

# TRANSITIONS

## TO THE FUTURE



### MTS ANNUAL MEETING ON THURSDAY, FEB. 23

The MTS Annual Meeting will be held from 5-7 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 23 at MTS High School, located at 2872 26th Ave S, Minneapolis, MN 55406. Join your students, teachers and MTS staff for a night of entertainment, dinner and district updates.

Attendees will receive a free dinner and can explore different school options within MTS at welcome tables for each of the eight schools. All schools will present their program. Superintendent Denny Carlson, Curriculum Director Tamara Schultz, and Elementary Director Shawn Fondow will present a state of the school report. Attendees are encouraged to vote for the three open board positions up for election.

### MTS SECONDARY SCHOOL HOSTED OPEN HOUSE

MTS Secondary hosted an open house for students and families on January 31. Attendees enjoyed a taco bar and several demonstrations such as archery, JROTC: color guard, MTS robotics, an algebra 1 class display, American Dream display, cell organelle games and a CIS display. There were 31 families in attendance, totaling 145 people with teachers and students, as well as four newly enrolled students!

MTS Secondary staff welcomes families and students to take tours anytime by requesting a tour online at [MTCS.org](http://MTCS.org).

Thank you to all who attended!

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- *MTS Annual Meeting*
- *MTS Secondary School Open House*
- *Interview with Superintendent*
- *Livio Health Group On-Site on Tuesdays at MTS Secondary*
- *Banaadir Academy Adds New Gym*
- *Mr. Jorgensen Earns WCCO's Excellent Educator Award*
- *MTS Introduces Blended Learning Options*
- *Cadet of the Month: Brian Vargas*
- *New Electives Give Students more Experiences at Minnesota Virtual High School*
- *MTS Shared its Voice at School Choice Week*
- *Girls Basketball Team Builds Skills and Improves Game*
- *P.E.A.S.E. Participated in Walk for Recovery*



## INTERVIEW WITH SUPERINTENDENT DENNY CARLSON

*MTS' new Superintendent brings 40 years of high-quality experience from running one of the largest districts in the state of Minnesota. Why is he at MTS? Passion.*

Denny Carlson retired two years ago so he could focus on training superintendents and potential superintendents. When the MTS Board needed to find a new superintendent, Charlie Kyte, who conducts superintendent searches, recommended Denny. The Board decided to hire Denny's educational consulting firm so he would be the acting Superintendent while they conducted a formal search.

As an educational consultant, Denny felt that he needed to help with the obstacles that MTS' school district was facing. Denny believed he could improve many aspects of MTS, but he wasn't sure if he wanted to work at a charter school. That is, until he met Tami Schultz, Curriculum

Director and Mary Becker, Human Resource Director. They talked about the school and the passion of the students, staff and faculty. After this conversation, Denny knew MTS was the perfect place for him.

Denny is passionate about students' success and providing education opportunities for all kids. It's well known at MTS that Denny has a soft spot for babies who come visit the District Office.

"Children really lift my spirit, and I want all of our kids here to have better opportunities in life," said Denny. "I believe this can happen by providing a range of electives for students to choose from."

Denny wants students to have classes that relate to real-life

skills, from art and music to robotics and chemistry.

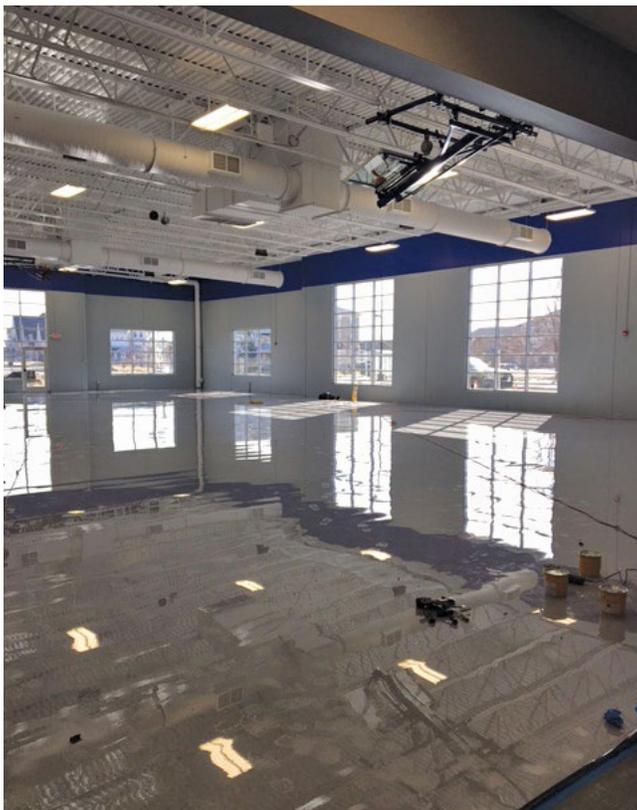
His vision for the school in the next five years is that every student will be in great condition to graduate; that they will continue to have good attendance; and that they will enjoy coming to class and participating in after-school activities with friends. What Denny loves most about the school is being around positive people and the energy everyone has when coming to MTS every day.

