

FALCONER NEWS

January 2025

www.allendale.k12.mi.us

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

****Please continue to check our website for the most up-to-date information on events taking place****

Dec. 23-Jan. 3	No School - Christmas Break
January 6	School Resumes
January 13	Board of Education Meeting, 6:00 PM, Oakwood Board Room
January 16	Half Day, Young 5s-12th grade
January 17	Half Day, Young 5-12th grade; End of 1st Semester
January 18	A Cappella Off, 7:00 PM, Ceglarek Fine Arts Center
January 21	Parent Engagement Night, 6:00 PM, Coopersville High School
January 28	Oakwood Singing Falcons/Talent Show, 7:00 PM, Ceglarek Fine Arts Center

HAPPY 2025



School Meals reminder: Free Breakfast and Free Lunch to each student.

A meal is reimbursable only when a Fruit or Vegetable is on the tray! Please remind your student to eat their fruits and veggies.

Breakfast is served at each building cafeteria when students arrive:

AECC: 8:20AM- 8:44AM

Evergreen: 8:20AM -8:37AM

Oakwood: 8:18AM - 8:28AM

Middle: 7:15AM- 7:33AM

High/New Options: 7:10AM - 7:45AM

Lunch is served according to each student/class daily schedule.



*Don't Scrap the App! Please continue to fill out the School Meals and Summer EBT application. Benefit status must be on record for the school year to qualify for other programs like summer EBT, Sports and AP testing fee reductions. It is best practice to have the application complete by October, however it is open all year. [Application](#)

The Wellness Committee is reviewing the school Wellness Policy. If you are interested in contributing to the policy, please contact Jodi Brouwer at brouwerjod@apsfalcons.net Meeting dates are January 7th, February 4th, and May 6th 7:30am - 8:15am. The current policy is posted on the Food Service [Webpage](#)

Thank You for your service to Allendale Public Schools Board of Education

WE APPRECIATE YOU AND
EVERYTHING YOU'VE DONE
FOR OUR STUDENTS, STAFF
AND COMMUNITY

**KIM CANNATA, PAM DEJONG,
ANNA HENDRICKS, TONYA HARRIS, KEVIN HOLSTEGE,
COREY MANGO, ELIZABETH RAMEY,
BRANDON TENBRINK, JOSHUA THURKETTLE**





Thank You

Allendale Families & Community Members!

FOR SUPPORTING OUR HOLIDAY HELPERS PROGRAM. THIS YEAR WE WERE ABLE TO SUPPORT OVER 70 ALLENDALE FAMILIES AND WE COULD NOT HAVE DONE THIS WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF OUR INCREDIBLE APS FAMILIES AND FAITHFUL SPONSORS.

YOUR WILLINGNESS TO HELP STRUGGLING FAMILIES RECEIVE GIFTS DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON ALSO BRINGS THEM THE GIFT OF LOVE & HOPE.

WE ARE BLESSED TO LIVE IN A COMMUNITY WHERE KIND HEARTS AND A GIVING SPIRIT IS CONTINUOUSLY SHOWN.

Many Blessings to you and your family in the New Year!!!



FAMILY C.A.R.E.
COMMUNITY. ACCESSIBILITY. RESOURCES. ENGAGEMENT



SIGMA
ALPHA IOTA
PRESENTS

A CAPPELLA OFF



SATURDAY
JANUARY
18TH
2025

ONE NIGHT ONLY

\$10 ADMISSION



ALLENDALE, MI



\$5 STUDENTS

CEGLAREK FINE ARTS CENTER



“Creating Community Connections”

Parent Engagement Nights

Allendale and Coopersville’s schools are teaming up to support our families and students by creating Parent Engagement & Learning Opportunities.

the great
disconnect

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEERS AND IN THE COMMUNITY

We are living in a time that has been described as the age of loneliness. Despite Western advances in technology, living conditions, education, and healthcare, we as a society, are isolating ourselves from one another, and because of this, facing a health crisis that affects all ages, genders, races, and cultures.

But how have we become so disconnected? And what can we do to change the status quo and fulfill our potential for health and well-being? Join wellness expert Tamer Soliman as he journeys through North American cities to meet with local citizens, community activists, and leading authorities on social, economic, and urban planning to discover the true factors that have profound and lasting impacts, not only on our health, but the health of the communities in which we live. This timely documentary invites us to reflect on the relationships we have with those around us and raises the questions: is it possible to overcome our modern culture of disconnectedness and rediscover how truly essential we are to one other?

Daycare
Provided

Food
Provided



January 21st, 2025 / 6:00-7:30pm
Coopersville High School
Centerstage Theatre



Allendale Public Schools

preschool Open House

When? Thursday, January 16, 2025

Time? 5:30pm-6:30pm

Where? ECC and Evergreen West

Please visit BOTH preschool locations!

