



QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER - Winter Edition

Velcome to our Winter installment of Tri County's Quarterly *Viking Views* Newsletter. Each edition will contain information on district and building happenings. We hope this finds everyone enjoying the holiday seasons already upon us.

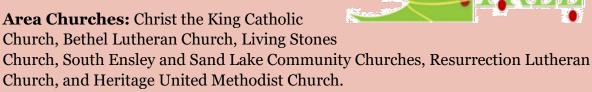
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In the event that school is cancelled due to snow, ice or other emergencies, information will be placed on the below stations. In addition, the district will do a robocall and email to parents/guardians and post it on our TC Facebook page. TELEVISION: WZZM TV 13 Wood TV 8 Fox 17

Happier Holidays Thanks to YOU!

We want to express our sincere thanks to our community friends and family, our staff, area churches, and business partners for your continued support of the TC Giving Tree program. With your help, the TC Giving Tree program was able to help support 105 district families/269 kiddos with gifts, necessity bags, and some basic food supplies. It definitely takes a village to make this program a success year after year.



Community Business Partners: Community First Federal Credit Union, Independent Bank-Howard City, Andersen Insurance, Independent Bank-Sand Lake, Pierson Township, and Tri County Eagles.

Business Sponsors: Mattson's Hardware, Biggby Coffee-Howard City, Sandyland Farms, Ark's Electric, Everest Communications, Hillard Electric, Dean Transportation, Owen-Ames-Kimball, Kingscott Associates, and special donation sfrom Jeff and Janet Powell and from those of you who left anonymous gifts or dropped coins into a jar.

We are so grateful to be part of such a kind and caring community! Thank you for making the holidays brighter for our students and their families! Together We Are TC!

District News

Celebrating a Wonderful Year Together!

Dear Tri County Families and Community,

As 2024 comes to a close, we can't help but feel an overhelming sense of pride and gratitude for everything we've achieved together. Our amazing students continue to inspire us with their accomplishments, and it's all thanks to the unwavering support of our dedicated staff and incredible families like yours. Thank you for being such an important part of this journey!

Student Highlights

This fall, our students shone brightly in so many ways, and we're thrilled to share some of their fantastic achievements:

In athletics, the boys cross county team had an unforgettable season, staying undefeated in the conference and chlinching the CSAA league championship - a first since 1997! Huge congratulations to Alex Cluver for once again qualifying for the state meet. Our football team also showed incredible determination by making it to the playoffs for the fifth straight year, overcoming injuries and challenges along the way.

Our high school marching bank hit a high note by placing 5th in their division at the MCBA State finals at Ford Field - their best finish yet! Meanwhile, middle school students wowed the crowd in Lansing by presenting their "Farm to Family" app at a Student Showcase in Lansing. This innovative app is designed to connect families with local farmers markets, and we can't wait to see where their creativity takes them next.

These accomplishments are a true reflection of the hard work, talent, and dedication our students pour into everything they do. We're so grateful for the teachers, coaches, families, and community members who make their success possible. You're the reason our students thrive!

District Updates

With your continued support, we' e made exciting upgrades across the district. Our new elementary school is buzzing with energy and providing a top-notch learning environment for our youngest learners. The high school cafetorium is a hub of activity, serving as a cafeteria during the day, a practice space after school, and even transforming into a stadium-style venue for music performances and community events. Additionally, our stadium improvements, including a brand-neew concession stand and restroom facilities, are well underway and will enhance everyone's experience.

We're also thrilled to welcome several new staff members to our team this year. Their dedication and enthusiasm are already making a difference. To ensure continued success, we're investing in professional development to give our teachers the tools they need to help students thrive.

Looking Ahead

As we prepare to welcome 2025, we're more committed than ever to fostering academic excellence and strong community connections. Stay in the loop with district events by visiting our website at www.tricountyschools.com, following us on Facebook, or downloading the Tri County Vikings app.

From our Tri County family to yours, we wish you a holiday season filled with joy, love, and laughter. Here's to a happy, healthy new year for us all!

With heartfelt thanks,

Ryan J. Biller Superintendent of Schools





Download the TC Vikings App

District News

Saying Goodbye!

Dear Tri County Community,

With the end of the 2024 comes the end of an era for the Tri County Area Schools Board of Education. The Board says goodbye to long-term board member Janet Powell.

