

THE

NORSEMEN NEWS

A Word from Our Admin:

As we wrap up the first semester of the school year, we want to take a moment to thank our students, families, and staff for a strong finish to 2025. This time of year reflects the hard work, dedication, and resilience shown throughout the semester, and we are proud of all that our students have accomplished. We are also appreciative of teachers and staff for their dedication to supporting students each day, and to our families for their ongoing support. Your involvement plays a vital role in creating a positive and successful school environment.

Enjoy a well-deserved break and don't forget to take time to rest, recharge, and spend time with family and friends. We look forward to welcoming students back refreshed and ready for a great start to the next semester. Have a safe and enjoyable break!

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Fall TALK Event

By: Daniel Venegas, Marilyn Morel,

Miranda McBroom, Yaimara Martinez

“The party don’t start till I walk in!”

Any party (or event) is not complete without a variety of people. What makes an event even more enjoyable is people who are enthusiastic about being there. The TALK event revolves around our students being present and being involved. Last year, there were 179 students enrolled at Newark High School. Imagine the party (or event) we could throw if more people went.

TALK is a student-led event that focuses on the mental health of our student body. The fall event, which was held on



Above: Attendees at the Fall TALK event participate in an activity that supports team bonding.

November 7th, involved the discussion of students’ feelings and emotions. Fifty students participated in activities that required them to talk to one another and to work together as a team.

TALK is a great way to meet new people or strengthen connections with friends. Every day, you pass people in the hall you haven’t talked to yet; or maybe you sat next to them in foods class a year ago, but never got to know them. TALK is a good way to meet new people or rebuild lost connections in a friendly and comfortable environment.

Junior Braddock Martin says he attended the event because, “I enjoyed it last time, and I had heard it was fun and a good way to talk to people



Above: NCHS TALK Leaders take a quick photo before the fall event starts.

Newark High School is very good at involving foreign exchange students in activities and making sure they feel welcome. Senior Ines RiouBacar went to TALK because her lunch table encouraged her to go. If we all encouraged our friends to participate in events such as the TALK event, we could potentially see more unity as a school. Ines says, “I talked a lot with Heather (Buhle). I also met a lot of other people, like the sophomores.”

Sophomore TALK leader, Scarlett Hopkins says, “I wish we could have more people. There was a small limit. I wish it were 100 instead of 50 people. Scarlett was a TALK leader for the first time this year and already has big ambitions for the spring event. She is hoping that the next event will be able to include even more students, rather than just 50. Working with Scarlett, Mrs. Elliott, our school’s social worker, is in charge of the TALK event.

Mrs. Elliott says, “We always receive wonderful feedback from students who attend TALK events. They enjoy meeting new people and having the opportunity to talk about their experiences in a structured way. The traditional school day often does not leave a lot of room for authentic conversations with others, so I believe TALK provides the space and time to connect. We really want to build on this idea in the future and create more opportunities for

students to authentically interact with each other.”

TALK is an event where students can express their feelings openly without being judged. TALK is only possible with students’ participation, so we encourage everyone in Newark Community High School to participate in the spring TALK event on April 17th!

Basketball Season Preview

By: Kolton, Malia, Evan, and Matthew

What's going on with Newark Basketball? Now that the season is starting up for both boys and girls, let's look into how they are feeling about the season.

The boys basketball season started off with the Huskers Hardwood Tipoff tournament on November 27. Newark ended with a 2-2 pair. The girls basketball season started off with the Somonauk Breakout Tournament on November 17th, and it has been an exciting month of play so far!



Above: Senior Starter, Reggie C. celebrates the start of basketball season at blue and white night on Friday, November 14th.

Senior varsity player Cody Kulbartz is thinking positively going into this season. He says, "I would say that our team's biggest strength is our core group of starters from last year. We are a pretty young team overall, but Jimmy, Austin, Reggie and me all have varsity experience and play well together." Cody is very optimistic when it comes to the varsity team, but what do other varsity players think?

