



# FRIDLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

# DISTRICT BULLETIN

*International Baccalaureate World Schools*

WINTER 2021



## MHS MEMBERS CONNECT WITH HAYES SCHOLARS THROUGH READ ALOUDS



Fostering district-wide unity, members of the Fridley High School (FHS) Minnesota Honor Society (MHS) made the most of an opportunity to connect with their younger peers by creating virtual 'read aloud' videos for Hayes Elementary School students to enjoy.

FHS senior Kimberly Escobar Cabanzo, and juniors Vanessa Lor and Sophie Pehl worked with Hayes staff to create the videos. Each student selected a book to read and also shared words of advice with the elementary students. The high schoolers discussed their love for reading and encouraged the younger scholars to attend the upcoming Feb. 25 drive-through Hayes Family Literacy Night event. Students will be watching the read alouds during the week of Feb. 8 in their Tower Talk morning meeting, which serves as the weekly communication to all Hayes students.

Lor said she would gladly volunteer at the elementary schools again. "The pandemic has affected everyone," said Lor. "I wanted to find a way to give back to my school community and help brighten up these young scholars' day!"



FHS senior and MHS member Kimberly Escobar Cabanzo reads "¡Vamos! Let's Go to the Market!" by Raúl the Third to Hayes students during "Tower Talk."

## FRIDLEY HIGH SCHOOL SELECTED AS **BEST PUBLIC SCHOOL** BY 2021 SUN MEDIA READERS' CHOICE AWARDS

*Congratulations to Fridley High School, an IB World School, which was selected as the Best Public School by community newspaper voters*

Fridley High School was selected as the Best Public School by community newspaper votes in the Sun Media Readers' Choice Awards. The Sun Media Readers' Choice Awards is an annual contest in which local newspaper readers choose their favorite community entities, including schools, colleges, hospitals, and more. Readers elected Fridley High School as their top choice by completing ballots online or by mail this past summer.

Fridley High School is an authorized International Baccalaureate (IB) World School that offers the rigorous IB Middle Years Programme, Diploma Programme, and Career-related Programme to all students. In addition to strong college and career-ready preparatory classes and programs, the school also offers over 50 clubs, student-led activity groups and sports teams, holistic student support services, positive and inclusive school culture and climate through its iBelong program that embraces student individuality.

As an IB World School, students often utilize their knowledge and skills in self-driven community service

opportunities. Fridley High School also places an emphasis on students becoming internationally-minded, global citizens, with second language requirements (Spanish and Chinese Mandarin) and a multitude of student cultural learning opportunities and clubs.

Sun Media published its 2021 Readers Choice honorees in a special edition on January 28 and 29, 2021.



**READERS' CHOICE 2021**

## DID YOU KNOW ?

Fridley High School offers a **small school atmosphere** with **LARGE SCHOOL OPPORTUNITIES**

College and Career Preparation Programs include:

- **IB Diploma Programme & Career-related Programme**
- **AVID** (We are an AVID Schoolwide Site of Distinction)
- **GET READY** College & Career Readiness program

## FRIDLEY PRESCHOOL BECOMES FIRST **IB WORLD SCHOOL** PRESCHOOL IN THE STATE



*Fridley Preschool is the only program in the state to offer the IB PYP to 3- and 4-year-old young learners.*

Fridley Preschool has received authorization from the International Baccalaureate (IB) Organization to provide the Primary Years Programme (PYP) in its 3- and 4-year-old Preschool program. The authorization, awarded in December 2020, officially made Fridley Preschool the only Preschool in the state that provides the PYP, and Fridley Public Schools the only Minnesota school district to offer the full, rigorous IB continuum to all its students in Preschool through Grade 12.

"Preschool is often the first entry into school for students and families," said Karin Beckstrand, the district's Preschool PYP coordinator. "We know that children learn more when they are happy and engaged. Through IB's inquiry-based learning, children ask questions that guide their desire for knowledge, lead to discovery and make education an adventure."

The IB's unique and innovative approach to learning provides a rigorous curriculum framework that encourages students to think critically, to consider both local and global contexts, and develop a second language. At Fridley, all students have the opportunity to begin learning a second language of Spanish in Kindergarten.

Beckstrand added that the PYP provides a map for learning via six transdisciplinary themes: who we are, where we are in place and time; how we express ourselves; how the world works; how we organize ourselves; and sharing the planet. "Along the way, students also build within themselves the IB's Learner Profile characteristics that equip them for success in the future," she said.



## FRIDLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS BEGINS PHASED-IN TRANSITION TO IN-PERSON LEARNING

*"It's like the first day of school all over again!"* echoed many Fridley Public Schools' administrators, staff members and students as the district welcomed some of its young scholars back to in-person learning on February 1, 2021. With updated state guidance outlined in the Minnesota Safe Learning Plan, school districts across the state are implementing "rolling start" approaches to welcoming students back by grade level. At Fridley, the first of February marked the beginning of Semester 2 and the start of the district's phased-in approach to bringing students back to learning at school.



### PHASED-IN TIMELINE TO IN-PERSON LEARNING

#### February 1, 2021

Preschool: 3- & 4-year-old students begin 4-day model (M, T, Th, F)  
Elementary: Grades K-1 begin 4-day model (M, T, Th, F)  
Fridley Middle School: Grades 5-6 begin hybrid model

#### February 16, 2021

Preschool, K, Grade 1 transition to 5 days/week  
Elementary: Grades 2-4 begin 5 days/week  
Fridley Middle School: Grades 7-8 begin hybrid model  
Fridley High School: Grades 9-12 begin hybrid model  
ALC: Students begin half day in-person learning, 5 days/week



#### Fridley Online Academy

All families who selected Fridley Online Academy for Semester 2 will not be affected by these changes.

For more information, resources and updates, please visit [www.fridleyschools.org/covid19](http://www.fridleyschools.org/covid19)

### HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES

The district continues to monitor COVID-19 cases in Anoka County and the City of Fridley. As students and staff return to school in-person, we follow the recommended guidelines to help keep students and staff safe, including:

- Students are required to wear face masks while inside school buildings.
- All staff are required to wear face masks while inside school buildings, and are encouraged to wear face shields in addition to masks.
- Cleaning and sanitizing will continue according to state guidelines and protocols.
- Staff have bi-weekly access to COVID-19 testing.

### November 2020 Election Recap



# THANK YOU FRIDLEY COMMUNITY

### FRIDLEY VOTERS RENEW CAPITAL PROJECTS LEVY

Thank you to the Fridley Public School District community for voting to renew the district's Capital Projects Levy with a 67% approval vote! The district uses funding from the levy to address maintenance issues at its schools and buildings, and to provide technology for teaching and learning for students and staff. The Capital Projects Levy was first authorized in 2002 and renewed in 2011.

"We are immensely grateful to the Fridley Public Schools community for voting to renew this essential levy to benefit all our students, staff and schools," said Superintendent Dr. Kim Hiel. "By voting to renew this Capital Projects Levy, our community has affirmed its commitment to ensuring that our students receive the educational tools necessary for learning, and that the district continues to maintain a safe learning environment for students and staff. From the bottom of our hearts, thank you, Fridley community, for your unwavering support."



*The Capital Projects Levy provides funding for technology devices and infrastructure that supports teaching and learning. Amid the COVID-19 global pandemic, it has never been more clear that the need for modernized technology for all our students is necessary to continue to provide equitable access and rigorous programs. Fridley Public Schools now offers a 1:1 technology device to student ratio in grades K-12.*

### ROSS MEISNER WINS SCHOOL BOARD SEAT



In addition to voting to approve the levy, voters also elected Ross Meisner to serve on the Fridley School Board. Meisner was one of three candidates vying for a seat on the Board. With his successful election, Meisner began his role in November 2020. He will serve for the one year remaining in the term of former Board member, Mary Kay Delvo, who resigned in June 2020.



*The Capital Projects Levy also funds deferred maintenance and renovation projects at various sites throughout the district. The average age of buildings in the district is nearly 60 years. Without this funding, it would not be possible to maintain upkeep to the district's aging infrastructure.*



# FRIDLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH AT FRIDLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Superintendent Dr. Kim Hiel created a story time "read aloud" that is featured on the elementary Black History Month website. She read an American-Black folktale titled "A Wolf and Little Daughter" from the book "The People Could Fly: American Black Folktales" by Virginia Hamilton.

## DID YOU KNOW?



Have you checked out Fridley Public Schools' Black History Month websites? The district's Equity and Inclusion department, in partnership with the Get Ready college and career readiness program, developed activities and resources for Fridley students and families. Each school's website features content that highlights and honors many aspects of Black History, and includes student participants, story time read alouds from Fridley administrators, Key Note Speaker Dr. Jesse Mason, plus much more! Students are able to explore and engage in these lessons during their advisory times. Please visit [www.fridleyschools.org](http://www.fridleyschools.org) to find links to the websites.

