

**Volume 16 Issue 1**  
**Fall, 2021 - 2022**

**District Events:****Nov 24-26**

No School;  
Thanksgiving Break

**Dec 3**

No School

**Dec 10**

2 hour Early Dismissal-  
Prof Dev

**Dec 16**

School Board Meeting  
6:00 p.m.

**Dec 17**

2 hour Early Dismissal  
Prof Dev

**Dec 23**

2 hour Early Dismissal

**Dec 24 - Jan 3**

No School;  
Winter Break

**Jan 4**

School Resumes

**Jan 7 and 14**

2 hour Early Dismissal-  
Prof Dev

**Jan 17**

School Board Meeting  
6:00 p.m.

**Jan 21 and 28**

2 hour Early Dismissal-  
Prof Dev

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***From the Superintendent's Desk...***

Let me first say, it's been an excellent start to the 2021-22 school year. There have been numerous distractions over the past 18 months but our students and staff have shown a great resolve in taking on one obstacle after another. It's with your help, we will continue to improve and make each day a better day for all of our students.

We have great news to share with our district enrollment as we increased approximately sixteen (16) students to start the school year. School districts all across the state receive their funding and design their budgets on student enrollment. It's critical we continue to improve our instruction, curriculum, and increase opportunities to provide the best possible education for all of our families attending the Independence Community Scholl District.

The Covid virus continues to take a great deal of our attention. We continue to clean and sanitize to provide the safest environment for all of our students and staff. In addition, we continue to monitor and report our statistics on the district website. Currently, the number of infections across the district are as low as anytime over the past 18 months. Let's continue to be safe, stay home when sick, and work together to educate our students during this unique and challenging time.

I'd like to congratulate and thank all the students, parent volunteers, and staff members for an excellent Fall activities season. Whether they were competing in athletics, on stage, in the classroom, or marching on a field, it was a very successful season and our kids need to be commended. Their commitment to excellence is demonstrated every day and we should all be proud to be a Mustang.



**Russell Reiter,  
Superintendent**

## School Improvement by Erin Burmeister, Director of School Improvement

“Things may never go back to normal. You may need to create a new normal. And that’s okay.”

-Author Unknown

We keep hearing about the “new normal”, what exactly does that mean for education and for Independence Community School District? I will share my opinion on some of the things that should be considered when determining our “new normal”.



**Erin Burmeister,  
Director of School Improvement**

Learning loss is and continues to be a topic of conversation in the education world. I recently read an article that looked at student learning loss from the perspective of students. Based on this, as well as other stakeholder input, the authors argued that schools should be addressing learning loss through relationship building, additional mental health and wellness supports and a less-is-more approach to content. This is what Independence Community School District has been trying to do and this article helped reinforce our approach to addressing student learning loss and providing a basis for our “new normal”.

Relationship building has always been important, but the need for teaching and reinforcing this skill has certainly increased during the pandemic. During school closure and the pandemic as a whole, many students were deprived of relationships with anyone except their immediate families. For some students, this came at a time when they were just learning how to form these relationships and they missed out on some important opportunities to build new relationships. Now we must find a way help students build, maintain and grow these important relationships with both adults and peers.

One of the ways we have worked to strengthen relationships is through a program called Capturing Kids’ Hearts (CKH). Through this program, teachers, staff, and administrators learn how to build meaningful, productive relationships with every student and every colleague. Another program that is being used K-6 is Positive Action. This program primarily focuses on social-emotional learning but does have a component specifically designed to help students build relationships with others. This emphasis on relationships needs to be a part of our “new normal”.

Mental health and wellness continue to be a large area of need for students. The pandemic has definitely increased students feeling of isolation, confusion and frustration. Under normal circumstances students experience a range of emotions that are difficult, the pandemic has amplified that. The Positive Action program I mentioned above has helped support students through social and emotional learning. Positive Action is based on the intuitive philosophy that we feel good about ourselves when we do positive actions. This program focuses on self-concept, positive actions for our body and mind, managing yourself responsibly, treating others the way you like to be treated, telling yourself the truth and improving continually.

