



NEW MILLENNIUM ACADEMY'S FAMILY NEWSLETTER

# RHINO SOURCE

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2024

## WHAT'S ON



## HAPPY 2024 & END OF QUARTER 2!

We have passed the mid-point of the school year! The last day of Quarter 2 was Friday, January 19th. Please make sure to congratulate your scholars on all their hard work since the school year started!

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### UPCOMING EVENTS



JAN. 19TH

Last Day of Quarter 2



FEB. 6TH

Spring After School Programs Begin



JAN. 23RD

First Day of Quarter 3



FEB. 16TH

Wellness Day, No School



JAN. 26TH

Q2 Report Cards Sent Home



FEB. 19TH

Presidents' Day, No School

READ MORE ON PG. 3

# A MESSAGE FROM MR. THOMAS

Dear NMA Community,

I am honored to have been selected as NMA's Executive Director! I would like to thank the NMA Board of Directors for their tireless time and energy during this search process.

I applied for the ED role because I believe with my whole heart in the promise and possibility of New Millennium Academy, and for the last 3 years I have loved being a part of this work with all of you. The decision to apply for and accept this role was made even easier by my care for each of you, and the joy I have found in working with you. I remain committed to our primary purpose as a school to improve student learning and to ensure high student achievement. Together with our families and communities, I am confident in the future and direction of NMA in achieving our mission and vision.

As we look to the weeks and months ahead, I commit to working alongside students, staff, and families to chart the best path forward. One of my first priorities is to listen to and learn from you about the thoughts, feedback and questions you may have. To hear your thoughts, and plan with them in mind, I will be setting up listening sessions to connect and to hear from you. Specific dates and times will be shared soon.

Lastly, you all are an incredible community of people, and I am humbled to be among you. I look forward to learning and leading with all of you.

In partnership,  
Thomas Thao  
Executive Director



# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

Spring After School Programs (ASP) are set to begin on Tuesday, February 6th! We are restructuring ASP beginning this year. The changes are as follows:

- School Tutoring Education Program (STEP), more commonly known as after school tutoring, will be discontinued.
  - The rationale for this is that we will pivot our efforts on staying laser focused on instruction during the school day vs. after school.
- All after school programs will be moved to Tuesdays and Thursdays only.
  - The rationale for this is that we will be able to save costs on transportation by moving to two days of transportation vs. four days.
  - Dance Empowerment Enrichment Program (DEEP), more commonly known as the dance program, will move to Tuesdays and Thursdays.
  - All other Hmong cultural programs will continue as planned.
  - All sports programs will continue as planned.

These changes were made with the intent to align our after school programs to better complement our academic program.

Any questions or concerns can be directed to Executive Director Thomas Thao.

## ACCESS TESTING

The month of February means that all students who have been identified as English Language Learners will be taking the state ACCESS test. ACCESS for ELLs is a computer-based, adaptive test that responds to student performance and may be administered in group or individual settings. This assessment is given annually to students in grades 1-12.

- The test provides information about students' English language abilities in school. Educators use this information to make decisions about students' education.
- ACCESS measures what students know and can do in English in the domains of Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing.
- Students do not need to study for the test, but rather, focus on demonstrating their language abilities.

### **Interested in volunteering?**

Families who are interested in volunteering at NMA may reach out to Thomas Thao at [thomas.thao@nmaedu.org](mailto:thomas.thao@nmaedu.org) or contact the Front Office at 763-235-7900.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## BLACK HISTORY MONTH

February is Black History Month. We encourage all families to use this month as an opportunity to celebrate the achievements, contributions, and influence of Black Americans throughout our nation's history.

Black history is American history, and it is important that we educate ourselves, our scholars, and our community about the rich and diverse experiences of Black people in the United States. From prominent leaders and freedom fighters, to musicians and artists, to scientists and entrepreneurs, Black Americans have made an indelible impact on our society and continue to shape the world we live in today.

During this month (and year-round), we encourage you to engage in conversations and activities with your scholars that celebrate the achievements of Black Americans and raise awareness of the ongoing struggles for justice and equality. Teachers will be implementing lessons in their classrooms, but we encourage families to create space outside of school to discuss the significance of this month.

Whether it's through reading books, attending events, or diving deeper to understand the role of Black civil rights leaders in supporting the resettlement of Southeast Asian refugees after the Vietnam War, there are many ways to participate in this important observance.

We hope you will join us in this celebration and make opportunities to deepen our scholars' understanding of how Black Americans have been building this country since its inception.





# HIGHLIGHTS

## MONTHLY PBIS ASSEMBLY

We had our monthly PBIS Assembly on Friday, January 26th!

Each month, on the last Friday, we dedicate time to reviewing school wide expectations, announcing the Rhino of the Month winners, watching student performances and staff vs. student games, and implementing any other suggestions scholars and staff may have!



## TOYS 4 TOTS RECAP

We hosted our annual Toys for Tots event on December 16th, 2023 and distributed toys to roughly 350 families! We appreciate all families and community members who were able to attend the event and we hope the toys brought joy to your scholars this holiday season.



Our Toys for Tots Team!

# RESOURCES

## ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP TEAM

NMA prides ourselves in having a robust Academic Leadership Team. Families who have questions or concerns about their scholar(s) may reach out to their respective leaders in each grade level band.

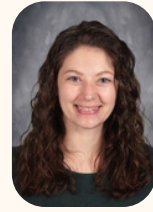
### GRADES K - 2



**Molly Kroiss**  
Assistant Principal  
763-235-7935  
molly.kroiss@nmaedu.org



**La Her**  
Impact Coach  
763-235-9590  
la.her@nmaedu.org



**Bridget Mealman**  
Academic Coach  
763-235-7930  
bridget.mealman@nmaedu.org

### GRADES 3 - 5



**Bao Cha**  
Assistant Principal  
763-235-7933  
bao.cha@nmaedu.org



**Kingston Xiong**  
Impact Coach  
763-235-7933  
kingston.xiong@nmaedu.org



**Jordan Lewandowski**  
Academic Coach  
763-235-7964  
jordan.lewandowski@nmaedu.org

### GRADES 6 - 8



**Hailey Collins**  
Assistant Principal  
763-235-7938  
hailey.collins@nmaedu.org



**Jamie Neal**  
Impact Coach  
763-235-7960  
jamie.neal@nmaedu.org



**Jamie Fitzgerald**  
Academic Coach  
763-235-7933  
jamie.fitzgerald@nmaedu.org

# RESOURCES

## WINTER CLOTHES

NMA believes outdoor recess is an important and valuable part of our students' day. Fresh air, exercise, and time spent outside afford scholars a break from the structure of the classroom. While there is no formal recess in the Middle School, it is important that scholars still dress appropriately for the weather.

During the winter season, at a minimum, every child should have a jacket, gloves or mittens, and a hat. If there is snow on the ground, snow boots and pants are necessary.

If you are in need of winter clothing for your scholars, please reach out to Nurse Terra at [terra.eicher@nmaedu.org](mailto:terra.eicher@nmaedu.org) or 763-235-7914.



## TRANSPORTATION REQUESTS

Please use the link below for transportation related requests.

Requests may include an address change, reporting a scholar-related transportation issue, or reporting a late/no show bus or van.

<https://nmaedu.org/transportation-requests/>

## HELPFUL LINKS

**[2023-2024 Master Calendar](https://nmaedu.org/academics/school-calendar-testing-calendar/)**

**[Lunch Menu](https://nmaedu.org/academics/food-nutrition-product-ingredients/)**

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