

Volume 13 Issue 3
Spring, 2018 - 2019

District Events:**April 19 & April 22**

No School

May 19

Graduation

May 20

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

May 27

No School -
Memorial Day

May 31

Last Day of School -
1:00 Early Dismissal

June 17

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

July 15

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

August 19

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

August 26

First Day of the
2019-2020 School Year

***From the Desk of the Superintendent...***

The calendar says, "Spring is here" but I'm a little cautious after watching some snowflakes fall this past week. Regardless, it's been a very busy Spring and I would like to catch everyone up on a couple of important issues.

The Independence CSD is currently in the middle of taking the new assessments designed for the state of Iowa. They are called the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP). These tests replace the old Iowa Assessments as Iowa's main state accountability test. Notable changes include:

- A Language Arts and Writing assessment.
- Science offered only for grades 5, 8, & 10.
- Online (computer) administration of the ISASP.
- The assessments will no longer be timed.



**Russell Reiter,
Superintendent**

We also know these tests will be more challenging as students will be asked to write out many answers and simply filling in the bubbles is a thing of the past. Deeper thinking and problem solving are the key components to being successful on these new assessments. Most importantly, we need to establish a solid baseline with our results and work on improving our instruction to match that of the Iowa Core and new standards coming our way.

After a very difficult Winter where we had to modify the 18-19 school calendar, I'd like to share a few important dates. April 17th and 18th are now full student days. Monday, the 22nd is for staff only. May 14th is the last day for our Seniors and Graduation is still on Sunday, May 19th. Friday, May 31st is the last scheduled student day with a 1 pm early dismissal. If you have any questions, please contact the Central Office at 319-334-7400.

As we finish up our final few weeks of the year, I'd like to personally thank everyone for a great first year in the Independence district. With all the mandated changes coming down from the Department of Education and other challenges we face, we have a great deal of work to do but with a quality staff and with your support, we can face those challenges with confidence.

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School Improvement by Erin Burmeister, Director of School Improvement

"Strive for continuous improvement, instead of perfection."

—Kim Collins

Setting realistic and attainable goals for school improvement will, no doubt, best serve Independence Community School District. Staff and students are constantly working toward continuous improvement and many of our school improvement goals are



**Erin Burmeister,
Director of School Improvement**

turning into reality.

Continuous School Improvement



Some may recognize the graphic on the left, as I refer to it often and have written about it before. Assessment and Data-Based Decision Making, Universal Instruction, Intervention System, Leadership and Infrastructure are five important areas to pay attention to with regards to continuous school improvement. This year, teacher leadership teams in all buildings have been engaging in a needs assessment to determine which of these areas we should prioritize and continue working on with an increased focus.

In all three buildings, universal instruction surfaced as an area for growth. Universal instruction is the instruction that ALL students receive on a daily basis. Over the

past few years, we have certainly set and reached goals in this area and will continue to strive for improvement. Both East and West Elementary teachers are being trained with workshop model for literacy instruction. Currently, almost half of the grade level teachers have been to, or are going to this training provided through the AEA. The learning has strengthened universal instruction practices for those teachers. The plan is to have all K-6 classroom teachers trained within the next two years.

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In addition, Units of Study for Reading and Writing have been purchased for teachers to use as a resource to support workshop model for literacy instruction. For the 2019-2020 school year all teachers K-6 will be using this resource. Finally, and probably most important, all teachers across the district have been working hard to prioritize standards and make needed changes to what we are teaching and to what degree we are teaching it. The next step with this will be to unwrap those standards, develop learning targets, develop units, assess and adjust as necessary. This will help us to be better aligned with Iowa Core and in turn will help our students to be more successful and better prepared for their future.

