

DISTRICT 821 NEWSLETTER
Menahga Public School
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Menahga, MN 56464

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Back-to-School Newsletter 2026-27

Menahga Public Schools



216 Aspen Avenue SE, PO Box 160, Menahga, MN 56464 218-564-4141 www.menahga.k12.mn.us



Welcome Back!

*From the Desk of
Superintendent Jay Kjos*

Dear Menahga Families and Community,
Welcome to the 2026–2027 school year! As I begin my fifth year as Superintendent of Menahga Public Schools, I continue to be grateful for the opportunity to serve this incredible community. Every year I become more convinced that what makes Menahga special is not just our school, it is the people who come together each day to support our students.
Over the past several years, we have worked together to create a clear vision for our district. This summer, our leadership team continued that work by studying student achievement data, refining our school improvement plans, and strengthening our commitment to providing every student with the opportunities they need to succeed. We are excited to put those plans into action as we begin another outstanding school year.
Our teachers and staff have spent the summer learning, preparing classrooms, improving our facilities, and planning engaging experiences for students. Their dedication to our children is inspiring, and I know they are eager to welcome students back into our buildings.
This year we will continue to focus on high-quality instruction, strong relationships, student safety, and preparing every learner for success beyond graduation. Whether a student plans to attend college, enter the workforce, enlist in the military, or pursue technical training, our goal is to ensure every Brave graduates with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to achieve their dreams.
Education is most successful when schools and families work together. I encourage parents and guardians to stay involved, communicate with our staff, attend school events, and celebrate the many accomplishments of our students throughout the year. Your partnership makes an incredible difference. Thank you for the trust you place in Menahga Public Schools. It is a privilege to educate your children, and we are committed to making this school year one filled with learning, growth, opportunity, and success for every student.
On behalf of our Board of Education, faculty, and staff, welcome back! We look forward to seeing our students on the first day of school and to another great year together. It's a great day to be a Brave! - Superintendent, Jay Kjos



Back to School
OPEN HOUSE
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2ND
5:30–7:30PM
FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8TH

Caulfield Studio
SCHOOL
PICTURE DAY!
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1ST

"AWAY FOR THE DAY" PHONE-FREE SCHOOL POLICY



Beginning this school year (26-27), Menahga High School will implement its new "Away for the Day" policy, creating a bell-to-bell, phone-free learning environment for all students in grades 7–12. The initiative is designed to reduce distractions, strengthen student engagement, and encourage meaningful face-to-face interactions throughout the school day. Under the new policy, students will place their cell phones in assigned personal lockers before the school day begins, where they will remain secured until dismissal. Smart watches with communication capabilities, wireless earbuds, and headphones are also included in the policy unless specifically authorized for instructional purposes. Parents who need to reach their child during the school day are encouraged to contact the high school office, and students may use the office phone with staff permission when needed.

The new expectations reflect a growing movement among schools across Minnesota to limit personal device use during the school day. Research has shown that phone-free learning environments can improve academic focus, increase classroom participation, strengthen peer relationships, and support student well-being.

"Our goal is to create the best possible learning environment for every student," said Menahga High School Principal Michelle Koch. "When students are fully present in the classroom instead of on a screen, they engage more deeply with their learning, build stronger relationships with their classmates and teachers, and develop important life skills. We appreciate the support of our families as we work together to make this a positive change for our students and school community."

The district believes the "Away for the Day" policy will help students stay focused on learning while fostering a more connected, respectful, and engaging school culture.

M Welcome Back to School!

From the Desk of Elementary Principal Steph Mercil

Dear Menahga Elementary Families,
As the new principal of Menahga Elementary, I am honored and excited to join such a supportive and caring community. I look forward to getting to know our students, families, staff, and community members as we begin a new school year together. At Menahga Elementary, which serves students in PreK through sixth grade, our goal is to ensure every child feels welcomed, valued, and inspired to learn each day. I firmly believe that strong relationships are the foundation of a successful school. One of my highest priorities this year is building meaningful connections with our students, partnering with families, and supporting the incredible staff who make Menahga Elementary such a special place. When students know they are cared for and families feel connected to their school, everyone is better positioned for success. We have a few new faces in different grade levels this year.

First Grade Team:
Ms. Bera and Mrs. Huotari will be joining our first grade team.

Third Grade Team:
Mrs. Viere (formerly Benham) will be joining our third grade team.

Fourth Grade:
Mrs. Rasmussen will join our fourth grade team.

Fifth Grade Team:
Mr. Justin will be joining our fifth grade team.

Title I Intervention:
Mrs. Johnson will be Title I intervention teacher.

