

Volume 12 Issue 3
Spring, 2017 - 2018

District Events:

April 30

Full Day of School for
Students

May 20

Graduation

May 21

School Board Meeting -
Independence 6:00 p.m.

May 28

No School -
Memorial Day

June 1

Last Day of School -
1:00 Early Dismissal

June 18

School Board Meeting -
Independence 6:00 p.m.

July 16

School Board Meeting -
Independence 6:00 p.m.

August 20

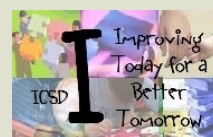
School Board Meeting -
Independence 6:00 p.m.

August 23

First Day of the
2018-2019 School Year

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From the Desk of Superintendent Jean Peterson

Another school year seems to have gone very fast. The weather certainly was a challenge this year. It seemed like we were monitoring the weather every other day!

The snow day on April 18th will not be made up for students. We have enough hours built into our calendar to cover for that day. Our students' last day will still be Friday, June 1st. Students will be dismissed on June 1st at 1:00 p.m.

Staff will make up the April 18th snow day. We will have professional development activities on June 4th and June 5th. June 6th will be the teachers' check out day.

Our spring activity schedule is up and running now as well. All of our spring sports have faced a challenge with the weather too. Hopefully, that is behind us and the rest of our activity schedule will run smoothly.

We will be saying good bye to another graduating class soon. Graduation is scheduled for May 20th at 2:00 p.m. in the Jr/Sr High School Auditorium. We wish our graduates well as they begin this next chapter in their life. We hope they will always remember the tenants of "Living the Mustang Way".

May is also the time of year when we honor our School Boards. It is an opportunity for local schools and communities to recognize their locally elected school board members for their dedication to children and schools.



Jean Peterson,
Superintendent

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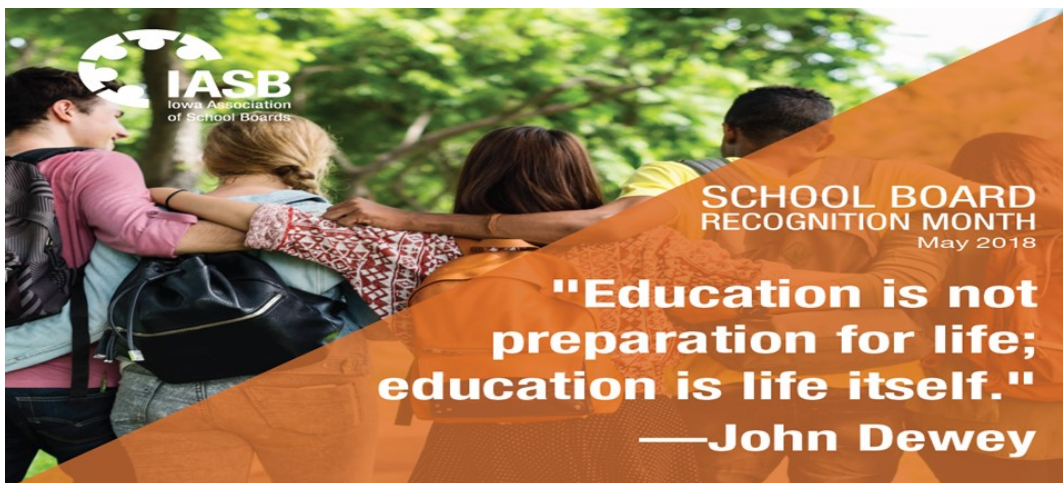
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Providing our community's children with a sound education is the most important investment we can make. It has been an honor and a privilege for me to have worked with our current and past school board members. Our school board members make critical decisions and donate countless hours of personal time in service to the Independence Community School District's students.

I have been fortunate to have worked on some very special projects with our school board members during my 8 years as Superintendent. Some of those accomplishments include:

- Hiring and retaining quality staff members
- Staying on top of curriculum and classroom needs
- Meeting all state accreditation standards with no non-compliance issues
- Building the New Junior-Senior High School
- Long Range Facility Planning – air conditioning East and West, new baseball/softball complex, new tennis courts, turf on the football field, new bus garage, trail system throughout school campus, and normal building/grounds upkeep – just to name a few things
- Adding Agriculture Education and FFA
- Working on a Communications Plan and PR/Marketing Strategies for our school district
- Working together to stay fiscally responsible
- Technology purchases and upgrades throughout the district
- Adding some new student activities – bowling, archery, dance, FCCLA

I will take many special memories with me as I retire from my Superintendent's position here in the Independence School District. I have had an awesome 40 years in education and have had the sincere pleasure of working with many outstanding students, teachers, classified staff, bus drivers, administrators, board members, parents, and community members. Russ Reiter, our new superintendent, is going to truly enjoy working in such an excellent school district and community.



