year.

Make it a great summer, Ramblers!

Mr. David Wissner
david.wissner@mcbain.org



1st GRADE TALKING ZOO

This year Mrs. Quist's first graders expanded their informational writing project beyond researching animals and writing books and opened a Talking Zoo! Our first graders worked extremely hard at researching information about an animal of their choice which included learning about the animal's diet, habitat, predators, parents and babies as well as telling other interesting facts. After their research was conducted, each student then wrote informational books about their animal. Our class concluded the project with a talking zoo. Parents and grandparents were invited to come in, as well as other classes, to listen and learn information about each of the animals in our class. When they entered our zoo, they could choose to visit a variety of zoo exhibits including our Ocean Aquarium, Bird House, Australian Outback, Bamboo Forest, Rain Forest, Arctic Palace, Big Cat Cave, home Sweet Home (Animals of North America) as well as our Reptile House. We are excited to continue this Talking Zoo in the future for years to come.

Kindergarten Corner



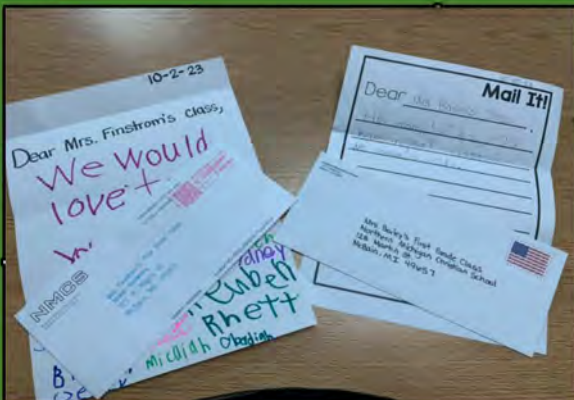
More Reading Buddies!

Mrs. Nelson's kindergarten and Mrs. Westdorp's 3rd grade reading buddies celebrated their last day together on May 16. The students made "magic" bracelets (with sun beads), had popsicles, and read together one last time out on the playground lawn. This year, the students connected once every other week to read, talk, do crafts or activities, and laugh together. The third graders were able to be leaders to the kindergartners, and the kindergartners got to practice and build their reading skills! Their time together resulted in a very special bond that they will hopefully carry with them as they grow older!

Finstrom's Firsties!

Mrs. Stacey Finstrom - 1st Grade

This spring, our class has been busy writing letters to our 1st Grade, NMC Pen Pals. Our class has been writing back and forth since the beginning of the school year. We started off writing letters as a whole group. This allowed us to discuss and learn the format of writing a letter, and how to address an envelope. Then this spring, each child was assigned a specific pen pal and letters were exchanged. We had the opportunity to take a walking field trip and meet our pen pals at the park in McBain. The students enjoyed a popsicle and played outside with their new friends.



A MESSAGE FROM THE MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL



Well that's a wrap for this year! I continue to be amazed and blessed to work with such an awesome group of staff and students. This year we have seen amazing gains in our student behavior and were able to celebrate students meeting expectations several times. In the coming year we will continue following the W.H.E.E.L. expectations and rewarding students for meeting the expectations. Along with great behavior, our academics continue to rise! This year we recognized over 52% of our students for being on the honor roll, with the majority of those students maintaining straight A's for the year! We look forward to a restful summer break and to continue the amazing work our staff and students are doing in the fall!

Mr. Troy Finstrom

troy.finstrom@mcbain.org



Congratulations to Mr. Dan VerBerkmoes for earning the 2023-2024 Outstanding Person In Education award! A perfect award for an amazing teacher!

Guard Strong



In April, a local inspirational team called Guard Strong came to speak to our elementary and middle school students. The group is known for bending iron bars, bench pressing tree trunks, and ripping phone books in half. This year, they called up Mrs. O'Malley and Mrs. Westdorp to get in on the action. With a little help from the team, the two teachers were able to rip through a phone book and a deck of cards. The message to the students was that with some help from our friends, we can do hard things. Additionally, the team talked to the students about how unique and special they are as well as more about what it means to be a team. This is the second time the team has visited our students, and we look forward to them coming again in the future!