Janet Powell has served on the Board of Education for 23 years. She says she began her journey on the board after a coin toss decision over two great candidates to fill a vacancy on the board. A decision Janet has never taken lightly. Her mission has always been the kids, always saying she didn't have one child in the district she had 1600! She has helped lead the district with smart decisions, a big heart, and a passion for the success of every student. Janet has always brought great thought and perspective into everything she was a part of.

At the December Board of Education meeting, a fellow member shared this thought, "Serving as a board member does not advance a person's career, it does not make you wealthy. However, it does make you rich in the knowledge that you've helped to make someone's future better." We acknowledge Janet's selfless service in the hours she has dedicated to serving our students, staff, families and community. We wish Janet the best in her future endeavors, whatever they may be and wherever they may take her. Thank you Janet for all you've done for Tri County Area Schools.

Welcome to Our New Board Members

Staring January 1, 2025, the Tri County Area Schools Board of Education will welcome two new board members, filling the seats vacated by longtime member Janet Powell, and more recent member Jennifer Arnold, both who decided to retire from the board this year.

In November, two new board members were elected. We welcome Brandon Monreal and Nick Hall to our Board of Education.

Brandon Monreal is from the Pierson area and has children that currently attend Tri County.

Nick Hall is from the Howard City area, and has children who attend or have graduated from Tri County. Nick is a Tri County graduate himself.

We look forward to them sharing their insights and dedication to our district through their board service. Please be sure to congratulate them on their election to the Tri County Area Schools Board of Education.

Educate • Encourage • Empower



Bond Update

Construction on the new concessions and restroom facilities is underway. The exterior block is finished and the roof is installed. Interior work will commence soon.

Demolition of the old concessions building and construction on the new track and entry plaza will start as we near spring. The job is scheduled to be completed before the fall football season begins.



Monster Mash Book Bash at Tri County Elementary

Literacy nights are a great way to build positive relationships with parents and build a foundation for early readers. Thank you to all the families that joined us for a spine-tingling yet fun-filled Literacy Night, where the eerie met the entertaining! We wandered through multiple stations where creepy tales came alive and chills mingled with laughter. A big thank you to our kitchen program for providing a spooky hotdog dinner to go—perfect for fueling those imaginative minds! With crafts, costumes, story time, and creepy reading, this night was a delightful blend of frights and fun for the whole family!









Building a Culture of Pride!

School spirit is more than just rallying together during sports events or a burst of color on game day. School spirit brings together students, staff, and the community in a shared sense of pride and enthusiasm. In recent years, there has been a big push of Viking apparel out in the community, with local businesses, the TC Sports Boosters, and building and athletic fundraisers, Black &





Gold can be seen everywhere. This fall, the TC Homecoming parade provided a great opportunity for our older TC students to connect and inspire the lower grade levels and foster the connection in having pride in our school and community. Building a culture of school spirit has begun with our littlest Vikings. Fight Song Fridays have been a long-standing tradition at our elementary schools that have been reinvigorated at TC Elementary this school year. It's with great pride that students learn the fight song along with the gestures to share with TC families on social media each week. It's all about bringing people together and giving them a sense of belonging. In a time where it seems that "It's all about ME," school spirit says, "It's all about US." We are TC!

TCE Salute to Veterans

Tri County Elementary hosted their first school-wide assembly to honor our nation's heroes on Veteran's Day. The elementary's 800 students gathered in the gymnasium to pay tribute to the 51 special guests from the Air Force, Army, Army Reserve, Army National Guard, Marines and Navy. The beloved assembly is a tradition that started at MacNaughton Elementary and after a brief hiatus with the opening of our new elementary school, this great event was brought back this school year.

The assembly featured "The Poppy Poem" and the song "See The Veteran" presented by Kindergarten students and Mrs. White, along with the First - Fifth grade students singing "Soldier, I Sing This Song To You" lead by Mrs. Hutton. As a grand finale, the entire student body sang "I Love That Grand Old Flag" while

proudly waving American flags.

Many of our students have family members, friends, and neighbors who have served in the armed forces, and learning about their contribution helps them to not only thank their loved ones for their service but to also show them how courage, respect, and selflessness can make a world of difference.



