

Volume 17 Issue 2
Winter, 2022 - 2023

District Events:**Feb 3, 10 and 17**

2 hour Early Dismissal-
Prof Dev

Feb 20

No School

Feb 20

School Board Meeting
6:00 p.m.

Feb 24

2 hour Early Dismissal-
Prof Dev

Mar 3

2 hour Early Dismissal-
Prof Dev

Mar 9

2 hour Early Dismissal-
K-12 Parent Teacher Conf

Mar 10

No School
K-12 Parent Teacher Conf

Mar 17

2 hour Early Dismissal-
Prof Dev

Mar 20

School Board Meeting
6:00 p.m.

Mar 24 and 31

2 hour Early Dismissal-
Prof Dev

April 7 & April 10

No School

Apr 12

School Board Meeting
6:00 p.m.

Inside this issue:

From the Supt's Desk	1
School Improvement	2
Technology	3, 9
ECC/East News	4-5
West Elem News	6-9
Jr/Sr High News	10-12
Activities	13,16
Nurse News	14
Volunteer & Mentor Program	15

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

Over the past few weeks, I've been reflecting on the past 37 years in education as a teacher, coach, activities director, principal, and superintendent. I've had the pleasure to work with some amazing staff members. They have been role models, mentors, problem solvers, and cared more about their students than the academic content they possessed. This profession is all about preparing students to become the leaders of tomorrow. Modeling the important qualities of integrity, honesty, character, and hard work will continue to plant the seed of success in all our students.



Russell Reiter,
Superintendent

As many of you know, I will be retiring at the end of the 22-23 school year. I've had the privilege of serving the students, staff, and parents of the Independence Community School District. We navigated the COVID-19 pandemic, improved our elementary facilities, improved the financial position of the district, and we see continued growth in our academic scores.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the staff and administration for the past five years. You, like me, love working with students and making a difference in the lives of young people. Your support and dedication to the students of the Independence CSD has been a true blessing.

School Improvement by Erin Burmeister, Director of School Improvement

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. (CASEL, 2018)

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) has been a focus for staff and students this year. We continue to see an increasing need for implementation of social-emotional learning and believe that that this must be a part of our Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS), like our academic standards. Social and Emotional competencies are important for whole-student development and well-being. “Brain function is hierarchical. We feel and then we think.” (Blodgett, 2015, Perry, 2006).

Iowa has adopted a set of social-emotional learning competencies that are organized around the five core Competencies from the Center for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL).

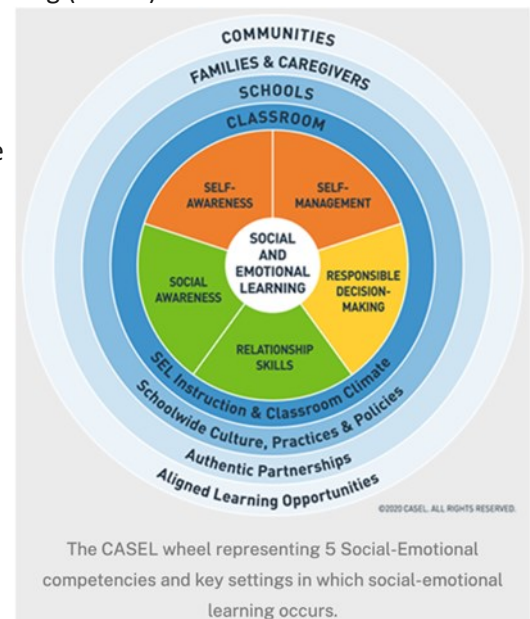
1. **Self-Awareness** is the ability to accurately recognize one’s own emotions, thoughts, and experiences and how they influence behavior. It is the ability to accurately assess one’s strengths and limitations, with a well-grounded sense of confidence, optimism, and a “growth mindset.”
2. **Self-Management** is the ability to regulate one’s emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations and to achieve goals and aspirations.
3. **Social Awareness** is the ability to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and contexts.
4. **Relationship Skills** includes the ability to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships and to effectively navigate settings with diverse individuals and groups.
5. **Responsible Decision-Making** is the ability to make caring and constructive choices about personal behavior and social interactions across diverse situations.