In addition to the Positive Action program, we are also working to provide additional supports to students who are struggling with mental health and wellness. We have added a school social worker to our staff and have increased internal and external counseling services for students. Although these are great first steps, we must continue to partner with families in order to support our students. If students and staff aren’t well, both physically and mentally, learning will continue to suffer. This must become part of our “new normal”.

*Continued on page 14*

## Viruses, Malware, Phishing, DDoS, Trojan Horses (And a myriad of other names and treats)



**Steve Noyes,**  
**Director of Technology**

Internet and computer threats are real and have many different forms, intentions and consequences. It is often difficult to understand the differences and how to best protect yourself, information and network services.

The school district was a victim of a very specific kind of attack in November. It is known as a Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attack. The attack involves many servers requesting information at the same time to overwhelm the server or network so normal activity is not possible. There is no intention of actually breaking into the network for access. The main purpose is disruption. The district experienced disruption in November so from this perspective, the attack was successful. The school did not pay any ransom nor did the school lose any data. The attack did force us to remove outside access to our camera security system. We allowed outside access for police and administrators to view district cameras. The security cameras are still running, just not available from outside the district. The district is looking at options to return this functionality without further risking another DDoS attack.

Independence Light and Power (IL&P) was instrumental in determining the target of the attack and we blocked access to the server. We expected the attacks to stop since the server was no longer responding and no longer available. The attacks continued, so we continued to investigate other solutions. IL&P had their upstream provider block all traffic to the target address. This stopped the attack to our network and to IL&P but caused another problem for the school district. The district was using this address for some outbound traffic. It took time for us to appropriately route traffic to another port and resume normal network traffic.

The district has a strong firewall and tools to help determine threats from the inside of our network. IL&P has tools to help determine threats coming to their network and we were able to successfully defend the school network and return to normal.

This kind of attack is not a normal attack for a user and normally your network provider will defend against this kind of attack. There are other attacks which you must protect yourself. Over the course of 2021-2022, I will be writing a series of articles to help explain various kinds threats.

For now, you must still be diligent to protect yourself by not giving out personal information, use strong passwords for your information, use different passwords for different applications and services, never give out your password to others. Watch for ads which are too good to be true and generally be aware of what is happening with your account information.

The Internet is a great resource of information, education and communication. You must be careful in your use of the Internet and work to protect yourself from fraud, theft, inconvenience, disruption and scams.

I am looking forward to this series of articles to help explain various threats and how you can specifically protect yourself.



East Elementary and the Early Childhood Center are off to a great start to the year. We are excited to be back to a little more “normal” after all the changes from last year. Staff and students are working at **Living the Mustang Way**. We are kind, grateful, respectful and responsible.



We had a special visitor at Halloween. Fechin, Principal Reidy’s Swiss Mountain puppy came to meet the students. We are hoping after she attends puppy school she can visit school more often so that she can support students and staff well-being.



**Kay Reidy, Principal**

## Preschool

The preschool held Preschool Family Night Out in November. The families were treated to a visit from Vonnie from the Independence Public Library. She read books and taught the children fingerplays. Deputy Ben Ward and his K9 partner, Koda, made an appearance and showed off some of his K9 skills. The children created paper plate owls and colored fall pictures. They also got to try their hand in decorating cookies to look like a scarecrow. Each student received a book as a departing gift. Fun was had by all.



## Kindergarten

Fall has been a busy time in kindergarten! We have been learning about using environmental print to help us learn about “Reading the World.” Students have learned how to retell using favorite storybooks. We love to read and retell The Carrot Seed and The Three Billy Goats Gruff! In math, we have been working on building number foundation. At this time, we are focusing on the “Tricky Teens,” counting, and writing our numbers.

In November we will be learning about Thanksgiving and sharing things we are thankful for as kindergarteners. Please continue to encourage reading and writing at home. Have a safe and wonderful Thanksgiving!