3,2,1...BLAST OFF!

Mr. VanderVelde's 7th and 8th Grade Rocketry class launched rockets as the culmination of their semester long class. Several of the rockets went high enough that students lost sight of them! The rockets eventually came down harmlessly to the playground grassy area.





Building a Future for the Next Generation

A Message from ~

The McBain Rural Agricultural School Foundation (MRASF) Board of Directors

At this year's annual auction, held on April 20, the MRASF raised over \$26,000, which will be used to provide scholarships to McBain students. The Board would like to thank the businesses as well as community members who donated items for the auction, all those in the community who attended the auction in support of our efforts to provide scholarships to McBain students and lastly to the staff & students of MHS who ensured a wonderful event with new elements showcasing student talents & a comfortable new atmosphere in the auditorium. More great improvements coming in 2025!

On May 23, at Honors Night, the MRASF provided 41 scholarships totaling \$111,600 for the Class of 2024. This is the highest number of scholarships the foundation has ever provided. The recipients were selected by a committee consisting of the high school principal, the high school counselor and high school teachers that are familiar with each of the applicants. To date, the Foundation has awarded 463 scholarships for a total of \$1,246,100 to McBain seniors since 2003. Currently, the foundation has 16 individual donors in addition to a general fund, which is money raised in the annual spring auction.

Additionally, in an effort to increase awareness of the Foundation, we have created social media pages on [LinkedIn](#) and [Facebook](#). Please follow, like and share!

The foundation is always looking for new donors. Those interested in learning more about the foundation can visit the foundation website at <https://mrasf.org>, email us at foundation@mc bain.org, call us at 231-825-2165 or contact any Board Director.

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Kevin Eisenga, School Board President


(Class of 1987)


Jerry Hoekwater (Class of 1965)

Jack Klunder

Harvey Lucas (Class of 1963)

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 107 E. Maple Street
McBain, MI 49657

BIG THINGS

are happening at the
McBain Sports Complex

On May 28th, crews installed the new 25ft long scoreboard up at the track! This could not have been possible without support from local businesses and community members!! Thank you!



THANK YOU TO THE MCBAIN SCOREBOARD DONORS!

B and D Classic Sewn
Baas Design Company
Bentham Brothers Dairy
BJ and Jenny Eisenga
Buning Dairy
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Sunshine Acres
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A MESSAGE FROM THE HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL



Hello Everyone,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support and encouragement as I have officially transitioned into being the high school principal. I am so excited to step into this role and continue to make McBain High School the school of choice!

It certainly has been an exciting time in the high school! We just celebrated graduation, with 78 seniors walking across the stage with their diploma. We also ended our semester with an End of the Year assembly for students in grade 9th-11th. It is so much fun to spend time with our students outside of the classroom and spend time getting to know them even better.

We are also excited to start next year in our new office! We will be moving down to the west side of the district. You will be able to enter the high school office on the same side as the middle school and elementary school.

I hope you all have a wonderful summer break and I look forward to seeing everyone in August!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Becky Rodenbaugh

becky.rodenbaugh@mcbain.org

Congratulations to our Retirees!

As we finished this school year, we have three retirees in the elementary building. Mrs. Hill, Ms. Thompson, and Mrs. O'Malley are all ending their illustrious careers with McBain Schools. Each has poured her heart and soul into our students, the school, and the community. Altogether, they have over 80 years of service in the school, and their knowledge and expertise will surely be missed. From teaching to coaching to helping and mentoring, these three have their fingerprints all over the district, and their presence and time will be felt for years to come. Thank you to the three of them, and we wish you the best in retirement!

We would also like to recognize Sheila Johnson and Heather Wiggins for their years of service here in McBain. Sheila has been an English teacher for both Middle School and High School helping countless students discover their passion for reading and writing. Heather Wiggins has been our band director for both Middle School and High School, along with our Elementary music teacher. Heather has helped our band program grow leaps and bounds to being recognized statewide for their talent. We owe a great deal of appreciation to both Sheila and Heather for their nearly 50 years of combined service to McBain!

