

ONE10 IN-PERSON LEARNING



PAT DEVINE
Superintendent,
Waconia
Public Schools,
ISD ONE10

As much as things have changed over the last year, one thing has remained consistent in the ONE10 community: we have continued working together to have the best outcomes for our students. This journey in a pandemic has been frustrating and stressful for everyone. Through it all, staff have rallied, students have shown resilience, and even though it is pushed to the limit at times, parents have demonstrated patience.

There have been disagreements about decisions made and alternative opinions on what path to take moving forward. The situation continues to evolve on a daily basis, and our decisions are guided by several factors, including: mandates/guidelines from the state of Minnesota, the Minnesota Department of Health, and the Minnesota Department of Education. We monitor our Determining Factors to help guide decisions about safe learning models. We know that In-Person is the best way for most students to learn. However, there are some who prefer Distance Learning and have chosen to finish out the school year with Distance Learning.

When we come back in the fall for the 2021-2022 school year, we have every intention of being In-Person. The more we all take care of each other over the next several months by following safety protocols, the more together we can be in the fall. Several dozen ISD 110 families did choose to send their child elsewhere for their education during the pandemic, mostly because



other institutions were offering more In-Person options. Now that we are planning to have In-Person learning in the fall, many have already chosen to come back. They have varying reasons for doing so, but we are quite proud of the education we deliver in ONE10. The opportunities for learning and growth are virtually endless, teachers are passionate about the success of every student, and the connections made last a lifetime.

SOUTHWEST METRO INTERMEDIATE DISTRICT 288 E-LEARNING

ONE10 is exploring options and partnering with SouthWest Metro Intermediate District 288 as we look at learning opportunities for the 2021-2022 school year. We are very excited about progress on this initiative to date, and we are working on how to make this work. We expect to have a full catalog of K-12 online offerings for families to check out by mid-July.

FEDERAL COVID-19 ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND (ESSER)

Funding from the first and second round of ESSER has been finalized from the state using Title I guidelines. The Title I formula that is used at the federal level and

adopted at the state level is highly inequitable. There are 330+ school districts in the state, and Waconia Public Schools ranks seventh from the bottom in the amount received. The third round of ESSER funding has yet to be finalized. ONE10 continues to advocate to change the funding formula to make it more equitable among all school districts. As an example, some districts, such as ONE10, are getting a few hundred dollars per student in funding and other districts that are similar in size are receiving thousands of dollars per student. COVID-19 affects everyone, and our students deserve to have the same opportunities as those in other districts. We are hopeful that legislators will make the adjustments so that ESSER III funding is equitable.

IMMUNIZATIONS



All staff who wanted to be immunized from COVID-19 have now had the opportunity to do so. We would like to thank all of those involved in this process, which has been

ever-changing and evolving-much like everything else associated with the pandemic.

GO WILDCATS!

LONGTIME WACONIA HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL MARK FREDERICKSEN ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT



Mark Fredericksen,
Retiring High School
Principal

What have been your roles in Waconia?

I was hired in the spring of 1988 to fill a one-year leave of absence for a social studies teacher. Before school started in the fall, the position was modified to half social studies and half administrative position. After three years, the position became a full-time assistant principal. I became the head principal when we opened the new

high school in the fall of 1994, and I've remained in this role. I've always felt that Deb and I took a huge gamble in leaving good jobs and moving our family to Waconia for a one-year leave of absence, but it couldn't have worked out better and we couldn't be more happy.

Of the things that have changed over your years at WHS, what stands out?

I suppose the most obvious change is growth. When we opened the high school in the fall of 1994, we had fewer than 500 students in the building, and the graduating class had 121 students. As we grew, we were adding new staff, athletics, programs, clubs, etc. Each fall there was a feeling of coming back to a slightly new and different school. As a principal, the job never felt like it was done; there were always new challenges, opportunities, and projects.

What hasn't changed?

First, we've always enjoyed great support for academic achievement, activities, and students in general. Even in challenging times, our parents and the whole community have supported education. Second, even as we've continued to grow, we've worked hard to maintain a small-school feel. I have an incredible staff and we understand the importance of building relationships and connections with students, and we've worked hard to create a safe and supportive environment for all.

Lastly, and most importantly, we have always had great students. They're kind, respectful, and willing to do the hard work needed to be successful. I feel so incredibly fortunate to have spent my career in this district.

What will you miss?

I'm going to miss graduation. There's something truly magical about watching the seniors go across the stage, dressed in purple and gold, and seeing them transform from a student to a young adult. Even the most cynical senior who might be "so done" with the whole high school scene can't help but smile when their name is read and they have a diploma in their hand.

What would you like to say to students?