Technology Integrationist:
Ms. Steiner will be our tech integrationist.

Another important focus for the year is fostering a culture of continual learning, not only for our students, but for our educators as well. Education is always evolving, and we are committed to providing ongoing professional learning

opportunities that help our teachers grow in their practice. By investing in our staff through collaboration, professional development, and shared learning, we strengthen the educational experiences we provide for every student.

As we prepare to welcome students back to school, I encourage families to stay involved, communicate with us, and partner with us throughout the year. Together, we can create a positive, engaging learning environment where every child has the opportunity to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

I am grateful for the warm welcome I have already received and am excited to begin this journey with the Menahga community. I look forward to a wonderful school year filled with learning, growth, and lasting relationships. I can't wait to see our students when the doors open this fall. Our Back to School Open House will be held on Wednesday, September 2nd, from 5:30-7:30pm. All are welcome to attend! This is a great time to meet the teachers, bring in school supplies, and become familiar with the school. Our first day of school is Tuesday, September 8th for grades K-6 and either Tuesday, September 15th or Wednesday, September 16th for PreK. You should be receiving a more detailed letter from your child's teacher at the beginning of August with more information. In the meantime, enjoy these final weeks of summer with your families- soaking up sunshine and making memories.

Here's to a fantastic school year at Menahga Elementary!



Steph Mercil
Elementary Principal

WHAT IS TITLE I FUNDING?

What is Title One Funding?

Title One is a federal program that gives additional money to schools based on the finances of the community. This funding helps make sure all children have the same chance to get a great education.

Why is it Important?

Title One funding helps us provide extra support and resources to students. This support can make a big difference in your child's education, helping them do their best in school.

How Does the Menahga District Use Title One Funds?

Here are some of the ways we use Title One funds to benefit our students:

-More Teachers and Staff: We can hire more teachers and support staff to make classes smaller and give students more individual attention.

-Special Programs: We offer special programs and help for students who need extra support in reading and math.

-Teacher Training: We provide training for our teachers to ensure they have the best skills and knowledge to help your child learn.

-Parent Involvement: We organize events and programs that encourage parents to be involved in their child's education, which is crucial for student success. Please be on the lookout for Title One stations during conferences and school events!

How Can Families Get Involved?

We believe that parents play a vital role in their child's education. Here's how you can get involved:

-Stay Informed: Keep up with school news and updates, and attend school meetings and events.

-Communicate: Talk regularly with your child's teachers and school staff.

-Support Learning at Home: Encourage your child to read, complete homework, and do learning activities at home. Menahga schools are committed to using Title One funds effectively to create a supportive and enriching learning environment for all our students. If you have any questions or would like more information about Title One, please feel free to contact us.

Thank you for your continued support and involvement in your child's education!

2026-27 PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!

QUESTIONS? CONTACT JAMIE ETZLER

Email: jetzler@menahga.k12.mn.us
or call 218-564-4141 ext. 1120

Applications are available online at
menahga.k12.mn.us
or can be picked up in the Elementary Office.

MENAHGA HEAD START

FREE for Eligible Families!

Menahga Head Start serves children ages 3-5, with an inclusive environment for children with disabilities. Our individualized curriculum and social emotional curriculum are designed to support each child's growth and build the skills needed for kindergarten readiness. Families have multiple opportunities to engage in their child's learning through volunteering, family events, parent committee meetings and policy council. Classes are held Monday-Thursday from 8:00-11:30 a.m. at 120 1st Street NE in Menahga.

Contact Rachel Phillips at 218-539-0516 for an application or more information!

SCHOOL CENSUS

Parents and new residents with children ages 0-5 who have not yet registered with the school census, please do so through the elementary office at 564-4141 ext 1.

Back-to-School



Welcome to the 2026-27 School Year!

