



Traverse City Area Public Schools
NAVIGATOR

SPRING 2025



A Letter From the Superintendent

It is hard to believe we have already surpassed the 100th day of school and are busy preparing for spring musical festivals, robotic competitions, and the return to outdoor sports. I always appreciate the unique excitement and accomplishments that coincide with each school year. Seeing students excel in the classroom, the stage, or on the field is truly inspiring.

To stay up to date with many of TCAPS initiatives, I encourage you to watch our 2025 State of the District Address. This is an informational video highlighting safety, financials, and future planning.



Moving forward, we are excited to welcome many new families to TCAPS who attended a kindergarten information session and already enrolled their child for next fall. We also recently hosted our 5th grade families at our middle schools and welcomed 8th grade families to our high schools. Coinciding with the excitement of these transitional years, we place a special light on our seniors and celebrate their futures as TCAPS alumni. We applaud the numerous college acceptances, military enlistments, and career decisions. The Class of 2025 is an exemplary group of students.

I express my sincere gratitude to our staff, families, and our greater TCAPS community for their commitment to our students throughout this school year. Thank you for taking part in helping each student reach their successes and milestones.

Sincerely,
John R. VanWagoner II, Ph.D.
Superintendent

Superintendent Office Hours

Held Monthly, Open to the Community

The Superintendent offers regular office hours to provide opportunities for community members to connect and discuss relevant topics.

In-Person:

Location: Horizon Books, 243 E. Front Street, Traverse City, MI 49684 (Mezzanine Level)
Dates: April 8, 2025; June 10, 2025

Virtual:

Platform: Google Meet
Access Information: <https://www.tcaps.net/about/superintendent/>
Date: May 13, 2025

All meetings begin at 5:00 p.m.



Looking Ahead: Preserving a Legacy & Embracing the Future

Central Grade School has been a key part of Traverse City's education for over 150 years. Starting as the Union School in 1877, it has grown and changed, always providing students with a strong education. Old records, like the 1923 yearbook, show the school's focus on providing great facilities, supporting both learning and activities. The school has changed over time to meet community needs, from the first brick building in 1886 to the rebuilt school after the 1934 fire, and the 1936 addition of a gym and auditorium, showing a focus on student growth.

To ensure the next renovation reflects the community's vision, an ad-hoc committee formed, comprised of residents, parents, and educators.



Click graphic to play Central Grade Historical Tour video

Knowing Central Grade School is a place where students, families, and the community come together, the renovation will blend history with modern education. This project highlights the community's commitment to quality education, while maintaining respect for the local history. Looking ahead, Central Grade School remains a legacy preserved and will grow to embrace the future of teaching and learning.



A Message From the School Board President

Dear TCAPS Community,

This spring, the Board of Education will identify key priorities as our district's focus for the next three to five years. In our commitment towards excellence in education, it is important for the Board of Education to align goals with the mission and vision of our district.

Because the Board of Education represents our stakeholders, we value the voices of students, staff, families, and our greater community. Therefore, we ask for you to share your opinions and experience via a survey regarding how TCAPS currently operates and how the district might improve in areas of academic opportunities, student achievement, community engagement, responsible financial stewardship, and safety and security. Surveys are anonymous, unless you intentionally add your contact information. This survey is designed for TCAPS parents and guardians and will remain open until 9:00 a.m. on March 18, 2025.

Data collected from all groups will be reviewed at a study session of the Board of Education. This will be the initial stage towards developing a comprehensive, multi-year strategic plan for the district. As the work continues, we will provide updates to the process and future opportunities for input.

Your voice matters. Through ongoing dialogue, collaboration, and shared commitment, we can build a future where every student succeeds. Thank you for your support and dedication to our students, staff, and schools.

Sincerely,
Scott Newman-Bale
President
Traverse City Area Public Schools Board of Education

Mission

TCAPS educates, inspires, and supports all learners to maximize individual excellence and success.

Vision

An educational community providing opportunities and resources to relentlessly support all learners in achieving their full potential.

SURVEYS



Please choose the survey that aligns with your relationship to TCAPS:

Student Survey

Staff Survey

Parent/Guardian Survey

Community Survey

TCAPS Board of Education Monthly Office Hours

The TCAPS Board of Education offers monthly office hours, providing community members an opportunity to engage with a school board trustee. Meetings are held virtually and in person.

Learn more at www.tcaps.net/board.