Senior Reggie Chapman is also optimistic when it comes to the state of the team. He says that new players are stepping up

to fill in the gaps of graduated players, "Cody and I have a lot more responsibility on the court, and Austin, Jimmy, and whoever else



Above: Senior starter, Reagan Thompson is ready to get in the game during Blue and White Night.

plays will step up and be great varsity players." Newark Basketball fans can rest easy that their team has it under control. Our Norsemen hope their plan falls in place and it does what they expect it to do. Let's see what the JV team is going to do.

Sophomore JV player, Cole Sateikis, is excited for the games this season. He says, "I am looking forward to all of them and giving maximum effort throughout the season and playing every game like it's my last." While the boys are excited for their season, they are not the only ones who will take the court this year.

Regarding her last season as a Lady Norsemen, varsity starter, Reagan Thompson says, "I would say our biggest strengths are ball movement and versatility. We work to find an open shot instead of relying on isolation plays. We also have girls who can play multiple positions. Our team mentality going into this season is to play as hard as you can while you are out on the court but have fun while doing it. I think an advantage that we have is being able to work well together. We are a close group of girls and that really helps us on the court."

Senior varsity starter Sadie Pottinger also says, “I would say my team’s biggest strength is working together on and off the court. I would describe the team’s mentality going into the season as excited to have fun and play our very best every game.”

Clearly, these two teams are ready for anything that comes at them this. Both our Norsemen and lady Norsemen have high expectations for the year, and we hope for the best and are ready to cheer them on for the season! As Newark fans, let’s cheer them on as the season progresses. Go Norsemen!

It's Finally Finals

By: James DiClementi, Blerim Berisha, Hadley Hergenbahn, Makaylee Minnis

The sounds of paper rustling, pencils scribbling down notes and comments, a constant foot tapping on the ground, hushed conversation between teacher and student fill the rooms and halls of Newark. The excitement of winter break and all the freedom it promises is thick in the air. It is finally time for Finals Week.

Finals week is the most important time of each semester. It gives you the chance to show your teachers all the skills you've learned throughout the semester, and allows your teachers to prove how well they have taught the material through your grade on the final. The final is worth 15 percent of your semester grade and helps admin and teachers learn how to improve our education system and to also check in on where you're at with understanding different subjects. However, many people feel that there are simply too many finals for one student to take. Luckily for those that think that, there is a possible solution. During finals week you can be awarded with exemptions. However, these exemptions have been re-evaluated recently.

According to Superintendent Mr. Ulrich, the admin have recently had to reconsider exemptions and how they impact the learning environment. He says, "We still want finals to be important and we want to make sure we reward students that are doing

well and make it balanced between the two" After much discussion, the final decision has been made to allow students to earn up to two exemptions. You can earn exemptions if you have higher than a C average in each class and display good behavior. In order to be eligible for the good behavior exemption you must have had zero referrals throughout the entirety of the semester. Although Admin's opinion determines the "final" decision on Finals week, they are not the only faculty members that have opinions on Finals.

This year Mrs. McCoy has been accompanied by student teacher Mr. Ruiz. Mrs. McCoy's finals will look a little different as she must make sure that the final exam must displays the criteria the students have learned this year. He says, "My classroom has looked a little different this semester as I have welcomed in a student teacher from Illinois State. With Mr. Ruiz leaving the first week of December, it will be my job to update my Final Exam and make sure it adequately reflects questions from the content that was taught by the both of us. This will be the most challenging in United States History & Geography." Mrs. McCoy claims that the hardest finals for her students will be Geography and United States History. As the teachers prepare for finals the students also have their own strong thoughts on finals and exemptions.