School Improvement by Erin Burmeister, Director of School Improvement

“Practice the philosophy of continuous improvement. Get a little better every single day”. –Author Unknown

If we are striving to get a little better every single day, then continuous improvement for Independence Community School District will happen.

Continuous School Improvement



**Erin Burmeister,
Director of School Improvement**

Over the past year I have thought a lot about continuous school improvement and how Independence can go from good to great. What I keep coming back to is shown in the graphic at the left. I first saw this with the roll out of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). What this graphic represents is the five big ideas/concepts that lead to school improvement.

One idea is assessment and how we use a variety of assessments, both formative and summative, to make data-based decisions for student learning and teaching. A second idea is universal instruction. It is imperative that our universal instruction is strong. Universal instruction must be of high-quality and scientifically based. ALL students need to receive this high-quality instruction in the general education classroom. Universal instruction is the instruction that all students get in all content areas. The third big idea is intervention systems. We need strong intervention systems for our students so that each may learn. When students are struggling and not making adequate progress in the classroom, they must be provided with increasingly intensive instruction matched to their needs. Additionally, if students are making adequate progress and are meeting our expectations, then we must provide enrichment activities and opportunities to continue their learning. The fourth idea is leadership. It is crucial that we have strong leadership teams to help guide school improvement efforts. I am not necessarily talking about formal leadership, but teacher leaders who are passionate about improving practice. Finally, the fifth concept is infrastructure. In the true spirit of the word, we are talking about the underlying foundation or basic framework of our system. We have to have a strong infrastructure just like we need strength in all the other areas as well. If we focus on this work, then we will see improvement happen and we can move from good to great. This improvement will come when we get a little better every single day.

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School Improvement by Erin Burmeister, Director of School Improvement

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Professional Learning

In order for continuous school improvement to happen, we must offer teachers high quality professional learning opportunities. This is exactly what we are striving to do. Some may wonder what teachers are doing on those full days “off” once a month or even when they have to be out of the classroom. I can assure you that the only people with the day off are students.

Professional learning at the elementary levels has been focused on high quality literacy instruction. East Elementary has been working on and enhancing their practices with small group (guided) reading. Small group (guided) reading is an efficient and effective way of instructing students. West Elementary has also been focusing on literacy instruction but their work has been centered on mini lessons. Mini lessons are short lessons, 10-15 minutes, with a narrow focus that provide instruction in a skill or concept that students will then relate to a larger lesson. Mini lessons are a very important part of reading and writing workshop. Mini lessons are for the whole group and are based on Iowa Core Literacy Standards.

In addition to literacy instruction, both East and West have continued their work with Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). PLCs aren’t another initiative or something else for teachers to do, but instead serve as a framework to do the things necessary for continuous improvement. This is an ongoing process in which teachers can work collaboratively to enhance their practices and ultimately to achieve better results for the students they serve.

Professional learning at the Junior/Senior High has had a different focus. This year the Junior/Senior High decided to pilot Authentic Intellectual Work (AIW). About half of the staff engaged in learning to support AIW. The goal of AIW is to increase student learning by engaging students in authentic intellectual work. AIW is defined by three criteria; construction of knowledge, through disciplined inquiry, to produce discourse, products, and performance that have value beyond school. AIW is a framework much like a Professional Learning Community is a framework. The teachers involved in the pilot had overwhelmingly positive experiences. Because of this, the entire staff at the Junior/Senior High will continue their learning of this framework.

If it weren’t for the time devoted to professional learning and teachers being willing to grow, improvement couldn’t and wouldn’t happen. If we are striving to get a little better every single day, then continuous improvement for Independence Community School District will happen.

A 21st Century Classroom From the “Tech Guy” by Steve Noyes, Director of Technology



**Steve Noyes,
Director of Technology**

Have you heard these kinds of comments?

- “We must teach 21st Century skills,”
- “We need 21st Century classrooms,”
- “K-12 education is not properly preparing our students for the 21st Century,”
- “We need to have a 21st Century program.”