## First Grade

First Graders enjoyed dressing up and parading through the school at our Fall Parties! During Science, Michael from Fontana Park presented facts about Bats. Students also played a game using echolocation. First Graders earned Word Detective badges by learning strategies to solve tricky words. In Math we continue to work on number patterns, telling time and solving number models.



## Second Grade

In second grade math we have been working on addition, time, and money. For writing, we have been working on creating and editing complete sentences. We have also been working on planning out our writing before beginning to write our story. As for reading, we have been working on scooping up more words and choosing the “right fit books” to read. Finally, in second grade science, we have been working on discovering and learning about different types of animals and their classifications. We look forward to celebrating a sense of community during Stone Soup in December.

## Fine Arts

Elementary art classes have been reviewing the use of color in art. In Kindergarten, first and second grade, we have studied how primary colors (red, yellow and blue) can mix to make secondary colors using books, videos, and experimentation. We have been working on the correct use of art materials as well as improving our drawing skills and creating self-portraits. -Mrs. Anderson

At East Elementary, Miss Baskerville, JK-2 Music, shares that all grade levels have been working hard in music! 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> graders have been working on rhythm and notating the rhythms that are clapped for them down. Kindergarten has learned many different music terms and ideas, definitions, and how to perform them. All grades have been working hard on preparing songs to perform for our Veterans Day Assembly on November 11th. And in addition to that, Kindergarten and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students have been getting their Christmas songs ready for their concert on December 20th at 6:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. We are looking forward to performing for all our friends and family and are excited to keep working in music!

## 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 a busy fall with a successful Parent-Teacher Conferences, setting and meeting our wellness goals, collaborating and strengthening our curriculum and instruction, visiting and learning in new environments with Fontana, 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.

Thank you for partnering with us to make West Elementary the very best it can be. We appreciate your support and look forward to continuing a positive and productive 2021-2022 school year.

Go Mustangs!

Cherilyn Reed, West Elementary Principal

### Third Grade

Third grade students have been working on building their third grade reading life, which means picking good-fit books, checking for understanding, and staying focused on their reading. They are also working hard to write a small moment story about their lives, making sure they are telling their story in order with lots of details and complete sentences. Third grade students are reviewing addition and subtraction strategies, practicing basic facts, and getting ready to start learning about measurement and multiplication. In science, they have learned about selection and how scientists use selection to make different plant varieties. The third grade students have enjoyed learning about agriculture from Shelby Hawkins and Mr. Haden’s students. The third grade students are excited to be at West!



## Fourth Grade

We were very fortunate to have Fontana naturalist, Sondra Cabell, come and teach a creative rocks and volcano lesson outdoors. It was fun and engaging for our 4th grade students, and it tied in really well with our Birth of Rocks unit in science. Math has consisted of geometry, and addition and subtraction review. Practicing multiplication facts at home would really set your child up for success for our next math unit of multiplication and division. We have been learning all about the Northeast region in social studies through our new inquiry social studies standards. Reading and writing has focused on realistic fiction. Fourth grade students also celebrated their first month of at home reading by playing kickball and participating in a fall craft! Please continue reading at least 20 minutes every night and recording your reading in your reading log. Reading is the best way to increase vocabulary!



## 5th Grade

**Reading/ Writing and Language Arts** - 5th grade students are working towards taking charge of their reading life. Students are learning how to respond to their reading by thinking analytically in their independent reading. Students will be thinking about the important parts of their book and supporting their ideas with evidence from the text. All year long we will be learning to dig deeper in our understanding about our reading. We are learning about theme literature in the first unit of study.

**Math** - 5th grade students have studied number theory in Unit 1: Facts, Number-line patterns, factor arrays, divisibility rules, square numbers, and prime/composite numbers. We have also studied estimation and computation in Unit 2: Addition/Subtraction of whole numbers and decimals, Multiplication/Division of whole numbers, decimals, and by powers of 10. In Unit 3, we are learning about geometry: angles, line segments, polygons, and tessellations. In upcoming units, we will be studying division and fractions.

