

ROOTED IN COMMUNITY

Growing for the Future

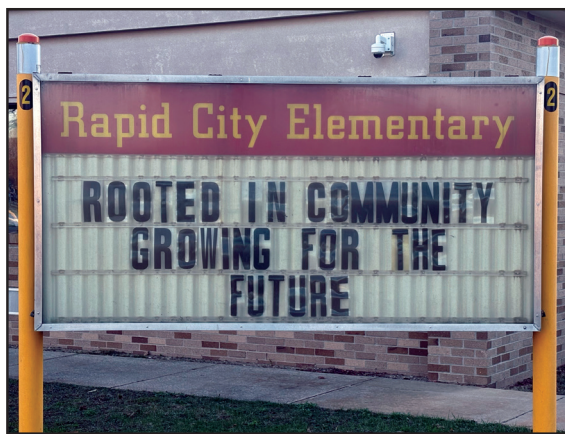
At April's meeting, the Board of Education voted to keep the doors open at Rapid City Elementary.

Rapid City Elementary School now has the opportunity to implement a plan to make the school a sought-after destination. During year one, RC will be shifting to multi-aged, family-style classrooms. The school district will share more about what this looks like when final enrollment numbers are available.

The school is also hoping to expand into grades six, seven, and eight in a self-contained classroom setting. Currently, staff are working to secure the enrollment needed to make this middle school expansion a reality.

This model creates a tight-knit environment where older students lead, younger students grow, and

every child is truly known by name.



The Stewardship Campus

These aren't just minor tweaks to what already happens at RC; staff are intentionally redesigning the way students access learning opportunities. Starting next year, our curriculum will be grounded on three core pillars.

★ **Place-Based Education:** Taking learning outside by using our local woods, water, and community as part of our classroom experience.

★ **Project-Based Learning:** Students will move beyond textbooks to solve real-world problems, helping them develop a deeper understanding of what they learn.

★ **Integrated Core Instruction:** Moving away from teaching subjects in silos, staff will be working on connecting math, science, and literacy as our plan for the next school year comes alive.

Please keep an eye out for an invitation to an upcoming school community meeting

to learn more about next year!



INSIDE THIS EDITION

BULLETIN

Kalkaska Public Schools
315 S. Coral St.
Kalkaska, Michigan 49646

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BOX HOLDER
KALKASKA MI 49646

KPS IS INVESTED IN OUR COMMUNITY

Strong students, strong families, strong neighbors

Kalkaska Public Schools partners with many local organizations — all in an effort to provide the best possible outcomes for our students and families. Not only do we work with many local entities in the Village of Kalkaska, but we also branch out into the region and work with many other organizations.

We are able to create opportunities for students that include assistance for athletics, scholarships, grants for teacher classroom supplies (who go above and beyond!)

In addition, we receive donations throughout the year that are simple but important like notebooks, paper, and pencils all the way to winter coats and boots. Every single donation is appreciated by someone — even though the donors may never know who receives the support.

Maybe you think of the Career Tech Center when you think of Kalkaska Public Schools' partners. It goes beyond the Northwest Education Services CTC, though. Northwest Ed provides a host of supports to our school. Our students attend Northwest Education Services programming every day.

We work with several other entities daily, including the Kalkaska County Library, Communities in Schools, and SEEDS. Our students are also recipients of Kalkaska Area Educational Foundation grants and scholarships. The Sports Boosters support our students on a regular basis. And most importantly, we work closely with the Kalkaska County Sheriff's Department to ensure student and community safety.

While these partnerships take many forms, they all share the overarching goal that when a student walks across the stage on their graduation day, they aren't just a product of a school district — but a product of families and caring neighbors who invested in them every step of the way.

Thank you to everyone who contributes to our students' success on a daily basis. It makes a HUGE difference in their lives.



SCENES FROM RAPID CITY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Great things are happening at Rapid City on a daily basis. Please check out the front page story that outlines the changes coming to Rapid City next fall.