There are many variations of these kinds of statements and parent and community might be confused by all of the shouting. If we are honest, school staff, students, and administrators can be confused by all of the noise too.

The goals of K-12 education have always been to teach students. In the early days of education through most of the 20th century, the overall teaching method was for the teacher to instruct students primarily in a lecture format. Students were meant to take notes and show their knowledge by taking written tests. Even in a modern classroom, students still need to take notes and still need to show they have learned. What is changing and what is the focus of a modern classroom?

Since I am the Technology Director for the school district, people might assume that I am only interested in tech toys and filling up the classroom with stuff. It is true, I am very interested in providing working equipment and a reliable network for our classrooms. I am even more interested in providing tools and resources for our teachers and students to excel at learning, growing and developing marketable and career skills. The goal of technology is integration into every area of study and not just going to the lab. Technology should empower the learning environment not be the end solution.

Things have dramatically changed in the 10 years since my arrival to Indee. Ten years ago, it took almost two hours to download computer software. It now takes 4-5 minutes to download comparable software. We could not transfer phone calls between buildings. Our classroom equipment was old and the computer labs were woefully inadequate.

The changes we have made, mirrors the changes for a 21st Century classroom:

- We have better Collaboration
- We can better Communicate
- We have greater opportunities for Creativity
- And we are able to think Critically and solve problems

This is amazing! We have been on a path of creating a 21st Century classroom for ten years and we are already incorporating the “4 C’s” into our classrooms. As we continue to improve, we will see even greater opportunity for our students. Students and teachers have technology in the classroom and can be used as needed.

Currently, students have opportunity to explore subjects, to dive deeper and research their own ideas. Students are able to network with people around the world, they are able to share ideas, learn from others and add their own voice to discussions. Students have the ability to create blogs, videos, written information and a host of other activities to show their learning and mastery of skills.

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Preschool Family Night Out (PSFNO)

We had a huge turnout for PSFNO. The parents and incoming Kindergarteners came and toured the building. They were able to see kindergarten classrooms, lunchroom, bus drop off, music, and art. We were fortunate to have SPARK here to have students do an activity while I had a parent meeting. This is the second time we have run the night this way and have had great feedback.



Fontana

We had an assembly to present Fontana with the money we raised for them. They brought their hawk, which was a HUGE hit!



**Danielle Meyer,
Principal**

Team Sunshine

On March 6, 2018 the Drew family got the news that their daughter's Acute Myeloid Leukemia (AML) was back. Their daughter, Isabel was admitted to the University of Iowa Hospital for chemotherapy. After some tests, it was decided that Isabel would need a bone marrow transplant. This process will take place over the course of the next year. Isabel will have many appointments and will be traveling to and from the hospital in Iowa City. The school is collecting donations which will be used to cover medical expenses and travel to and from the hospital.



Preschool

March was a busy month in Preschool! One of our favorite themes was Dr. Seuss! We read several of the books and participated in many fun activities, including rhyming and Cat in the Hat masks. We ended the week with a movie day of Dr. Seuss classics.

Our Preschool friends also had a blast at Kindergarten Round-Up, and learning all about Kindergarten for next year. They are so excited to be Junior Kindergarteners and Kindergarteners next year!



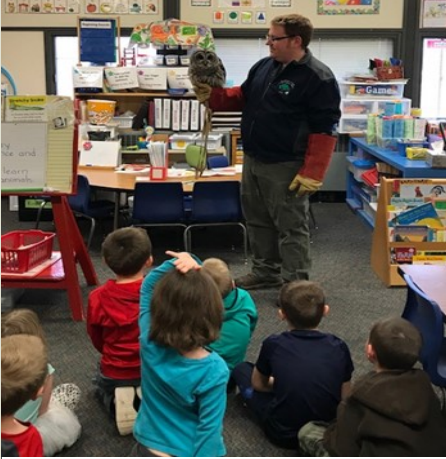
We have lots of fun themes planned for April, including: The Farm, Nursery Rhymes, The Zoo, and Flowers/Gardening.

We have 2 more visits from SPARK this month and Michael will be coming to visit us from Fontana!



Kindergarten

Kindergarten kids are enjoying Junior Achievement and learning about making choices and the difference between needs and wants. Thank you to our Junior Achievement volunteers!