My message to students, past and present, is a very simple, "Thank you." Thank you for allowing me to be a part of your life, however large or small, as you passed through Waconia High School. I truly enjoy bumping into former students and hearing their stories about WHS and their lives today. There have been so many great memories over the past 33 years, but as an old guy I've forgotten many of them or have them all jumbled into a huge purple collage of memories. What I do know is that there's really one reason why I stayed at WHS all this time; we have the best students anywhere. Being in education, especially the last 16 months, isn't easy; it's challenging and demanding work. With that being said, because of our students I've enjoyed (almost) every day I've been here.

Words of advice for your successor, Mr. Sparby?

Don't screw it up!

What are your hopes for the future of Waconia High School?

I believe WHS is poised for even greater things. For all of the success we've enjoyed, I'm convinced there's room for improvement and growth. I'm confident in the leadership of Mr. Sparby and the incredible teaching and support staff we have in place. I truly expect great things.

Any additional thoughts as you close out your career?

I suppose it's pretty natural at some point in your life to look back at the body of work you've left behind and wonder if you've made a difference.

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I look back on the last 33 years and feel so much pride in Waconia High School and all of the accomplishments of our students. There is a positive culture of learning, a level of acceptance, and a quiet, confident feeling throughout the building.
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WHS is a great place for both students and staff, and it's held in high regard by people throughout the state. There are so many reasons to be proud. I'm also wise enough to understand that in all of these things there is very little connected to "me," and virtually everything connected to "we." This collective "we" includes students, staff, parents, and community members, and the power of "we" has made anything and everything possible. Looking back, it leaves me feeling so grateful for the opportunity to be included. I'll always bleed Purple and Gold and will forever be a Wildcat.

Ind. School District No. 110

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PAUL SPARBY
NAMED WACONIA
HIGH SCHOOL
PRINCIPAL



Paul Sparby, High School Principal

With the retirement of Mark Fredericksen as the principal of Waconia High School, ISD 110 had to go just a few steps down the hall in the high school front office to find his replacement. Incoming principal Paul Sparby has been the assistant principal at Waconia High School for the past three years.

According to superintendent Pat Devine, “When Paul joined us three years ago, he knew that it may turn into

a principal position in the future. In that time, Paul has proven to be a great leader and is ready. I look forward to the great work that he and the amazing high school staff will do together.”

Sparby’s promotion and Fredericksen’s retirement were officially approved at the April 12 school board meeting. Sparby addressed the board, stating, “I am very excited about the opportunity. I have been here for three years and had the opportunity to work with and learn from Mark along with getting to know staff and students.”



WHS is a great place to be, and I am really looking forward to the future, the challenges it will present, and what we can do to keep WHS one of the best high schools in the state!”

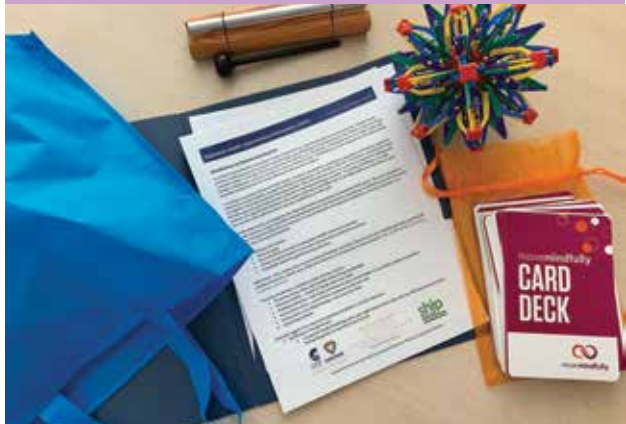
PAUL SPARBY
High School Principal

When Sparby arrived at Waconia High School, he already had 20 years of experience as a school principal. Prior to Waconia, he was the high school principal at Glencoe-Silver Lake, starting in 2010. He was also a high school and elementary principal in New Richland and an assistant elementary principal in Northfield. Sparby received his master’s in educational leadership from Moorhead State and his undergraduate degree in elementary education from Concordia College.

Sparby will start his new role on July 1.

MINDFULNESS
KITS SUPPORT
HEALTHY
LEARNING

Through a Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) grant award, elementary schools have new mindfulness kits for teachers, educational assistant rooms, special education, and specialists. Along with the peaceful packs and peaceful places already in classrooms, these kits expand the ways that teachers and staff help kids manage big emotions in healthy ways. Carver County Public Health is also partnering with our schools to offer mini mindfulness training sessions for staff.



Mindful kits help kids manage big emotions in healthy ways

WACONIA HIGH SCHOOL NAMES
NEXT ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL



Tonya Constantine,
Assistant High School Principal

We are pleased to announce that upon school board approval, Tonya Constantine will become the next Waconia High School assistant principal on July 1, 2021. There were over 95 highly qualified candidates for this position. We interviewed nine exceptional applicants in the first round of interviews, with input from students, staff, administration, and parents. In the second round of interviews there were four

talented candidates who all had great skill sets. We are pleased to announce Ms. Constantine as the candidate who is the best fit for the WHS AP position.

