



LEADERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

Elementary

Happy New Year! From our schools to you ~ We wish you joy, love, peace, and prosperity in the new year!

Respect: Our Elementary Schools started out the new year with review and reminders for using respect for a great day at school! Our review included academic and behavior expectations for the second trimester of school. We focused on contributing to a respectful, kind, and peaceful school. All teachers use the Second Step Curriculum to teach our students social skills and managing their emotions.

Gratitude: 2020 brings us the mindful habit of ~ Giving Thanks and Being Thankful! This mindful practice builds positivity, peace of mind, and a respectful and collaborative community. The more we practice being grateful for the things that we have in life, the more benefits we will experience. Science has proved that people who frequently show their gratefulness will experience better well-being, greater relationships, be happier and more positive, and have stronger self-control.

Professional Learning Communities (PLC): Teachers continue to support student learning through dedicating time to collaborating in teams to find the best ways to teach our students. Professional learning communities tend serve two broad purposes: (1) improving the skills and knowledge of educators through collaborative study, expertise exchange, and professional dialogue, and (2) improving the educational aspirations, achievement, and attainment of students through stronger leadership and teaching.

Winter Assessments: As we prepare for the second trimester of school, winter assessment are used to provide teachers evidence of student learning and what students need next to be successful at school. Teachers will do an in depth analysis and review of all reading and math assessment data in order to provide students with the best learning supports to master the grade level standards.

Service Learning: Learning through services is an authentic and relevant way to learn and give to others. Martin Luther King Day inspires us and provides us with a commitment to start each new year with service to others. Elementary students dedicate themselves to service in many ways throughout the year. Service is a strong value in our school district and we take every opportunity to teach our students this core value: Reaching out our Caring Hands to help others. Here are a few ways we are providing service in our community:

- Tie Blanket for Refugees
- Letters to Veterans
- Feed My Starving Children
- Toys for Children
- Books for Children's' Hospital

Grade 4 Kindness Retreat: We believe that to do well in school, students need to be comfortable with who they are and feel physically and emotionally safe. In this effort to create a safe and caring culture, we bring in Youth Frontiers to facilitate a Kindness Retreat. Youth Frontiers staff focus on creating a more positive school community by engaging students in a variety of activities that build students' empathy skills and teach safe ways to help prevent bullying.

A Month of Gratitude

The first Monday of each month is an invitation to practice GRATITUDE ~ Saying Thank you and Being Thankful! In the month of January, we look ahead to 2020 and we are grateful for what the new year will bring each of us!

Middle School:

Intramurals and Clubs registration for the 3rd quarter opened to families on January 6th. Some of our new opportunities include Volleyball, Pond Hockey, Outdoor Broomball, Bowling, and a Running club. The Weight Training and Fitness club that spans the 2nd and 3rd quarters continues to receive great reviews from students and families. To view all of our Quarter 3 opportunities please click [WMS Intramurals, Clubs and Fine Arts Overview Link](#).

As we continue to develop our WMS Connect Advisory program we are communicating weekly Second Step Curriculum topics to families in the hope of continuing the learning discussions at home. Each week families will receive a link to a running document that outlines the grade level topics for the week and some suggested conversation starters to have with student(s). There is also a free website available for parents and their teens created by the makers of the Second Step Program. [ParenTeenConnect.org](#) is a great resource for middle school families. It provides expert advice and practical tools for dealing with real parent-teen issues.

Before we headed out on winter break, all middle school bands performed their first concerts of the year. 432 (45%) students currently elect to participate in band at WMS-- amazing participation! This year there are 174 students in 6th, 149 students in 7th and 109 students in 8th. Under the leadership of WMS instructors Mr. Snyder and Ms. Wilmes, our students performed with a lot of excitement! The progression of musical ability from 6th to 8th grade is amazing. The 7th and 8th-grade band students also took their musical talents on the road to perform publicly at the Southdale Mall. Students and staff both commented on the fun involved with the unique experience. The music was great and our students continue to be excellent representatives of our community.

Congratulations to 7th-grade U.S. History teacher, Mr. Johnson, on being recognized as the WMS PTO December Teacher of the Month. Mr. Johnson was nominated by 7th-grade student Alex Kearney. Alex's nomination letter was full of supporting details highlighting many reasons Mr. Johnson deserved the award. Alex shared, "...every day the first thing he tells us is, "I care about you guys" so we can feel good about ourselves before any of the school work begins." Alex also shared that Mr. Johnson makes history fun and engaging and highlighted him singing "We Didn't Start the Fire" while solving a Rubik's cube as the introduction to the Cold War Unit. In summary, Alex shared, "... he is an inspirational, nice, and energetic guy who puts countless hours to prepare class for us."

High School:

Activites: www.waconiaathletics.com

Congratulations to the Wildcat Boys Swim team on their victory over Dassel Cokato-Litchfield in their first ever home competition on Thursday, Jan 9th! Led by our three Captains, David Sinclair, Carson Roehl & Connor Hennen, the team has competed extremely well in their inaugural season! Keep it going Wildcats!