When Denny isn't at school, he plays in a rock-n-roll band, plays golf, goes out to eat with his wife and loves to watch football.

### **Livio Health Group On-Site on Tuesdays at MTS Secondary**

Livio Health Group is now on-site at MTS to provide students, families and staff with easy access to health care. The clinic provides urgent care, primary scheduled care and guided care for chronic conditions. It will be on-site every Tuesday from noon-3p.m.

***Feel free to contact our District Social Worker, Courtney Stenseth 612-235-5780 with any questions!***



## **BANAADIR ACADEMY ADDS NEW GYM**

Banaadir Academy has recently remodeled to house a 14,725-square foot gym, giving students a regulation-sized indoor basketball court and a valuable community gathering space. Branded with a giant Banaadir Academy logo on the floor, the new gym provides ample space for students to exercise and explore their abilities during team and individual activities. The gym is complete with bleachers, nearby restrooms and its own front door. The school is looking forward to a grand opening celebration in late March.

*Continue to follow us on*

*[www.mtcs.org/site/banaadir-academy](http://www.mtcs.org/site/banaadir-academy)  
for a final date for this exciting opening!*

### **MTS Expands Lunch Options with Leeann Chin**

MTS is now offering Leeann Chin catered twice per month to give students improved meal options.

## **MTS MISSION**

MTS will empower and ensure all students acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to access their future.

## **IMPORTANT DATES**

**February 20: Presidents Day – No School**

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**February 23: Annual Meeting**

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**March 13–24: MCA Reading Tests – MTS Elementary School**

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**March 30: End of Q3**

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**March 31: Staff Development – No School**

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**April 3–7: Spring Break – No School**

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**April 10: School Resumes, Start of Q4**

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**April 17: MCA Math Tests – MTS Elementary School**

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**May 18: Title One – Portfolio/Science Exhibit – MTS Elementary School**

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**May 29: Memorial Day – No School**

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**June 5: Kindergarten celebration – MTS Elementary School**

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**June 7: 6th Grade Celebration – MTS Elementary School**

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**June 8: Last Day of School, End of Q4**

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**June 9: Summer Break – No School**

## MR. JORGENSEN EARNS WCCO'S EXCELLENT EDUCATOR AWARD

WCCO news awarded Blake Jorgensen with the Excellent Educator award for helping students break out of their shells to become confident, well-spoken public speakers. Mr. Jorgensen teaches language arts and speech at MTS high school and was nominated for the award by his student and her mother.

Earning recognition from his students and their parents carries the most weight in Mr. Jorgensen's eyes, and he feels honored to

receive this award.

"I'm proud of my students when they show courage and speak in front of class, but my favorite moments are when students are proud of themselves," said Mr. Jorgensen.

Upon entrance of the WCCO reporters, he felt surprised, but also touched. Mr. Jorgensen likes teaching because every day is different. He also likes to interact with people and build

relationships with the students he teaches.

Mr. Jorgensen decided to pursue teaching because he had several influential teachers when he was a student. His most inspirational teacher was Mrs. Williams, his high school English teacher, because she was authentic and shared his passion for language arts. Mrs. Williams inspired him to become an English teacher, and he has been teaching for four years.



*"I'm proud of my students when they show courage and speak in front of class, but my favorite moments are when students are proud of themselves."*

**BLAKE JORGENSEN**

## MTS INTRODUCES BLENDED LEARNING OPTIONS

MTS has expanded options for student learning styles by exploring blended learning. The blended learning model gives teachers and students more options to work with, although many people are unfamiliar with it. Blended learning is a mix of

online and traditional classroom learning that equips students with real-world experience by working with internet resources.

MTS introduced blended learning on January 10 at MTS Middle and High School. Blended Learning is also available at MNVirtual

High School, and MTS is currently negotiating to get Connections Academy and MTS Elementary in the program as well. The courses include chemistry, Spanish and math, and will expand to electives as MTS incorporates new classes into its program.