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Constantine is currently the assistant principal at Rock Ridge Public Schools in Virginia, MN. Although she is from Virginia, before going back to the Iron Range, she spent two years as an instructional coach and administrative intern in Eastern Carver County Schools. Constantine also taught grades 4-8 in Eastern Carver County Schools for two decades.
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She earned her B.S. in Education and Psychology from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, her M.Ed. from Saint Mary’s University, and her Specialist Degree in Educational Leadership from Minnesota State University-Mankato.



“This is a dream job for me. I know that may sound trite, but it’s so true. When I obtained my principal license, even at that time, Waconia Public Schools was my top spot to work at someday. I haven’t been able to sleep much since accepting the assistant principal position, and I am really looking forward to being a Wildcat.”

TONYA CONSTANTINE
Assistant High School Principal

Constantine’s background as an ELA teacher, instructional coach, and AP experience demonstrates her skills and abilities to be a very effective assistant principal.

She also shows a great ability to connect and build relationships with staff, students, and parents. We are excited to have Constantine joining our staff at WHS and think she will be a great addition to our ONE10 team. She is very excited and can’t wait to get here this summer to get started!

The recommendation for Tonya Constantine to become the next WHS AP will go to the school board for approval on May 10 She will then take over assistant principal duties on July 1.

ISD 110 LOOKS TO BECOME UNIFIED
CHAMPION DISTRICT

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The ONE10 community came through big, once again at the Polar Plunge. This year’s event was held on Lake Waconia in late March. Funds raised support Special Olympics and the Unified Sports program at Waconia High School. In total, \$20,000 was raised, with nearly \$10,000 coming back to Waconia’s Unified programs.
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Kari Klein, developmental disabilities teacher at the high school, who helps organize the Polar Plunge, said, “We are always excited to do the plunge each year to fundraise for Waconia’s Unified programs.



We have our familiar faces that rejoin each year, and new ones all the time, which means support for our programs is expanding! The dream of incorporating Unified programs and sports throughout all the district’s schools is coming closer and closer, meaning more and more students will benefit. Live Unified!”

KARI KLEIN
Developmental Disabilities Teacher



2019: Waconia High School Unified Bowling

Klein is also working on a plan to make ISD 110 a Unified Champion District. To accomplish this, the district would need to offer Unified Sports at all levels, not just at the high school. She is working with a team in the district to design a plan to offer this incredible opportunity to all students in the district. If successful, Waconia would become only the fourth district in the state to reach this status.

BUS DRIVER APPRECIATION

Everyone has had to make major adjustments and learn to “go with the flow” during the 2020-2021 school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. ISD ONE10’s bus drivers have had challenges of their own.



We have had several drivers who have had to learn new routes and fill in with routes they have not done before, but everyone has done a great job with the adjustments.”

BRIAN KOCH
Koch Bus Company Owner



February 24 was set aside to thank our bus drivers. Usually PTOs at schools host appreciation events but, due to COVID-19, coffee and donuts were brought to the bus garage for the drivers by the PTOs.

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Did you know?
There are 75 ISD ONE10 bus drivers who log a total of 920,000 miles per year in 50 buses and 18 vans.
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LINDSAY SEIM, ISD 110 INSTRUCTIONAL COACH, ON TEACHING DURING A PANDEMIC



Q1: What is your role in the district?

I have the privilege of supporting teachers and staff in the first two years of the evaluation cycle as an instructional coach. This means I observe educators in their learning space as they innovate, implement, and monitor strategies that support student achievement. I have the opportunity to collaborate with staff as they evaluate effectiveness using student and observational data. I am also the point person for the district mentorship program and professional development for teachers new to the district.

Q2: What techniques have you identified as ways to better engage students in the hybrid model and in the distance model (or both)?

I have observed teachers as they seek to find answers for this question, and my viewpoint represents only a small window into the creative work occurring across the district daily. There is no script or model for how to best deliver meaningful instruction in a hybrid or distance model, and in many cases, teachers are having to redesign lessons that have already proved effective to fit the new model.

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Teachers have worked diligently to implement live components to the daily plan this school year, whether it be small group breakout rooms, individual appointments, large group morning meetings, or streaming a demonstration. These live interactions place a priority on real-time feedback, greater opportunity to incorporate student voice, and increased student accountability.

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When we were in the hybrid model, teachers quickly noticed that masks resulted in an unintended quietness in the learning space. They used music and mindfulness strategies to pique student interest. Additionally, I saw teachers experiment with digital tools like whiteboards, flipped classroom videos, Zoom annotation, Pear Deck, Epic, Edpuzzle, Google Jamboard, Google forms, Padlet, and others.