From the Desk of High School Principal Michelle Koch



Michelle Koch
High School Principal

As we prepare to welcome students back for another school year, there is a real sense of excitement across Menahga High School. We are looking forward to a year filled with new opportunities, strong relationships, and meaningful learning for every student. This year, we are expanding course offerings and continuing to strengthen our Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, giving students more opportunities to explore their interests, develop valuable skills, and prepare for life after high school. We are also excited to partner with Till360 to support our students, staff, and school community. This partnership will help us continue building a positive school culture and climate where everyone feels connected, supported, and empowered to succeed. Beginning second quarter, we will introduce our new Wednesday Advisory program (Brave Connections). This dedicated 20 minutes will allow students to build stronger relationships with staff, receive academic support, explore career and college readiness opportunities, strengthen social-emotional skills, and participate in activities that help every student succeed both in and out of the classroom. To create focused learning environments, our new "Away for the Day" phone policy will begin on the first day of school. Starting on day one, students will be expected to keep their phones away for the entire instructional day by leaving them at home, in their vehicle, or secured in their school locker. Beginning in mid-October, when our secure phone lockers arrive, students will store their phones in those lockers during the school day. This initiative is designed to help students stay fully engaged in learning, collaborate with their peers, and build meaningful relationships with staff. We appreciate the support of our families as we implement this positive change to enhance student learning. As technology continues to evolve, Menahga is committed to helping students become responsible and ethical users of artificial intelligence (AI). Through our partnership with Gruvy Education, both students and staff will receive ongoing learning and support to use AI effectively, responsibly, and with academic integrity. By learning alongside one another, we are building the skills needed to prepare students for the future while enhancing teaching and learning in every classroom. We are grateful for the continued support of our families and community and can't wait to see what this school year will bring. Here's to a fantastic year of learning, growth, and success.

7th-12th Grade

DEVICE ROLL OUT INFORMATION





Complete the **2026-27** online registration and device information in **Infinite Campus Parent Portal** **BEFORE** pickup.

! NO DEVICE CHECKOUT DURING OPEN HOUSE

PICKUP • HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER

	WED. AUG. 19	• 8:00 AM-4:00 PM
	WED. AUG. 26	• 10:30 AM-7:00 PM
	THURS. AUG. 27	• 10:30 AM-7:00 PM

FEE:

\$40

PER STUDENT

\$100

MAX PER FAMILY

 **Fee waived with completed Educational Benefits Application.**

ALC INFORMATION

ALC through Freshwater Education District will be offered after school at the Menahga High School. This is for students who are behind credits and need to make them up in order to graduate. Classes will be held on Tuesdays and/or Thursdays depending on student scheduling needs from 3:30pm-7:00pm. Students already enrolled should attend Thursday, September 10th at 3:30pm. If you have any questions regarding ALC, you may contact Deanna Hillukka - deannahillukka@menahga.k12.mn.us or Stephanie Kramer - skramer@menahga.k12.mn.us or call 218-564-4141 ext. 1300 and leave a message.

ONLINE LEARNING OPTIONS FOR MENAHGA STUDENTS

At Menahga, we are proud to offer flexible learning options that support every student's needs and goals. As we begin the 2026-2027 school year, we are continuing strong partnerships with the following online options: **Edmentum** helps students recover credits online so they can stay on track for graduation. **Elevate** offers online classes for students who need more flexible schedules or prefer to learn at their own pace. **Menahga Online** gives students a fully online option while staying connected to our district and staff. We are excited to partner with these amazing programs to make sure all students have access to the right learning path for them. Thank you for supporting Menahga students, we're looking forward to a great year!



Andria Bristow
Teaching & Learning Coordinator

ANDRIA BRISTOW TEACHING AND LEARNING COORDINATOR

Welcome back to another exciting school year! There is always something special about the start of a new year, the hallways fill with smiling faces, classrooms come to life, and we all have the opportunity to begin a new chapter together. As your Teaching and Learning Coordinator, I am looking forward to supporting our students, staff, and families throughout the year.

We have several exciting initiatives underway, including piloting a new elementary English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum. This gives our teachers the opportunity to explore high-quality instructional resources that align with Minnesota state standards and meet the growing needs of our students, with the goal of selecting a curriculum for adoption next school year. You'll also see our commitment to continuous learning in action as our staff participates in ongoing professional development focused on best instructional practices, with a special emphasis on strengthening reading instruction. By learning and growing together, we can continue providing the engaging, high-quality education our students deserve. Thank you for your support and contribution to this wonderful community. It is a privilege and a blessing to be a Brave. I can't wait to see all that our students accomplish this year, and I look forward to working alongside our amazing staff and families to make it a successful and rewarding year for everyone. Here's to a wonderful school year!

7th Grade Orientation & Open House

Please join Mrs. Koch and Mr. Hedstrom in the High School Commons during Open House on Wednesday, September 2nd from 7:00pm-7:30pm for a quick and fun 7th Grade Orientation! We will have information specific to our 7th grade students, snacks, prizes, and 8th grade students ready to share advice and helpful hints to make the transition to high school smooth and easy!



VISION

To engage all learners on a lifelong path to success.

MISSION

To build strong partnerships with stakeholders to ensure all learners succeed.



