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**Northland Pines School District**

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**ADMINISTRATION**

Dr. Mike Richie, District Administrator

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 15, 2017

**Northland Pines Introduces Active Mentor Mentee Partnership (AMMP) to Help Transition 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Students**

We are excited to introduce a new peer mentoring program for the 2017- 2018 school year. An advisory committee comprised of administrators, teachers, school counselors, parents, students and community representatives worked to establish the mission as well as the scope and structure of the Active Mentor Mentee Partnership (AMMP) program. The purpose is to match middle school students with high school students to establish increased connectedness to the school community. Juniors and seniors from Northland Pines High School who were recommended by staff, attended an informational session in the spring of 2017. A specialized, one-day mentor training took place on August 18, 2017. Following the training, peer mentors were assigned a partner and a 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade homeroom. Once a month, during middle school homeroom, the mentor partners lead activities based on the Cross-Age Mentoring Program (CAMP) curriculum. The goals of the CAMP curriculum align with the mission of the AMMP program. The curriculum is mutually beneficial in that it fosters the high school mentor's leadership and service skills while simultaneously promoting the middle school mentees' connectedness.

Peer mentors sent all 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students welcome post cards prior to school starting. Then they met their 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade mentees in person at a kick-off breakfast on the first day of school for students in grades 7-9 on September 5, 2017. That day, mentors answered questions about the building, helped mentees find their lockers, and showed them where their AMMP sessions will meet. We believe this new mentor program will support the middle school students in making a smooth transition to the larger building while adding to the already strong sense of community in the Northland Pines Middle and High Schools. NPHS senior and AMMP mentor Claire Reese, recognizes the importance of her new role and is looking forward to the opportunity to serve as a peer mentor. In her introductory letter to the advisory committee she stated the following, " I really like the idea of the 7-12 mentor program for all of the young kids coming into the high school feeling a little lost and confused, there will be a friend and someone who knows what they're doing to help them at anytime. Without my friend this year, I know for sure my transition into full-time school would definitely not have been as enjoyable! I can also relate because I am an older sister. Having my younger twin sisters entering into the new building, I also want to be there for them, and help them through this huge transition that they are about to undergo. I'm so excited to be a part of this program and to see where it will lead in helping these new 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders in their transition to the high school building!"

During the second week of school, all the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade homerooms were challenged to build a tower with their high

school mentors using only 20 spaghetti noodles, 3 mini marshmallows, and 6 inches of tape. Mrs. Petreikis' homeroom ended up winning with a tower measuring 42.5 inches! (Photos attached to email)

NPSD School Social Worker, Courtney Weber will oversee the program, coordinate the implementation, conduct the initial and ongoing training of the mentors, provide ongoing supervision of the mentors, communicate with parents and staff and collect data. If you have any questions regarding AMMP, please contact Courtney at 715-479-8989, ext. 4 or Emily Rhode, Director of Pupil Services at 715-479-8989, ext. 3.