Literacy isn't the only content area where we are working to improve universal instruction. With the introduction of the new Iowa Core Science Standards, science instruction is becoming more hands-on, inquiry based, and focused on not only content but scientific processes and concepts as well. Both East and West are using a resource called Mystery Science to support instruction. According to my fourth grade daughter, "Science is more fun now!". Students appear to be more engaged and excited about learning science. At the Junior/Senior High, more opportunities are being provided to students to better meet individual needs. Three new courses will be offered next year that will help students capitalize on their strengths and provide support in areas for growth.

In the area of social studies, the state has finally adopted standards. Districts are to be fully implementing these new standards by the 2020-2021 school year. Teacher teams have started digging into these new standards. According to the Iowa Department of Education Website, *The state's academic standards in social studies are premised upon a rigorous and relevant K – 12 social studies program within each district in the state. Engaging students in the pursuit of active informed citizenship will require a broad range of understandings and skills. It will also require an articulated district curriculum which connects students to the social world through informed instructional experiences led by teachers who are committed to active civic participation. This represents a bold step toward a vision of social studies for all of Iowa's students.*

Math continues to be an area of relative strength for Independence Community School District. Through hard work and dedication of staff and students we will continue to grow our expertise in this area as well. Similar to other content areas, math instruction has seen a shift from just content, to content and mathematical practices. East and West Elementary use a resource called Everyday Math to help support these shifts. The Junior/Senior High is working to determine what resources they need to help best support instruction.

Although perfection isn't within our reach, yet, we will continue to strive for continuous improvement in all areas.

I completed my series about teachers with the winter newsletter. If you did not have an opportunity to read my previous articles, they are available at the district website.

With spring already here and the 2018-2019 academic year coming to an end, I thought I would write about spring-cleaning within the technology department.

We are just as excited about spring as the students and staff. We perform many of the same things families do in their own homes. We “open” the windows for fresh air, we clean out our storage areas, and we make plans for the summer.



**Steve Noyes,
Director of Technology**

We inspect our sever and network closets and make plans to clean out the dust, update the equipment (as needed), tidy-up the wires, and sweep the floors.

We go to our district storage room at West Elementary to clean, organize, make plans for part replacement, and prepare to properly repair or recycle any broken or damaged equipment. Every spring we have equipment no longer repairable or no longer able to run necessary software. This equipment is recycled with a licensed and bonded company to destroy the data on the hard drives and ensure our software licenses are not distributed illegally.

As part of our summer plans, we will be updating about 40 wireless access points throughout the district, many at JSH. We will also be updating and expanding the network switches as several will be at end-of-life next year.

A major project for us this summer is our servers. Most of our servers are running an older version of Windows Server and this software will not be supported next year. Along with the software, we will be updating nearly all of the hardware.

The old system was to update one server every-year. One big drawback about upgrading one server every year is the continual change of servers and testing all of the software to ensure compatibility. Maintenance is cleaner and programs can be moved easier if the operating system is the same.

About five years ago, we decided to purchase a larger server and run several servers virtually on the same hardware. This cuts down on the actual number of servers as well as electricity use. This bigger server will need to be replaced. We also have several smaller servers running and would be on the normal one server per year plan. I have held off on a couple of upgrades until this year. I want to re-evaluate our entire server operation and work through a long-term plan for district servers.

We have been looking at options this entire spring. We are considering moving some of the servers to the cloud by either allowing the company to host the server or for Amazon Web Services to host the server for us. By allowing the company or Amazon to host the server, our servers are inherently in a more secure location and have multiple fail-over options available.

Currently, PowerSchool is hosted by PowerSchool and our primary contact for support is Grant Wood Area Education Agency (GWAEA). This arrangement has worked great for the district as PowerSchool provides a safe and secure environment and insures all patches and backups are constantly running. We also receive excellent support from GWAEA.

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A Busy Winter Leads to a Busy Spring

by Travis McBride, Auditorium Manager

What a winter and spring so far! Much like the classrooms, the auditorium has been impacted for rehearsals, show dates being rescheduled, and equipment being shuffled around to accommodate all of the crazy calendar issues! Since the start of 2019, the auditorium has hosted several events that were well attended. Following the barrage of snow storms in January and February, the race was on to get the stage ready for the high school musical and vocal concert. The vocal concert finally took place after being rescheduled three times and hosted a near capacity crowd of around 600 people.

