



# L'Anse High School News

January 2020 - 2nd Quarter Newsletter

## Did you know...

...that students who attended a college or technical school earn more than students who graduated from high school?

...that you can search for careers based on your interests or subjects that you like?

...that there is a college and career just for you?

...that skills you practice (having folders, prepare for class, assignment book, on-time) in junior high help you become successful in life?

...that you can search to see how much money certain careers pay?

...that all of these questions can be answered by looking at [www.careeronestop.org/explorecareers](http://www.careeronestop.org/explorecareers)? Go online and start to explore the website. Take a self-assessment. Find colleges that fit your likes. Find out how much money you can make. Start to make a plan now. It can change in the future, but why not start now?

L'Anse Guidance Department

## A changing of the guard in HS science

L'Anse High School says goodbye to our dedicated science teacher and robotics coach Mrs. Cara Wightman, as she has taken a position closer to home at Calumet High School. We wish Mrs. Wightman all the best as she continues her career as a Copper King!

In order to fill Mrs. Wightman's place, the high school science teacher position will be filled by Alanna Hamel of Champion. She is scheduled to start Feb. 12. We will have a substitute for the time between Jan 27 and Feb 11.

Mrs. Hamel is coming to us from the Ewen-Trout Creek School District where she taught science the past 2.5 years. She is a graduate of NMU and has a Master's Degree in Clinical Molecular Genetics. Prior to entering the education field, she spent many years as an artist and also worked as a chemist for Eagle Mine. Mrs. Tollefson led the interview team, and said, "I believe she will be an excellent addition to our top-notch teaching staff!"

## EXTRACURRICULARS

### Band

High school band students performed their winter concert and have started rehearsing music for band festival which will be in Marquette the first week of March at NMU. The event is open to the public, and more information will be sent home as it gets closer to the date. Solo & Ensemble and the Variety of Music show is fast approaching and students have been rehearsing before and after school with Ms. Poniatowski or the accompanist. The date for both events is Saturday, Feb. 1.

Solo & Ensemble is in Lake Linden and the Variety of music show will be at the school.

### Yearbook

Our class is designing and creating the yearbook. You might see students at events around the school with a camera, taking pictures. If you have any pictures, please send them to a yearbook student, or Ms. Poniatowski.

**Seniors need to have senior pictures and baby pictures turned in by May 1st** if they want a picture in the yearbook, class video, or class composite. This is the absolute last deadline.

Yearbooks will be on sale for the 2019-2020 year in February for \$35. This early bird special is the best deal a student will receive on a yearbook. We currently have the 2018-19 yearbooks for \$40 available. As well as most yearbooks from 2000-2017 available for \$20. So if a student is missing a year, he/she may purchase one still to remember.



## ACADEMICS

### English 9

In Quarter 2, students explored the idea of tragic heroes. We read an ancient Greek play with a tragic hero and completed a research project on a modern-day tragic hero, to learn how to properly write an academic paper. We finished the quarter with reading and writing poetry. Next quarter we will look at the heroic story of The Odyssey.

### English 11 College Prep

The American dream was the focus of Quarter 2. We read *New York Times* articles about how the American dream has changed through the decades and how it is alive today. Students defined their version of the American dream and conducted interviews to give a speech about what people in our community say on the topic. Then, we examined the dreams of our Founding Fathers and read *The Great Gatsby*, a novel about dreams, hope, and corruption. In semester 2, we will continue studying key novels in American literature and focus strongly on preparing for the SAT exam in the spring.

### English 12

Students reviewed how to write an academic paper by researching a future career and important problems in that field. In December, we began our study of Shakespeare and his play *Hamlet*. Students read and viewed a film to explore key themes. Moving into the spring semester, students will be encouraged to bring their Senior Memory Book, a multi-chapter writing project required before graduation.

### NMU English

Our class continued writing compositions for our NMU class, as well as engaged in close reading strategies to dissect, analyze and eventually debate current topics in our world.