ATTENDANCE LINE

FOR GRADES 7-12

To help us keep accurate records and ensure student safety, please report all absences, tardies, and early dismissals by calling our Attendance Line at:

218-564-4142

WHEN LEAVING A MESSAGE, INCLUDE:

 your child's full name

 grade level

 reason for the absence or early dismissal

 your name and contact number

Thank you for your continued partnership in supporting student success!



School Supplies



PreK - 12th Grade



-PRESCHOOL-

3 Prong Plastic Folder
Composition Notebook
Gym Shoes
Backpack
Optional: Dixie Cups, Colorful Highlighters, Dry Erase Markers, Construction Paper, Ziplock Bags, Paper Plates



-KINDERGARTEN-

Crayola 8 ct. Crayons
Crayola 24 ct. Crayons
Crayola 10 ct. Washable Broad Markers
Composition Notebook
Scissors
12 Large Glue Sticks
6 Fine Tip Expo Markers
Large Labeled Backpack
Paper Plates
Ziplock Bags (Gallon or Sandwich)
Change of Clothes
Gym Shoes (Please NO tie shoes unless able to tie.)
Plain Plastic Pencil Box (NO pouches or frills.)
Labeled Headphones (NO ear buds or wireless.)
1 Box Kleenex
Optional: Clorox Wipes



-1ST GRADE-

2 - 24 ct. Ticonderoga Pencils
1 - 2-Pocket Folder
2 - Crayola 24 ct. Crayons
2 - Crayola 10 ct. Washable Broad Markers
2 - Pink Erasers
Composition Notebook
12 Gluesticks
8 Expo Black, Fine Tip Markers
Pencil Box
2 - Highlighters
Labeled Headphones (NO ear buds or wireless.)
1 Box Ziplock Bags (Any Size)
Gym Shoes
Backpack
Optional: Kleenex, Clorox Wipes



-2ND GRADE-

1 - 24 ct. Ticonderoga Pencils
1 - 24 ct. Crayola Crayons
1 - 10 ct. Crayola Markers
1 - 12 ct. Crayola Colored Pencils
1 - Folder (Not plastic)
10 Expo Black Fine Tip Markers
Labeled Headphones (NO ear buds or wireless.)
2 - Large Pink Erasers
Backpack
Gym Shoes
Optional: Kleenex, Clorox Wipes



-3RD GRADE-

Pencils
Crayons
Markers
4 - Composition Notebooks
1 Pack of Glue Sticks
1 Glue Bottle
10 Expo Markers
Expo Eraser
4 - Folders
Colored Pencils
Ruler
Highlighter
Labeled Headphones (NO ear buds or wireless.)
Pencil Top Erasers
Pencil Box
Gym Shoes
Backpack
Optional: Kleenex, Clorox Wipes

-4TH GRADE-

24 ct. Pencils
3 - Notebooks
3 - Folders
8 ct. Expo Markers
12 ct. Colored Pencils
24 ct. Crayons
2 - Large Pink Erasers
Pencil Box
Headphones (NO ear buds or wireless.)
4 Glue Sticks
Gym Shoes
Backpack
Optional: Markers, Kleenex, Clorox Wipes, Hand Held Pencil Sharpener, Pencil Top Erasers, Sandwich bags.



-5TH GRADE-

24 ct. Pencils
Large Pink Eraser or Eraser Tops
Colored Pencils
Markers
2 - Fine Tip Expo Markers
2 - Fine Tip Sharpie Markers
Scissors
4 - Glue Sticks
3 - Folders
3 - Notebooks
Ruler
Headphones
Backpack
Gym Shoes
Optional: Crayons, Hand Held Pencil Sharpener, Supply Box, Ziploc Bags (Gallon or Quart Size), Kleenex.

-6TH GRADE-

2 - Notebooks
6 - Folders
2 - 24 ct. #2 Pencils
2 - Fine Tip Black Sharpie Markers
Markers
Large Eraser
Pencil Top Erasers
4 - Expo Markers
2 Glue Sticks
Headphones (Labeled)
Colored Pencils
Gym Shoes
Backpack



7TH & 8TH GRADE

Pencils
Pens
10 - Folders
10 - Notebooks
Gym Shoes

9TH - 12TH GRADE

Pencils
Pens
Folders (Per Scheduled Courses)
Notebooks (Per Scheduled Courses)
Gym Shoes (9th Grade)



Athletics & Activities



John Hedstrom

From the Desk of John Hedstrom
K-12 Assistant Principal - Athletics/Activities Director

I'm thrilled to welcome all of you back for another exciting school year! As Assistant Principal and Athletics & Activities Director, I'm proud to be part of a school community that lives out the spirit of the Braves and Warriors every day with heart, hustle, and pride.