ECC has 3 year old preschool & 4 year old preschool classrooms
Evergreen West has 4 year old preschool classrooms

Come meet our experienced preschool staff!

See our curriculum-based preschool classrooms!

Learn about our 3 year old preschool options!

Learn about our FREE 4 year old preschool options!





ALLENDALE PUBLIC SCHOOLS REGISTRATION 2025/2026



(All registrations are online)
AVAILABLE ONLINE MARCH 1, 2025

TO REGISTER for Kindergarten or Young 5's children must be 5 years of age on or before September 1, 2025 to attend for the 2025/2026 school year.

Parents of children turning 5 between September 1st and December 1st, 2025 may submit online registration, Allendale Public Schools will make every effort to consider your child's registration.



REGISTRATION AVAILABLE ONLINE MARCH 1, 2025



★ REGISTRATION DOCUMENTS NEEDED: ★

1. Birth certificate (county issued) (original or copy)
2. Proof of residency (utility bill, lease/mortgage work best)
3. Complete up to date official immunization record or valid waiver (DPT, Polio, MMR, Varicella, Hep B)
4. Health appraisal form completed and signed by a physician dated 2024 or newer
5. Proof of vision, hearing and dental screening

The above items are not required at the time of registration, but must be provided BEFORE your child can attend school.

Free hearing vision and dental screenings are available for students entering kindergarten (or Young 5's) through the Ottawa County Department of Public Health.

***PARENTS/GUARDIANS:** If you have questions about Young 5's or Kindergarten classes please attend our informational meeting on February 25, 2025, at 6:00 PM, in the Allendale Early Childhood Center cafeteria. You may also watch the informational video on our website <https://www.allendale.k12.mi.us/enrollinginaps/> or scan the QR code above.*

PLEASE VISIT our enrollment page after March 1st 2025 to register your child. (Use the link or QR code listed above.) We look forward to partnering with you for your child's education. For additional information, contact Allendale District Office 616-892-5570 or Allendale Early Childhood Center 616-892-5580.

Parents/Guardians of current 2024/2025 Young 5's/Kindergarten students at APS

There is no need to submit a new registration for your child. If your child is currently attending Young 5's or Kindergarten at Allendale Public Schools they are expected to continue for the next school year.

High School Happenings

Our **Holiday Pops Concert** was amazing! Our band and choir students were able to showcase their holiday numbers they had been working so hard on! What a talented group of students and teachers represented in this group! Go Falcons!



Allendale High School CAMPP Team Community Outreach Project

On November 23rd our Allendale High School CAMPP Team participated in the Allendale Artisan & Craft Marketplace to show off their skills and help support the Allendale High School Senior Parent Group. This was a wonderful opportunity for the students to showcase their craftsmanship and increase their focus area in the following categories:

Community Involvement Leadership Skills Financial Skills Public Speaking Public Relations Marketing



Middle School Happenings

RAIL Project Update: Exploring Biodiversity Through Salmon and Macroinvertebrates



In 6th grade science, we're excited to continue partnering on the **RAIL Project** with the **Michigan DNR's Salmon in the Classroom Program** for the third year. Currently, our Chinook salmon are in the alevin stage, relying on their yolk sacs for nutrients as they grow. These young salmon provide a unique opportunity to study how their introduction into local ecosystems may influence aquatic biodiversity. Later this spring, we will release the salmon into the **Sevey Drain**, continuing their journey in the wild.

This project ties directly into our RAIL Project, where we investigate the impact of Chinook salmon on the abundance and diversity of aquatic macroinvertebrates in the Sevey Drain. Macroinvertebrates—such as scuds, mayflies, caddisflies, aquatic beetles, etc.—are vital to stream ecosystems. They serve as indicators of water quality and stream metabolism and are a primary food source for salmon during their fry and smolt stages.

Our driving question this year builds on our previous year's research:

How does the introduction of Chinook salmon as a new predator affect the macroinvertebrate community and the overall ecological health of the Sevey Drain?

Through this investigation, students are exploring key ecological concepts, including:

- The predator-prey relationship between salmon and macroinvertebrates.
- How changes in macroinvertebrate populations might alter water quality and ecosystem balance.
- Scientific methods to measure biodiversity and assess stream health.

By studying these interactions, our students gain firsthand insights into the dynamic relationships within ecosystems and the critical role biodiversity plays in maintaining ecological health.



Spirit Week!