Community Ed:

Preschool and Kids' Company registration for the 2020-2021 school opens in January. Current families can register between January 8 - 15. New families are able to register starting January 22 at 8:00 am. All registrations are done online through Community Education. There will be an open house on Tuesday, January 21 from 5:30 -7:00 pm at the Waconia Enrichment Center. Families are able to come and meet the teachers, check out the classrooms and ask any questions they may have about our programs. It will be a great night!

Human Resources:

All new Educational and Administrative Assistants will receive training next week on the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act and specifically on a school employee's duty to maintain the privacy of student educational data. With little exception, information about students maintained by a school district constitutes private data and cannot be shared with others without a legitimate educational purpose. Training will also be provided regarding the potential pitfalls that social media can sometimes pose for employees within an educational environment.

Teaching & Learning:

Gifted Services - "Be the Change Challenge"

Gifted services students in Grades 3, 4, and 5 are engaging in a design challenge that puts 21st Century skills into action through critical thinking, problem solving, and collaboration. This year, students will design a solution to a real-world environmental challenge. Prototypes will be chosen from one category of the United Nations Sustainability Goals:

- Clean Water and Sanitation
- Affordable and Clean energy
- Sustainable Cities and Communities
- Responsible Consumption and Production
- Climate Action
- Life Below Water
- Life on Land

We look forward to students sharing their work at the “Be the Change” Showcase this spring. Many thanks to Mr. Hockinson and Ms. Millender for coordinating this rich learning experience.

Cultural Competence Faculty Cohort

This year, we launched a unique opportunity for faculty to use their Impact Challenge hours to become involved in a district-wide Cultural Competence Faculty Cohort. Our goals are as follows:

- Increase understanding of self-awareness as it relates to intercultural relationships
- Build positive school culture that supports equity and inclusion
- Improve communication among diverse populations
- Increase intercultural competencies related to age, gender, ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation

Some of us have shared interesting and unique learning experiences, including a visit to the Race exhibit at the MN Science Museum, viewing the Emmy winning documentary “Love Them First - Lessons from Lucy Laney Elementary”, and attending a social justice workshop by Dr. Timothy Berry. Others have collaborated on book studies and viewed additional documentaries related to race and unconscious bias. On February 11, we look forward to a visit to the downtown YMCA Equity Innovation Center for Excellence.

Superintendent:

School Board Org Meeting

The School Board Organizational meeting was held on January 7, 2020. This is the annual meeting that determines the assignments and directions for the school board for the next calendar year. It is also the meeting we elect our school board officers and this year elected positions are as follows:

- Dana Geller, School Board Chair
- Jackie Johnson, School Board Vice Chair
- Tabitha Laumann, School Board Clerk
- Cathy Thom, School Board Treasurer

Other committee assignments and school board expectations will be finalized over the next few months. Congrats to all.

Crisis Communication Planning Continues

One of ISD ONE10 Operational Plan Goals for this year is to enhance and improve our Crisis Communication. We have already made some very good improvements and have more to do. One of the improvements has been to utilize a UberConference service to allow all of our

administrators on the same phone call during a crisis so that we do not have to make multiple efforts to communicate a given situation to each other. This week we met with the Carver Co. Sheriff's Department, the Waconia Fire Department and with the Waconia City Administrator to discuss methods of improving our communication during crisis. One of our solutions was to add each one of these groups to our UberConference call during a crisis. We all feel very good about this improvement and know that it will help all of us have immediate and collaborative conversations when time and communication is extremely important.

We were also able to debrief and reflect on areas of improvement from the December 13 WHS and WMS lockdown and WHS school release. It is vital that we work with our crisis partners to continue to find ways to improve. As much as we all agreed that the outcome of keeping our students safe was very successful, we know we can always improve.

One of the areas that the school is looking to improve upon from the December 13 crisis is ways to inform and educate parents with what we can say, when we are able to say it and what expectations we will have from parents during events like this. As part of our goal that we have been working on this year, we will be informing parents, students, and staff of our crisis communication expectations during a crisis including the expected role from each group during such an event. We recognize that during events such as a real lockdown emotions will be high and we want to honor those feelings and help calm high emotions the best we can. In the end the shared goal will always be the same..."keep our students safe" and that will be our number one priority. May we all work together to support this vital shared goal.

A Big Thanks to the WEA

I am very thankful that the WEA and the school district has come to an agreement with the WEA contract. I was very impressed with the great work that the negotiation teams did through a tough financial negotiation session. I am so proud of how staff members are willing to help our school district get through these tough times together. Each and every one of our staff members are highly valued and do exceptional work. It takes courage and a ONE10 philosophy to get through tough times and I am so grateful that we have such an amazing staff at ONE10 to get us through the tough times.

A Big Thanks to all our staff for all they do for kids!!

WE Are ONE10!!

Have a Great Weekend!
We are ONE10!!