None of these strategies or tools work 100% of the time for engagement; however, teachers have found complementary tools that increased capabilities to have person-to-person connections even in distance/hybrid learning.

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The variety of tools coupled with teacher persistence proved to be valuable allies against the many distractions that can exist when learning from home.

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Q3: What have you seen as innovative or unexpected wins in the instruction approaches this year?

Smaller student pods in compliance with social distancing guidelines is an absolute win for both students and teachers in regard to relationship, responsiveness, pacing, and individualizing tasks and feedback.

At the elementary level, teachers are specializing in content areas as they work with rotating pods, allowing them to have a deeper understanding of student progress in that area as well as more effectively providing direct instruction around critical content. The prevailing goal of ensuring students receive a common experience across the building grade level is further solidified by this model.

At the secondary level, I observed elective courses with hands-on components moving into a more self-paced course. Teachers have the opportunity to provide individual conferencing as students navigate through curriculum and craft products to demonstrate their learning. This practice of teachers as a “guide on the side,” who spur on critical thinking and provide feedback

so that students are equipped to take on higher-level thinking tasks, is well grounded in research. Many secondary students balance academics, extracurricular activities, and job responsibilities, and this model is providing the opportunity to refine time management skills, practice prioritizing tasks, and demonstrate grit.

Q4: What “life skill” learning and growth do you see happening for staff and students as we’ve been thrust into online learning?

So much learning has occurred this year in areas not written in the Minnesota standards. We all have valuable opportunities to show essential characteristics of empathy, compassion, and understanding. The challenge of this year remains to stay fixed on seeing the good and showing gratitude for elements we may have previously overlooked.

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It is inspiring to see the creative work of teachers as they simultaneously modify for a digital environment, relentlessly pursue ways to engage students, take on learning of new tools, and diligently implement safety protocols, all while maintaining a critical focus on building relationships with students.

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I see teachers deliberately teaching nonverbal cues to be more effective communicators in Zoom but will be applicable going forward as well. Students are pushed to be innovative problem solvers, to find work-arounds, refine advocacy skills, utilize resources in addition to the classroom teacher, and to organize and keep a calendar. This model has revealed many opportunities for students to demonstrate responsibility and initiative.

Q5: What beneficial instruction techniques or strategies do you predict will endure beyond COVID-19 restrictions/requirements?

It is certain there are elements we have learned that we will retain as we move forward in education. Learning management system platforms like Schoology and Seesaw are tools that allow for immediate feedback, and I wouldn't be surprised if they continue a more prominent way for students to practice and demonstrate understanding. These tools allow for individualized pacing and practice organizing with digital tools that is certainly part of the future. Time is a valuable resource, and it seems that we are finding ways to use it more intentionally.

Q6: What are teachers doing on the “non-instructional” days that have been allotted this year, as teachers prepare for a learning model change? How has lesson planning changed this year?

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Non-instructional days have proved a powerful support for teachers in a number of capacities: evaluating effectiveness of delivery, planning interventions, receiving training related to COVID-19 protocols, and receiving training that streamlines workflow and enhances the digital platform experience.

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Teachers have less opportunity to collaborate within the school day in this model, so non-instructional days have built in regular intervals so professional conversation, support, and collaboration can continue to be embedded as an essential component in our district. An exciting development from my perspective is the increased number of teachers who have selected a collaborative observation in their partnership with me. A collaborative observation is when at least two colleagues observe one another implementing a lesson. This is one of my favorite types of observations to join because of the meaningful and sincere questions and reflections that follow in the post-observation conference.

GO WILDCATS!

ULRICH AND FITZSIMONDS AWARD-WINNING SENIORS

Waconia High School seniors Kate Ulrich and Bram Fitzsimonds were recently acknowledged for academic success in the prestigious National Merit Scholarship competition.

More than 1.5 million students from about 21,000 high schools entered the annual competition by taking the 2019 PSAT exam. From this group, the top 3% of scorers are honored in their senior years as Commended Scholars, and the top 1% are deemed Semifinalists who advance to the next round of scholarship competition. To further become a Finalist, Semifinalists must next submit a scholarship application that includes an outstanding academic record, a recommendation from their schools, an essay, and SAT/ACT scores that confirm the results of the PSAT exam.



Waconia High School is pleased to announce that Kate Ulrich has been acknowledged as a National Merit Finalist and Bram Fitzsimonds a Commended Scholar. Kate will learn in the late spring if she is awarded a National Merit Scholarship, which is the final step of the widely recognized program.