Iowa’s Social-Emotional Learning Competencies and Learning Targets are consistent across grade bands that include grades K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12.

Teachers have been working to develop their understanding of these competencies and instructional practices that support them. We currently have a JH team looking at how they can provide instruction around the competencies as well as a team in each elementary building. All three teams are engaging in learning around the competencies supported by Central Rivers Area Education Agency. We believe that we must provide instruction for all students centered around these competencies. In addition, we need to provide more time and support for those students that are struggling with one or more of these competencies. We are excited to continue to explore how we can help support our students and staff with social and emotional learning. For more information about the competencies please visit the Iowa Department of Education’s website, educateiowa.gov or casel.org



**Erin Burmeister,
Director of School Improvement**



Various Guardian Software Titles

The school district uses many different titles for various purposes. Many of the programs do similar functions and many times the names are being used interchangeably as if they are the same program. I want to try to sort out some of the confusion and give a brief description of the different programs parents might use during your student's education.

We are always interested in how we are communicating, relaying information and building relationships with our students, parents, community at-large, and local businesses. If you have any questions or comments about any of these titles, please email me at snoyes@indeek12.org.

I am concentrating on programs which parents and guardians might be able to create an account or receive communication from and not all of the internal software titles we use.

These six programs are the important titles for parents and guardians:

- PowerSchool
- SchoolMessenger
- Canvas
- Google Classroom
- SeeSaw
- MySchoolBucks

For the spring newsletter, I will cover district websites and social media outlets:

- District website, <https://indeek12.org>
- District sport related page: <https://www.indeemustangsports.com/>
- District sport related page: <https://www.indeemustangarts.com/>
- Facebook usage and goal, District page: <https://www.facebook.com/indeeschools>
- Other social media sites: Twitter, Instagram, Youtube



Let's start with PowerSchool. PowerSchool is our Student information System (SIS) and is used throughout the district. PowerSchool keeps track of our students, contacts, state reporting and sends information to our other programs. Parents use PowerSchool to start the process for registration and to view attendance. At the Junior Senior High, PowerSchool is also used for grades and scheduling. **Website:** <https://indee.powerschool.org>



SchoolMessenger is our mass communication tool. We do not use OneCall, but SchoolMessenger is often referred to as OneCall. SchoolMessenger is capable of sending phone messages, sms messages and email to students and parents. We try to limit the number of phone calls and use primarily sms messages and email. Several local businesses have requested we block their general phone number from being contacted. You are able to see past SchoolMessenger messages from PowerSchool Parent Portal account. When your contact information changes, please contact your student's building secretary for changes. You only need to call one building and your changes will be seen by all buildings.



Canvas is used in grade 7-12 for class assignments and instructional materials. Parents may create an account as an Observer. It is easiest to ask your student for the pairing code.



Steve Noyes,
Director of Technology

The winter months are upon us and like other parts of the school year they are filled with new memories and lots of learning. As a staff, we are always working to engage our students in quality learning opportunities that meet their needs both academically and emotionally. In order for our youngsters to learn, we know it is important we build strong relationships and address any social and emotional needs they may be experiencing.

Winter Weather

Winter weather continues to make it necessary for students to dress warmly. Even though our buildings are heated, children should be wearing warm clothing such as long sleeved shirts and/or sweaters or sweatshirts to keep them warm inside. This will serve as an extra layer to help them when they are playing outside as well! Just a reminder: if there is wet or snowy weather, students will be required to wear boots, coats, hats, mittens and snow pants to keep them warm and dry.



Kay Reidy, Principal

Preschool Early Registration

Preschool is often a child's first educational experience. Young children grow and develop at various rates. While their path of growth may be predictable, each child will reach his or her educational and developmental milestones at their own pace. Our goal is to teach the whole child, which includes: social, emotional, physical, self-help, and academic skills. These important skills are essential for Kindergarten readiness. One central component of a great school system is a clear set of expectations or standards. The Iowa Early Learning Standards represent our learning standards. Our students learn through a variety of developmentally appropriate experiences which include large and small group activities and learning through child-centered play. To encourage the success of each student, activities are also planned to address individual needs.