## THE TALLEST TOWER!

### STEVENSON STUDENTS LEARN FROM SCHOOL-WIDE STEM ACTIVITY

Stevenson Elementary students and their families connected virtually through a school-wide STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) activity on Wednesday, January 13, 2021. The activity challenged students to create the tallest possible tower with various materials, including balloons, plastic utensils, straws, rubber bands, and toothpicks. All students received STEM kits, provided by the Stevenson PTO, with the necessary supplies for the activity.



Strengthening school-wide community, all Stevenson students were able to share their well-engineered tower designs on a Padlet and Flipgrid, digital tools for sharing images and videos. Students enjoyed seeing the towers of fellow classmates, reflecting on their own engineering processes and designs.

## FRIDLEY YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT LEADERS KEEP TRADITION ALIVE

### Freshman Alexis Bright earns YIG youth leadership scholarship

The Fridley High School Youth In Government (YIG) delegation continued the more than 30-year tradition of attending the Model Assembly, held from January 7-10, 2021. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the state-wide event was held virtually in Minnesota. The YIG Model Assembly program is a student-led, realistic and complex simulation of state government for 8-12th grade students.

At Model Assembly, students have the unique opportunity to serve as legislators, judges, attorneys, cabinet members, and media representatives. This engaging learning style allows students to develop civic responsibility, strengthen public speaking skills, listen to delegates with different experiences, debate issues, and be involved in decision-making processes.



Nate Thorp

Although the conference was held virtually, there were 15 top elected student officials who attended the event in-person. FHS sophomore Nate Thorp served as Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals, a role that he was elected to during the 2020 YIG assembly. Thorp said he

enjoyed serving in the leadership role and worked long days throughout the event to ensure all aspects were ready for student delegates, including preparing schedules, program areas, and a closing speech to end the ceremony.



HHS sophomore and YIG 2021 Chief Judge of Court of Appeals Nate Thorp (pictured center on screen, bottom) with fellow YIG specialists and press secretary.

ernment and was known as being a person of honesty and integrity who often led by example.

Through an application process, Bright wrote a scholarship essay that expressed the impact of YIG in her life. "I've been an introvert for most of my life, and YIG has given me the courage to break out of my shell," said Bright, who added that the organization has introduced her to many new friends and opened doors to new experiences. The \$450 annual scholarship recognizes and encourages youth leadership, and will fund Bright's participation in future conferences.

Bright plans to pursue interests in government and criminal justice with the goal of becoming a criminal defense attorney. "Earning this scholarship really means a lot to me," said Bright. "YIG could give me the opportunities to make a difference, help people for the better, and aid me in achieving my future career goals."

### FHS freshman earns leadership scholarship



Veronique Kolibe-Gnamikou

Fridley High School (FHS) sophomore Veronique Kolibe-Gnamikou, who was selected to serve as an appointed official in the Court of Appeals, said she enjoyed participating in this year's conference. According to Kolibe-Gnamikou, the conference still remained engaging and interactive, despite the all-virtual format.

"Everything was the same, except it was moved online," she said. "We really did our best to keep the integrity of the whole Model Assembly intact." In her role, Kolibe-Gnamikou helped to prepare the conference, working with student delegates to provide information, prepare several mock trials, and serve as a judge on the Court of Appeals.



Earning this scholarship really means a lot to me. YIG could give me the opportunities to make a difference, help people for the better, and aid me in achieving my future career goals.

Alexis Bright, grade 9



Alexis Bright

FHS freshman Alexis Bright was one of two students who earned the Beth Hidy Memorial Scholarship. The scholarship honors Beth Hidy, a YIG student participant who tragically died in 2015. Through YIG, Hidy discovered a love for gov-

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



Fridley High School, an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School, celebrated eight alumni from the Class of 2020 who earned the IB Diploma, along with their Fridley High School diploma. Two students, Baobai Xiong and Joshua Brandt, shared their experience in the rigorous, college-preparatory IB Diploma Programme (DP) that they had the opportunity to pursue in high school.



### Baobai Xiong

Class of 2020

**Studying Nursing at St. Catherine University**

Xiong's career aspiration is to become a nurse. Her goal is to help others maintain health and wellness at their highest potential.



### Joshua Brandt

Class of 2020

**Studying Business Finance & Analytics at Bethel University**

Brandt's career aspiration is to work for a Minnesota sports team, such as the Timberwolves, Vikings or Twins.