Kate and Bram were also chosen as the 2021 Waconia High School MSHSL Triple “A” award winners. The Academics, Arts, and Athletics Award (Triple “A”) is a unique recognition program sponsored by the Minnesota State High School League. The purpose is to recognize and honor high school seniors who have excelled in the classroom, on the athletic field, and in fine arts.

Along with winning the local Triple “A” award, Kate also won the award at the overall Region 2AA level. She was honored as the female Region 2AA representative during a special MSHSL ceremony and via a televised acknowledgment during the state high school basketball tournaments.

Next fall, Bram will be attending the University of Chicago and Kate will continue her education at Carleton College.

LAKETOWN ELEMENTARY HAS NEW WAY TO PLAY IN THE SNOW



Laketown Elementary students advocated for and researched ways to be more inclusive at school. Their hard work led to loads of recess fun for all students, with kicksleds. They were purchased with proceeds from fundraising efforts at Laketown. Students who would otherwise be limited in opportunities to participate can now be right “in the middle” of all the action during winter recess.

ON-THE-JOB TRAINING FOR WACONIA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

The benefits for students are high-paying careers, without college debt. The benefits for businesses are local, skilled employees, ready to contribute and ready to stay longer-term. For many years, but more formally this past year, through a group called the Business Education Network, local business leaders and ISD 110 tech ed teachers Dave Aeling and Peter Brown mentor and grow talent in the trades and manufacturing workforce.

Waconia Chamber of Commerce president Christine Fenner explains, “Businesses are seeking skilled and qualified workers in our community. The participating companies of the Business Education Network are providing experiences that give students exposure to jobs available in the career path of manufacturing and trades. Many of the companies are furthering their employees’ careers within their own companies and are offering programs to enhance job skills and further their education. It’s been encouraging to meet several WHS grads who are working in lucrative jobs.”

The hurdles to placing more WHS students in manufacturing and trades jobs are many, but perhaps the biggest involves overcoming the assumption that a four-year degree is the only way to advance in a career. Along with the group above, ISD 110 school counselors James Bettcher, Lynette Alger, and Dana Henn, as well as science teacher (and tech ed fan) Mike Jensen, are working to reframe this mindset. To help, students-turned-employees at local businesses share their experiences below, about the benefits of transforming work ethic and classroom know-how into on-the-job career growth and confidence.

SACKETT WACONIA

Norwood Young America: Paul Peterson, director of operations; Aidan Schiro, engineering and drafting; and Kyle Glaser, metals and welding

Paul Peterson, director of operations for Sackett Waconia-Norwood Young America, regularly seeks welders, layout fabricators, and painters. Layout fabricators operate equipment to cut (beam line, saw, plasma table, punch, shear) and bend (press brake, roller) metal. Peterson has an engineering and project management background and was a former student of Dave Aeling.

“I don’t believe that a four-year degree is the best option for every student, and I think it’s important that these young men and women are able to make informed decisions.” Peterson says. “We are able to provide students with some basic experience in industrial metal fabrication, giving them an idea of the careers that are available at a manufacturing company like ours.”

He also shared, “If you do the following, you will be successful regardless of the field you choose. These things seem basic/cliché, but it can be difficult to find people with these attributes.”

- › Show up at work on time.
- › Be willing to put in extra hours when necessary.
- › Be willing to perform any reasonable task asked of you, even if it’s not much fun.
- › Stay productive during work hours (you are not being paid to play on your phone).
- › Have a good attitude.
- › Always be willing to learn.



Aidan Schiro, engineering & drafting, Sackett Waconia

him with Paul Peterson at Sackett. Schiro started with administrative tasks, then began talking with engineers at Sackett about their roles. “The engineers and the people here are absolutely awesome,” Schiro said. “They were always ready to answer any question and get me involved whenever I was curious.”

Those engineering conversations sparked Schiro’s interest in drafting. As Schiro described, drafting is the role of taking an engineer’s ideas and method and translating them to paper. Schiro is currently working on equipment for a barge conveyor project in St. Paul. When Peterson learned of Schiro’s drafting interest, Sackett offered to send Schiro to school for a drafting

degree (he will graduate next fall) while Schiro continues working in engineering for Sackett.

Schiro credits Sackett for growing his technical experience along with a greater awareness that Sackett’s equipment goes worldwide, to help farmers fertilize crops. “Not many of us realize what is going on behind the scenes when we go to grocery stores and grab our food. . . .I discovered that I didn’t know how much work and thought goes into supporting America’s infrastructure until I worked here.”

Schiro would tell his younger self to not be afraid to try something unconventional. “The push going through high school was to go get a four-year bachelor’s degree. While this is a popular opinion, this job sort of fell into my lap, and I was surprised by how much I learned through working.”