Our Kinder Literacy units for the month of April include snakes, frogs, Earth Day, and spring! For Earth Day Sondra and Michael brought animals into our classrooms for us to observe and enjoy. We will also be learning about the importance of taking care of our environment.

Kindergarten students are well on their way to becoming First Graders! They will need opportunities and encouragement this summer to maintain the skills they have learned. Practice letters and sounds, writing words and sentences, and READ, READ, READ! Also, don't forget to practice math skills - identifying, counting, and writing numbers to 100, as well as basic addition and subtraction facts.



1st Grade

Junior Achievement has been underway.

The BCHC Spark program continues to come monthly to teach students about healthy food and exercise.

BankIowa will be coming in to "Teach Children to Save" in April.

We had Fun with Fontana Field Trip in February, Monarchs to Mexico in March, and Earth Day in April.

Students learned about outer space and did a STEM Activity with rockets.

Students learned about parts of a plant and planted seeds with the JSHS Plant Science Class.



Collaborative groups creating rockets.



2nd Grade

Junior Achievement has been going on in the 2nd grade. We appreciate the JA volunteers who have taken the time to come to our classrooms to teach the lessons.

Fontana visited our classrooms to teach a lesson on how seeds travel. This lesson complimented our science unit on Balance and Motion.

Throughout the month of April students are earning play coins to go on a pretend tropical vacation to Hawaii. This activity helps students with counting money and exchanging coins. On our vacation day in May, students will participate in mini lessons on Hawaiian culture, taste coconut water, and be given a hula lesson.

Specials

In art class we have been busy learning about line and shape and how they are used in art. Second grade students created an oil pastel and watercolor drawing with several different types of line. First graders had a great time making line sculptures with construction paper “lines”. Kindergarteners learned all about different lines from several videos and books. They used oil pastels and watercolors to draw and paint lines. We are currently working on our shape projects. We will finish the year by reviewing what we have learned and working on the drawings for the 2018-2019 Elementary Parent-Student Handbook.



The music room has been busy since 2018 started. It has been packed full of great music and fun activities! Kindergarteners have been learning about different kinds of instruments and learning lots of fun music games. 2nd Grade has been working hard on practicing rhythm patterns and learning how to read music on their own. The 1st graders have put in lots of hard work on their Spring Concert, and the songs they learned for their “April Fools” theme got some good laughs from the audience. The school year isn’t over yet, and students at East still have a lot to look forward to, from working with iPads to playing instruments and learning about how songs are made!

WANTED!

Mileage Club Volunteers Needed!

If you would like to devote 15-30 minutes each week outside at recess to help students reach their goals in the Mileage Club, please call Val Maximovich at 319-332-0626 to volunteer your time!

Mentors Needed!

If you are interested in being a mentor and volunteering your time to work with a child for approximately 30 minutes each week on a regular basis, please call Val at 319-332-0626 and let her know!

Wanted:

Substitutes

If you are available to substitute occasionally as a classroom, office or media paraprofessional, (duties vary), please call 334-7425.

We need YOU!

Box tops for Education/ Pop Can Tabs/Milk Moola for Schoola

We continue to collect Pizza Ranch Wagon Wheels, Donuts to Dough, General Mills Box Tops, Pop Can Tabs & bottle caps and bag tops from Kwik Star products. This is a good way to help us earn extra money for things we need. Thanks!

If you are interested in spending time at school or at home sorting/cutting and redeeming these items for our school, please call 334-7425.

Greetings from West Elementary!

It has been an eventful, exciting school year with a successful Parent-Teacher Organization fundraiser, setting and meeting our wellness goals, collaborating and strengthening our curriculum and instruction, visiting and learning in new environments on field trips, growing our capacity in Professional Learning Communities, and continually asking, “How can we best meet the social, emotional, behavioral, and academic needs of all of our students?” Whew! What an incredible opportunity to learn and work with teams and a community completely dedicated to the success of the whole student.



Cheri Reed, Principal

When we talk about meeting the needs of the whole student, we are talking about all the educational opportunities and decisions we make in order to positively impact our students' intellectual development. To achieve this, all of us play a vital role. In each interaction with students and with each other, we are modeling and building a foundation for our future learning success.

As a foundation for our success and learning, West has been implementing our Positive Action Curriculum. During this learning, we work on being the best we can be every day. We frame these conversations around our Living the Mustang Way expectations and characteristics. Each quarter, we recognize students who are being responsible, being respectful, showing kindness, and living gratefully.