**Social Studies and Science** - Our 5th grade students are learning about Native Americans in the Americas and Exploration. The 5th grade students are also learning about Spaceship Earth and Chemical Magic in our Mystery Science units.



## **6th Grade**

On Wednesday, September 29th, our sixth grade students had a fun day of outdoor learning at Fontana Nature Center. Each class rotated through one of four stations. Naturalist Michael Mass shared about watersheds and water erosion. We all enjoyed watching him propose different scenarios with a water erosion table. This learning experience supports our geology science unit. Another station involving water was led by Chelsie Byram, our AEA science consultant. Students tested water from the Wapsi River for phosphate levels. After two stations, we all enjoyed eating lunch together outdoors in this beautiful setting. In another station, we practiced our Mustang pillar of Showing Kindness by helping with the clean-up from the recent wind storm. There were twigs and branches all over the park. Our many hands made light work of the clean up so that the mowers could operate safely throughout the park. Volunteering makes everyone feel good! A new experience for many of our students was with Naturalist Sondra Cabell as she instructed students on the proper use of compass with an orienteering session.



The sunshine and perfect temperatures capped a perfect day away from school!

## **Fine Arts**

Elementary art classes have been reviewing the use of color in art. In third through sixth grade, we have: engaged in a color review, discussed how colors mix to make new colors and how they work together in art. Third grade students have painted nighttime pumpkins. In fourth grade, we learned about Andy Warhol and are finishing a Pop Art drawing. In fifth and sixth grade, we have created self-portraits in the style of Tim Burton. They turned out great! Fifth grade students studied Asian Koi art and are using watercolors to paint their koi fish. In sixth grade, students have just about finished their painting collage of Mid-Century fish. Over the next few months, we will focus on how lines and shapes are incorporated into art making as we continue to create. -Mrs. Anderson

Mrs. Fisher at West Elementary, 3-6 Music, has enjoyed getting her students acquainted with her new Music room! 3rd grade has been focusing on rhythm, performing and composing all kinds of great rhythmic music! 4th grade has started working on their Holiday Program entitled *Crazy Christmas* which we are excited to present on December 20 at 7:00 pm. 5th grade is preparing to start their recorder unit (finally!), including Recorder Karate. Finally, our 6th grade students are starting bucket drumming. Lots of fun musical opportunities in the Music classroom are happening right now!

Band is in full swing with Ms. Cummings at West Elementary. The Sixth Grade Band has been working hard, getting better every lesson and full group band rehearsal. We've been having fun learning new music and preparing for the holiday concert. The Fifth Grade Band has been progressing in learning the basics of reading music, putting their instruments together, and making some awesome sounds! We just started full-group band a few weeks ago and the band is having a blast! The 5th and 6th Grade bands will have their first performance of the year on December 9th.



## “Good Things”

### Mr. Howard

For the last couple of years, in coordination with our Capturing Kids’ Hearts program, many meetings and class periods begin with Good Things. In essence, the administrator (in the case of meetings) or the teacher (for the classroom) asks the participants or pupils to share the Good Things happening in their lives. This simple five to ten-minute segment is designed to set a “positive” tone for the meeting or class as well as promote quality relationships with all involved. From my point of view, Good Things has been a tremendous success.



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

So, you may be asking, “what does this have to do with the Fall Newsletter?” Well, the answer is quite clear. This issue is a perfect time for me, as the principal, to express my Good Things in regards to the Independence Jr/Sr High School. Here goes...

