

July 30, 2013



Perpich gears up for great school year!

From Sue Mackert, executive director

As we enter the final days of this school year, we look forward to the beginning of the next one. We are encouraged by the enthusiastic support for Crosswinds and are confident our success in the 2013-2014 school year will launch us into a strong, solid future. Crosswinds and Perpich administrative teams are working together to ensure that Crosswinds' wonderful programming is maintained and that students and staff have a successful transition to the new school year.

We are thrilled that so many students, families and staff have made the decision to stay at Crosswinds. Our goal from the beginning remains – to preserve this model school as an educational option for all children. Perpich brings a 30-year history of teaching in and through the arts to Crosswinds and will provide a solid foundation from which the school, its students and staff will thrive.

The information in this first newsletter is designed to provide you with an update of happenings and preparations being made for the year ahead.



New principal

Crosswinds is fortunate to have a strong leader in our new principal, Dr. Carlondrea Hines. Dr. Hines came to Perpich from the Envision Academy of the Arts where she served as the administrative representative to the Envision Parent Organization and Burnsville High School where she served as dean of students. She holds a Ph.D. in education and a M.Ed. in business education.

In addition to her work in Burnsville, Dr. Hines has served as AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) coordinator for Roseville Area High School and as a high school business teacher. She also taught in Memphis, Tenn. and Jackson, Miss. She served as a professional development and school compliance coach while in the Memphis school system. Dr. Hines is active in the Delta Sigma Theta sorority and has served that group in several leadership roles.

Faculty

While we say goodbye and wish our graduates good luck, we are also busy with preparations for the upcoming school year. Cornelius Rish can't wait to see all the new and returning students, Anna Barker is harvesting and planting new gardens and Peggy Palumbo is bursting with ideas for good health. Our returning teachers – their commitment to Crosswinds and leadership – will help ensure the culture and programming are maintained. Perpich faculty also will infuse some new surprises into the teaching curriculum, including photography and video arts, as well as electronic music. Where there are gaps, we are interviewing potential teachers and are impressed by the high level of skill we are seeing from our applicants. As final contracts are worked we will be able to share names of others staying or joining our faculty.



Staff

Perpich and Crosswinds share the same philosophy that through our teaching and student support services we will help every student reach their fullest potential.

Most of our wonderful Crosswinds staff are staying, which means we will see the same level of service and support in the office, in special education programs, the cafeteria and with maintenance. Torria Randall, the glue that holds it all together in the office, is busy preparing the calendar and registering students, while Carol Rydeen is happily creating a new years of scrumptious menus and Jim Sullivan and his team are busy cleaning and taking inventory of what needs to happen in the interim between this school year and fall.

Students

Many students are committed to coming to Crosswinds and new applications come in daily. Torria tells us that we are on par with past year's numbers registered and will continue to accept registrations. If you listen to student conversations, you can hear how excited students are about returning. Students like Leah Stein who, when she heard Crosswinds would stay open said, "Yay! I'm so happy! And I can still do theater!" Many more have expressed interest and are in the process of completing their Intent to Return forms. The EMID Families group and Perpich communications team also are working hard to ensure all members of their communities know about Crosswinds for their students. This strong marketing effort is already resulting in new students registering at Crosswinds.

Curriculum

The goal of Crosswinds since its founding has been to serve as an interdistrict integration program. That commitment to integration at Crosswinds was affirmed by the state legislature, the EMID board and the Perpich board and will remain intact.

Your returning and new students will benefit from the same curriculum that has engaged students in learning in the past. This curriculum will continue to be grounded in the International Baccalaureate Middle-Years Program. The IB accreditation will be maintained at Crosswinds and training efforts will ensure all teachers are skilled in delivering the IB program. It is this IB curriculum that ensures a true integration of learning across all subject matters. Additionally, we are focused on maintaining the progress of curriculum that is mapped out over a multi-year course of study.

Crosswinds will continue to be an arts and science magnet program with a year-round schedule. It will house grades 6-10, which is consistent with the IB Middle-Years Program.

Transportation

Funding for transportation will be maintained so all students in the EMID 10-member district will be bused to Crosswinds. In addition, current Crosswinds students who reside in North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale school district will have transportation available. Students outside the EMID district will be able to open enroll at Crosswinds.

Arts

The arts program at Crosswinds has been highly successful and one in which the school takes great pride. The commitment to music will continue with a dedication to a strong instrumental music program. Our hope is to expand this program to include vocal and electronic music this year.

Mr. Rish will continue the performing arts program, which has brought us great shows like "The Wiz," "Hairspray," and "West Side Story."

Visual arts will continue to be available to students offering them opportunities for drawing and painting, media arts and sculpture. Some new surprises are in store in media arts.

After-school and intersession

We will maintain the after-school and intersession programming offered in 2012-2013. We are exploring opportunities to bring forward financial resources to restore the programs from previous years. Perpich Center for Arts Education has a wealth of resources that can assist in this area. One of our alumni has taught during intersession and there are opportunities for many more alumni to come forward and teach these programs.

Perpich partnership and future

Perpich will be a strong leader for Crosswinds as both programs have similar approaches to education and learning environments. Perpich is committed to maintaining the existing strong programs at Crosswinds and intends to get long-term approval from the legislature to govern the school. We have witnessed strong support from many legislative leaders, particularly those serving on education committees and those elected to represent constituents in the East Metro. Rep. JoAnn Ward, DFL-Woodbury, who helped shepherd the Perpich management agreement after the session ended, says, "There's no question in my mind that Perpich has the background and the experience to run this program."

Back to School Night

I hope this information helps you as you prepare for the 2013-2014 school year. Returning students will receive additional information about back-to-school activities in the coming weeks. If you have additional questions, please don't hesitate to contact Torria Randall in the office at Crosswinds at 651-379-2601 or Sue Mackert, executive director at Perpich at 763-279-4160. You may also continue to find updates at emidfamilies.org/crosswinds.