Kyle Glaser, current WHS student working at Sackett Waconia

Current WHS student and hockey player Kyle Glaser rises at 5 a.m. to work at Sackett Norwood Young America three days per week (15 hours). At Sackett, he grinds parts and uses the lift to move them. Other days, he assembles stairs and platforms. At WHS, Kyle took an Intro to Metals class and became connected with Sackett through Mr. Aeling.

The Sackett work experience has helped Glaser feel more proficient at reading blueprints and managing his time (the job is very busy, every day). Glaser is getting high school credit through the paid internship, and he plans to attend Alexandria Technical and Community College for welding. He would encourage students to take an internship and said the Sackett experience helped him realize he could do this work longer-term.

MODERN DESIGN CABINETRY

Co-owner Jo Eiden; Nate Koch, project manager; and Maison Stamson and Jonathan Kohls, cabinetry



Modern Design Cabinetry co-owners Troy and Jo Eiden with airplane kits

may job shadow or apprentice (a few hours a day and then possibly full-time in the summer) to get hands-on experience to determine if cabinetry is of interest.

“We don’t need the students to have experience, since we can train them,” Eiden said. “We are looking for someone who enjoys hands-on work and the woodworking industry, with a good work ethic and willingness to learn! We have many positions throughout our company: cabinetmakers, machine operators, installers, designers, CAD drafters, project managers, estimators, finishers. There is opportunity to grow and change positions over the years.”



Nate Koch, project manager, shop foreman, and scheduler at Modern Design Cabinetry

growth. “To me, it seems like every day is a little different when working in the trades.”

Nate Koch, Modern Design Cabinetry project manager, shop foreman, and scheduler, secured an interview with Dave Aeling’s help 18 years ago, and he’s never looked back. He would encourage students in a job internship to ask questions, to understand the multiple positions in a company and the opportunities for



Maison Stamson, college student working at Modern Design Cabinetry

garage wood shop. He has grown his craftsmanship abilities with the help of training from other Modern Design Cabinetry employees.



Jonathan Kohls, assembly, Modern Design Cabinetry

Jonathan Kohls graduated from WHS last spring but began working full-time earlier, in March. He started on drawer boxes and now works on final assembly of a cabinet before it goes out for installation. Kohls would encourage WHS students to take shop classes, to check the field out. Stamson said, “Don’t be afraid to stray off the conventional path. College isn’t for everyone, and

there is good money to be made on the job.” Stamson aims to learn as much as he can and eventually move out west to start his own carpentry or cabinetry business.

WACONIA DODGE CHRYSLER JEEP RAM

Jessica Schmidt, small engines and mechanical engineering



Jessica Schmidt rebuilds a snowmobile engine after cleaning the carburetors and replacing parts

Jessica Schmidt took Auto class, all of the Small Engine classes, and some of the Metals classes at WHS and has now worked just over three years at Waconia Dodge. She works mostly in the service department, but also when needed in sales and parts, and appreciates getting to see the commercial and business sides of the automotive industry. Schmidt also studies mechanical engineering at Dunwoody College of Technology.

Schmidt has always been curious about how engines work, in part due to being a snowmobiler all her life. She has completed six snowmobile rebuilds of varying degrees and has a variety of vehicle maintenance skills. She would tell her younger self to start Industrial Tech classes from an even earlier age than when she started, because she learned so much in those classes.

She acknowledges it’s different being a female in an occupation and industry with more males. Part of it is stigma; people who don’t know her can make incorrect assumptions. But for the most part, she’s been fortunate to work alongside people aware of her abilities. She says she still has to work harder to earn the same respect through demonstrating knowledge and capability. She also says she’s not shy about getting her questions answered and appreciates that Waconia Dodge has been phenomenal about helping her learn.

TECH ED COURSES BUILD THE BASE

According to science teacher and tech ed supporter Mike Jensen, “Every single time you learn a new concept in English, math, or science, one of the toughest things for students to recognize is how to take that knowledge in your brain and apply it with your hands. That’s what tech ed and engineering does.” Students may try a class of interest in these areas*:

- › Intro to Woods, Intermediate and Advanced Woods (Cabinetry/Furniture)
- › Metals—Beginning and Advanced
- › Auto Maintenance
- › Small Engines
- › Intro to Construction
- › Electricity
- › Entrepreneurship
- › Engineering/Drafting

STUDENTS PLAN FOR FUTURE DURING PANDEMIC



Lynette Alger



James Bettcher



Dana Henn

The pandemic may have put our students “on hold” in some ways, but it’s not stopped them from planning for life beyond high school, according to Waconia High School counselors Lynette Alger, James Bettcher, and Dana Henn.

Although students continue looking at colleges, the way they’re doing it has changed. In general, colleges aren’t offering tours, there are not college representatives coming into the high school building, and the “overnight stay” with a first-year student on campus is not an option, Henn described.