- We have a tremendous student body. I am proud to work with them on a daily basis.
- We have teachers who exhibit commitment, dedication and a genuine zest for their positions, even in the most difficult/stressful times.
- We have support staff who labor tirelessly, void of any fan-fare, to make our school a better place each day. Honestly, I can’t commend these individuals enough!
- We have quality administrators (at every level) who display a love for students.
- We have a board of education who continuously strives to do what is best for the district.
- We have parents/guardians who are active and encouraging, not to mention financial contributors to Indee.
- We have coaches and sponsors who not only demonstrate a never-ending yen to/for triumph but also aspire for participants to be better people.
- We have a marching band who is one of the best in the state. I was so proud of the new staff and how they worked with the students.
- We have a volleyball team who has reached the regional final the last 5 years. In other words, during that time, the team has been one of the top 16 teams.
- We have thespians and singers who continually impress me with their acting and singing skills.
- We have just finished a record setting football season where the varsity made the quarterfinals (top 8) for the first time.
- We have a cheer squad who earned a 2<sup>nd</sup> and a 3<sup>rd</sup> place finish at state cheer.
- We have a HS student council who organized (multiple) fundraisers for the Northeast Iowa Food Bank. Their efforts provided enough food (1,408 pounds) and cash donations (\$5,698) to serve many, many individuals in need.
- We have a JH student council who is coordinating a “Give Thanks Challenge” where students write Thank You notes to others.
- We have community partnerships that are “second to none” in the state.

Trust me, I could add many more to this list. However, time and space are both limited. Let’s just say there are a lot of “Good Things” associated with Independence Jr/Sr High School.

Go Mustangs!

Greetings from the Independence Jr/Sr High School Assistant Principal's Office. We are off to a great school year, thanks to the great staff and tremendous students who make this an awesome place to work and learn. This article will share with you about some students who work very hard to accomplish a goal through teamwork and applying academic knowledge

The Independence Robotics team participates in a competition called First Tech Challenge, "FTC". There are three levels of competition put on by FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology). FIRST is a robotics community that works to prepare young people for the future through inclusive, team-based robotics competitions. FIRST core values are discovery, innovation, impact, inclusion, teamwork, and fun. Working together with gracious professionalism is a big part of *FIRST*. Gracious professionalism is a way of doing things which encourage high-quality work, emphasize the value of others, and respects individuals and the community.



**Dewey Hupke, JSH  
Assistant Principal**



Student and adult team members are encouraged to bring any skills they already have and use them to enhance their team's success. Examples of these would be programming, electronics, metalworking, graphic design, web creation, public speaking,



videography, and many more. However, if a student does not have any of these previously listed skills, they are still welcome to participate.



All participants, who are referred to as 'Gracious Professionals' learn and compete like crazy but treat one another with respect and kindness in the process. FIRST Tech Challenge teams design and build a robot using a reusable kit of parts and compete within a common set of game rules to play an exciting field game and complete the specific season challenge. "The

robot game changes every season and is always a blast," said Michael Decker, a member of Team 7495 for the Independence Mustangs Robotics team.

A traditional FTC event is typically held in a school gymnasium, where teams use robots to compete in the current season challenge. Teams participating in traditional events compete with Alliance partners in a head-to-head style of competition on the official FIRST Tech Challenge Playing Field. Teams compete in a series of matches that determine their ranking at a traditional tournament. The size of a traditional event can range anywhere from 8 Teams to over 16 Teams competing in one place. Traditional events are run by many volunteers including referees, judges, scorekeepers, and other key volunteers. Traditional events consist of Robot inspections, Robot Competitions, judging interviews (for most Competitions), and an overall celebration of Teams and their accomplishments.



Michael Decker went on to say, "Robotics to me is a time where kids who want to apply what they learn can get together and have fun." After being a spectator at a Robotics competition, I can assure you the level of teamwork and enjoyment is high.

Photos by CJ Huffman

As we start getting into November, it is time to transition from fall activities to our winter activities. This time always brings new excitement as we move indoors and start new seasons. With that in mind, I wanted to use my column on the importance of the parent-coach/sponsor relationship. I feel that between seasons is a good time to hit the reset button and relook at a few things. This is an updated version of what I shared three or four years ago, but I feel it is worth updating and sharing again.

I believe that we have tremendous coaches, sponsors, kids, and parents that are involved with our programs. Each year I am impressed with the coaches and sponsors that work with our students. Each of our coaches and sponsors want what is best for the entire student population, not just the portion of them that are involved in activities. The Positive Coaching Alliance has put out guidelines for how parents can contribute to the Coach-Parent Partnership, which I have shared. Additionally, I have added some of my thoughts behind them. While many of these are “common sense” I wanted to share these thoughts with you. We have had a tremendous fall with our sports and activities and the great relationships between our parents and our coach/sponsors are very important in that success.