In March, the school district and auditorium hosted the district NEIBA Jazz Festival. Hosting this festival is no easy task as we hosted 15 bands on stage plus six junior high bands in the band room. In total, our staff estimate a total of 1,500 people attended the event either as performers or spectators. To host this many performing acts takes a fleet of volunteers. Thank you to the parents, community members, students, and band boosters who made the day a success.

With a quick one day change over to rebuild the musical on stage, the cast and crew rehearsed for one week with full lights and sound on stage. During the daytime, staff and crew members worked tirelessly to construct, design, and make edits to the equipment, lighting designs, props, costumes, and orchestra. Mary Poppins was performed on stage for the first time before students from West, East, and St John's as scheduled with only half of the rehearsals due to weather. Following four public performances, staff estimate total attendance was near 2,000 people. Thank you to everyone who attended one or more shows. The funds raised from ticket sales goes back into the budget for next year's musical.



In the frantic winter scheduling, the auditorium also managed to host a public concert sponsored by the Independence First United Methodist Church Youth Program with Atlanta based recording artists K4C. The artists were very impressed with the facility, hospitality, student production crew, and staff.

K4C Vocalist Lucson Joseph commented, "I had the pleasure of working with Travis McBride and his production team February 9th, 2019. In my current tour I have not met a team as dedicated, cooperative and fun to be around as the Independence Staff and AV team. Prior to our show, they reached out to me by communicating what equipment he had so that we wouldn't bring any extra equipment. The sound, lighting, technology, and props used were all up to date and made our evening hassle free. The staff and students are professionals at making their visitors feel welcomed and you can sense the generosity. The students in this program I can tell are under great leadership!"

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We are currently in the works to schedule a repeat performance sometime yet again in 2019 with K4C. Until then, we continue to prepare for the end of year events in and outside the auditorium including Dollars for Scholars Awards Night, National Honor Society Ceremony, Prom, Prom Parade, and Post Prom, end of year music department concerts, and lastly Graduation. We invite you to join us for these events as they are open to the public as a way to show community support for the next generation of community leaders and mustang alumni.

As noted in the fall newsletter, the State has specific laws and policies regarding facility usage such as how public performances can be funded and organized. Because of these regulations, discussions are taking place to organize a potential “Friends of the Auditorium” organization to help foster public performances in the auditorium. The district cannot use state education funding on promoting public performances but can rent the facility to a community member or organization wishing to promote an event. The goal of such an organization would be to collaborate with district and venue staff to schedule and promote a series of various performances throughout the calendar year. Ticket prices of such events would go towards covering event costs and sustaining funding for future events. If you think this might be of interest to you either in planning, collaborating, or funding, please contact myself or Superintendent Reiter.

Lastly, we want to invite everyone to keep an eye out for our new Fine Arts and Auditorium website coming soon this spring. The site will feature information on all of our great fine arts groups and auditorium events. The site will be announced and made live to the public via social media hopefully in early May.

As always, if you have questions about the auditorium, please feel free to contact me at tmcbride@independence.k12.ia.us or by phone 319-334-7400 ext. 772

Travis McBride
Auditorium Manager & Technician / AV Tech Adviser

Consider joining us for one of these upcoming events:

Saturday, April 27th Prom Parade 5:15pm
Thursday, May 2nd Junior High Band/Vocal Concert 7pm
Sunday, May 5th National Honor Society Ceremony 7pm
Monday, May 6th 5th & 6th Grade Band/Vocal Concert 7pm
Tuesday, May 7th High School Band/Vocal Concert and Senior Awards
Wednesday, May 8th Dollars for Scholars Awards Ceremony 7pm
Wednesday, May 15th Baccalaureate
Sunday, May 19th Graduation Commencement Ceremony
Thursday, May 23rd Junior High Awards Assembly 8:30am
Thursday, May 23rd Preschool Graduation Ceremony 5pm
June 10th-13th Camp Creamery Theater Camp
Friday, June 14th Evening Performance Camp Creamery
Saturday, June 15th Morning Performance Camp Creamery