A time for growing

Spring has arrived; it's time for a fresh start!

Welcome, Spring!

Spring is a time for growing, learning, and fresh starts!

The days are getting longer, flowers are blooming, and students are working hard every day.

At Birch Street Elementary, we are proud of our learners and their positive attitudes!

Reading Corner

Keep reading this spring!

Try:

- ★ Reading outside on a sunny day
- ★ Visiting your local library
- ★ Reading a nonfiction book about animals
- ★ Starting a family reading time

Reading 15–20 minutes each night helps students grow strong reading skills.

Spring Fun Ideas

- ★ Go on a nature walk
- ★ Draw spring flowers
- ★ Write a poem about rain
- ★ Look for signs of new life
- ★ Ask your child: "What is your favorite thing about spring?"

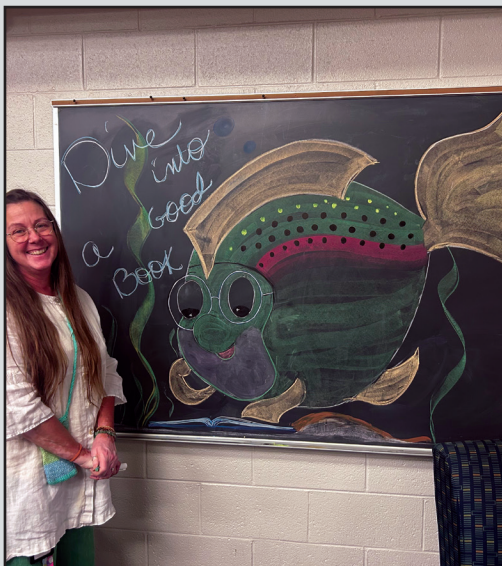
Important Reminders

- ★ Dress for changing weather
- ★ Bring jackets on cooler mornings
- ★ Practice kindness every day

★ Continue nightly reading

Events

- ★ May 21 - Graduation
- ★ May 22 - No School
- ★ May 25 - No School - Memorial Day
- ★ June 9th - 1/2 Day
- ★ June 10th - 1/2 Day; End of Second Semester - Last Day of School



Art classes focus on trout

Mackinac Historic Society

The Mackinac Historic Society visited the fifth grade to help prepare them for their upcoming trip to Mackinac Island. Reenactors worked with students to discover how early trade worked in the Straits area. Students learned how goods were obtained, shipped, and traded to

help develop the local economy. In some cases, students role played to explore how merchants and people interacted during that era.

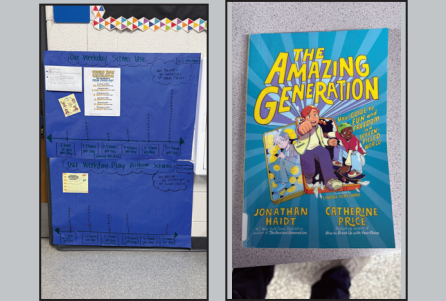
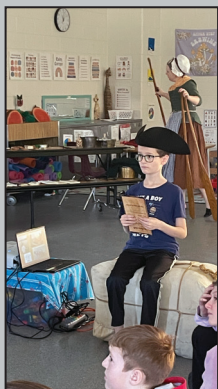
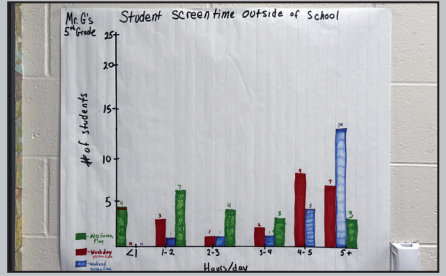
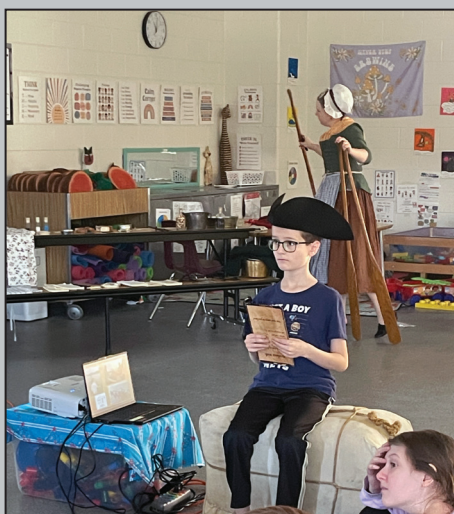
The Amazing Generation