**Justin Putz,  
Activities Director**

**Recognize the Coaches Commitment-** Coaches make a commitment that goes well past in-season practices and games. Additionally, some coaches, especially youth coaches, are volunteers and do not get paid at all. At our levels no coach is a full-time coach. They coach because they like working with students and are trying to make a difference. Coaches sacrifice to help kids out. Many take vacation time off work, time away from their families to attend practices, games, clinics, and meetings to coach or sponsor an activity. Make sure you keep that in mind as the season goes on.

**Make Early, Positive Contact with the Coach-** Get to know your student’s coach and sponsor and offer any assistance that you can provide. Getting involved in the program is a great way to be a part of the program and be active in your student’s activities. From a coaching standpoint, any help is greatly appreciated. Ways parents can help is coordinate rides for your student and others who may not have rides, team meals, snacks for road games, volunteer to film the games, be a positive advocate for the team and program (social media, in the community, and with others parents), keep stats, and other areas that you may be able to help.

**Fill the Coaches Emotional Tank-** Many times, coaches only hear from parents with complaints or deal with negative issues. Based on experience well over 75% of parent communications I receive are when there is some type of issue. If you or your child had a good experience in an activity please take the time to write the sponsor an email and share that. It is always a nice change to hear positives.

**Don’t Put the Player in the Middle and Let Coaches Coach-** In activities there are many strategies or ways to do things and coaches/sponsors pick the one that they feel gives the team and your student the best chance to be successful. Sometimes it works great and other times things do not go as planned. With that in mind, it can be confusing for a player when a parent coaches from the stands. This is especially true when parents are offering instruction that differs from the coaches. In addition, when questioning a coach in front of your child, often times the child is put in the middle of two people that they respect. Try to avoid making negative comments in front of your participants.

**Contribute to a Positive Environment –** Parents, coaches/sponsors, and participants all want the same thing. Each wants the participant to be successful, grow as a person, and have a great experience. Do whatever you can to provide an all-round positive environment for that to happen. Get involved, be supportive, demonstrate good sportsmanship, and anything else you can do to help provide the best environment possible.

For more information visit <http://www.positivecoach.org>.



## Information from your School Nursing Department



**COVID-19, flu or cold**  
Check your symptoms to find out

**Northwell Health**  
Current as of March 16, 2020

Symptoms	Coronavirus	Flu	Cold
Fever	Common	Common	Rarely
Fatigue	Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes
Cough	Common (usually dry)	Common (usually dry)	Mild
Sneezing	No	No	Common
Aches & pains	Sometimes	Common	Common
Runny/stuffy nose	Rarely	Sometimes	Common
Sore throat	Sometimes	Sometimes	Common
Diarrhea	No	Sometimes (for children)	No
Headache	Sometimes	Common	Rarely
Shortness of breath	Sometimes	No	No

Source: Northwell Health Organization. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

### Prevention

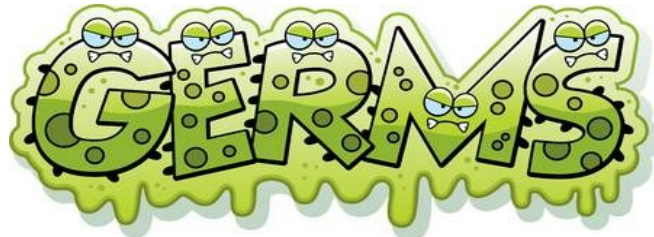
- Wash your hands frequently and keep your hands away from your nose and mouth.
- Get your flu and covid vaccine
- STAY HOME WHEN YOU ARE SICK!**

### Stop the Spread

The top **five most virus-contaminated** areas in the home are:

1. Telephones (have you cleaned your cell phone lately)
2. Appliances such as the refrigerator and microwave
3. Faucets
4. Light switch and door handles
5. TV remotes

Make sure to **disinfect regularly**, especially during cold and flu season.