## Physics

The physics classes have been working on Forces and Newton's Laws. They designed a canister that would protect an egg (or 2!) that was dropped from the 2nd floor gym balcony. If their eggs "survived the drop" they were able to move on to the challenge of dropping them from the 3rd story window onto the pavement below. Many groups had successful canisters. The class also worked to determine how forces in/on a system affects the overall acceleration of a system. They used rolling cars, string and hanging weights to determine how varying the mass of the car or the force on the string would affect the acceleration of the car. Their next topic will be to investigate collisions and how momentum of the objects colliding has an effect on the overall collision and damage during the collision. "Aim for the snowbank!"

## Earth Science

Earth science classes have been studying rocks and minerals. They learned about their different mineral groups and how the minerals combine to form rocks. The class did a small investigation to determine the identity of some unknown minerals by testing various properties (color, hardness, luster, streak, etc.). The class learned about each of the 3 main types of rocks and how they have been cycling throughout Earth's 4.6 billion year history. Each student wrote a story about a rock's "life," transitioning between rock types and all of the process involved in the transition. They were able to read and grade each others' stories, which were anonymous to the reader. Many enjoyed reading others' work, but thought that the grading was tough to do. Next they will be learning about Earth's other resources and how humans utilize them.

## NMU Calculus I

I want to again thank the students who are enrolled in NMU MA 161 Calculus I. We recently completed Chapter 3 on The Derivative. It is the most important chapter we cover and we spent over a month to complete it. The first semester exam, which is on Wednesday, Jan. 22, will cover only chapters 1, 2, and 3. Just a reminder that students must earn at least a C- for the class and score at least a 65% on the final exam in May to earn the 4 NMU credits.

## Algebra 1

We have been talking a lot about linear equations and inequalities. We are finishing up our current chapter on inequalities before we start reviewing for the semester exam. Speaking of semester exams, students will be receiving their semester exam review by Friday, January 17. Students will be expected to work on the exam review outside of class and we will spend time in class going over questions and any necessary clarifications. The semester exam will cover chapters one through 5.

## Algebra 1B

We have been studying conic sections. The students have been writing equations and graphing parabolas, circles, and ellipses. We are going to switch gears for about a week and start preparing for the semester exam. Students will be expected to work on the exam review outside of class and we will spend time in class going over questions and any necessary clarifications. The semester exam will cover chapters 7, 8, and the first half of 9.

## Geometry

Students were given a study guide on Wed., 01/15, which covers Chapters 1, 3, 4, 5, & 13. They will be allowed to make a note page for use on the exam - details/limitations will be discussed in class. They should try to spend 10-15 minutes of daily focused study time preparing for their exams. Waiting until the day before to "cram" for the exam is not a good way to prepare for a math exam. Geometry classes meet 1st and 2nd hours so their exam will be on Wednesday, 01/22.

## Algebra 2

We recently completed Chapter 4 on Quadratic Functions and Equations which reviewed a lot of the concepts from Algebra 1. We are part way through Chapter 5 on Polynomial Functions which is mostly new material for students. However, the first semester exam covers only chapters 1 through 4. The exam is on Wednesday, January 22 for students in 1st hour, and on Thursday, Jan. 23 for students in 5th hour. It is crucial that students please seek out help if they are getting lost. Letting things slide is the worst thing that they can do.

## NMU Precalculus

This is our first year offering NMU Precalculus, MA 115, at L'Anse High School. I want to thank the students who are enrolled. We have completed Chapter 4 on Trigonometric Functions, and have started Chapter 5 on Identities and Equations. It is a challenging chapter with some difficult concepts to learn. The first semester exam will cover only chapters 1 through 4. It is crucial that students please ask for help if they are getting lost. Letting things slide is the worst thing that they can do. Just a reminder that students must earn at least a C- in the class and score at least a 65% on the final exam in May to earn the 4 NMU credits.

## Exam details from Mr. Smith

The first semester exam for Math Lab will consist of each student choosing a problem type from their respective class, either Algebra 1 or Geometry, and giving about a 3 or 4 minute presentation to the class explaining how to solve the problem.