Door Decoration - You might recognize some friends



Special Guests



Links Buddies

Oakwood Jan '25



Communitarian



Reading Buddies



Character Counts Guest Speakers



Thankful for our Lunch/Recess Crew



Empathy = Walk in My Shoes

OAKWOOD: WE BELONG HERE

APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

Special Education



Emily Karchon

Speech and Language Pathologist

- Mrs. Karchon has been with APS for 4 years.
- Mrs. Karchon has a true heart for helping students. She provides excellent speech services to students when she is supporting students inside the classroom as well as when she works with students individually in the speech room. Mrs. Karchon is also an excellent colleague. She works very well with other staff members at all three of the buildings she services. Staff respect Mrs. Karchon for her skill set and dedication to supporting students and staff. Mrs. Karchon is also very knowledgeable and provides input on interventions, tools, ideas, and strategies to support students throughout their school day. These ideas are not only regarding speech but on many different areas that students may need support in. Mrs. Karchon is also strong and versatile. She has a very diverse caseload and works in three different buildings. She has been able to handle all of this successfully and without complaining. Mrs. Karchon is truly an excellent speech therapist, co-worker, and person. We are very fortunate to have her on our team and the parents and students who work with Mrs. Karchon are just as fortunate.
- Fun Facts: In Mrs. Karchon's spare time, she enjoys watching her children play sports, cuddling with her dogs, and going to the lake. She went to space camp in 6th grade, and can relate every part of conversation to a song or movie quote, and she absolutely hates the smell and taste of bacon.

APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

Special Education



Brittany Pearson

Special Education Teacher at Evergreen

- Ms. Pearson has been with APS for 3 years.
- Ms. Pearson is deserving of this recognition for many reasons. She has done an amazing job so far this year in her role of a special education resource program teacher at Evergreen Elementary. Ms. Pearson has taken on many challenges this year and has maintained a positive attitude and willingness to help. Ms. Pearson goes above and beyond on a regular basis to meet these challenges and to support administration, staff, students and parents. Evergreen has had many new students with significant needs enroll and Ms. Pearson has taken the lead to create supports and plans for many of the new students while still staying on top of all of the other needs and responsibilities she has. To support students, Ms. Pearson is very creative and has spent hours creating manipulatives, tools, visuals, etc...She collaborates with special education and general education staff at Evergreen, working to ensure everyone has the communication they need regarding schedules, plans, updates, etc...When working with students, Ms. Pearson does a great job. She is passionate and dedicated. She works hard every day providing academic and behavioral supports for students. She sees the best in students and their individual capabilities. Students are very lucky to have Ms. Pearson as their teacher. The special education team is also fortunate to have Ms. Pearson on our team.
- Ms. Pearson loves spending summer days at her mom's cottage with her two daughters. Her favorite place to visit is Disney World.

APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

Special Education



Diana Wilson

Special Education Paraprofessional

- Ms. Wilson has been with APS for 6 years.
- We are so fortunate to have Ms. Wilson on our special education team. Ms. Wilson does an incredible job at the High School. She is positive, upbeat, hard working, and works excellent with students and staff. Ms. Wilson jumps right in and supports students in both the general and special education classrooms. Staff have shared how much they appreciate Ms. Wilson, the work she does, and the support she provides. When working with students, Ms. Wilson does an awesome job. She builds rapport with the students, collaborates with other staff on supporting the students, and works hard to ensure that the students have the support they need to be successful. Ms. Wilson is also creative and knowledgeable. She takes advantage of and creates learning opportunities for the students. Ms. Wilson is versatile and supports students at their job sites, in the community, and at school. She has been a key to the students growth in all of these areas. She does a great job and she is appreciated greatly.
- Ms. Wilson has her cosmetology license and has been doing hair for the past 30 years.

APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

Allendale Early Childhood Center



Carrie O'Connor-Helmholdt
Math and Reading Specialist

- Mrs. Helmholdt has been with APS For 24 years.
- Mrs. Helmholdt is the leader of the AECC's academic intervention team. She works hard to build strong relationships with the students she works with on a daily basis. Mrs. Helmholdt will often support learners who may be struggling in their academics, but she does it in such an encouraging way that her students want to make her proud, and always give her their best. Mrs. Helmholdt is also a leader in our new "Advanced Tiers Team", helping build interventions and more support for our students and staff at the AECC. We are blessed to have such a dedicated educator in our district, and we are thankful for everything that Mrs. Helmholdt does at the AECC!

APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

Allendale Early Childhood Center



Sarah VanDonkelaar

- Preschool and Wrap Aide/Wrap Billing Specialist
- Mrs. VanDonkelaar has been with APS for 2 years.
 - Mrs. VanDonkelaar is an important member of our Preschool and Wrap Around Program. Everyday, Mrs. VanDonkelaar shows up to school, ready to help make an impact on her young student's lives. Mrs. VanDonkelaar works with a calm and patient demeanor, as her students want to be in her presence, and want to make her proud when they are in her classroom. We are blessed to have Mrs. VanDonkelaar as such a dedicated member of our staff here at the AECC!

APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

Evergreen Elementary



Emily VanDyken

2nd Grade Teacher

- Ms. VanDyken has been with APS for 7 years.
- Ms. VanDyken has worked diligently over the past two years to complete her Master's degree. While completing her studies, she maintained high expectations for herself as a teacher, her students, and her classroom. Ms. VanDyken has also played a valuable part in building a positive school climate through her work on Evergreen's Social Committee.
- Her dog, Winnie, has a Leap Year birthday. She has a goal to visit all 50 states - and is very nearly half way there. She LOVES Christmas. She enjoys crafting and making things.

APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

Oakwood Intermediate



Jenna Hughes

5th Grade Teacher

- Mrs. Hughes has been with APS for 3 years.
- Oakwood Intermediate is proud to recognize Mrs. Hughes as our staff member of the month for January. Mrs. Hughes teaches 5th grade and truly enjoys being an educator. She works hard to connect with and motivate her students by setting high expectations for herself and for them. She exhibits a calm confidence for those around her and truly wants what is best for her students. Mrs. Hughes has been teaching at the upper elementary level for 6 years now. She has taught in both general education and special education classrooms. She really enjoys teaching Science. She (and her students) enjoy the hands-on activities and labs. They always share that those are some of the things they remember most about 5th grade. Mrs. Hughes has been a part of the Oakwood SLT for three years now.
- Something fun to know: Mrs. Hughes and her husband are expecting their first child, a baby girl, in February! Thank you, Mrs. Hughes, for your commitment and dedication to the students of Oakwood and APS.

APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

Allendale Middle School



Marianne Provenzano

English and Academic Extensions Teacher

- Ms. Provenzano has been with APS for 8 years.
- Congratulations to Ms. Provenzano, our Staff of the Month! Ms. Pro exemplifies what it means to be an outstanding educator. Thoughtful and kind, she consistently goes the extra mile to support her students and colleagues. Her engaging teaching style keeps students excited to learn, while her caring and enthusiastic nature creates a welcoming and inspiring classroom environment. Ms. Pro's dedication to excellence in education makes her a role model for all. We are grateful to have her as a part of our team and these parents agree: "I just wanted to reach out and tell you again how amazing of a teacher we think Mrs. Pro is! I was just looking over [student] test scores for his I ready assessment and talking to him about them and I wanted to report the praise that he was giving to Mrs. Pro. He said, and I quote, 'Mrs. Pro actually breaks things down so that we can understand them. I know how to do a 5 paragraph essay because of her.' I just wanted to reach out with some good news because I know how often times your inboxes can get filled up with just the problems. I wanted you both to know that we appreciate the work you do for our kids! And we especially wanted you to know how much we appreciate [Ms. Provenzano]!" Another happy parent writes, "I cannot tell you how much of a different kid we have at home since he has had [Ms. Provenzano] as a teacher! Every year English is his trying subject and to see him light up about being and feeling successful is amazing! Thank you, thank you thank you!" We are grateful for Ms. Provenzano. If your child has ever had her, I think you'll agree. Congrats, Pro!
- Her daughter recently graduated from UofM with a Social Work degree!

APS STAFF HIGHLIGHTS

Allendale High School



Erin Overmeyer

Art & Photo Kendall College of Art and Design, Dual Enrollment Instructor

- Mrs. Overmeyer has been with APS for 25 years.
- Our staff member of the month is Mrs. Overmeyer. We would like to recognize Mrs. Overmeyer because she goes above and beyond for our students each day in and outside of the classroom. We are continually impressed by the different things she takes on. Mrs. Overmeyer is a committed member of the SLT. This year she implemented an Art club for any students interested to attend. She gives students opportunities to learn outside of her classroom by taking them to Chicago and to ArtPrize. In addition she teaches dual enrollment classes for students to earn college credit. This semester she has taken on the responsibility of having a teaching assistant. Hayley says "Over the past few months, Erin has been a very kind, supportive, and encouraging mentor teacher to me, and I am so grateful for her guidance throughout my teacher apprenticeship. She has gone above and beyond to make me feel comfortable and welcomed in every aspect of the classroom and is always providing me with tips, strategies, and resources that I can take with me and use in the future. She was always confident in my ability to take over the classroom periodically throughout the last few months, but still reassured me that she was there if I needed her to step in for any reason. One thing I really admire about Erin is her dedication to creating a space where students feel safe, comfortable, and supported, and the consistency in the structure and routines that she enforces in the classroom. She is kind, thoughtful, supportive, and empathetic toward everyone and has truly been an incredibly supportive and inspiring mentor teacher." A student adds this "Mrs. Overmeyer's classroom makes me feel welcome and she makes me feel appreciated." Another student says "Mrs. O goes out of her way to help everyone succeed in art. She teaches in a fun and interesting way that shows her passion for art. She brings a sense of humor to everything and I look forward to her class everyday. We love Mrs. O."