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School News MS Classroom #94 - A Unique Place to Learn

Classroom #94 was born out of a series of renovations made to Tri County Middle School in 1999, when the old cafeteria was transformed into three new classrooms at the same time a new cafeteria was being built. At that time, classroom #94 was designed to be a self-contained special education classroom. Part of the unique design was to install a fully functioning kitchen with two stoves. The reason behind this was to be able to add to and to go beyond the curriculum by teaching functional life skills. The classroom also houses a washer and dryer.

Since this time, students of classroom #94 have engaged in many cooking activities, with one being the annual Middle School Thanksgiving Dinner. Each year, a date is chosen for the dinner and a list of items needed for the dinner circulates amongst staff to sign up for donations. Students, with the help of their teacher, then prepare and serve a Thanksgiving feast that all TCMS staff are invited to attend and enjoy during their lunches. Students also invite members of their families to join them for a special Thanksgiving dinner. It is an amazing time for the students to share with their families.

In addition to the Thanksgiving feast tradition, students, under the direction of their teacher, Victoria Maguire, also cook up homemade soups for staff on a monthly basis. Staff members can place a lunch order, selecting the soup of their choice from the menu provided, which is also served with bread. Students learn many functional life skills including following a recipe, measuring, following directions, safety, cooking techniques, washing dishes, preparing and packaging materials, customer service, social skills and money skills. Classroom #94 is a tried-and-true place where students learn and develop skills that last a lifetime; classroom #94 is unique.







News from the Middle School STEM Lab

Middle School STEM students started the year off working on some great hands-on learning. They worked on assembling devices that integrate with one of our microcomputers, helped create awesome new signs throughout the school, and are even learning programming with Python.

Students will be working on digital literacy and media projects second semester thanks to a program for teachers with the Michigan Learning Channel and PBS. This will give students a hands-on approach to telling the stories of the communities they live in through video. We are very excited to be able to participate! This program also provides digital media equipment that we will be able to keep. This means that we'll be able to continue this project in the future as well.

We will be expanding our STEM lab offerings thanks to a grant from the Montcalm Panhandle Community Fund and the Parker family! This grant will allow us to expand on the real-world connections between STEM, design, and creating something "real", like the new signs throughout the school. We cannot wait to do more with opportunities like this for students and are deeply appreciative of our Technology department for making sure that our Chromebooks are up to date so that we can do all of the amazing things we do.

Finally, we are excited to share that our student submission for the Student Technology Showcase at the capitol in Lansing was accepted, so a small team of students from TCMS attended the showcase where they represented the TCMS STEM program and explained their awesome ideas to legislators and lawmakers.



Middle School Chapter of the National Jr. Honor Society Inducts New Members

Forty-seven Middle School students were inducted into the National Jr. Honor Society on October 29th. The induction ceremony took place in the high school cafetorium, where students and families were welcomed by Mrs. Kurtz, Middle School Principal. Mrs. Harkness, NJHS Advisor, explained the history of the National Jr. Honor Society. The five pillars of the honor society; Scholarship, Leadership, Service, Character and Citizenship were explained by second year members of the MS National Jr. Honor Society. Each candle representing the 5 pillars were lit and members recited the NJHS pledge. To conclude the ceremony, all 47 students were recognized and given certificates and a big congratulations was given to all. A small celebration with cookies and lemonade was enjoyed after the ceremony.

How does a student become a member of the National Jr. Honor Society? 7th and 8th grade students are recommended by their teachers as students that excel in academics and are leaders within their classrooms. After recommendation, students are asked to complete an application detailing leadership, community service, and extracurricular activities that they have been involved in. The Faculty Council consisting of Middle School teachers score the applications. Students are then notified by Mrs. Harkness of their selection as members into the National Jr. Honor Society. Throughout the year, members of the NJHS will serve as role models for other students and participate in school, community and world service activities.



Congratulations to the 2024-25 National Jr. Honor Society Members!