The first semester exams for Algebra 2, Algebra 2A, and Math Lab will count for 20% of the first semester grade. Per NMU policy, the first semester exams for NMU Precalculus and Calculus will count for 30% of the first semester grade. Finally, I want to mention that I am happy to help any student who is having difficulty in their math class. You may come to see me before or after school. Please note that all of the above information can be found on my school website at

<https://sites.google.com/a/laschools.k12.mi.us/mr-smith/home>

## Algebra 2A

We recently completed Chapter 3 on Systems of Equations and Inequalities. We are part way through Chapter 4 on Quadratic Functions and Equations. However, the first semester exam only covers chapters 1, 2, and 3. It is extremely important that students take advantage of the usual 30 minutes of in-class time to work on assignments as this is one of the main reasons the slower paced Algebra 2A is offered. Both myself and Mr. Moore are in the classroom and available to individually help students. It is critical that students pay attention and work while they are in class. Not using this time is the main reason why so many students are not passing.

## Algebra 1 Math Lab and Geometry Math Lab

Please be aware that the Math Lab class is graded on bringing required materials (textbook, notebook, etc.) and most importantly, participation. Many students are choosing not to work during Math Lab which is resulting in lower grades than they should be getting. Please take advantage of the 52 minutes of time available to work each day. Since Math Lab is 7th hour, students should be able to complete their math assignment each day before school ends. If they complete their math assignments before class ends, then they may work on assignments from other classes. If they complete assignments from their other classes as well, then they are to bring a book to read. Please don't waste class time.



## REMINDER

The school board policy is for students to “power off and put away” their cellular devices during class.



## ACADEMICS CONTINUED

### SPANISH I

HOLA! BEFORE WINTER BREAK, WE HAD A CULTURAL HOLIDAY POTLUCK. STUDENTS MADE HISPANIC FOOD AND BROUGHT IT TO CLASS TO SHARE. THERE WAS A NICE VARIETY OF TASTY ITEMS! MID-TERM EXAMS ARE APPROACHING QUICKLY. STUDENTS RECEIVED A TEST OUTLINE THIS WEEK AND WILL GET A STUDY GUIDE NEXT WEEK. STUDENTS SHOULD BE STUDYING A CHAPTER A NIGHT UNTIL FINAL EXAM DAY. BREAKING MATERIAL UP IS KEY TO LEARNING AND RETAINING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE. DURING QUARTER THREE, STUDENTS WILL BE STUDYING FOOD AND PLACES. PARENTS, PLEASE ENCOURAGE YOUR SON OR DAUGHTER TO STUDY FOR AT LEAST 10-15 MINUTES A NIGHT AND TO COMPLETE ALL ASSIGNMENTS TO THE BEST OF HIS OR HER ABILITY.

### SPANISH II

BUENOS DIAS! BEFORE BREAK, WE HAD A TEST ON VACATION VOCABULARY. STUDENTS HAVE HAD TO PERFORM ON TWO FORMAL SPEAKING ASSESSMENTS SO FAR THIS SEMESTER. THEY WILL HAVE ONE MORE DURING MID-TERM EXAMS. MOST STUDENTS HAVE FALLEN INTO THE PROFICIENT CATEGORY AND A FEW HAVE RECEIVED ADVANCED RATINGS! STUDENTS WHO RECEIVE A PROFICIENCY OR ADVANCED RATING FOR THEIR SPEAKING AND/OR WRITING PARTS OF THE TEST RECEIVE "STAMPS" IN THEIR "PASSPORT." AFTER RECEIVING 10 STAMPS, STUDENTS GET THREE SMALL PRIZES FROM THE TEACHER! AS FAR AS PREPARING FOR MID-TERM EXAMS, STUDENTS WILL RECEIVE A STUDY GUIDE ON FRIDAY, JANUARY 17TH. STUDENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO STUDY A CHAPTER NIGHT INSTEAD OF CRAMMING THE NIGHT BEFORE.

DURING QUARTER THREE, STUDENTS WILL BE READING AN EASY READER NOVELA IN SPANISH. IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT THEY COMPLETE ALL READING ASSIGNMENTS TO THE BEST OF THEIR ABILITY.

DURING QUARTER THREE, STUDENTS WILL BE READING AN EASY READER NOVELA IN SPANISH.