Quality Preschool programs help children to:

- Develop confidence
- Develop a positive view of themselves as a learner
- Use language effectively to communicate ideas, feelings and needs
- Make friends and engage in group activities where they cooperate with their peers
- Form positive relationships with peers and other trusted adults.
- Learn to be responsible for their belongings.
- Develop persistence and self regulation skills through engaging in challenging activities
- Develop literacy skills, creatively expressing ideas through art, music, story telling, and dramatic play
- Develop scientific and numeracy skills as they identify, explore, examine, and question to solve problems.

Early registration for the 2023-2024 school year will begin February 17 thru March 3rd for Independence, Kidsville, Moser, St. John's and WeeCare sites. Registration is done virtually. We will post the link to the Independence School District website. Feel free to call Kelly at 319-334-4780 with any questions.

Preschool News

We are so fortunate to have Special Visitors come to our PK4 and ECSE classrooms monthly!

*The SPARK program from BCHC comes to our classrooms 2 times per month! They bring us a fruit or vegetable to try, as well as an additional way to eat it. So far, we have had: Peaches, Tomatoes, Plums, Pumpkin, Peas, Olives, and Cucumbers. We also participate in physical activities such as Squats, Burpees, Inchworms, and Bear Crawls.

*Fontana comes to visit our classrooms almost every month. This year, we have learned about Nocturnal Animals, Turkeys, What Animals Do In Winter, Salamanders, and Pumpkins.

*Our 3 ECC PK4 sites each have a Reading Buddy Classroom from East. Our Buddy classrooms visit us 2 times per month and read us stories that they have been reading in the classroom.

*Mrs. Shaffer's 8th Grade FCS Exploratory class recently studied Child Development. For their final project, they made special books for Mrs. Gilroy's class, and came to our classroom to read them to us. Both the Preschoolers and the "Big Kids" had a blast!! We keep the books in our library, and they are the absolute favorite books in our classroom library:)



ART - Mrs. Anderson

Art classes are their shape unit projects. Kindergarteners practiced coloring and cutting shapes as well as making a shape polar bear. In first grade we drew, painted and created shapes using these materials: watercolors, oil pastels, colored paper, glue and scissors. Second graders studied the difference between geometric and organic shapes in order to create their shape collage. This week they have started making painted paper for our upcoming project.

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!

Our winter months have been filled with learning and lasting memories. At West Elementary, our staff continually work to maintain our health and well-being, build positive relationships, and provide authentic, engaging learning opportunities to best meet students' emotional and academic needs.



Cheri Reed, Principal

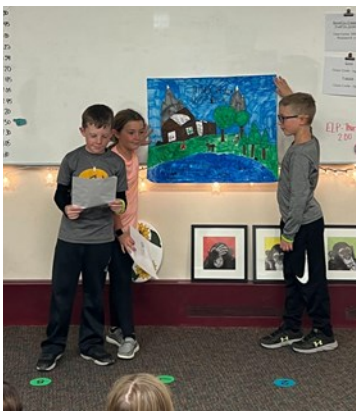
As one measure of our students' academic success, students in the district will take Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP) tests during our 2023 designated window, April 17th-May 5th. During the months of February and March, our building staff and students will be preparing for the administration of our state-wide assessment. As the dates get closer, we will be sending home more information about our testing process.

We are so proud of our West Mustangs and their dedication to *Living the Mustang Way* by being responsible, being respectful, showing kindness, and living gratefully.

Go Mustangs!

Third Grade

Third grade students have been learning and practicing non-fiction comprehension strategies to help them deepen their understanding. They have learned how to find the main idea and supporting details of a non-fiction book. In writing, students have written opinion pieces in which they stated how they felt about a topic and supported their opinion with at least three reasons. Third grade students are currently learning how to write an informative piece on a topic they are familiar with. In math, they have been using their knowledge of place value when adding or subtracting large numbers. In science, third grade students have been learning about forces and friction. In social studies, students will be taken back to the 1850's to learn how migration, trade and survival impacted people's lives.