Through a partnership with the Kalkaska County Library, fifth graders obtained copies of *The Amazing Generation*. We are using this book to teach students about the overuse of screen time. The book focuses on how to avoid being on screens too much, and how to have fun without the use of screens. Students (and

staff) have been examining their own screen usage and how to reduce screen time. This has been a kid-friendly way to explore screen usage and how to make sure we aren't overdoing it with our screens.

Celebrating the Trout!

As the National Trout Festival approached, our art class focused on creating works of art with trout in mind. Students produced different trout-themed works of art showing pride in this national festival. Long live the trout!



Students visit Washington, D.C., and more on trip

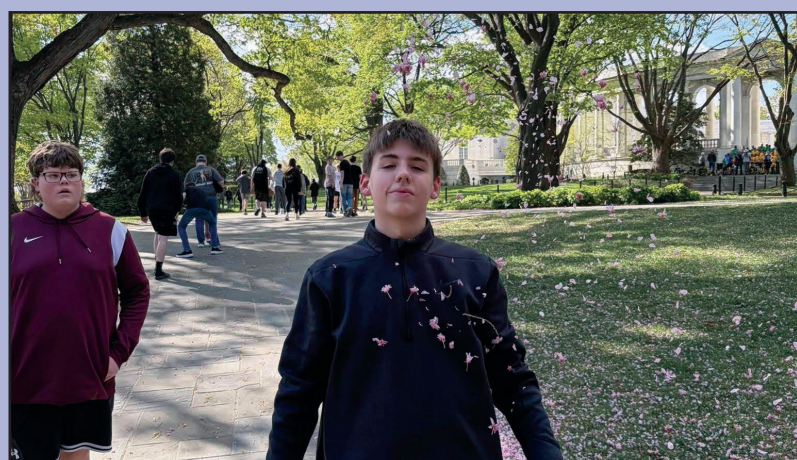
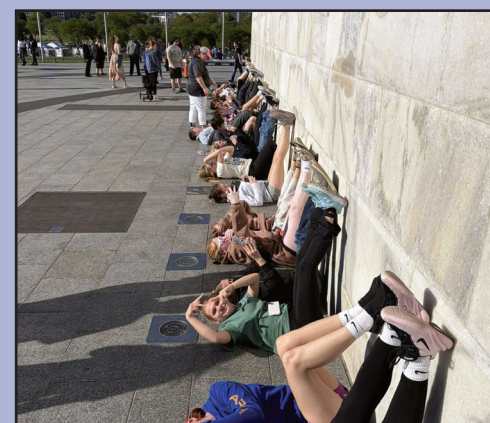
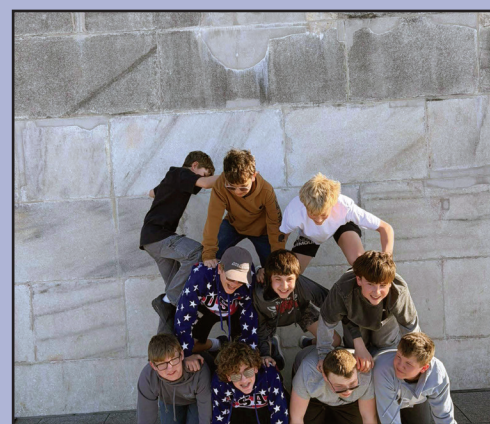
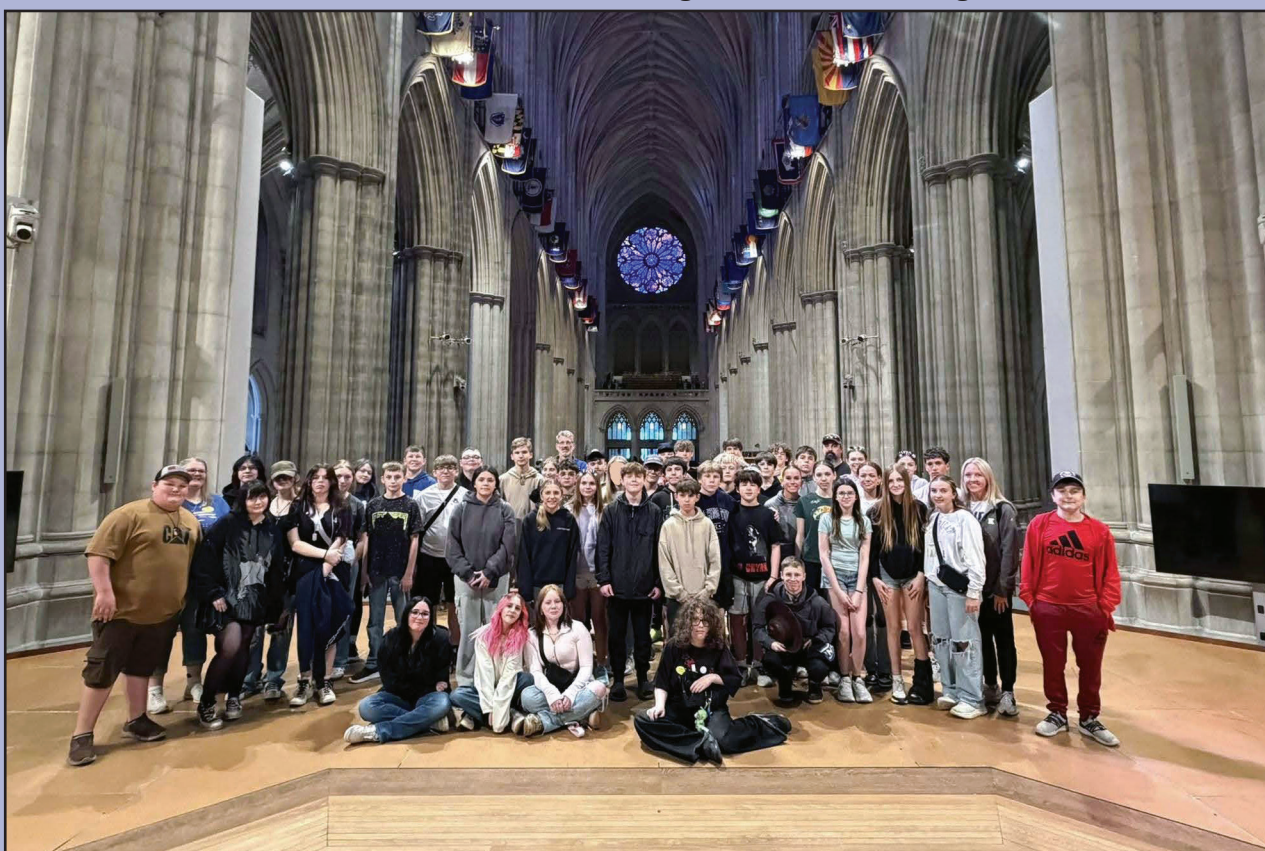
Kalkaska's eighth graders had the opportunity to step outside the classroom and experience history firsthand during an unforgettable field trip to Washington, D.C., April 8-12.