Scott Hardy Appointed to Board of Education

At the March 10 Board of Education meeting, Scott Hardy was appointed to the TCAPS Board of Education, filling the recently vacated seat of Andrew Raymond.

Trustee Hardy is a familiar name to the Board of Education, having served previously on the TCAPS Board for two terms. During that time, he chaired both the finance and communications committees.



At Monday's meeting, the Board also nominated and voted Trustee Hardy to Board Treasurer and will sit on the Board's finance committee.

"Andrew left very large shoes to fill and we were fortunate to have very strong candidates apply," President

Scott Newman-Bale stated. "Scott Hardy's knowledge on school finance along with his first-hand Board of Education experience will allow for an efficient transition entering our strategic planning process."

Trustee Hardy's term is set to expire December 31, 2026.



Josey Ballenger, Secretary



Holly Bird, Trustee



Erica Moon-Mohr, Vice President



Scott Newman-Bale, President



Beth Pack, Trustee



Ty Schmidt, Trustee



EDTech Coach Danelle Brostrom has been invited to the 2025 Women in AI Fellowship! The Women in AI Fellowship is a year-long program that supports exceptional and impact-minded individuals by providing an outstanding platform to learn and work on questions of AI in education. Fellows have the

opportunity to work with world-renowned experts in AI safety, ethics, and policy. They also participate in a rigorous seminar series, where they learn about the latest advances in AI research and discuss the potential impacts of AI on society. Designed for women technologists and leaders, this Fellowship creates a space for learning, support, and building a network. Built for leaders in the education sector from industry and the field, this interdisciplinary fellowship brings together leaders on the supply and demand side to reimagine education as a learning system enabled by AI. This is an exciting opportunity for both Danelle and TCAPS.



Stephie Luyt, Elementary Library Coordinator for TCAPS, has been appointed to serve as a member of the 2026 Randolph Caldecott Award Selection Committee. The Caldecott Medal, established in 1937, is one of the oldest and most highly regarded awards for children's book illustration in the

United States. It was named for 19th-century English illustrator Randolph Caldecott. It is awarded annually by the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC), a division of the American Library Association, to the artist of the most distinguished American picture book for children.

Stephie was a Lead Project Fellow in 2017-2018 and co-chaired the Michigan Association of School Librarians *MI Self in Books* project. She was selected to participate in ALSC's 2024 Bill Morris Seminar: *Book Evaluation Training* and is currently the Advocacy co-chair for the Michigan Association of School Librarians.

Preschool Programming

TCAPS Preschool Programs nurture each child's unique potential. These programs are designed to meet individual developmental needs, with a strong emphasis on building a solid foundation in literacy and language. Through productive play, children will experience rich social, physical, emotional, and intellectual growth.

Children explore the world through creative games, hands-on science and nature projects, arts and crafts, and engaging music instruction. Students also benefit from access to our school's resources, including the library, gymnasium, playground, and cafeteria, ensuring a comprehensive and stimulating learning environment.

Preschool Programming at TCAPS:

Tuition Toddler Program (18 months - 3 years)

Offered at TCAPS Montessori, providing a nurturing start for our youngest learners.

Tuition Preschool Program (3 - 5 years)

Available at various locations, offering flexible options for all families.

Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) State-Funded Preschool (4 years old by December 1)

Providing preschool education at multiple sites.

Adventure Awaits! at TCAPS Schools

Enrollment for the 2025-2026 school year is now open. At TCAPS, programs are designed to encourage learners to realize their potential in an engaging, inspiring, and safe environment. We encourage you to learn more about our programs.

Parents and students interested in learning more about any of our schools are welcome to schedule a tour. To schedule a tour, please contact the school office directly.

Junior Kindergarten

Students often benefit from the gift of an extra year prior to entering a traditional Kindergarten program. The Junior Kindergarten program exists to serve this purpose.

Traditional Kindergarten

Traditional Kindergarten and Junior Kindergarten are offered at all TCAPS elementary schools. Students attend a full day, Monday through Friday. School times vary based on location.

Montessori Program

TCAPS Montessori is a multi-age program, serving children three to six years of age. The Montessori methodology is used with the goal of providing children the opportunity to develop independence and be a contributing member in their learning community. Transportation is not provided for this program.



TCAPS

Traverse City Area Public Schools

ADVENTURE AWAITS!