I want to let you know that we have transitioned to a new software program for facility scheduling, game scheduling, and registration for athletics and activities. This change comes as the entire Park Region Conference, of which Menahga is a member, has moved from Arbiter/RSchool to BOUND. The district website has been updated and linked to our new BOUND page. You can access it here: <https://www.gobound.com/mn/schools/menahga>

Even through the summer, the energy hasn't slowed down, our gyms and fields have been busy with our youngest Braves at camps and our dedicated athletes preparing for the seasons ahead. This year promises to be full of energy and opportunity, with another exciting lineup of Braves and Warrior athletics, fine arts, and student activities. Whether you're competing, performing, supporting, or leading, your involvement helps make Menahga a strong and spirited place to learn and grow. Be sure to follow the action all year long on Hudl, our streaming service for activities, programs, concerts and competitions. It's a great way for families and fans to stay connected and cheer on our students wherever they are. Let's make this year one to remember. Show up, get involved, and continue to show what it means to be BRAVE! Let's go, Braves! Go Warriors!

STUDENT INSURANCE AVAILABLE

The Menahga Public School District is not responsible for accidental injuries that occur to students while under school supervision or participating in interscholastic sports.

Our School District has partnered with Student Assurance Services to give families the opportunity to purchase accident insurance for their student(s). When enrolled, this coverage provides financial assistance with your out-of-pocket medical expenses should your student sustain an accidental bodily injury. If you have any questions regarding this voluntary student accident insurance program, please contact Student Assurance Services at (800) 328-2739. You will speak with a live person who can assist you with your questions. To Enroll Your Student & Review Medical Benefits Visit: www.sas-mn.com

- AFTER SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS -

Students who are not participating in after school activities must vacate the school building at the end of the school day unless permission is granted to do otherwise. If your child needs to stay after school, please make prior arrangements with Michelle Koch or John Hedstrom. During game days or any other events, students may re-enter the building 20 minutes prior to the start of the first game or event. During games, students must be in the vicinity of the game that is being played. Students may not be in other parts of the building unsupervised. If students are not behaving or following directions, they will be removed from the building. It will be the responsibility of the guardian of how the student will be transported home. Students who are under the age of 14 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS & IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Stay informed with the latest school announcements, weather-related closings, delays, and emergency notifications by following Menahga Public Schools through our communication channels - Menahga Public Schools Instant Alert, Facebook and website. School closing information will also be shared with the following local media outlets:

- TV STATIONS -

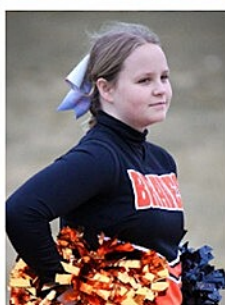
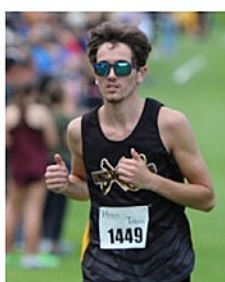
WCCO, Fox 9-KMSP, KSTP, KSAX, WDAY & KARE 11

- RADIO STATIONS -

KKWS (105.9 FM), KDKK (97.5 FM), KXXX (92.5 FM), KPRM (870 AM), KWAD (920 AM) & KMSP (1420 AM)