#### Q Why did you decide to pursue the IB Diploma?

A I decided to pursue an IB Diploma because I saw how challenging it was. Knowing that college or anything in life won't come easy, I wanted to push myself to my limits, knowing that I'd have teachers and staff helping me to the best of their abilities.

#### Q Did any FHS classes shape your career interests? Which courses did you find most valuable?

A All the classes taught me something different that was valuable and molded my perspective on nursing. Nursing is science-based, but that is not the only aspect that will help me succeed in nursing. Along with science comes empathy, clear communication, an appreciation for the small things, and acknowledging history.

#### Q Was there anyone who inspired you during your time at FHS?

A I would like to thank ALL my teachers for their honest remarks and critiques. They have made me reflect on myself and my work and to improve overall for the greater good. I felt very supported throughout my DP experience. I would also say that I developed the skill of taking initiative and sought help whenever I needed it.

#### Q Would you recommend the IB DP path to FHS students?

A Yes. The IB DP is for students who want to challenge themselves and learn how to adapt quickly because the course work is fast-paced.

#### Q Why did you decide to pursue the IB Diploma?

A I decided to pursue an IB Diploma so I could take the most challenging classes available to help me prepare for college. What really attracted me to the program was that I could take these courses at Fridley High School with my friends and still be a part of the high school atmosphere.

#### Q Were there any particular IB experiences that prepared you for college-level coursework?

A Writing the extended essay was a valuable experience that has proven to be very helpful in college. The first final of my freshman year was a 15 page paper. The learning experience helped me to find resources easily and helped space out my work in manageable increments to complete my college paper.

#### Q Learning in the IB DP prepares students to be global citizens. Do you think the IB provides a "whole education?" How and why?

A I do think IB provides a whole education. Our history and English classes never focused only on the United States, like other programs tend to do. We always focused on global perspectives that helped develop our mindsets to become more open-minded.

#### Q Would you recommend the IB DP path to FHS students?

A Yes. I would recommend this path because it helps develop crucial studying and learning habits that are very important in college.

## CITY OF FRIDLEY PROCLAIMS DEC. 16 AS FRIDLEY TIGERS FOOTBALL TEAM APPRECIATION DAY

The City of Fridley officially proclaimed December 16, 2020 as *Fridley Tigers Football Team Appreciation Day* to recognize the success of the Fridley High School football team. Mayor Scott Lund read the proclamation at the City Council meeting on December 14. On top of success on the football field, the football players have demonstrated academic excellence and have volunteered on multiple occasions to give back and support our surrounding community.

Pictured from left to right: Fridley Football Assistant Coach John Swanson, senior and football captain Micah Niewald, Fridley Football Head Coach Justin Reese, senior and football captain Michael Ude, and Fridley Activities Director Dan Roff.



## HEAD FOOTBALL COACH JUSTIN REESE NAMED KARE11 CO-COACH OF THE YEAR



Congratulations to Fridley Head Football Coach Justin Reese, who was named the KARE-11 All-Metro Co-Head Coach of the Year. The honor follows over ten years of hard work by Reese and his veteran assistant football coaching staff.

"It's truly an honor to receive this recognition," said Reese. He added he is incredibly thankful to Activities Director Dan Roff, as well as his coaching staff and players who have supported him for years.

According to Roff, Reese has grown into an incredible game planner, and empowers and challenges his assistants with game-changing decision opportunities.

"Justin does his homework, both technically and strategically. Fridley teams are well prepared and this comes from his leading by example," said Roff. "Justin is really talented at breaking down opponent's tendencies."

He added Reese excels at building strong relationships. "Justin also puts a lot of time in getting to know his players as individuals."

#### Excelling through a pandemic

Reese had high praise for his students on the field. "This year's seniors displayed outstanding leadership qualities that set the tone for the rest of the players," he said. "Our coaching staff presented a game plan, but it was the players who consistently executed it. This goes to show the hard work, dedication, and passion our players had for football and for each other. The team created an environment of commitment to one another, a brotherhood that will continue throughout the program and beyond their high school playing years."

Reese added that the experience of playing through a pandemic was challenging, but it was an opportunity to develop more resiliency and trust.

"Our team was able to turn these difficult times into a positive, understanding that we needed to adapt to playing football in a pandemic," said Reese. "As a coaching staff, we understand the importance of maintaining relationships with our student-athletes on and off the field. Our coaches regularly checked in with players regarding how they were doing personally, which ultimately led to mental toughness and more trust on the field."