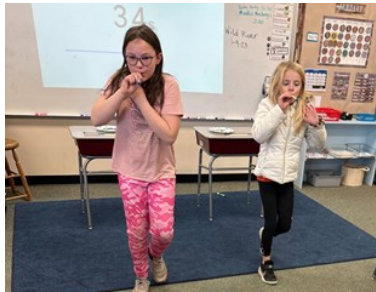


Fourth Grade

This winter, fourth students have been busy working with fractions, decimals and place value. Students have enjoyed the hands-on activities and discussions the new Illustrative Math curriculum has brought to the classroom.

In literacy, students have gained a variety of skills within different genres and writing pieces. Students are engaging in hands-on activities to better understand how animals and humans receive information through their senses in science.

We continue to celebrate our at-home reading with a reading celebration for all students who meet their goal of 400 minutes each month!



Fifth Grade

We have been working hard on comprehension strategies and learning to think deeply when we read. We are currently working to find the main idea of nonfiction text.



We have been sharpening our math skills by working on understanding multiplication and division of fractions using numbers and diagrams.

Students are learning to develop models and engage in arguments using evidence in our current science units.

In Social Studies, students are working to analyze how interactions between individuals and groups influence society. Some classes are working on creating bio cards for an assigned Explorer. Some classes have created dioramas and poster displays for Social Studies as well.



Sixth Grade

A priority standard for sixth and seventh grade math is understanding of ratios and proportions. Our sixth grade students have really seemed to grasp this math concept and we've seen a lot of success with their practice of proportionate reasoning. We followed that topic with fraction work. Students learned multiple ways to multiply and divide fractions, both with visuals and using the traditional algorithm. We are now diving into a decimal unit to improve decimal computation fluency.

In 6th grade, the students have been busy reading a lot of non-fiction lately as our lessons have focused on informational reading skills. For part of the unit, students read nonfiction narratives (biographies and nonfiction told in more of a story format) in book club groups. For the current part of the unit, the students are learning to read for the purpose of research. Students previewed multiple topics to determine their top choices, of which the teachers then used to assign the topics. The teachers have provided the websites and books for the research.

This unit is combined with our informational writing unit. Students are learning how to choose subtopics (rather than being given them to direct their research) and take notes. Then, there will be lessons on organizing the notes. We will review how to construct the introductory and concluding paragraphs as well as how to elaborate in the body paragraphs. Other important lessons will include how to avoid plagiarism and how to cite sources. Ask your child what topic he/she is researching and the interesting information that is being learned.

During social studies, we have begun our unit on the history of Medieval Europe. As we learn about topics such as the feudal system, castle life and structure, knights, and medicine, the students will continue to practice note-taking skills. We will also compare and contrast medieval serfs to plantation slaves, castles to



modern homes, and the education and towns of then to now.

Causes and effects of history abound when we learn about the Black Death (Bubonic Plague), 100 Hundred Years War, and the Battle of Hastings. Be prepared to hear about the crazy meals and other bizarre aspects of daily life in the Middle Ages!



P.E.

Physical Education – Living a Healthy Lifestyle

Students in Physical Education at West Elementary are outdoors for our warmup and indoors for the activity due to the cooler temperatures and snow outside. While indoors, we will focus on several different activities that focus on various locomotor skills to help them become more agile, flexible, and physically fit. We spend some time talking about living a healthy lifestyle and the importance of eating properly and getting the proper amount of sleep. Students learn about the importance of trying to limit their intake on foods and drinks that have added sugars in them. While discussing nutrition and healthy eating, we also talk about the importance of getting plenty of uninterrupted sleep each night. As February approaches, we will begin physical fitness testing in pull-ups, sit and reach, sit-ups, and the shuttle run. Continue to encourage your son/daughter to live a healthy lifestyle and be active as much as possible.

Keith Donnelly – Physical Education Teacher – West Elementary

ART

In third grade we studied the artist Henri Matisse who cut shapes from paper rather than drawing them first. Fourth graders are finishing their unique tessellations after looking at the work of M.C. Escher. In fifth grade students have made a creative shape drawing using shape templates, rulers and colored pencils. Their projects resemble the work of Frank Stella. Sixth graders have enjoyed making Japanese Notan art. We will continue working on the seven elements of art as we start projects using texture and form. Be sure to check out the student artwork hanging at Ryan's Pharmacy!