MENAHGA VARSITY Fall Sport Schedule 2026



VOLLEYBALL

TUES. SEPT. 1 - AWAY VS. PARK RAPIDS 7:15PM

TUES. SEPT. 8 - AWAY VS. PELICAN RAPIDS 7:30PM

THURS. SEPT. 10 - AWAY VS. VERDALE 7:00PM

SAT. SEPT. 12 - WALKER-HACKENSACK-AKELEY INVITE 8:30AM

MON. SEPT. 14 - HOME VS. W-H-A 5:30PM

THURS. SEPT. 17 - HOME VS. SEBEKA 7:00PM

THURS. SEPT. 24 - HOME VS. PILLAGER 7:00PM

SAT. SEPT. 26 - PARKERS PRAIRIE INVITE 9:00AM

TUES. SEPT. 29 - AWAY VS. BRANDON-EVANSVILLE 7:15PM

THURS. OCT. 1 - AWAY VS. WDC 7:00PM

SAT. OCT. 3 - BARNESVILLE INVITE 9:00AM

TUES. OCT. 6 - HOME VS. HAWLEY 7:00PM

THURS. OCT. 8 - AWAY VS. HENNING 7:00PM

MON. OCT. 12 - AWAY VS. NEVIS 7:15PM

TUES. OCT. 13 - AWAY VS. BERTHA-HEWITT 7:00PM

TUES. OCT. 20 - HOME VS. NYM 7:00PM

THURS. OCT. 22 - AWAY VS. FRAZEE 7:15PM

FOOTBALL

THURS. SEPT. 3 - HOME VS. MAPLE LAKE 6:00PM

FRI. SEPT. 11 - AWAY VS. FRAZEE 7:00PM

FRI. SEPT. 18 - AWAY VS. LAKE PARK-AUDUBON 7PM

FRI. SEPT. 25 - HOME VS. PARKERS PRAIRIE 7PM

FRI. OCT. 2 - AWAY VS. WDC 7:00PM

FRI. OCT. 9 - HOME VS. NYM 7:00PM

WED. OCT. 14 - HOME VS. OTC 6:00PM

TUES. OCT. 20 - AWAY VS. BRECKENRIDGE 6:00PM

HOMECOMING WEEK OCT. 5TH - 9TH

CROSS COUNTRY

TUES. AUG. 25 - @ MAKE THE LAKE - DETROIT LAKES 9:00AM

FRI. SEPT. 4 - @ AUGGIE TWILIGHT - SIOUX FALLS, SD 6:00PM

TUES. SEPT. 8 - @ JOHANNA OLSON INVITE - WADENA 4:00PM

MON. SEPT. 14 - @ LONG PRAIRIE INVITE - 4:00PM

TUES. SEPT. 22 - UNC MEET - MENAHGA 4:00PM

SAT. SEPT. 26 - @ BORDER BATTLE - GRAND FORKS, ND 12:30PM

TUES. SEPT. 29 - @ BERTHA INVITE - DOUBLE EAGLE GOLF COURSE, EAGLE BEND 4:00PM

THURS. OCT. 8 - @ OTC INVITE - BATTLE LAKE 4:00PM

TUES. OCT. 13 - @ PERHAM INVITATIONAL 4:00PM

TUES. OCT. 20 - @ PARK REGION CONFERENCE - LONG PRAIRIE 4:00PM

FRI. OCT. 30 - @ SECTIONS - BAGLEY 4:00PM



GET READY TO MAKE MUSIC!

INSTRUMENT RENTAL INFORMATION

Eckroth Music & Schmitt Music will host instrument displays during Menahga's Back to School Open House & during the first week of school.

WHO: Anyone interested in setting up a rent-to-buy plan with Eckroth or Schmitt Music stores

WHERE: Menahga Band Room

WHY: Ask questions, get information, set up a rental-to-buy plan

SCHMITT MUSIC
Wednesday, September 2
5:30-7:30
during the Open House

ECKROTH MUSIC
Thursday, September 10
3:00-5:00

6th GRADERS! IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO SIGN UP FOR SIXTH GRADE BAND! Check your mail for more information and registration forms.

Email Beth Hahn with any questions at bhahn@menahga.k12.mn.us or call 564-4141 ext 1220.

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Baileigh Baumgart
Student Support Coordinator

Building Bright Futures Through Career Pathways

Choosing what comes after high school can feel overwhelming, but no student should have to navigate that journey alone. My name is Baileigh Baumgart, and I am honored to serve as Menahga Public School's new Student Support Coordinator. My goal is to help every student discover their interests, explore career possibilities, and develop a plan that fits their unique strengths and aspirations. I am excited to partner with our dedicated staff, supportive families, and outstanding community and business partners as we continue to grow and create opportunities that inspire students to build a bright future. At Menahga Public School, we believe that career exploration begins long before graduation. Through our Career Pathways Program, students have the opportunity to connect classroom learning with real-world experiences while discovering their passions and developing skills for life beyond high school. Our mission is to ensure every student graduates with a plan, a purpose, and the confidence to pursue their chosen path.

In the 2026-27 school year, our goal is to continue strengthening partnerships with local businesses, higher education institutions, and community organizations. These collaborations provide students with valuable experiences such as job shadowing, internships, career fairs, industry tours, guest speakers, mentoring opportunities, and work-based learning experiences that bring learning to life. A key focus of our work is supporting students in meeting Minnesota's Career and College Readiness indicators while helping them build the knowledge, skills, and experiences that employers and colleges value most. Throughout the year, students will have the opportunity to:

- ✓ **Complete Career and Technical Education (CTE) coursework aligned with their interests and career goals.**
- ✓ **Earn industry-recognized certifications such as CPR/First Aid, OSHA-10, Microsoft Office, and other valuable credentials.**
- ✓ **Participate in meaningful work-based learning experiences, including job shadowing, internships, and apprenticeships.**
- ✓ **Develop professional résumés and career portfolios.**
- ✓ **Complete college and employment applications.**
- ✓ **Maintain strong attendance and active engagement in school.**
- ✓ **Explore career pathways through industry tours, career fairs, college visits, guest speakers, and hands-on learning opportunities**

Family involvement is one of the greatest contributors to student success. Throughout the school year, we will continue sharing updates through Schoolinks, the Infinite Campus Parent Portal, newsletters, and school events to keep families informed about upcoming opportunities and student progress. We encourage parents and guardians to have conversations with their children about their interests and future goals, celebrate milestones along the way, and encourage participation in career exploration activities. Together, we are creating a culture where every student is empowered to explore, prepare, and succeed. By continuing to expand our partnerships and provide authentic learning experiences, we are opening doors that help students make informed decisions about their futures. I am grateful to be part of the Menahga community and look forward to working alongside our students, families, educators, and community partners. Together, we will continue building pathways that prepare every student to graduate career-ready, college-ready, and life-ready. Here's to an exciting school year filled with growth, discovery, and opportunity!





Transportation REMINDER:



SCHOOL BUS

Students **HAVE TO** obtain a **BUS PASS** from the High School/Elem. Office to ride a different bus than they are assigned to! Any after school transportation changes need to be called in before **1:00pm.**

PLEASE NOTE:
Bus passes are only given out for child care or extra curricular activities that are **preapproved.**

The BUS BUZZ: Safety in Motion!



WELCOME BACK, RIDERS!

We're excited to welcome our students back for another great school year! Help us make every ride **safe, smooth, and on time** by reviewing these important bus safety reminders as a family.





BE EARLY

Arrive at your bus stop at least **5 minutes BEFORE** your scheduled pickup time.



STAY SEATED

Remain seated with your back against the seat until you **arrive at your stop** and the bus door opens.





LISTEN CLOSELY

Follow the bus driver's directions the first time they're given to help keep everyone safe.





KEEP IT CLEAN

Please save food and drinks for before or after the ride. Eating and drinking are not allowed on the bus.



WE'RE ALL ON THE SAME ROUTE TO SAFETY!

Thank you for partnering with Menahga Public Schools to help keep every bus ride safe, respectful, and on schedule!

We look forward to a fantastic school year!

Parents play the biggest role in helping our drivers transport students and we wouldn't be successful without you.

Please call or email with questions, comments, or concerns.



- Christina Albin – Transportation Supervisor
- Office: (218)564-8402
- Email: calbin@menahga.k12.mn.us

2026-27 Application for Educational Benefits

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Our school offers healthy meals each day. All students can get one breakfast and one lunch free of charge each day at school. Although no application is required to receive this free meal benefit, filling out the Application for Educational Benefits is still important! Your application may help the school qualify for education funds.

To apply, complete the online application found in the Menahga Public Schools Infinite Campus Portal.

Who should complete this application? Children in households participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) or Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR), and foster, homeless, migrant and runaway children qualify without reporting household income. Alternatively, children can qualify if their household income is within the maximum income shown for their household size on the instructions.

COMMON QUESTIONS:

I get WIC or Medical Assistance. Can my children qualify? Children in households participating in WIC or Medical Assistance do not automatically qualify. Children may be eligible depending on other household financial information. Please fill out an application.

Who should I include as household members? Include yourself and all other people living in the household, related or not (such as grandparents, other relatives, or friends).

May I apply if someone in my household is not a U.S. citizen? Yes. You or your children do not have to be U.S. citizens for you to complete an application.

What if my income is not always the same? List the amount that you normally get. If you normally get overtime, include it, but not if you get overtime only sometimes. For seasonal work, write in the total annual income.

Will the income information or case number I give be checked? It may be. We may also ask you to send written proof.

How will the information be kept? Information you provide on the form, and your child's approval, will be protected as private data. For more information, see the back page of the Application for Educational Benefits.

If I don't qualify now, may I apply later? Yes. Please complete an application at any time if your income goes down, your household size goes up, or you start getting SNAP, MFIP or FDPIR benefits.

If you have other questions or need help, email requests@menahga.k12.mn.us
Sincerely, Superintendent Jay Kjos

How to Complete the Application for Educational Benefits

Complete the Application for Educational Benefits form for school year 2026–27 if any of the following applies to your household:

- Any household member currently participates in the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), or the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) or
- The household includes one or more foster children (a welfare agency or court has legal responsibility for the child) or
- The total income of household members is within the guidelines shown below (gross earnings before deductions, not take-home pay). Do not include as income: foster care payments, federal education benefits, MFIP payments, or value of assistance received from SNAP, WIC, or FDPIR. Military: Do not include combat pay or assistance from the Military Privatized Housing Initiative. The income guidelines are effective from July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027.