## STUDENT VOICE

### FRIDLEY TIGERS FOOTBALL TEAM, KICKER MAKE HISTORY

Fridley Football's first female player, 8th grader Mya Karsten, breaks barriers

By Deodatus Gbadoe,  
Fridley High School Student Reporter, 9th Grade

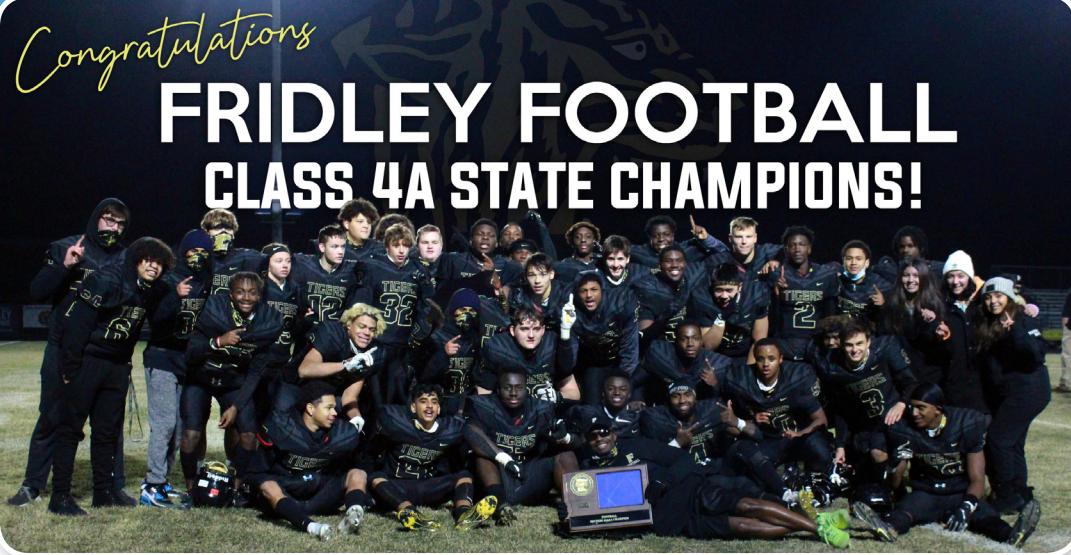
Finishing out a season like no other, the Fridley football team completed their 2020 season as state champions, earning their place as the number one ranked team in Class 4A. With an undefeated record of 7-0, the team's impressive feat has demonstrated the grit and perseverance of the Fridley football program. Due to the pandemic-shortened 2020 season and cancellation of the traditional Prep Bowl, the Associated Press officially named the football state champions for the 2020 season. Determined by a statewide panel of prep sports journalists, Fridley football earned its title as the 2020 Class 4A state champions.

According to Fridley Activities Director Dan Roff, it has been 30 years since the Tigers have been named state champions. This year's team was led by KARE11's Co-Head Coach of the Year, Justin Reese and a veteran staff of assistants.

Coach Reese said the 2020 season has been one of the best seasons to date. "Not just because of the undefeated record, but because of how the team, as a whole, has grown into who they are today," said Reese. "They have built strong relationships with each other over the years. This season has shown that this team has the camaraderie, leadership skills and discipline to stay focused and play for each other."

Roff added the 2020 Fridley football team will be remembered for its crushing defense. The Tigers outscored their opponents 242 - 16. Defensively, they gave up four field goals, and the only touchdown scored was from a blocked punt in their sixth game of the season.

"Our team has really learned how to appreciate all the moments they have together," said Reese. "And they've learned not to take anything for granted."



### FRIDLEY'S HISTORIC KICKER: MYA KARSTEN

On top of an unforgettable season, Fridley football is continuing to break barriers by recruiting first-time female football athlete, Fridley Middle School 8th grade student Mya Karsten. Since joining the team, Karsten served as the primary kicker for all varsity-level games.

Karsten, who has been a soccer player for her entire life, was spotted by Head Coach Justin Reese and Activities Director Dan Roff on the Varsity Girls Soccer field. With unmatched kicking strength, she was offered an opportunity to compete on the football team. Karsten is not only the first female football player in the team's history, she is also the first student-athlete to play two varsity-level sports in tandem. During this shortened 2020 season, Karsten played five of the seven games and made a total of 17 extra points.

Karsten shared she felt incredibly welcomed and supported by the entire football team, both on and off the field. "It's different being on a team of all boys than a team of all girls, but they're all really nice to me," she said. "They are definitely supportive and I've gotten a lot of advice from them."