To continue strengthening our culture of literacy, West Elementary continues to celebrate reading with our building-wide reading incentives. In February, we celebrated our learning and reading accomplishments with a trip to River's Edge. In May, we will celebrate our building-wide end-of-the year goals with another special activity.

Thank you to the Independence Community School District students, staff, families, and local businesses. We have so greatly appreciated your support throughout the 2017-2018 school year!

Go Mustangs!

3rd Grade

Third graders have spent the spring practicing informative and opinion writing. Students continue to work on reading fluency, which includes accuracy, expression, and rate while also implementing a variety of reading comprehension strategies. In math, we are working on multiplication and division, fractions, geometry, measurement, and data. We are wrapping up the digestion and nutrition units in science, and we will begin to study the weather and earth's climates. In May, students have the opportunity to review bike safety and practice their skills during the Bike Rodeo. This is always a fun event for the students and community volunteers.

The photo is from the Fontana visit in March. The students learned about animal nutrition and looked at the teeth on different animals.



4th Grade

As the end of the year is approaching, the remaining science unit in fourth grade is the weather unit. We look forward to the KCRG meteorologist's visit where we will learn even more about weather and what we need to do during severe weather.

The southwest and west regions will be studied in social studies.

Students who have met their reading goals in the past couple of months were able to participate in some fun incentives, which included basketball, root beer floats, and line tag on the football field. Make sure that your child is reading so s/he can participate in the final incentives!

Upcoming math units will focus on multiplication, division, perimeter, area, fractions, decimals, and percent.



5th Grade

5th graders at West Elementary have been working hard in school this year. In Reading, we have been reading a lot of historical fiction novels in literature circles. We created projects with some of our novels as well. Other classes have been studying theme during a Dr. Seuss Literature Unit.

We are learning about fractions, measurement, and geometry in Math. We are still working on multiplication and division as well. In Social Studies, we are learning about the history of America and studying the 13 Colonies. Some classes are preparing for a Colonial Fair.

In Science, we have studied electricity and magnetism, the parts of the eye, and skeletal muscular system. We even dissected the eye. The pig eyes were donated by Mark's Locker in Rowley. We built electricity projects to show our understanding of parallel and series circuits.

6th Grade

Once a week this fall, Sheriff Wolfgram taught D.A.R.E. classes to the 6th grade students. In this program, students learned how making poor choices can lead to negative outcomes, particularly when dealing with stress, bullying, alcohol, tobacco, and drugs. They practiced using a decision-making model to help them make responsible decisions for a more successful future. On Thursday, April 19th, all of the D.A.R.E. students in Buchanan County will graduate and celebrate. This year's invited speaker is magician Steven Parker, voice of McGruff, the dog that "Takes a Bite Out of Crime". The winner of this year's essay contest is Joshua Beatty, who will read his paper at the ceremony.

Sixth graders enjoyed learning about "A Global Marketplace" through the Junior Achievement program. Volunteers from the community taught six 45-minute sessions where kids explored a variety of interesting topics. Quota, tariff, subsidy, and embargo were a few terms they came to understand. Students learned how culture and language could affect a restaurant menu and the construction of a product. The exchange rate for currency and the World Trade organization were two other topics addressed.

As a STEM project extension of our Middle Ages unit study, students constructed castles modeled after real castles. Students from two classrooms were divided into groups of four with a week to complete the model and two engineering challenges. Each group was given the same supplies to meet expected requirements. Collaboration was evident as we observed working drawbridges and extremely tall towers. Students applied math skills as they determined the surface area of the various locations within the castles. This cross-curricular project was a great success!



**John Howard, JSH
Principal**

On April 12th & 13th, the Independence Junior/Senior High School students and staff participated in a multi-faceted assembly addressing distracted and impaired driving. This article will describe, in further detail, both the factual events as well as one example of the positive impact of the proceedings. A special thank you to Charlie McCardle and John Klotzbach for their documentation of the events with their tremendous photography contributions.



**Dewey Hupke, JSH
Assistant Principal**

On Thursday, April 12, fifteen students, whose parents had already agreed to have their child participate, were ‘called out’ by the Grim Reaper. After being summoned by the Grim Reaper, the student was brought to the front of the classroom and his/her obituary was read by a building administrator. After listening to the obituary, which was written by each student’s parent/guardian, each was escorted to the office by law enforcement personnel and met with Gina DeBoer and Jackie Schultz to debrief and share their feelings.