## English 10

In quarter 2, students were allowed to pick their own novel to read. We talked a lot about themes and students came up with very interesting ways to share the theme of their novel; some students compared themes in their novels to movies, some students created yearbook entries for their characters, and some even chose to write a paper discussing themes in their novels.

In Quarter 3, our literature will be from the Realistic Fiction genre around the time of The Great Depression, we will focus on relationships including:

**Book:** *Of Mice and Men*

**Poetry:** "Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night"

As usual we will work on vocabulary building and grammar, while learning to create a valid argument.

## English 11

In Quarter 2, we focused on Contemporary Literature and how it relates to our current lives, focusing on tone, imagery, and theme. We read the novel, *The Things They Carried* and the essay, "Why Soldiers Won't Talk". We also worked on Argumentative writing.

In Quarter 3, we will be reading from the American Romantic and Realism periods: "The Devil and Tom Walker", "An Occurrence at Owl Creek", *The Emancipation Proclamation*, "Civil Disobedience" from Gandhi and Thoreau. Students will be able to identify and use satire, inferences, and realism.

Because testing time is coming we will also focus on vocabulary building and grammar correcting.

## Civics and U.S. History

As we end of the semester, I wanted to share some exam prep tips for my high school social studies courses:

1. Review old tests and quizzes as all of the exam questions are pulled from the multiple choice, matching, true/false, and fill-in-the-blank portions of those assessments.
2. Do your exam review packet. I provide packets for all of my classes with what topics will be covered on the exams. These packets will be collected and count towards their overall exam grade.
3. Make sure you bring a pencil to the exam as they will be multiple choice and answers will be filled in on a scantron.

# TRUANCY VS. CHRONIC ABSENCE



As the concept of chronic absenteeism gains traction across the country, some people are under the mistaken impression that it's just a politically correct way of saying truancy. Educators, policymakers and journalists often use the words interchangeably, describing the same, old problem with the same, old solution.

In fact, the two terms describe different aspects of our absenteeism problem and require different approaches to bringing students back to school every day.

First, let's take truancy, a term that generally refers to unexcused absences. In the past, federal law required states to track truancy but left it to states to come up with the definition. California schools have tracked the number of students who are truant which is defined as missing three days without a valid excuse or are late three times to class by 30 minutes. In contrast, in Maryland, schools have monitored habitual truancy, defined as missing 20% of the school year (which is 38 days in a 180 day school year).

With its focus on unexcused absences, truancy naturally leads to a focus on compliance with the rules. Students are missing school without an excuse, skipping school and violating mandatory attendance requirements. Fixing the problem becomes a question of ensuring compliance, often left to front-office administrators, and in the most severe cases, to the legal system. Policymakers often recommend punitive consequences for truancy – such as suspensions, jail time and fines – for children and parents. Some communities and courts have devised effective approaches to reducing truancy, but in other places, punitive efforts are pushing students out of school.

Chronic absenteeism, on the other hand, incorporates all absences: excused, unexcused and suspensions. The focus is on the academic consequences of this lost instructional time and on preventing absences before students miss so much school that they fall behind. It recognizes that students miss school for many understandable issues such as asthma or homelessness or unreliable transportation, for which a punitive response is not appropriate. But what helps is working with families to share the importance of attendance and to fix the underlying problems that lead to absenteeism.

Given this broader focus, addressing chronic absenteeism becomes an issue for the entire community. Medical providers can help address health challenges; transit and housing agencies can resolve other barriers to attendance; volunteers from businesses and faith communities can mentor students and support families. These approaches can also reduce truancy.

Like truancy, chronic absence has no common definition, though many researchers and schools monitor how many students are missing 10 percent or more of the school year. That's about two days a month, or 18 days in most school districts. The U.S. Education Department's Office of Civil Rights this spring will release data showing how many students miss 15 or more days.

This data represents the first time that many schools and districts will know how many students are missing so much school that they are falling behind academically. What's the right response to this new information? Rather than launching a punitive crackdown, educators and community partners should use the opportunity to dig deep into their numbers to determine who is missing too much school and why. Taking a data informed, non-punitive approach that draws upon insights from students, families, teachers and community partners is what leads to strategies that can improve attendance and achievement.

## Truancy Vs. Chronic Absence