7th Grade (1st Year Members) Maria Avilia-Garcia, Olivia Bucholtz, Kalli Burns, Claire Butler, Ezra Dale, Lillian Freer, Karraina Gardner, Paige Hagstrom, Chloe Hawkins, Jenna Hawkins, Avery Jensen, Reese Jordan, Claire Powell, Theodore Reichert, Greyson Ringler, Alister Ritter, Faith Scott, Lillian Stewart, Daniel Thompson

8th Grade (1st Year Members) Genevieve Abshire, Isabel Barnum, Lukas Bazzett, Finley Clegg, Khloe Holmes, Rowan Hoyle, Cody Keller, Evan Reeder, Ellyanne Reichert, Harlow Rockwell, Elyse Woods-McKay, Zoey Zarna

8th Grade (2nd Year Members) Natalie Almy, Berkley Armstrong, Chase Blain, Betsy Butler, Torrie Grassley, Reagan Halstead, Kylee Hendges, Roxanne Pake, Elijah Renner, Evelyn Russell, McKenna Sanford, Aaron Schulz, Lella Shadley, Lauren Stewart, Guinevere Trowbridge, Isabelle VanderZouwen





High School Chem II Labs

As part of their unit about matter, Mr. Dean's 2nd hour Chemistry II class used the bunsen burners in the lab for the first time this year. The Chemistry room was one of the rooms that was remodeled in the summer of 2023, and this year's class is the second group to use it. The goal of this laboratory activity was for students to build laboratory skills which will be practiced throughout the year. By the end of Semester 2, the students will have built their skills and will have the opportunity to design, plan, and film their own lab demonstration. In addition to their labs, the students use this same remodeled space as classroom space when not engaged in laboratory activities.





October is College Application Month!

High School Counselors, Wendy Kik and Amie Renner, kicked off application month with a Doughnuts & Applications Day in the cafetorium, where all seniors were invited to complete college applications, create their FAFSA ID, and have a doughnut together. This event helps make sure seniors know when certain tasks need to be completed this school year to prepare for post-HS career paths and gives all of them a chance to have help completing college applications. A big thank you goes out to Wesco for helping us provide this doughnut day opportunity to our seniors every fall!

All of our seniors have been working to complete at least one college application to Montcalm Community College this fall in case they choose to utilize the new Community College Guarantee the State of Michigan created this past summer. The

Community College Guarantee allows any students graduating high school to attend community college TUITION FREE, regardless of income, as long as they complete certain eligibility requirements.

Also going on this fall, our seniors were able to attend college visit field trips due to a grant we received to help cover costs. So far, seniors have visited Grand Valley State University, but more visits are happening soon!

Upcoming tours and visits this school year will include Calvin University, Davenport University, Montcalm Community College, Grand Rapids Community College, and the West Michigan Construction Institute.





High School Continues To Set Sail

2024 Homecoming Fun!

Debates in U.S. History

Students in Mrs. Bartoszek's United States History class got to experience their first project-based learning opportunity of the semester in the form of the Industrialist Debates. Students were placed into groups based on which industrialist they wanted to learn more about, and they were tasked with researching their industrialist and determining if they were a robber baron or a captain of industry during the time period. Once students decided their position, they had to craft different arguments to support their industrialist as well as craft a defensive position against the other industrialists. Once research was completed, students engaged in a "Fishbowl" debate, arguing their points about industrialists being captains of industry or robber barons. Students worked collaboratively while using critical thinking skills and different communication strategies within their debates. When the debates were finished, students voted on the group they thought had the best argument and overall performance of the debate!





High Schoolers Visit "Be Nice" Symposiums





High School Be Nice student leaders attended the Be Nice Symposium at Ford Field and at the Mental Health Foundation of West Michigan on two separate occasions. They learned about mental health, suicide prevention and resiliency. Keynote speakers were former Detroit Lions Quarterback Eric Hipple and Magician/Comedian Anthony Grupido. The students participated in breakout sessions which included working with students from other schools and special time with comfort dogs! Our Be Nice student leaders look forward to implementing what they learned at the symposiums within TC middle and high schools.



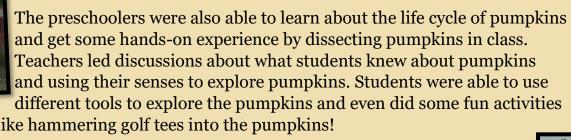


Preschool Hands-On Learning!



This Fall the preschool did some hands-on learning activities using apples and pumpkins. Tri County Food Service provided the preschoolers with different types of apples to try. The teachers then led an activity for the students to try the apples and choose which ones were their favorites. To build on their learning, the students were asked to tally and then graph their favorites. Students then were able to see which apple was the classroom favorite. This activity worked on many math skills such as counting, graphing, subitizing, matching

numerals to their quantities, and base ten. Students also were able to explore apples in other parts of the classroom by doing painting activities using apples in the art area and getting to dissect an apple in the science area.



