On the upside, it’s become easy to visit many colleges via virtual tours. Although these virtual tours are appealing and easily accessed, school counselor Alger notes that colleges tend to “put all the nice stuff out there.” So, she’s gone a step further to ask her students, “Do you know someone at the college? If so, ask them to put on their phone and walk around campus, so you can see everything. We want to see what it really looks like. . . . We’ve always told students to find a place that feels like home. Well, it’s hard to know what feels

like home when you can’t actually go there. It will be interesting to see if students transfer or stay, based on what they can’t actually go to and walk around in and participate in now to make that decision.”

In some cases, the pandemic has influenced the location of college choice, in that some are choosing different colleges if they can’t be on campus and have the full dorm room experience, Henn shared.

Already pre-COVID-19, there was a movement to do away with national testing (ACT/SAT) as an admission requirement, according to school counselor Bettcher.

With COVID hitting in March of 2020, colleges were somewhat forced to fill their spots by saying well, if you didn’t get your ACT, that’s OK, we will waive it this year. But the interesting thing from my perspective is it’s given those institutions more of a permission to say, we didn’t like it [ACT/SAT] anyway, so we’re moving on.”

JAMES BETTCHER
Waconia High School Counselor

He feels the pandemic has somewhat pushed the agenda of adopting a more holistic approach to the admission process. He has been seeing private schools do this, and now more public schools are “stepping out on that ledge more, being pushed by the pandemic. . . .Grade point averages (GPAs) are still important to them, but as far as national testing, they have changed their tune.”

In a typical year, counselors would be meeting in person with small and large groups to begin course selection plans with eighth graders or to check in and touch base with WHS students. Although in-person meetings are much preferred, COVID-19 restrictions have prompted the guidance team to strengthen the channels through which career planning and course selection information is disseminated.

All of the guidance office information is available on Schoology, but in recognizing the general public can’t access Schoology, WHS orientation details, career planning, and course enrollment information are posted in the guidance area on the website: isd110.org.

All are important substitutes because limitations have decreased the ability to job shadow. By this time, many more students would be placed in job internships or personal job shadowing opportunities under typical conditions.

Alger noted some students have chosen to take more college classes, to earn college credit, reasoning that if college is online, and high school is online, why not get that college credit as well, since we’re all online.

Alger added that our students are learning how to advocate for themselves: “Let’s admit it, we all hold hands. As parents we do the same, as teachers we do the same, because we want the best for our kids. We want to see them all successful, whether they’re ours biologically or not. So we do what we can to get them what they need. But right now, we’re not able to do that in person, so we’re really doing what we can to help them use those skills, and the kids are figuring out their own strengths and weaknesses, and what works for them, what doesn’t. That will still help them after high school, whether they’re in the workplace, whether they go to the military, whether they go to college.”

WHS SENIORS DESCRIBE PANDEMIC’S EFFECTS ON PERSPECTIVES AND PLANS

What’s been different, and how have you adapted?

The first noticeable difference that happened was in relation to the ACT. I missed early admissions deadlines for many colleges because my ACT was postponed two weeks when my sister got a cold. A two-week quarantine was not ideal at such a critical time. I also have been looking at hybrid programs at Twin Cities because this distance trimester has been one of my most successful.

Most people do not actively adapt but adapt in more passive ways. The absence of social interaction has been most people’s biggest downfall, and combined with the winter season with low sunlight, has resulted in the most depressed winter nationwide. At first this social hiatus was a big deal, but after 10 months, the isolated lifestyle has become more normal. Right now (late January) would be the time most people are serious about their post-high school plans, and a lot of this involves talking with peers and employers. This has been difficult for many, including myself. I have some loose plans to live with some friends at Twin Cities but nothing major has come out yet.

- AMANDA

I feel like because of the pandemic, I did not prepare for the ACT, after seeing that colleges were not considering them in the application process. School overall has changed a lot for me. I have become less motivated to do my work at home rather than at school. As far as adapting—so far so good, although it is harder for me to concentrate on my homework. I am still getting it done on time and doing it right.

- CHRISTIAN

I am finding a college close to extended family, so I have a place to live while going to college instead of going to dorms or on campus, to save money. As far as adapting—just making it so we can save money, instead of spending it, if we don’t have to, as a family.

- ZACHARY

Next year I will be attending University of Wisconsin-Madison with hopes to study political science on the pre-law path, with a minor, or certificate as they call it, in Spanish. I believe the pandemic has made the college application process easier for seniors this year, without requiring the ACT and looking at other things that set students apart, rather than their test scores. I believe getting rid of the test scores helps colleges better examine who students are, instead of just looking at one big standardized test that not all students are good at taking.