2018-2019 has been an exciting year at East Elementary and the Early Childhood Center. The focus for Professional Learning for teachers has



been on unpacking literacy priority standards. We began this work last month and teams made great progress. It leads to very deep conversations about instruction K-6.



**Danielle Donnelly,
Principal**

Students have done a great job of Living the Mustang Way this year.

We are excited to close out the school year with many great activities

from Fontana visiting to Fitness Day on May 10th. Families are welcome to Fitness Day, we ask you check in at a table outside or in the main office. If you want to join us for lunch that is great! Also, parents are welcome to take their children home after the Fitness Day activities. Look for papers to come home soon. It is a fun day for students and families.

Preschool

Mrs. Gilroy's class has been studying science this semester. Students were able to do a hands on experiment to showcase their learning with the colors and blending of colors. Mrs. Gilroy also demonstrated what happens when you mix baking soda and vinegar. Students were very interested.



PK4 students are also looking forward to the field trip to Fontana in the next couple of weeks. They are also preparing for their graduation ceremony on May 23rd. Next stop, Kindergarten for 2019-2020.

Kindergarten

Kindergarten students have been working hard to become readers. They are learning what it takes to be an avid reader in school. Each day students are given 90 minutes of literacy instruction. They rotate between a small group, reading to self, listening to reading on an iPad, and word work. They are really doing a nice job as they prepare for 1st grade.

Kindergarten Roundup was March 14th and 15th. The teachers spent time assessing students. Below are some skills that indicate readiness.

- Social and Behavioral Skills
- Self Help Skills
- Language and Listening
- Math Skills
- Large Muscle Skills
- Small Muscle Skills
- Writing

Not only is it necessary for teachers to assess the students, it is equally important for students to gain a familiarity with the building. Below is a schedule of events for the students.

- Puzzles, Play-doh, Coloring pages
- Read Big Red Barn/Activity
- Centers/Story/Songs
- Snack/Songs
- Recess
- Library – Principal Donnelly reads
- Home

First Grade

The Easter Bonnet 1st grade program was a success! The students were able to showcase not only their singing talent but also showed off their dancing and instrumental skills. It is a wonderful ICSD tradition.

1st grade is also working on investigating the intriguing question of why stars only appear at night, but not during the day. Students modeled the stars using their own constellation projectors and tested what happened to the stars as the Sun rose and set. Through this activity, students also learned how simple models can be used to test scientific ideas.

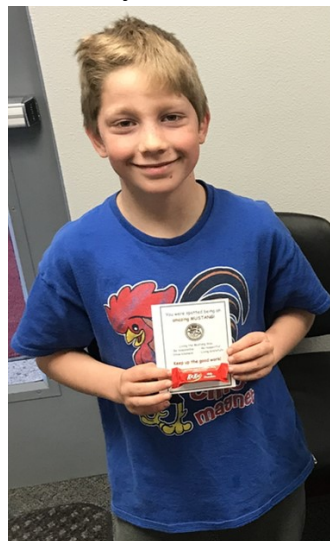
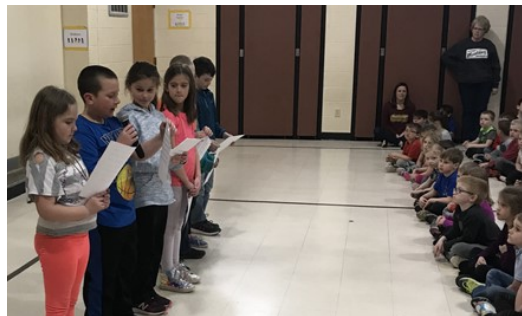


Second Grade

Our second grade leaders were able to explain to students and parents what Living the Mustang Way means at East Elementary.