Mrs. Anderson - Art Teacher - East/West Elementary

Continued from Page 3



Google Classroom

Google Classroom is used for grades 3-6 and usage varies by individual teacher and classroom. Since teachers communicate directly with parents/guardians about student progress and concerns, there is no option for parents to have Google Classroom accounts. If you are concerned about your student's progress, please contact your student's teacher directly.



Seesaw is used for grades K-2 and usage varies by individual teacher and classroom. Since teachers communicate directly with parents/guardians about student progress and concerns, there is no option for parents to have Seesaw accounts. If you are concerned about your student's progress, please contact your student's teacher directly.



MySchoolBucks allows guardians to pay registration fees, add money for meals and pay student fines. MySchoolBucks also offers an electronic application for Free/Reduced status. MySchoolBucks allows you to see past paid amounts and current due amounts. You must have a MySchoolBucks account, but can access through PowerSchool. The data is not stored in PowerSchool and the district does not have access to credit card information.

My closing paragraph is officially announcing Registration for 2023-2024 will open on Saturday, July 15, 2023. You will need a PowerSchool Parent Portal account for registration. You should also have a PowerSchool Parent Portal to see past SchoolMessenger messages, student attendance, and access to MySchoolBucks.

Why Do We Do What We Do?

At a recent all-district assembly, we recognized a lot of students for outstanding accomplishments in our co-curricular activities (see Mr. Putz' AD report for details of all the recognition our students and teams have received). As I told the Board and our staff at the beginning of this school year, I love what I do because I get to see great kids doing great things everyday. Our assembly highlighted many (though by no means all) of those great things in the context of co-curriculars, and we know that the most successful students are those involved in athletics, fine arts, clubs, activities, or other co-curriculars (see our Course Guide for a list of all those activities).

And this is the critical point: co-curricular participation is correlated with *academic* achievement. We are, fundamentally, an educational institution and our number one priority must be academics, which is to say, preparing students to be college and career ready. To be sure, this looks different for different students: some are engaged in college preparatory course work, some are engaged in our Industrial Technology courses (I don't know of another school in Iowa that does what we do in preparing students for the trades), some are engaged in concurrent enrollment courses with an eye towards getting a head start on a 2-year or 4-year degree, some are involved in our Ag program (among the best in the state, in my opinion), and some are focused on the arts.

In all cases, students are gaining the skills that allow them to do great things after they leave high school. Here is a sample of what our students are doing:

- **19** students took the **PSAT** this year (the qualifying exam for the National Merit Scholarship Competition)
- **176** students comprise **371** Hawkeye Community College course enrollments for a total of **1073** credits
- **17** students are enrolled in **2 AP courses** (AP Government, taught by Joel Dinger, and AP Literature and Composition, online and supervised by Todd Reed)
- **11** students are involved in our **student built house** (the construction capstone course at IJSH), facilitated by Trish O'Loughlin
- **7** students are enrolled in **Auto Restoration** (the automotive capstone course at IJSH), taught by Wade Stahr
- **77** students are in **Band**, directed by Joel Knipe
- **90** students are in **Choir**, directed by Roger Barloon
- **32** students are in both **Band and Choir**
- **9** students are enrolled in Chris Juhl's capstone **Visual Arts** course

We have a highly engaged student population and I'm excited to build on this engagement toward greater academic success in coming years. As we begin the course registration process for next year, please encourage your students to challenge themselves with coursework that is rigorous, aligned to their interests, and will prepare them for post-secondary success.



Ian Kleman, Jr/Sr High School Principal

Continued on Page 11

Continued from Page 10

Staying Connected

A big part of being a great school is making sure those who have come before stay and feel connected to the present. I had a principal who was great at making sure former staff (and parents) were welcomed back into the school at various times of the year (he often gave tours to staff members who had been gone for 15 years or more and had stopped in to visit). To that end, we had a holiday get together the last Friday before the holiday break and invited as many former staff as we could think of. We had about 10 retirees join us on a snowy and icy afternoon to catch up with former colleagues, enjoy cake, cookies, cocoa, and coffee, and listen to our jazz choir, Divisi, and our jazz band perform short sets.