This season, Karsten said she created many significant memories, hit important milestones and made new friends. "My best memory from this season would have to be the first game of the season," she said. "I remember feeling so nervous and anxious - I had a million different thoughts flowing through my mind."

The nerves peaked as she stepped up to kick her first field goal. "Everyone was cheering and excited for me," said Karsten. "And the moment I made that first extra point - the crowd went crazy and a ton of weight was lifted off my shoulders. I will never forget that."

As Karsten has paved the way for young female athletes everywhere, she offered words of advice for any student who may have similar aspirations. "Just go for it," said Karsten. "Don't think twice about it, and just see what happens. You never know if you don't try!"

Looking ahead, Karsten plans to continue her Fridley football career throughout her high school years. "I'm looking forward to trying new things, like kickoffs and maybe punts," she said. "I'm really excited to see what the future holds!"

Fridley Middle School 8th grader Mya Karsten served as the primary varsity kicker during Fridley Football's historic 2020 season. She is the first female athlete in the team's history.



### FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

In celebration of Fridley Tigers Football Team Appreciation Day, Fridley students, staff and community members shared their School Spirit selfies on social media! #FridleyStrong #FridleyProud

### STAY CONNECTED:

[www.fridleyschools.org](http://www.fridleyschools.org)




**FRIDLEY FRESH**

# FREE MEALS FOR ALL STUDENTS

We are providing ALL CHILDREN with free meals through the end of this school year!

**DID YOU KNOW?** Our Fridley Public Schools Nutritional Services department is providing free meals to all children, ages 18 and under. The funding is provided by an extended waiver by the USDA, which allows school districts to provide free meals to all children while learning at school and learning at home.

Families are invited to pick up their child(ren)'s meal bags at the dates and times listed below. Each meal bag contains 3-5 lunches, breakfasts, snacks and milk (depending on the learning model for each student). **Reminder:** As elementary students are returning to full five days/week in-person learning, they are ineligible to pick up meal bags. (*Students receive their free meals while learning at school*).

## MEAL PICK UP INFORMATION

Stripes	TUES	4:30-6:00 pm	Fridley High School 6000 W Moore Lake Drive
Online Academy	WED	11:30am-1:00pm	Fridley Middle School 6100 W Moore Lake Drive
Paws	THURS	4:30-6:00 pm	Fridley High School 6000 W Moore Lake Drive

Families are encouraged to pick up meal bags according to their Stripes, Paws, or Fridley Online Academy group assignment, but there is flexibility if they are unable to pick up meals at their designated time.

## HAVE QUESTIONS?

Contact Nutritional Services  
Director Renee Arbogast at  
763-502-5022.



## UPCOMING DATES

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15**
**NO SCHOOL - PRESIDENTS DAY**
**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16**
**SCHOOL BOARD MEETING**

Work Session 5:30 pm | Business Session 7 pm  
Meeting will be held at the Fridley Community Center

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16**
**CONTINUATION OF PHASED-IN TRANSITION  
TO IN-PERSON LEARNING**

\*All PreK, Kindergarten, and Grade 1-4 begin 5 days per week, in-person learning (M-F);  
\*FMS Grade 5-6 continue in Hybrid schedule; FMS Grade 7-8 return to Hybrid schedule;  
\*ALC students begin half days in-person learning (M-F);  
\*FHS Grades 9-12 return to Hybrid schedule

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18**
**VIRTUAL PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION EVENT**

Time slots include: 9:30 am, 12 pm, 5:30 pm  
[www.fridleyschools.org/preschoolregistrationevent](http://www.fridleyschools.org/preschoolregistrationevent)


*A World-Class Community of Learners*
**STAY CONNECTED:**  
[www.fridleyschools.org](http://www.fridleyschools.org)

**FRIDLEY FRESH**
**FRIDLEY IS PROVIDING FREE MEALS FOR ALL CHILDREN, AGES 18 & UNDER**

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## ENROLL NOW FOR 2021-22 SCHOOL YEAR

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**International Baccalaureate World Schools**



IB district-wide curriculum focus on  
**holistic development** - we promote  
 intercultural understanding, community  
 service, and real world connections

We take an **interdisciplinary**  
 approach to learning - developing  
 conceptual understanding

Positive and inclusive school  
 culture and climate for  
 all students and staff



**REGISTER NOW & BE PREPARED!**  
 We offer: Option for full-time distance learning (Fridley  
 Online Academy) and Fridley Flex Hybrid Model



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