Students who chose to attend the trip visited some of the nation's most iconic landmarks and historic sites. One of the highlights was touring the Gettysburg Battlefield, where they learned about one of the most important battles of the Civil War.

The group also explored the U.S. Capitol Building, gaining insight into how our country's government operates. Additional stops included the Jefferson Memorial, the Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) Memorial, and Mount Vernon, the historic home of George Washington.

Each location offered students a deeper understanding of American history and the people who helped shape it. One especially memorable experience was having dinner at the Pentagon.

While many students traveled to Washington, D.C., those who chose not to attend the trip still enjoyed a fun and engaging week back home. Activities included watching a movie at the high school, going skating at the Kaliseum, playing games, and enjoying grilled hot dogs and chips with friends. Whether traveling across the country or staying local, Kalkaska's eighth graders had a week full of memorable experiences, learning, and fun.



Arbiter for Sports

Athletics is rolling out something new, online athletics registration through Arbiter! Think of this as our “soft launch,” which is just a fancy way of saying we’re using the spring season to work out the kinks before this becomes standard process for the 2026-27 school year. So why the change? A few good reasons include that our coaches will have important athlete information right at their fingertips, our athletic trainer will have the electronic records he needs, and everything will run smoother for everyone involved. Good stuff all around.

You only create an account once — it works from middle school all the way through to senior year. First-time setup takes about 30 minutes per athlete. We know, we know — nobody loves extra steps. But this is a one-time investment that pays off for years. It works on a laptop or mobile device.

Ready to get started?

We’re all learning this together, and we appreciate your patience as we make this transition. Questions? Reach out to the Athletics Office at KHS — we’re happy to help! <https://students.arbitersports.com/programs/kalkaska-high-school-athletics-2025-2026-registration>.



Questions?
Contact the library!

231-258-9411
info@kalkaskalibrary.org



Dear Blazer Community,

Due to flooding, the Kalkaska County Library basement is **CLOSED** until further notice.

We are in the process of relocating the children’s and teen collections upstairs while repairs are underway.

Until the repairs are completed, **placing holds** is the best way to ensure you and your family get the books and other items you want.

Not sure how to place holds? Just stop by the library or give us a call, and we’ll gladly help!

We’re working as quickly as possible to repair our space.

Thank you
for being patient with us.

Congratulations to our 2026 retirees



Julie Rodes, Helen Crawford, Sue Woodruff, and Kim Cotton are all retiring after the 2026 school year. Congratulations on your successful careers at Kalkaska educators! Enjoy the next chapter! (Missing: Robyn Czuk)

Kalkaska Blazers Fight Song

Smash right through that line big Blue.

Watch the points keep growing.

Blazer teams are bound to win.

They’re fighting with the vim.

Rah, rah, rah!

See that line, it’s weakening.

We’re going to win this game.

Fight, fight, rah, team fight!

Victory for Blue and White!

#BLAZERPRIDE

We want your athlete to thrive.

EXPERIENCED STAFF
Kim, FNP-BC and Christina, PA-C each have over 15 years of experience in Adolescent Health.

MORE TIME SPENT WITH YOUR ATHLETE
We want to talk about all areas of your teen's life to help them stay healthy and able to compete.

ON SITE TESTING IF NEEDED
Hemoglobin check for anemia

Urinalysis
Infection, sugar, protein

Blood sugar

IMMUNIZATIONS
We carry all recommended vaccines for 10-21 year old

TEEN HEALTH CORNER

Call for an appointment

Forest Area: 231 369-2000
located on the Forest Area MS & HS campus open Monday, Wednesday and Thursdays

Kalkaska: 231 258-7791
Located on KMHC campus Open Monday-Friday

Medicaid enrollment assistance site.

Please call us if a physical is a financial hardship. We can help.