### Lice

This is the time of year that we see an increase number of cases of head lice. It is important for you to routinely check your child/children. It is also important to remind them not to share items such as brushes, combs, hats, etc.

Adult head lice or their eggs (nits) are found in the hair, most often behind the ears and at the base of the neck. Head lice are most commonly spread by direct head-to-head contact with hair of other people who have head lice.

Head lice are less commonly spread through contact with an infested person's personal items, such as hair brushes and combs, hats, unwashed clothing, bedding or towels. Head lice are commonly spread within households.

There are a number of effective treatments for head lice. Treatment for head lice usually consists of shampooing the hair with a medicated shampoo. Consult with your primary care provider for treatment of head lice.

Head lice are certainly a nuisance, but they are not considered a health hazard, nor is it a sign of poor hygiene.



### Nosebleeds

If your child suffers from winter nosebleeds it may be from the dry air.

Try using a **cold air humidifier** in the child's room at night.

Try using **saline drops or Vaseline** may help too.

If **severe**, consult your primary care provider.



As always, please contact your school nurse with questions, concerns, needs, or changes with your child's health.

Molly Beatty, RN  
East Elementary  
319-332-0533

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

Jennifer Eddy, BSN, RN  
Jr/Sr High School  
319-332-0720



Val Maximovich,  
Volunteer & Mentor  
Coordinator

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



We are back to school and we need to recruit mentors!

We took on a new recruitment location this year! We had a booth at Elm Tree Gallery and Gifts during downtown Holiday Open House, Nov. 4-7.



It was a wonderful time to tell our community about the school based mentoring program!

Special thanks to the owners, Eric and Lisa, of Elm Tree Gallery and Gifts for their wonderful hospitality.

Many, many thanks to everyone that volunteered their time at the booth, and to the many others that stopped by and inquired about mentoring! We are excited to have more mentors to meet with our students!

On Friday, we had a mentor and their student to share their story they have met for 3 years.

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## **MENTORING MATTERS**

Mentoring has a positive lifelong impact for both students and mentors. It builds leadership and management skills, expands professional networks, and provides an empowering opportunity to give back to the community.

**BECOME PART of THIS LEGACY** – Please consider sending a gift of time or resources. All contributions are welcomed and greatly appreciated.

*To make a difference call 319-332-0626 or email [vmaximovich@indeek12.org](mailto:vmaximovich@indeek12.org)*



*Please like and share our Facebook page Independence Mustang Mentoring!*

Finally, a less-is-more approach to learning needs to be taken. One way we can continue this approach is by working with the Iowa Core Standards and determining what our priorities for students are. Which of the state mandated standards provide students with essential knowledge and skills necessary for success in the next class, course or grade level? Which of the standards provide students with knowledge and skills that are useful beyond a single test or unit of study? Which standards will be assessed on upcoming state and national exams and finally, which standards will provide students with knowledge and skills that will be of value in multiple disciplines?

These are the standards that we must prioritize for students. At minimum, 60% of time needs to be spent teaching and learning these standards. Additionally, these are the standards that we should be assessing students on to ensure students are mastering them. If we are going to address learning loss, we must focus on the priorities with a less-is-more approach and ensure that all students demonstrate proficiency with these standards. When students struggle, we must intervene and provide more time and support with these priorities. If we say they are a priority, we must treat them that way.

In order to help support students, we have added staff and refined structures. The addition of a math interventionist has helped elementary students that struggle with the math priority standards. In addition, we currently have six reading interventionists to support students with foundational reading skills as well as mastery of the priority standards. We continue to work on improving instruction and learning opportunities for all students.

If our "new normal" includes focusing on relationships, addressing mental health and wellness needs, and taking a less-is-more approach we will help to reduce learning loss for 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@indeek12.org](mailto:eburmeister@indeek12.org)

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@indeek12.org](mailto:eburmeister@indeek12.org)

### **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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