- To be respectful means honoring other people and treating them with care and courtesy. At East, we show respect to our peers, teachers, and adults. An example of respect is not talking when the teacher or another student is talking.
- To be responsible means doing the things we are supposed to do and accepting the positive or negative outcome of our actions. An example of being responsible would be using our work time wisely.
- Showing kindness means the act of being caring. An example of showing kindness may be tying a friend's shoe for them or picking up a book if they have dropped it. There are opportunities to be kind to each other all over.
- Living gratefully is a feeling of thankfulness and appreciation. There are so many things to be grateful for at East Elementary. For example, the caring adults, fun friends we have here, and most importantly recess!

Upcoming events for second grade include Farm Safety Day May 9th. Students will be able to tour many different aspects of farming. We are also planning a transition day to West Elementary. Our 2nd Graders get to tour West Elementary to ask their students questions in hopes they will feel more confident moving to 3rd grade. It is a great day for East students and West students!



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.

At West Elementary, we are Living the Mustang Way (Being Responsible, Being Respectful, Showing Kindness, and Living Gratefully), and we are:

Working Hard
Engaged in Learning
Staying Positive
Thanking those along the way

A huge thank you to our students and staff for their flexibility and commitment to learning and doing their best each and everyday, and particularly with our integration of the new state-wide assessment: Iowa State-wide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP). We appreciate our students being at school each day and being ready to learn. It has been, and it continues to be, an exciting spring.

Please join West Elementary for our Track and Field Day on Friday, May 24th and for our Talent Show on Friday, May 24th.

Thank you for your support!

3rd Grade

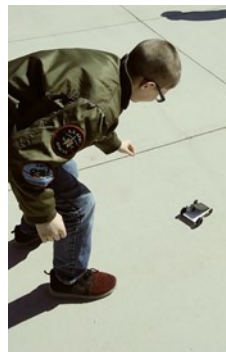
We're wrapping up the school year with a ton of exciting learning in third grade! In writing, we're working on stating our opinion and giving quality reasons to support our thinking. In reading, we're focusing on understanding the characters in our books to help us better comprehend the texts and the messages the author wants to teach us. Our final units in math will cover fractions, multiplication and division, and measurement and data. In May, we'll be learning about weather in our Stormy Skies science unit. We'll even have Sondra from Fontana coming to our classrooms to help us learn about air pressure and how it affects the weather. Bike Rodeo, an annual event for 3rd graders, is coming up in May. The students will get a refresher on bike safety and the opportunity to practice what they learn on the obstacle course set up by several community members.

4th Grade

As the end of the year is approaching, the remaining mystery science units include Energizing Everything and Waves of Sound. We enjoyed Sondra Cabell's visit where we assembled solar cars. 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 for which included hot chocolate, movies, root beer floats, and outside activities. Make sure 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 percents.



Cheri Reed, Principal



5th Grade

Spring is in the air!

Our 5th graders have been very busy learning about fractions, fractions, fractions: Improper fractions, mixed numbers, common denominators, simplest form, decimal and percent equivalents. They are studying how to apply the operations with these concepts as well. In literacy class, students are learning about informational text to understand text structure and efficiently use the text features. They are also learning about author's purpose and studying new vocabulary to improve comprehension. Our young writers have been working on several different pieces which include biographies, how to writing, poetry, and opinion pieces. In Social Studies, our 5th graders have been creating presentations for the Grand Encounter and the Colonial Fair for which they have displayed and presented to



West Elementary students and staff. Science is always a favorite as 5th graders have investigated how mold grows, the importance of aquifers, and experimented with chemical magic. We will finish our year with a unit about Fish Iowa. This will culminate in a field day on May 9th at the Buchanan County Wildlife Association Quarry.