It was a fun time to reconnect with folks and our staff enjoyed being with former and current colleagues in the building. If you are ever interested in reconnecting with the school and would like to take a tour or simply visit, please give me a call (319-334-7405) or send me an email (ikleman@indeek12.org) and I would be happy to facilitate that reconnection! The Mustang community is outstanding and I appreciate leading in a place that is welcoming, authentic, and full of life. Go Mustangs!



Divisi Jazz Choir, with Mr. Barloon directing



IJSH Jazz Band



Staff and Retirees enjoying conversation and catching up

Vaping Concerns:

In the Spring of 2022, the Jr/Sr High School administration collaborated with Pathways (a substance abuse treatment facility) and the Independence Police Department. The three groups wanted to come up with a more educational response to students who are found in possession of vaping devices, or paraphernalia. In place of a citation from the police students are now given the opportunity to attend a 4-hour class to learn what the effects of vaping are, and how harmful it is to their body and their development as a person. It is our goal to help educate students about the use of vaping devices.



**Dewey Hupke, JSH
Assistant Principal**

Attendance Concerns:

During this time of the school year, student illness typically increases. As a reminder for all families who have students at the Jr/Sr High School, please take a moment to call the Office at 319-334-7405 when your student is absent. This not only allows us to get them marked down with an appropriate attendance code, it also eliminates a call to you about their absence. Thank you for your attention to this.

Technology Use/Misuse:

The Independence Jr/Sr High School is a 1-to-1 school. Each and every student in our building is issued a computer to allow for greater learning opportunities. Sometimes, students do not exercise good judgement with these devices, or with their personal devices/phones. In these instances, administration works to communicate with parents. If a your student gets anything they deem to be inappropriate, please encourage them to bring it to the attention of an administrator.

Student Conflict:

If your student is experiencing peer conflict, please refer them to the counseling office. Often, the conflict is able to be addressed and resolved at this level. Other times, it needs to be taken to the level of administration. If this happens, either the counseling office, or you as parent, can contact a building administrator for this administrator involvement.

Day of Service

This Spring, the Jr/Sr High School will be participating in a Day of Service in our communities. Four teachers and I have been planning the day coming up in April with several different community organizations. The goal of this day will be for students to get to serve the community that gives our school so much. We are confident our staff and students will be able to assist in many different ways. If there is a need for assistance you are aware of, please contact Mr. Hupke at 319-332-0704, or by email at dhupke@indeek12.org

Winter is a very busy time in the activity world and Independence has had a great fall and start to the Winter all things considered. During the winter have four different high school sports going as well as the band (jazz, concert, and pep), speech, and musical practice. Every season I enjoy seeing our students have the opportunity to pursue their passions and interest throughout their school year. Additionally, I enjoy seeing the work they put in and how our students develop over the year. However, many times people get caught up in results, playing time, role in the group, ect 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 in the first place and their benefits. A few times a year I believe that we all can forget the benefits of and what it means to be a on the team, in the cast, or a part of the activity. I have written an article like this before, but I always like to remind myself and others during those times of all the reasons our students are in activities and the benefits they gain by participating. As I have done this in the past, I again asked a six senior students involved in multiple activities throughout their high school career to answer a few questions and shared some of their answers. Their quotes are below:



**Justin Putz,
Activities Director**

Why do you participate in activities?

“I participate because you get close to people you never knew existed and created lifelong bonds. They help you leave many skills for the future.”- 12th grade student.

“I participate in activities to stay in touch with my friends and meet new people through the things I enjoy.” - 12th grade student.

“I participate in activities because it helps me become more involved in the community, it teaches me to be part of a team, and how to work through adversity with teammates. I also participate in activities because it helps me work on my time management skills.”- 12th grade student

“I participate in activities because I love hanging out with my friends and learning and creating new things to share with my community.”- 12th grade student

“I participate in activities and sports because it allows me to do the things I like to do, and be around my friends.”- 12th grade student.