## CADET OF THE MONTH: BRIAN VARGAS

The January 2017 Cadet of the Month is Cadet Brian Vargas. Brian is an awesome all-around cadet. He has set the bar high for his fellow classmates. He currently maintains a GPA of 3.65 and is in the top ten academically for the freshman class.

Brian is an outstanding athlete and avid soccer player and holds the JROTC record for the most “correct” push-ups—which is 75! Brian came to JROTC from Sojourner Truth Academy. His goal is to attend college and pursue a bachelor’s degree after high school.

He would also like to join the



Army National Guard and possibly pursue a career with Center Point Energy. JROTC did a job shadow at Center Point Energy last month and Brian was very excited about the career options they presented to him.

Way to go Brian!

## NEW ELECTIVES GIVE STUDENTS MORE EXPERIENCES AT MINNESOTA VIRTUAL HIGH SCHOOL

Minnesota Virtual High School (MVHS) is offering two new electives this semester – forensic science and online literacy prep.

### Forensic Science

*Taught by Lindsey Meuwissen*

In the new forensic science elective, you can learn about the importance of forensic science in the justice system and its limitations. You can learn how to process a crime scene, collect and preserve evidence and analyze ballistic evidence such as fingerprints, blood spatter, and DNA. Finally, you can learn about the forensic investigative methods that are used in arson crimes, computer crimes, financial crimes and forgeries.

### Online Literacy Prep

*Taught by Martin Lukaszewski*

Online Literacy Prep is a new elective developed by a group of PLC members at Virtual High School. The goal of this class is not only to introduce students to a variety of academic language and readings, but to improve the comprehension and vocabulary of each student.

This class is piloting the use of Reading Plus curriculum, an innovative program that provides a personalized reading program based on a student’s abilities. Reading Plus is proven to increase achievement in students by developing the physical, cognitive and emotional domains of reading.

**Visit [MNVHS.org](http://MNVHS.org) for more information.**

## MTS SHARED ITS VOICE AT SCHOOL CHOICE WEEK



School Choice Week was held at the State Capitol on January 24 to raise awareness of the variety of effective education options for students, from online

learning to traditional schooling to public charter schools.

Minnesota Transitions Charter School and Authorizer Pillsbury United Communities, coordinated student testimonies to be heard in the Minnesota House of Representatives in support of its schools. Five cadets from the General Colin L. Powell Leadership Academy provided their testimony in addition to a student that shared testimony from greater Minnesota.

## GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM BUILDS SKILLS AND IMPROVES GAME

Since tryouts on November 14, the girls' basketball team has played nine games. The team has seen growth in its scores, encouraging teammates to keep practicing and working together to build their team skills.

Tamara Moore is the head coach, assisted by Jarice Sherman and former MTS player Dontrayia Cole. Most of the team is in grades 7 and 8, so it is a year of growth. Coach Moore sat with a white board that read, "Student Athlete...Student comes first!" and addressed the team, explaining that this year will be a rebuilding year to prepare for the future.

We wish the girls' team good luck this year and hope they have a blast playing basketball this season. GO WOLVES!



### Girls Basketball Schedule

2/9 Home

2/22 Away

2/23 Home

## P.E.A.S.E. PARTICIPATES IN WALK FOR RECOVERY

Students and staff from P.E.A.S.E. Academy participated in the annual Walk for Recovery to support their peers and advocate for a sober learning environment. Here's what students and parents had to say about their education:

"Everyone comes together and it is a better education system. They help you learn and help with emotions."  
-Student



"I have been there for one month and love how small the school is. It is a family where everyone 'gets' recovery and everybody wants you to do the best you can."  
-Student

"This school helps my son get the support he needs for a sober life. We need more schools like this one. It is his choice to be there. It holds kids accountable. They are building a community around sobriety."  
-Mother

"It is a supportive environment and everything you need is right there. The teachers are really understanding. I am a junior and I love the art class, my favorite."  
-Student

### Contributors

Brianna Williams  
Shenaya A.  
Shyiona H.  
Justin Martin  
Seniors at MTS  
Secondary

### Schools

MTS Elementary School  
MTS Secondary School  
Banaadir Academy North Campus  
Banaadir Academy South Campus  
Banaadir Math & Science Academy  
Minnesota Virtual H.S.  
P.E.A.S.E. Academy  
MTS Connections Academy