Other Preschool Fun!

On Tuesday, December 9th, the preschool hosted their annual Gingerbread House Night from in the Edgerton Gymnasium. All preschool families in our GSRP, Head Start and ECSE programs were invited to join their students and their teachers in making gingerbread houses.

The Preschool also had fun doing a Christmas Spirit Week December 9th-13th. Students and staff had Merry Monday dressing in red or green, Tinsel Tuesday wearing lights, glitter, dequins, sparkles, and bright colors, White Out Wednesday dressing in white, Holiday Headgear Thursday where they got to wear Santa hats, antlers, and elf ears, and ended the week with Polar Pajama day on Friday! What a fun way to bring in the holidays!

Fall Athletic Highlights

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR FALL ALL CONFERENCE ATHLETES

Front row - Aidan Pell, Addisyn Siple, Sydney DeHart, Jocelyn Olds, Annabelle Pake, Nora Kauffman, Brandon Garcia

Second row - Anthony Jones, Ayden Gonzalez, Ae Oliveira

Third row - Kelan Monreal, Henry Kauffman, Alex Culver, Rocket Wilson, Tyler Schuster, Caleb Kohl, Jaxon Lumbert

Back row - left to right: Vaughn Veltman, Preston Pifer, Bryce Reed, Wilson Sixbury, Jordan Riva





CROSS COUNTRY SUCCESS!

Congratulations to our Boys Cross County team, who had an OUTSTANDING season this year, being undefeated in the conference. The team finished out their season by winning the CSAA League Championship for the first time since 1997.



Congratulations to the Varsity Football team, who qualified for the MHSAA playoffs for the sixth time in seven years, and the fifth year in a row. The team was able to accomplish this even while fighting through a lot of adversity this fall, losing multiple staring players due to injuries. The team finished their season playing Frankenmuth in the first round of the playoffs.

The team had four athletes named to the All-Conference roster.

State Finals 2nd Year in a Row

Congratulations to junior Alex Culver, who qualified for the State Cross Country meet for second year in a row. At the regional qualifying meet Alex finished 15th overall, clocking the second fastest time in school history.

Congratulations Alex!



Other District News

Download the Tri County App!

Did you know Tri County Area Schools has an app? Get access to school information, social media, websites, maps, etc. in one place! You can even receive notifications about snow days, calendar items, and other important information right from the app!

Just scan the QR code to download the app today! Or search for Tri County Vikings in the App Store.





2024-25 Upcoming Calendar

Dec 23-Jan 3 No School - Christmas Break

January 6 School Resumes

February 14 No School for Students/PD Day
February 17 No School for Students/PD Day
March 3 P/T Conference - Middle School
March 4 P/T Conferences - High School
March 5 P/T Conferences - Elementary

March 6 Early Release/P/T Conferences - All Bldgs

March 7 Early Release for Students & Staff March 21 No School for Students & Staff

March 24-28 No School - Spring Break

March 31 School Resumes

April 18 No School - Good Friday (Snow Make-up)

May 22 Class of 2025 Graduation
May 26 No School - Memorial Day
June 3 Early Release/PD Day
June 4 Early Release/Staff Workday
June 5 Early Release/Last Day of School

EMERGENCY CLOSING INFORMATION

Inclement weather, hazardous road conditions, power outages or other incidents may require the closing of school. However, there are strict state requirements on the number of hours of education for public school students. The state provides up to 30 hours, or equivalent to 6 days and hours) for inclement weather/emergency closing. We are required to make up any additional hours. With student safety as our first priority, every effort is made to avoid school closings when possible. In bad weather, the decision to close school is made after:

- •Road conditions are tested by the District Operations and Transportation Departments
- •Weather conditions are examined (weather advisories, storm patterns, temperature, etc.)
- •Montcalm County Road Commission's ability to plow area roads is determined
- •The condition of school driveways and parking lots are assessed

The Superintendent closes school based on the severity of these items coupled with our ability to transport our students safely.

When the District closes school or releases students early, we send out a robocall and email to all parents, notify the local TV news stations, and post closing information to our district social media outlets and our district website homepage. Please do not call your child's school.