How have activities you participate in enhance your high school experience? (if it has)

“Being in activities made me feel more welcome throughout high school because I had a built-in friend group that consisted of my teammates and peers.”- 12th grade student

“They enhance my high school experience because I can still do the things I enjoy like playing sports and being in FFA while working on schooling helping me decide what future career I want to go into.”- 12th grade student

“I think high school would be boring if I wasn’t in activities. It brings so much more life and fun to my time at school.”- 12th grade student

“They have allowed me to meet friends, learn about myself, pushed me to consistently work hard.”- 12th grade student

What have you learned from participating in activities that may be applicable to future endeavors?

“Hardwork is an everyday thing. It doesn't stop on off day. You'll need to work hard everyday.”- 12th grade student

“My activities helped shape who I am by teaching me problem-solving skills, as well as a strong work ethic that I will carry with me forever.”- 12th grade student

“Time management. responsibility, communication skills, teamwork, problem-solving”- 12th grade student

“I have learned how far hard-work can get you. If you are dedicated enough you can do or learn anything.” - 12th grade student

Continued on Page 16

Information from your School Nursing Department

Molly Beatty, RN
East Elementary

Kelsi Donnelly, BSN, RN, NCSN
West Elementary

Jennifer Eddy, BSN, RN
Jr/Sr High School

Hello families and welcome to the New Year! Most all of us set some sort of New Year's Resolution around this time, and for many people that involves exercising more. Exercising frequently is a great thing for everyone to be doing, including your children! This is a great time of year to help your child find ways to maintain a healthy and active lifestyle.

How much exercise does your child need?

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that all children should get a minimum of 1 hour of physical activity per day.

Why It Matters

Just like with adults, regular exercise is extremely beneficial for children. Some of these benefits include:

- Maintaining a healthy body weight
- Prevention of diseases, such as Type 2 Diabetes, heart disease, and obesity
- Reduced stress levels



What You Can Do

Some tips that you can use to help your child maintain an active lifestyle include:

- Limit time spent playing video games or watching TV
- Find activities that you can enjoy as a family such as taking walks or riding bikes around your neighborhood
- If indoors, you can use YouTube videos that lead children in an exercise program, or simply put on some music and have a dance party.



Val Maximovich,
Volunteer & Mentor
Coordinator

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

We celebrated *National Mentoring Month* in January!



Bowling at 319 Social House!

It was a great night of fun for all!

It's been a month-long celebration, goals for Mentoring Month were:

- Celebrate with our current mentors and students!
- Mentors shout out on January 11 "I Am A Mentor day!"
- Thank Your Mentor Day January 26 – "Who mentored you?"
- Raise awareness of mentoring
- Recruit individuals to mentor, especially with our program having waiting lists of young people
- Promote the rapid growth of mentoring by recruiting members of businesses and organizations to engage in mentoring

We are also celebrating 30 years of mentoring in 2023, three decades of commitment from our schools and community members!



Invest in your community – become a mentor! Mentorship is a cornerstone of community and a relationship toward brighter futures!

Every January, the mentoring movement unites in celebration of **National Mentoring Month** and uses the power of our collective voices to recruit new mentors for students, and drive meaningful change for young people.



Contact Val Maximovich, Mentor Coordinator
319-332-0626 or email vmaximovich@indeek12.org



What advice would you give to future students about activity involvement?

“The sooner you learn to manage your time the better, if you manage your time you have so much you can do.” - 12th grade student

“Be involved in what makes you happy. At the end of the day, it is your high school experience and you should do everything you can to make it the best.” - 12th grade student

“Do activities that you like not that your friends like. Find a group of people that will support you. If you think you're interested the go do it, but if you do it then give 100% all of the time.” - 12th grade student

“Get involved! You don’t have to want to win or have a competitive nature to be in activities. There are so many things you can be a part of that are just fun with your friends. If you are competitive there are so many opportunities for you to show how awesome you are!” - 12th grade student

“You will never regret working hard, giving it your all, and finishing what you start” - 12th grade student

As you can see our students have learned a lot over their time in activities. They also all responded that activities help them learn to handle adversity, be part of a team, and feel community involvement. These students’ responses were a nice reminder of how activities benefit students and why they do them in the first place. 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 and an opportunity to learn valuable lessons. It also was a reminder this year to appreciate any opportunities we get, and understand that kids are benefiting from being involved.

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

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

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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We're on the Web

<http://www.indeek12.org>