After lunch, students were taken to the Buchanan County Fairgrounds for a ‘mock accident’ which was set up by the Independence Police Department, Buchanan County Sheriff’s Office, and the Iowa State Patrol. In the accident, one student perished, one had critical injuries, and two students suffered only superficial injuries not requiring medical attention. The driver who caused the accident was then taken through sobriety tests and later arrested for Operating While under the Influence (OWI) and also cited for distracted driving.



Students at the Buchanan County Fairgrounds watching the ‘Mock Accident.’

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The two cars in the 'Mock Accident' on April 12, 2018.



Deceased victim Lucas Dawson getting placed into the hearse from Reiff Funeral Home.

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On April 13, 2018, the students observed the trial for the driver in the auditorium. Attorneys from the Buchanan County Attorney's office, Dan Clouse and Jena Zaputil, argued the case. Presiding as judge was County Magistrate, Ben Lange. Throughout this process, students and staff were able to observe (first-hand) different aspects of a criminal trial involving distracted/impaired driving. In our mock court of law, the defendant was sentenced to 31 years in prison, which according to Judge Lange, was very close to the actual sentence a person would serve under the same circumstances.

After the trial, students left the auditorium for a memorial service in the gymnasium officiated by Pastor Greg DeBoer, under the direction of both White Funeral Home and Reiff Funeral Home. Sharing thoughts during the memorial service about the deceased victim, Lucas Dawson, were: one of Lucas's teachers, Mr. Dan Putz, a teammate/friend Tom Reiff, and principal Mr. John Howard. Josie Fischels, a classmate of Lucas', ended the service with a terrific acapella rendition of, "I Can Only Imagine."



Judge Ben Lange and Officer Andy Isley in the trial of Zach Davis.

Students entering the memorial service for Lucas Dawson.



Pastor Greg DeBoer leading the memorial service for Lucas Dawson.

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Shawn O'Brien of United Fire Group sharing with students about distracted driving.



Zander Smith spoke about his experience in the Assembly.

After lunch, students listened to Shawn O'Brien of United Fire Group speak about distracted driving. Mr. O'Brien shared his experience from an accident in which he was involved as well several different statistics regarding distracted driving. Then, students who were part of the activities over the past two days were able to speak and share their reactions with their peers. The two-day activity then concluded with students and adults involved in the event sharing their thoughts about the assembly answering questions from the audience. We want to thank two young men who, without their participation, this event would never have been possible. Zach Davis and Lucas Dawson were instrumental in making this assembly occur. Those are the facts, but now let's focus on how these events changed one student's perspective.

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Mr. Hupke thanking Zach Davis and Lucas Dawson for their involvement.

As administrators, at least in our experience, it is difficult to gauge the positive impact our actions have on members of the school community. Due to the nature of our positions, not many stakeholders communicate their open gratitude or agreement with our decisions, and we certainly understand this fact. So, we simply wait. We yearn for that one example, single instance or solitary moment where we know we have truly made a difference in someone's life. After Thursday's activities, an Independence Jr/Sr High School student posted this message on Facebook (and permission was given to use it here):

"I was on my way to work when I looked at my phone to see if I had received a message I had been waiting for. The 'do not disturb while driving' had turned on automatically like it does. Instead of hitting, 'I'm not driving' I set it face down on the passenger seat. I set it down because today while in my Algebra II class, my assistant principal, an officer, and the 'Grim Reaper', came into my class and took my best friend that sits beside me. My assistant principal proceeded to read her obituary that her parents had written. It talked about how she loved hanging out with friends and always lived life to the fullest, that she would be survived by her little sister...I thought of that little girl I had watched grow up and thought about how devastated she would be without her big sister, my childhood friend. I set my phone down because no matter how important I thought the message was, it was more important for me to come home to my family, and to school to my friends. I thank my school and the community members for showing the students in my school today, once again, your life could change in a heartbeat, with the stop of a heartbeat. Pay attention while driving, be safe, come home to the ones who love you."

As a result, we simply say, "Thank you, Peighton, for writing this message". Your simple, yet highly profound, message proved our assembly made a lasting, positive impression on you. We sincerely hope others thought the same and lives will be saved!