Danita Carpenter has transported our students to and from school and to numerous sporting events and field trips for the past 10 years. Thank you for taking care of the students and making sure they arrive to their destinations safe!

Best wishes to all our retirees. You will be missed by your school!



Danita Carpenter



Mary Beth Hill



Sheila Johnson



Tasha O'Malley



Melissa Thompson



Heather Wiggins

AP Calculus Rocks!

By Genesis Wilson - 11th Grade



AP Calculus rocked! The class was one of the highlights of my year. Mrs. Utecht, as always, worked hard to create a classroom environment that facilitated learning and encouraged fun. Here, you can see us studying for the end-of-year AP test by writing all of our formulas on the sidewalk. We also enjoyed creating copious amounts of geometric origami to celebrate the completion of the class.

MACKINAC ISLAND TRIP!

The third graders took their annual field trip to Mackinac Island on May 10 this year. Each year the third graders spend some time learning about the history of Michigan, European explorers, and the Indigenous people who lived and continue to live in Michigan. On their trip to Mackinac Island each year, the third graders get to cross the Mackinac Bridge, take a ferry out of St. Ignace to the island, take a carriage ride, and explore the Fort. This trip is such a special way for the kids to connect to their learning each year!



MEMMIC MASTERPIECE

Congratulations to Alyvia and Mylan, winners of the Meemic Masterpieces Student Art Contest! The 7th graders created awesome comic strips detailing aspects of friendship that are featured in a digital Comic Book! The students received individual prizes for their art as well as a \$500 check for our school for classroom supplies.



Alyvia



Mylan

Rambler Cheer



McBain Cheer is looking for girls that are going into 2nd through 12th grades that want to cheer for our Rambler Football teams. Registration forms went home to Elementary students for Pop Warner Cheer and they are due by August 1st.

If you are in Middle or High School and interested and did not sign up in the office please email Coach Sikkema at brianne.sikkema@mcbain.org so she can put you on the list. If you have any questions or are interested in summer training, please send that email!! Practices start in August.

There will be a cheer clinic in the fall where girls get to cheer at a football game. More Information as we get closer to August. Cheer is a great sport that gets you stunting and learning fun skills! Come cheer for our Rambler teams!! We ARE McBain!!

An End of Year Send Off!



The elementary school had a treat on the last day of school! The McBain Fire Department showed up to our last recess to spray the kids and cool them off. The kids loved it. Thank you to our local department for investing in our community so well!

Girls Solve-IT Competition

Three teams of seventh grade girls competed in a robot coding competition organized by the Michigan Council of Women in Technology Foundation. The Girls Solve-IT competition is a state-wide competition designed to encourage more female interest in technology careers. The groups, coached by Mrs. Bronkema, completed four challenging Quests during which they really expanded their knowledge of coding concepts.



PBIS UPDATE - Mrs. Melanie Schmid

As we wrap up our first full year of Positive Behaviors Interventions and Supports (PBIS), its time to reflect back on the changes the implementation brought to our district. Over the course of the year our staff in the Elementary, Middle School, and High School have focused on instilling character traits that define what it means to be Ramblers. Per our fidelity surveys that we take in each building every semester in which we interview a sample size of our students' about 87% of all of our students have received at least one ticket celebrating their efforts to be Welcoming, Honest, Engaged, Empathic, and Leaders. Each one of these tickets represents a teacher's explicit effort to celebrate the student in showing the qualities that define a Rambler.

With this being the very first year of implementation there is room for improvement. All of the Leadership teams are ready to meet throughout the summer to continue to build the PBIS initiative and continue to use the data feedback collected throughout the year to integrate the program into the structure of the McBain District. While I have the privilege of spending my days in the High School, the effect of PBIS is palpable throughout all of the buildings. Teachers are noticing less behavior issues, and when they do arise the process for handling them is streamlined and timely. Administrators are able to offer more support to the staff and the positivity radiates throughout the whole district.

CONGRATULATIONS to the Class of 2024!

You will always be a RAMBLER





We Are McBain!

Elementary Track and Field Day!



If you would like to be added or removed from this mailing list, please call or text 313- 509-7028.



McBain Rural Agricultural School
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