NOW ENROLLING
Preschool, K-12, Virtual & In-Person

www.tcaps.net/enroll



Not All Student Needs Are Academic,
SSN Can Help.

Donate Now!



STEM

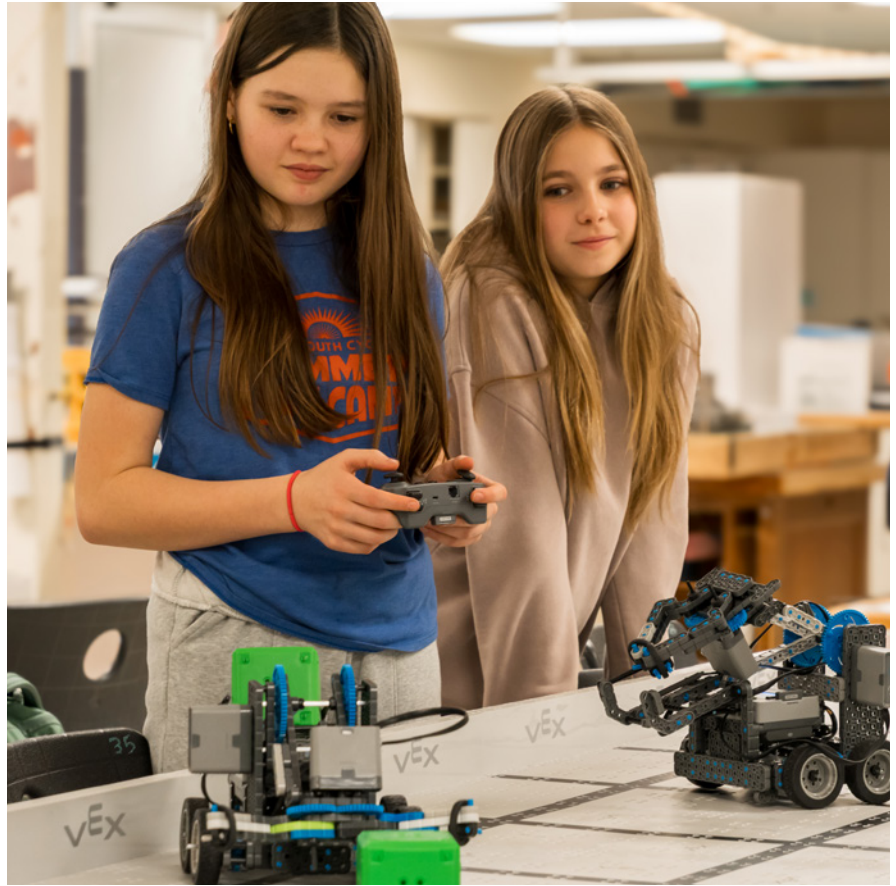
science • technology • engineering • math

Empowered Innovation

TCAPS offers STEM opportunities that ignite a passion for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics through a variety of captivating courses and extracurricular activities.

In middle school, students can dive into our hands-on STEM Exploration course, where they'll unravel the mysteries of design and tinker with cutting-edge technologies like 3D printing and robotics. High school students can further explore their interests in STEM Robotics course or an Innovation & Design course, where they'll push the boundaries of creativity and problem-solving. In addition, TCAPS offers a two-year STEM cohort program for 9th and 10th graders which is an accelerated pathway into the fields of healthcare, engineering, robotics, and environmental science.

Students in middle school and high school can also join robotics teams, where they'll collaborate to build awe-inspiring robots and compete in robotics competitions throughout the state. TCAPS high school teams have made their mark on the world stage, qualifying for the prestigious World Robotics Competition in Houston, Texas!



TCAPS is preparing to open two 7,000+ square foot Innovation and Manufacturing Centers at Central High School and West Senior High School. These state-of-the-art centers will have advanced equipment for computer programming, construction, manufacturing, and design. The goal is to give students practical, hands-on experience in STEM fields, better preparing them for 21st-century careers.

With a blend of engaging coursework, hands-on projects, and exhilarating competitions, TCAPS STEM programming empowers students to become the innovators and problem-solvers of tomorrow.

RIBBON CUTTINGS



April 10, 2025
4:00 p.m.
Traverse City West Senior High School
5376 N. Long Lake Road

Innovation & Manufacturing Center

April 10, 2025
5:30 p.m.
Traverse City Central High School
1150 Milliken Drive



Innovation & Manufacturing Center