Sophomore Kyla Wesseh, thinks students with good grades should be rewarded by not having to do the final if they have an A or higher because she thinks that proves that they have put in time to learn the material and do it correctly. She says, "For exemptions, I think that if you have an A- or above in the class, you should not have to take the final. Having a grade of 90% or higher shows that you have mastered the skills and worked hard. I think it is pointless to be tested on things that

Below: Mr. Ulrich addresses the Board of Education during the monthly meeting on November 13th.



you have shown you already know.” Regarding study time, Kyla plans to dedicate each night at home to studying for each of her finals to guarantee that she does well. She also wants to keep her room clean as she feels living in an organized space allows her to keep an organized mind. There is so much advice regarding preparing for finals, but in the wise words of Senior Reggie Chapman, don’t stress about it. “You won’t be clear minded”

As finals week comes closer and closer, we wish every student the best of luck on their finals and strongly encourage you to take the time you need to properly prepare yourself for your final. And on behalf of Mrs. Reardon’s Pub Pro class, have a great winter break and we wish you a Merry Christmas.



Above: Senior Reggie C. hard at work on his final ceramics project

Gratitude & Good Cheer

By: Morgen Hergenbahn, Travyn Holmstrom, Heather Buhle, Emma Dierzen, and Izzy Roberson

Happy Holidays! Our students are getting in the holiday spirit this year at Newark High School. They spent Thanksgiving break eating turkey and spending time with family, as well as preparing for the upcoming Christmas break. The chestnuts are roasting, presents are being wrapped, and Newark students are hoping to wake up to a blanket of snow on Christmas morning.

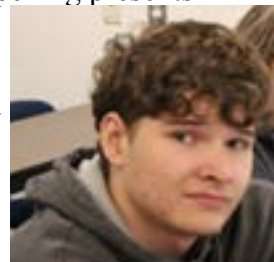
Although students and their families have long established their holiday traditions, hearing of other traditions can certainly inspire fresh ideas. Some holiday activities are based on heritage while others are related to the school or community. Now that Thanksgiving is over, Newark High School is excited for Christmas, and some students were willing to share their memories or perspectives on this popular holiday.

Sophomore Kyla Wesseh's family is extra generous around the holidays. She says, "My church does this event where you can buy gifts for kids who have parents in prison, so we've done that before, and we get to have a whole dinner with them." The holidays are times not just for activities and decorations but also for helping the community. Many families make donations or volunteer to help families in the community or support those that are serving others in a different part of the world. Travel Club is currently promoting the purchase of stockings for NHS's micropantry- show your holiday cheer and ask Mrs. McCoy for details!



Regarding Christmas Eve traditions, sophomore Colin Shields says, "I do a Polish Christmas Eve which is rough, because all we're allowed to eat is grains, usually rice. I usually end up making a midnight run to McDonald's to get some nice food."

Colin Shields' family tradition is not one of his favorites, but it is one that is extremely memorable. Something else that is memorable is people opening presents on Christmas morning and spending time with family and having a good time. Someone who has gotten a really exciting Christmas present is Senior Blerim Berisha.



Senior Blerim's favorite Christmas present from his family was "a PC" because he asked his parents if he could get this and they said "yes, of course." and it was his first computer. He says, "I could play games like Fortnite and complete school work" he says

A PC is definitely a memorable gift, and experiences like these let us reflect on things that we also can be thankful for. This feeling of appreciation connects to what other students shared about what they value.

Juniors Kaylin Ryan and Gracyn Schultz say that they are both thankful for friends, family, and food. As we reflect on things that make us thankful this season, their answers highlight how the holidays bring us closer to things that matter most. Whether it's spending time with loved ones, or simply appreciating the comfort around us, their words remind us why this time of year feels so meaningful.

As we move into the holiday season, taking a moment to reflect on what we're thankful for can help us end the year with gratitude and begin the next one with a positive mindset. The holidays show us how different each family's traditions can be and how it shapes their family. Some people we interviewed appreciate their family traditions while others will probably not continue them when they are older. Traditions are so important for family bonding. The end of the year approaching allows us to pause and appreciate people, accomplishments, celebrating with family, and the moments around us. Farewell, 2025!