KALKASKA MEMORIAL HEALTH CENTER
Partnering with MUNSON HEALTHCARE




SPORTS PHYSICALS

- GET YOUR PHYSICAL NOW FOR SPRING SPORTS
- ANYTIME AFTER APRIL 15th for 2026-2027 season
- Schedule before you leave for summer break
- You'll be ready for practice to start in AUGUST
- 6-12th Grade MHSAA sports start in AUGUST




<p style="text-align: center;">Board of Education</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr><td>Rachael Birgy</td><td style="text-align: center;">—</td><td>President</td></tr> <tr><td>Steve Ordway</td><td style="text-align: center;">—</td><td>Vice President</td></tr> <tr><td>Wendy Watson</td><td style="text-align: center;">—</td><td>Secretary</td></tr> <tr><td>Mary Scobey</td><td style="text-align: center;">—</td><td>Treasurer</td></tr> <tr><td>Richard Hodgman</td><td style="text-align: center;">—</td><td>Trustee</td></tr> <tr><td>Chase Stevenson</td><td style="text-align: center;">—</td><td>Trustee</td></tr> <tr><td>Mitchell Saxton</td><td style="text-align: center;">—</td><td>Trustee</td></tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">Central Business Office — 258-9109</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr><td>Rick Heitmeyer, Superintendent</td><td style="text-align: right;">1120</td></tr> <tr><td>Cari Jo Roberts, Executive Assistant</td><td style="text-align: right;">1101</td></tr> <tr><td>Jeffrey Scroggins, Director of Finance</td><td style="text-align: right;">1104</td></tr> <tr><td>David Tucker, Human Resources Director</td><td style="text-align: right;">1116</td></tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">Senior High — 258-9167</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr><td>Staci Short, Principal</td><td style="text-align: right;">2103</td></tr> <tr><td>Aaron Ostrander, Assistant Principal</td><td style="text-align: right;">2170</td></tr> <tr><td>Mary Deb Rabourn, Secretary</td><td style="text-align: right;">2102</td></tr> <tr><td>Monica Crawford, Secretary</td><td style="text-align: right;">2173</td></tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">Kalkaska Alternative Program — 258-2777</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr><td>Josh England, Dean of Students</td><td></td></tr> </table>	Rachael Birgy	—	President	Steve Ordway	—	Vice President	Wendy Watson	—	Secretary	Mary Scobey	—	Treasurer	Richard Hodgman	—	Trustee	Chase Stevenson	—	Trustee	Mitchell Saxton	—	Trustee	Rick Heitmeyer, Superintendent	1120	Cari Jo Roberts, Executive Assistant	1101	Jeffrey Scroggins, Director of Finance	1104	David Tucker, Human Resources Director	1116	Staci Short, Principal	2103	Aaron Ostrander, Assistant Principal	2170	Mary Deb Rabourn, Secretary	2102	Monica Crawford, Secretary	2173	Josh England, Dean of Students		<h1 style="font-size: 2em; margin: 0;">BLAZERS</h1> <p style="font-style: italic; font-weight: bold; margin: 10px 0;">Blazer Bulletin</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">Published by KPS</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">Superintendent: Rick Heitmeyer</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">The Blazer Bulletin is published during the school year from September—June. If you have any suggestions, or questions, please contact the office at (231) 258-9109 between the hours of 8 a.m.—4 p.m. Editorial assistance provided by Kalkaska County Library Director John P. Roberts.</p> <p style="font-size: 0.8em; margin: 0;">All content copyright © MMXXVI by Kalkaska Public Schools</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Middle — 258-4040</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr><td>Laura Gehman, Principal</td><td style="text-align: right;">3205</td></tr> <tr><td>Daryl Dimon, Dean of Students</td><td style="text-align: right;">3208</td></tr> <tr><td>Nickey Torrey, Secretary</td><td style="text-align: right;">3201</td></tr> <tr><td>Sandra Kittle, Secretary</td><td style="text-align: right;">3203</td></tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">Birch Street Elementary — 258-8629</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr><td>Arica Zenner, Principal</td><td style="text-align: right;">4204</td></tr> <tr><td>Tracy Dimon, Secretary</td><td style="text-align: right;">4200</td></tr> <tr><td>Melissa Patnode, Secretary</td><td style="text-align: right;">4202</td></tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">Early Childhood Learning Center — 258-0257</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr><td>Arica Zenner, Director</td><td></td></tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">Kalkaska Upper Elementary — 258-9146</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr><td>Ryan Moore, Principal</td><td style="text-align: right;">5106</td></tr> <tr><td>Sue Woodruff, Secretary</td><td style="text-align: right;">5107</td></tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">Rapid City Elementary — 331-6121</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr><td>Kevin Malbouef, Dean of Students</td><td style="text-align: right;">6103</td></tr> <tr><td>Robyn Czuk, Secretary</td><td style="text-align: right;">6101</td></tr> </table> <p style="text-align: center;">Athletics — 258-9167</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr><td>Jeremy Guggemos, Athletic Director</td><td style="text-align: right;">2236</td></tr> <tr><td>Linda Colvin, Secretary</td><td style="text-align: right;">2185</td></tr> </table>	Laura Gehman, Principal	3205	Daryl Dimon, Dean of Students	3208	Nickey Torrey, Secretary	3201	Sandra Kittle, Secretary	3203	Arica Zenner, Principal	4204	Tracy Dimon, Secretary	4200	Melissa Patnode, Secretary	4202	Arica Zenner, Director		Ryan Moore, Principal	5106	Sue Woodruff, Secretary	5107	Kevin Malbouef, Dean of Students	6103	Robyn Czuk, Secretary	6101	Jeremy Guggemos, Athletic Director	2236	Linda Colvin, Secretary	2185
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ONCE A BLAZER