Winter Sports Schedules (



Varsity Basketball - Boys Fri Dec 20 (A) Newaygo 7:00 pm (A) Fri 7:00 pm Jan 3 Sparta ! Tue Jan 7 Potter's House (A) 7:00 pm Fri (A) Jan 10 Chippewa Hills 7:00 pm (H) 7:00 pm Tue Jan 14 Morley Stanwood Jan 17 Reed City (H) 7:00 pm (A) ! Tue Jan 21 Lakeview 7:00 pm Fri (H) 7:00 pm Jan 24 Grant Fri Jan 31 Big Rapids (H) 7:00 pm Newaygo Showcase (A) Sat Feb 1 1:30 pm (H) Fri Feb 7 Newaygo 7:00 pm Tue Feb 11 **Kent City** (H) 7:00 pm Feb 14 Chippewa Hills (H) 7:00 pm Tue Feb 18 Central Montcalm (A) 7:00 pm Feb 21 Reed City (A) 7:00 pm







Home (H) Away (A)

Vars	arsity Basketball - <u>Girls</u>				
Fri	Dec 20	Newaygo	(A)	5:30 pm	
Fri	Jan 10	Chippewa Hills	(A)	5:30 pm	
Tue	Jan 14	Morley Stanwood	(A)	7:00 pm	
Fri	Jan 17	Reed City	(H)	5:30 pm	
Tue	Jan 21	Lakeview	(H)	7:00 pm	
Fri	Jan 24	Grant	(H)	5:30 pm	
Fri	Jan 31	Big Rapids	(H)	5:30 pm	
Sat	Feb 1	Newaygo Showcase	(A)	12:00 pm	
Tue	Feb 4	Hesperia	(H)	7:00 pm	
Fri	Feb 7	Newaygo	(H)	5:30 pm	
Tue	Feb 11	Kent City	(A)	7:00 pm	
Fri	Feb 14	Chippewa Hills	(H)	5:30 pm	
Tue	Feb 18	Carson City-Crystal	(H)	7:00 pm	
Fri	Feb 21	Big Rapids	(A)	5:30 pm	
Tue	Feb 25	Sparta	(A)	7:00 pm	

Varsity Wrestling

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Fri	Dec 20	Sparta (Dual)	(A)	TBA
Sat	Dec 28	Grandville Invitational	(A)	9:00 am
Sat	Jan 4	Allendale HS Tourney	(A)	9:00 am
Wed	Jan 8	Reed City* (RC, GT, TC)	(A*)	5:00 pm
Fri	Jan 10	Hastings	(A)	5:30 pm
Sat	Jan 11	Sparta Invitational	(A)	TBA
Wed	Jan 15	Central Mont@TC (CM, TC, NW)	(H)	5:00 pm
Sat	Jan 18	Mancelona Tourney	(A*)	8:30 am
Wed	Jan 22	Chippewa Hills* (CH & LV)	(A*)	5:00 pm
Fri	Jan 24	Whitehall Invitational	(A)	1:00 pm
Wed	Jan 29	Allendale	(H)	5:30 pm
Sat	Feb 1	CSAA Tourney @Lakeview	(A)	9:00 am

	Varsity	Competitive	Cheer
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Fri	Dec 20	West Catholic Invite	(A) TBA
Sat	Jan 11	Rochester Stoney Creek	(A) TBA
Mon	Jan 13	Grant	(A) TBA
Sat	Jan 18	West Catholic Invite	(A) 6:30 pm
Sat	Jan 25	Rochester HS	(A) TBA
Mon	Jan 27	Chippewa Hills	(A) TBA
Thur	Jan 30	Northview	(A) TBA
Sat	Feb 1	Forest Hills Northern	(A) TBA
Mon	Feb 3	TC Home Invite	(H) TBA
Wed	Feb 5	Jenison	(A) TBA
Sat	Feb 8	Bullock Creek	(A) TBA
Sat	Feb 15	District Finals @ Alma	(A) TBA
Sat	Feb 22	Regionals @West Catholic	(A) TBA
Sat	Mar 1	State Finals @CMU	(A) TBA

For all other sports related info and schedules, please visit our Tri County website or follow the TC Athletics Facebook page.



Tri County Area Schools

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