Year-to-Date Highlights

While seasons always go fast, this weather has made it harder to believe that we are in the middle of spring activities. We have had a busy school year so far with all of our activities. I wanted to use my column to share some of the “highlights” to date.

Volleyball Team goes to State-

The Independence volleyball team qualified for the state volleyball tournament for the second time in school history this fall. It was such a great experience and I was blown away by the support that showed up in Cedar Rapids.



**Justin Putz,
Activities Director**

Independence Bowling are WaMaC Tournament Champs-

The Independence bowling team won the second ever WaMaC Bowling Tournament. The bowling team had an excellent season and will return a lot of talent for next year.

Winter Concert Aired on KCRG 9.2-

For the third straight year, the music department’s high school band and vocal concert was aired on KCRG 9.2. They put on an outstanding performance. This event takes a ton of work from rehearsing to decorating the auditorium. It was great to see the hard work on display for the KCRG viewing area.

Swimming-

This marked the second year that Independence has had a sharing agreement with boys swimming with Cedar Falls High School. We had four boys swim this year with Cedar Falls. Independence sophomore Dylan Moffatt qualified for the state meet in multiple events again this year. Dylan won his second consecutive State Championship in the 500 meter freestyle while setting a state meet record in the process.



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Individual Speech Qualifies 10 events for All-State and wins the WaMaC West Speech Festival-

The individual speech team qualified an amazing 10 events for the All-State Festival. The kids and coaches did an outstanding job and have so much talent.

Boys' Basketball Wins a Postseason Game-

The boys' basketball team finished 15-9 and finished second in the WaMaC West this year. This is the third consecutive year of increasing wins as a team. Additionally, the team won a postseason game for the first time in a while.

Wrestling has Two State Place Winners-

The wrestling team qualified three kids for the state wrestling tournament. Matthew Doyle and Hunter Crawford both placed 6th in the meet and had outstanding seasons.



Jazz Orchestra Places 4th at the Jazz Championships-

In what feels like an annual occurrence, the Indee Jazz Orchestra places high at the state jazz championships. I am always impressed with how versatile and skilled our band program is. Our band students excel, whether it is jazz, marching, concert, or pep band.

Indee Marching Band Wins ValleyFest for the First Time in School History-

The Indee Marching Band won the ValleyFest Showdown for the first time in school history. They were 1st Place in their class and 3rd overall. The band received awards for Best Color Guard, Best Marching, and Best Hornline.

As I look back on the year so far I am very proud of everything our students do and how they are able to excel in so many areas. We are fortunate to have so many quality students, coaches, sponsors, and parents. Hopefully the rest of the year ends as strong as we started.

As another year comes to an end, we would like to inform you of some important health requirement changes that will affect students.

Kindergarten Health Requirements

For all students entering Kindergarten it is required by the state to have the following complete:

- Vision screening- Can be conducted by ophthalmologist, optometrist, primary care doctor's office, or sometimes there are community based programs.
- Dental examine- By a certified dentist.
- Immunizations

The above must be complete and the nurse have documentation prior to the start of the 2018-2019 school year.

If you have any questions, please contact your primary care provider or Molly Beatty, East Elementary Nurse.

3rd grade Health Requirements

For all students entering 3rd grade, it is required by state law, that they have a vision screening. The vision screenings can be conducted by an ophthalmologist, optometrist, primary care doctor's office, or sometimes there are community based programs.

The vision screening must be completed 6 month- 1 year prior to the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year. Proof of exam must be given to the school nurse upon completion.

If you have any questions, please contact your primary care provider or Kelsi Donnelly, West Elementary Nurse.

7th grade Health Requirements

Per the administrative rule change **ALL** students entering 7th grade are required to have one meningococcal vaccine. If your student/students have had a previous meningitis, in order to be valid, it must have been given after age 10. If your student/students had one prior to age 10, they are required to have another one given. This must be complete **PRIOR** to the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year.

Another important immunization requirement for **ALL** students entering 7th grade is that they are required to have a Tdap booster. This must be complete **PRIOR** to the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year.

If you have any questions, please contact your primary care provider or Rhonda Jasper, Jr/Sr High Nurse.

9th grade Health Requirements

For all students entering 9th grade, they must see a certified dentist for a dental exam. Documentation must be given to the school nurse upon completion.

If you have any questions, please contact Rhonda Jasper, Jr/Sr High Nurse.