6th Grade

Once a week this fall, Sheriff Wolfgram taught D.A.R.E. classes to the 6th grade students. In this program, the students learn the negative outcomes of making poor choices particularly when dealing with stress, bullying, alcohol, tobacco, and drugs. They practiced using a decision-making model to help them in making responsible decisions for a most successful future. On Thursday, April 11th, all of the DARE students in Buchanan County were able to graduate and celebrate. This year's invited speaker was Mark Farley, football coach at UNI. Winner of this year's essay contest was Ethan Wilcox, who read his paper at the ceremony.

"A Global Marketplace" was the Junior Achievement program enjoyed by 6th grade this year. Volunteers from the community taught six 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 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.

Students were selected by McDonald's to work a two-hour shift as an honorary crew-member. Selection was based upon applications and cover letters that were submitted. These followed students had fun experiencing McDonald's from the employee viewpoint: Campbell Schwartz, Gracee Cornwell, Cael Post, Addison Lange, Brooklyn Tudor, Lizzie Kremer, Kylie Osborne, Evonne Clemens, EJ Miller, Presley Clendenen, Hunter Weepie, and Keenan Postel.

Greetings from the Independence Jr/Sr High School! I hope you are getting to enjoy some of the good weather we have been having with your children or friends outside. I know I usually feel better after exercising, or just getting some fresh air. At a recent Independence Community School District Board meeting, I was given the approval to pursue the purchase of a therapy dog for our Jr/Sr High School. This is very exciting to me and I am sure to many of our students and their families. I want to use this newsletter as a way to communicate more about our new team member, McCoy.

Many schools in our immediate area and also throughout the United States are utilizing dogs as a way to help students cope with many areas of concern. Dogs have been found to help provide many positive influences on the human body. Something as simple as petting a dog has been shown to help reduce blood pressure and lower the stress hormone cortisol, also known as 'the fight or flight hormone'. Dogs have also been documented in helping reduce anxiety and depression. Research is also supporting students who may have Adverse Childhood Experiences, also known as ACES.

Kathy McCoy and her husband Tim Hurley of Waterloo have agreed to purchase a miniature Bernedoodle for our school. 'McCoy' will be a great addition to our students and staff. Starting April 19, McCoy will be undergoing dog obedience training in Waterloo, Iowa. After 4 weeks of obedience training, he will then come to live with my family and begin coming to school with me periodically to continue to socialize him with various environments. In order to make sure all students and staff are safe, we need to communicate with parents. If your Jr. High School or High School son or daughter has a pet allergy, we need to know this by you emailing me, Mr. Hupke. Please send me an email at dhupke@independence.k12.ia.us I will then get in contact with you and do some follow up. Let me explain a little about McCoy's parents. First, his sire (dad) is a poodle. This will make him hypo-allergenic for most people with allergies. McCoy's mother is a bernese mountain dog which helps with his calm demeanor and intelligence. The combination of these two have proven to make very effective therapy dogs for many different settings. He is expected to be around 40 pounds and be a non-shedding pet.

We are extremely grateful for the support of the following businesses and supporters of this project:

- Independence Community School Board
- Kathy McCoy and Tim Hurley, Waterloo
- Winthrop Veterinary Clinic
- Pipestone Veterinary Clinic, Cameron Schmitt
- Pets Allowed, Rick and Julie Wulfekuhle
- Norby's Farm Fleet, Independence

If you have any questions about McCoy, please do not hesitate to contact me at 334-7405.

Have a great rest of the school year and GO MUSTANGS!!