Maximum Total Income					
Household size	\$ Per Year	\$ Per Month	\$ Twice Per Month	\$ Per 2 Weeks	\$ Per Week
1	29,526	2,461	1,231	1,136	568
2	40,034	3,337	1,669	1,540	770
3	50,542	4,212	2,106	1,944	972
4	61,050	5,088	2,544	2,349	1,175
5	71,558	5,964	2,982	2,753	1,377
6	82,066	6,839	3,420	3,157	1,579
7	92,574	7,715	3,858	3,561	1,781
8	103,082	8,591	4,296	3,965	1,983
Add for each additional person	10,508	876	438	405	203

Step 1: Children

List all infants and children in the household, their school and grade if applicable, and birthdate. Attach an additional page if needed to list all children. Check the box if a child is in foster care (a welfare agency or court has legal responsibility for the child).

Step 2: Case Number

If any household member currently participates in SNAP, MFIP or FDPIR, write in the case number and then go to Step 4. If you do not participate in any of these programs, leave Step 2 blank and continue to Step 3.

Step 3: Adult and Child Incomes / Last 4 Digits of Social Security Number

- Social Security Number/Total Household Members. An adult household member must provide the last four digits of their Social Security number or check the box if they do not have a Social Security number. Report the total number of household members and ensure all household members are listed individually on the application in the child or adult section as applicable.
- Child Income. If any children in the household have regular income, such as SSI or part-time jobs, list the total amount of regular incomes received by all children, and check the box for the frequency: weekly, bi-weekly, twice a month, or monthly. Do not include occasional earnings like babysitting or lawn mowing.
- Adult income. Report the names of adult household members and income in this section.
 - o List all adults living in the household not listed in Step 1, whether related or not, such as grandparents, relatives, or friends.
 - o Gross Earnings from Work. This is usually the money received from working at jobs where a paycheck is received. For each income, check the box to show how often the income is received: weekly, bi-weekly, twice per month, or monthly.
 - o List gross incomes before deductions, not take-home pay. Do not list an hourly wage rate. For adults with no income to report, enter a '0' or leave the section blank. For seasonal work, write in the total annual income.
 - o Are you Self-Employed or a Farmer? List the net income per month or year after business expenses. Do not list the same income twice on the application. A loss from farm or self-employment must be listed as 0 income and does not reduce other income.
 - o Any Other Gross Income. List gross incomes before deductions from all other sources, such as SSI, unemployment, child support, public assistance, social security, rental income or annuities.

Step 4: Signature and Contact Information

An adult household member must sign the form. If you do not want your information to be shared with Minnesota Health Care Programs, check the "Don't share" box in Step 4.
Optional: Please provide the information on ethnicity and race that is requested on the second page of the form. This information is not required and does not affect eligibility. The information helps to ensure we are meeting civil rights requirements and fully serving our community.



Complete Your EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS APPLICATION ONLINE

IT'S PRIVATE, SECURE, AND EASY!



Did you know you can complete your Educational Benefits Application through your **Infinite Campus Parent Portal**?

Applying online is the most **private and confidential** way to submit your application. Your information is entered securely by you—there's no paper form to send home, return to school, or hand to school staff.

HOW TO APPLY ONLINE:

1



Log in to your Infinite Campus Parent Portal. If you don't already have a parent portal set-up please email requests@menahga.k12.mn.us to request an activation key.

2



Click **More** in the left-hand menu.

3



Select **Meal Benefits**.

4



Complete and submit your application online.

WHY COMPLETE AN EDUCATIONAL BENEFITS APPLICATION?

- ✓ Private and confidential online application process.
- ✓ Helps bring additional state funding to our schools.
- ✓ Helps the district qualify for grants and other funding opportunities.
- ✓ Supports athletic classification appeals.
- ✓ Reduces unpaid meal debt collection.
- ✓ Helps keep school meals available at no charge for all students.
- ✓ Supports healthy meal options, including our salad bar.
- ✓ Encourages more students to participate in school meals.
- ✓ Helps ensure students have the nutrition they need to learn and succeed.





Every **completed** application **makes a difference!** Even if you're unsure whether you qualify, we encourage every family to complete the application. ❤️



Thank you for taking a few minutes to invest in our students and our school community! ❤️