12th grade Health Requirements

Per the administrative rule changes **ALL** students entering 12th grade are required to have two doses of meningococcal vaccine. The only exception is if first dose of meningococcal vaccine was given at 16 years of age or older, only one dose is required. Again, this must be complete **PRIOR** to the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year.

If you have any questions, please contact your primary care provider or Rhonda Jasper, Jr/Sr High Nurse.

Also, as a reminder please make sure to update your student's health conditions and concerns on PowerSchool under the health section.

Molly Beatty, RN
East Elementary
319-332-0533

Kelsi Donnelly, RN, BSN
West Elementary
319-332-0589

Rhonda Jasper, RN
Jr/Sr High School
319-332-0720



Val Maximovich,
Volunteer & Mentor
Coordinator

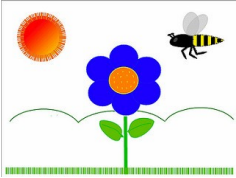
Independence Community Schools **Volunteer & Mentor Program Update by Val Maximovich**

A big "Thank you" to all our volunteers during National Volunteer Week April 15-21

We appreciate the time they spend with us each week throughout the school year!



The adult and student volunteers that volunteer during the school day, will be thanked by the students and teachers during the end of the year District Wide Assembly, on Wed., May 9th, 9 a.m. at the Independence High School gym. We hope everyone can attend!



Annual Mentor Picnic "Bloom Where You Are Planted"

Mon., May 21, 2018, 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. at West Elementary

Lots of "blooming" fun activities are being planned for all ages!

Come one, come all!! Come join us in the 4th of July parade at 9 a.m. downtown Independence! Our float will have a circus theme, so ride your bike or wear a costume and come join us!

If you have been involved with the mentoring program anytime during the last 25 years, come on down, we would love to have you!



The parade will conclude the "25 years strong" year long celebration by "Celebrating the Spirit" of Mentoring with the community.

Thank you to everyone that purchased the "25 Years Strong" t-shirts in celebration of the 25 years of mentoring in our schools!



MENTORS and VOLUNTEERS are always NEEDED! Now is the time to register for the 2018-19 school year!

It's only takes 30 minutes a week, during the school day, during the school year to make a difference in the life of a child! Or register to be a volunteer for a variety of needs for teachers throughout the year. Contact Val at 319-332-0626 or email vmaximovich@independence.k12.ia.us, or download the volunteer registration form at <http://www.independence.k12.ia.us/district-departments/volunteer-information/>



Please like our Facebook page Independence Mustang Mentoring!

With the right tools, students are more self-directed as learners and learning can be far more personal compared to the mid-80's when I graduated from high school. The opportunities for the modern students do not overshadow the basic requirements of hard-work, diligence, never giving-up, seeing things through, doing the best quality work possible, paying attention, and making appropriate choices. These personal qualities become even more important in the modern classroom because there can be so many distractions.

We're on the Web
<http://www.independence.k12.ia.us>

Teachers are even more important to the learning process than ever before. When the teacher was primarily responsible for a lecture and the student was primarily responsible to answer questions on a test, it was a simple formula. Today, teachers must be classroom managers, motivators, directors, learners, and provide opportunities for success. Teachers are experts in their fields and explore skills with their students.

A 21st Century classroom is not so much a list of required equipment but the opportunities for the educational community (students and staff) to continue to grow, to learn and to achieve. Our students at Independence have many valuable opportunities because of the tools and equipment they have available as a Mustang.

It is great to be a Mustang and play an integral role in providing new opportunities for Independence School District students.

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

It is the policy of the Independence Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact: Erin Burmeister, Director of School Improvement, 1207 1st Street West, Independence, IA 50644, (319) 334-7400 or eburmeister@independence.k12.ia.us

The board requires all persons, agencies, vendors, contractors and other persons and organizations doing business with or performing services for the school district to subscribe to all applicable federal and state laws, executive orders, rules and regulations pertaining to contract compliance and equal opportunity.

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

It is the policy of the Independence School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy, please contact: Erin Burmeister, Director of School Improvement, 1207 1st Street West, Independence, IA 50644, (319) 334-7400 or eburmeister@independence.k12.ia.us

ANNUAL NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Independence Community School District offers career and technical programs in the following areas of study:

Agriculture
Business
Family and Consumer Science
Industrial Technology
Marketing

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