McCoy



**Dewey Hupke, JSH
Assistant Principal**



Options Send in Messenger

“Spring’s Precedent”

Mr. Howard



**John Howard, Jr/Sr High School
Principal**

The calendar has recently flipped to spring... and much goes with this change. Grass has begun to turn a little green and those who love to mow are ecstatic. Sunshine, on most days, has replaced the cloudy dreariness of previous months. Walkers and joggers fill the sidewalks to shed some pounds and enjoy the fresh air. Golfers have begun to “flood” courses in an effort to reclaim that one (ever) elusive perfect shot. But in terms of this newsletter edition, the most significant aspect of this season is one thing...graduation 2019.

Yes, in just a couple of weeks Commencement 2019 will be here. The gym will be decorated; seats will be filled with family and friends. Faculty and students will process through the doors, in proper attire, to the sounds of “Pomp and Circumstance.” Songs will be sung and speeches professed. Academic awards and scholarships will be announced. And finally... seniors will listen for their names, meander up three stairs, and receive a coveted, signed diploma to the delight of those involved in their education. In essence, at that time, all will be completed for them and their academic expedition at our school will be over.

It is with this last sentence in mind that I want to express some heartfelt sentiments. First, congratulations to the class of 2019 on all your accomplishments on the academic, athletic, and social “fronts”. Second, thanks to all the parents, grandparents and other family members for choosing the Independence Community School District. We sincerely appreciate this selection. Third, there is no doubt that the faculty and staff at Independence Jr/Sr High School have provided the members of the class of 2019, like so many before them, an excellent foundation to be successful in the future. And for this I am grateful. Finally, on a personal note, I am extremely proud of and thankful for our son, Kaden, who is a member of the class of 2019. May he, and all the other students, remember fondly their time at Independence.

So, spring now appears at the top of the calendar. The grass is much greener, and the weather is better. Activity has increased outside and our sports’ focus has changed. But, along with all of these things, graduation is also imminent for the class of 2019. And that takes precedent.

Congratulations, Class of 2019! May you always be Mustangs. Good Luck!

Spring is a very busy time in the activity world. We have four different high school sports going as well as State Individual Speech, State Jazz Band Championships, Mock Trial, concerts, the musical, and other events. I enjoy seeing our students have the opportunity to pursue their passions and interest throughout their school year. However, many times people are caught up in results, playing time, role in the group, etc. and forget the reason why we offer such a variety of activities. While everyone would like to win a state championship, get a “1” rating, qualify for all-state, be the lead in a play or musical, it is important not to lose sight of all the reasons kids participate in extra-curricular activities and their benefits. A few times a year I believe that we forget all the benefits of and what it means to be on the team, in the cast, or a part of the activity. I always like to remind others and myself during those times of all the reasons our students are in activities and the benefits they gain by participating. To do that I asked a few junior and senior students involved in multiple activities throughout their high school career to share with me why they participate in activities. Their responses are quoted below.



**Justin Putz,
Activities Director**

“I do extracurricular activities because it is a fun way to stay involved, to find friends, and to flourish in your area of strength. The activity you do is full of other people who also care about the activity. No one is forced to be there, they all want to do the activity just like you do.”-12th Grade Student

“I’m involved in extracurricular activities because I like to keep myself busy and expand my realm of friends, relationships, involvement, experiences and interactions. Once I got started with extracurriculars, it was hard to walk away from something that was such a big part of my life. My extracurriculars have given me lifelong friendships and memories to last a lifetime. They have also helped well-round me as a person, student and an athlete.”-12th Grade Student

“Being involved in extracurricular activities has really benefited me. I keep doing them every year because the memories that I get to make with my friends and the hard work, dedication and reward that I am getting from them is worth it. Being involved in them has also taught me many things that I wouldn't have known or figured out if I wasn't involved in them. They have not only taught me life skills or people skills but how I can solve things by myself, that I don't need someone a teacher or coach peering over my shoulder making sure I'm doing the right thing. Being involved in them puts a lot of responsibility on myself. How well I want to do at a certain competition or tournament is all-dependent on how hard I'm willing to work and how much time I am willing to put in. Extracurriculars have benefited me in the aspect that I have grown so much as a high school student. I know how to manage school, homework, and fun while still managing to keep my grades up.”-11th Grade Student