ALWAYS A BLAZER

Show Them What You've Got

KHS students move on to compete in college

College Signings

Congratulations to Keira Curry on signing her letter of intent to play basketball at Kirtland Community College!

From the streets of Saginaw to the woods of Kalkaska — Keira has made her mark on the Blazer hardwood and is now taking her game to the next level. The Kirtland Firebirds are getting a caring, energetic, and talented competitor who is ready to work. A huge shout out to Keira's family for the love, sacrifice, and support that made this moment possible — your investment in her journey shows every single day. And to her coaches who believed in her, pushed her, and helped shape her into the player and person she is today — thank you for everything you poured into her.

Congratulations to Kylie Robinson on officially signing to compete in track & field at Thiel College! Kylie is good-hearted, energetic, and a fierce competitor. Watching her grow as an athlete and as a person has been a privilege, and today she earns a well-deserved celebration. The Thiel College track & field program is getting an outstanding young woman, and we know she is going to thrive in this next chapter. Kylie, go show them what you've got!

Spring Sports

After enduring a stretch of “April showers” and stubbornly cold temperatures, Kalkaska athletics is FINALLY in full swing! Our girls soccer program is grinding with grit and showing tremendous promise as the season builds. Boys golf is “teeing” up impressive scores both on our home course and across the region. Track & field athletes are sprinting, jumping, and throwing their way into top regional performances — representing Blazer Pride with every effort. On the diamond, baseball and softball are bringing the heat in both conference and non-conference play, competing with energy and determination week in and week out.

As we head into May, we are hopeful for warmer days and clear skies to help our student-athletes finish the season on a high note. Go Blazers!

A New Recruit Has Arrived!

We are so grateful for our wonderful athletic trainer, Cam! Caring, calm, and always present when our athletes need him most, Cam is a true asset to Kalkaska Athletics. Please join us in congratulating him as he welcomed a new “rookie” to his roster at home! Thank you, Cam, for everything you do for our student-athletes — enjoy your well-deserved “Baby moon” and this special time with your growing family.