“Extracurricular activities have benefitted me because they teach ideas I wouldn't be able to learn inside a classroom. I'm involved in activities and sports outside of school because they provide a creative, physical, and/or rewarding outlet for me. Extracurricular activities have also benefitted me by introducing me to groups of friends who have become like family throughout my high school career. Since I have been involved in activities such as cross country and marching band, my overall high school experience has been filled with great memories.”-11th Grade Student

“I am involved in extracurricular activities to make more friends and have fun. I have made so many different friends within the different activities I do and I love them all. I have also learned so much about myself and what I can push myself to do. The activities I am in are helping me stay in shape and stay healthy.”-12th Grade Student

As you can see, our students participated for a variety of reasons. They also all responded that activities help them create friendships, learn about themselves, learn lessons that cannot be taught in the classroom, and help them learn to take responsibility and be accountable. These students’ responses were a nice reminder of why students do activities and all the benefits student can receive from being involved. It is also a nice reminder that no matter one’s role or the results that being a part of the team, cast, or activity is still an experience that can benefit students greatly.

Information from your School Nursing Department



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 2019-2020 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 2019-2020 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 **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 2019-2020 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 2019-2020 school year.

If you have any questions, please contact your primary care provider or 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 2019-2020 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.

Mustang Pride — Volunteer & Mentor Program

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Val Maximovich,
Volunteer & Mentor
Coordinator



Independence Community Schools **Volunteer & Mentor Program Update**

by Val Maximovich

National Volunteer Week April 7-13

Volunteers -- YOU MATTER!
You Have **Hands** That Share And
Hearts That Care

We will say a big "Thank you" to all our volunteers on Wednesday, May 8!



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.



S'Mores



Annual Mentor Picnic "How about S'more Mentoring Fun!"

Mentors and their students will enjoy some end of the school year fun

Mon., May 20, 2019 — 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. at West Elementary

Lots of camp out games and activities are being planned for everyone!



Jeannie Neeley Mentor of the Year Award

Daryl Roberts was the recipient of the Jeannie Neeley Mentor of the Year Award at the annual Chamber of Commerce banquet in February. Daryl and his mentee, Jaimee have met every week for 10 years. They were matched when Jaimee moved to Independence and was in Mrs. Mace's 2nd grade. Mrs. Mace made sure every student in that classroom had a mentor! It has been a great time of sharing and growing through the years together! Jaimee is now a senior, and ready for the next chapter in her life.



It's Planting Season on the Farm

Mentors and their students had a great time at the **Planting Season on the Farm** event at Heartland Acres Agribition Center on Sat., Apr. 13. It was a first time event for the mentoring program.



This event was sponsored by Buchanan County Farm Bureau, Fraternal Order of Eagles, Heartland Acres Agribition Center, Independence Community Schools Mustang Mentoring program, community and private donations.

MENTORS and VOLUNTEERS are always NEEDED! It's a great time to register to be a mentor or volunteer for the 2019-20 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 and share our Facebook page "Independence Mustang Mentoring"!

We are evaluating each server's traffic use, response time, data recovery options, and a host of other factors in determining the best plan moving forward. If we choose to keep some servers locally, we will be purchasing two servers to automatically switch services if one server becomes inoperable.

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

Another big consideration is network data. We currently have data connected to each server. The data is backed-up everyday and moved offsite in case of a natural or man-made catastrophe. We want to get away from this model and purchase one network drive for all data so either server is able to access the necessary data. This arrangement allows for both servers to mirror each other.

One thing the technology department spends time on in the spring is the fall return of students. Registration for 2019-2020 will start August 1, 2019. Teachers will return for staff development on August 20 and the first student day is August 26 (Grades 3-12) and August 27 for grades K-2.

The technology department loves spring. We love the warmer weather and summer planning.

We hope you enjoy spring and look forward to the summer.

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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