- BROOKE

I want to become a nurse, and the pandemic has affected medical workers immensely. They are put at risk every day, and it makes me think about whether I would be willing to be put at risk to do my job, if this ever happened again, which I would be. It also has affected things like taking the ACT, which is not a bad thing. I did not have to apply to many colleges with an ACT score. I am adapting by getting used to the pandemic. I work at a coffee shop and a nursing home, and we must wear masks and shields. This makes me more aware of the pandemic and makes wearing a mask more familiar.

- DANA

I was able to start visiting colleges early, before the pandemic was an issue. I had visited most of my colleges before everything started getting bad, which made me super happy that I got started earlier. I’m adapting pretty well. The adjustments are harder and harder to deal with, but at the end of the day, it will eventually pay off and that is what I can’t wait for.

- AUBREY

The pandemic has impacted my plans for the future, because I do not want to do college online. I needed to base my decision on if there are going to be in-person classes. I found a school with a program that I like that has classes in-person.

- HUNTER



2020-2021 WINTER SPORTS AWARDS



GIRLS HOCKEY
All Conference: Maya Lindstrom
All Conference Honorable Mention: Abby Elvebak



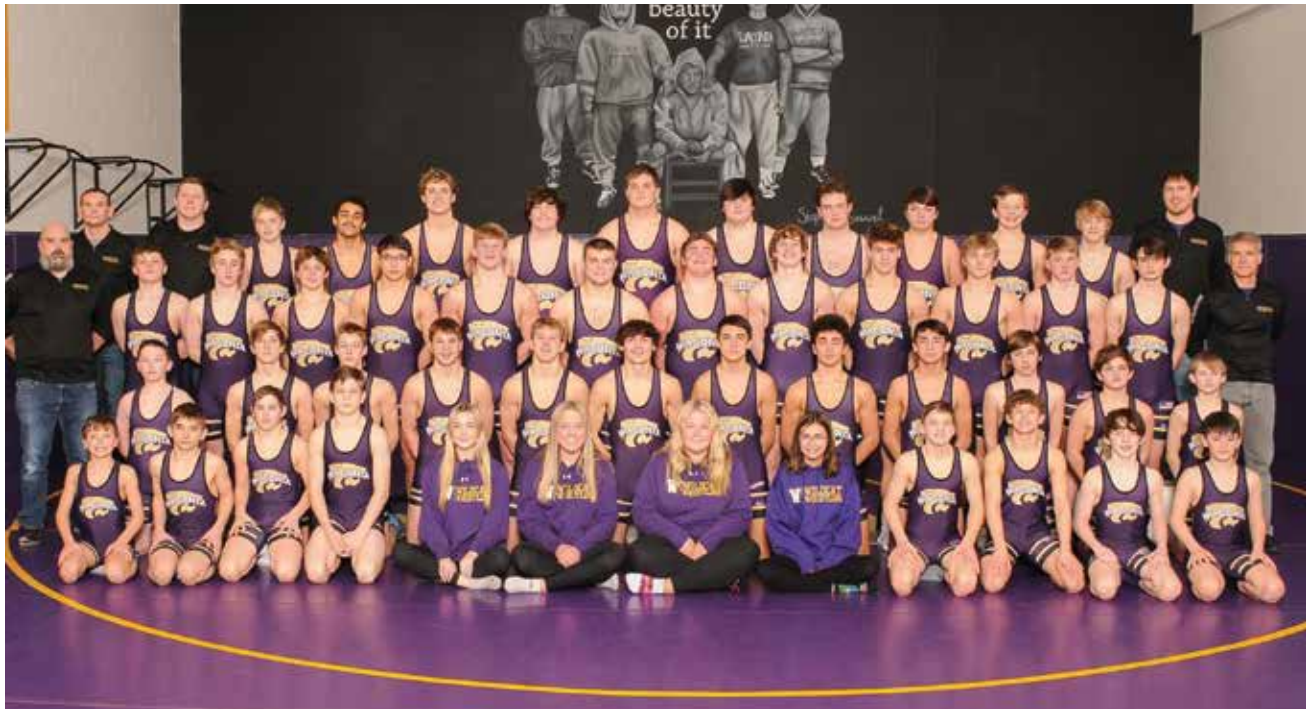
BOYS HOCKEY
All Conference: Chase Holcomb
All Conference Honorable Mention: Gus Leivermann, Louie Bodem, Tyson Wiese, Danny Appलगren



GIRLS BASKETBALL
All Conference: Ava Stier, Audrey Swanson, Addy Salzer
All Conference Honorable Mention: Allie Zimmer, Sydni Olson
Wright County Conference Champs



BOYS BASKETBALL
All Conference: Spencer Swanson, Noah Bonick
All Conference Honorable Mention: Ryne Anderson



WRESTLING

All Conference: Lincoln Vick, Alex Riley, Max McEnelly, Bram Fitzsimonds, Sam McEnelly

State: Lincoln Vick, #113, 6th place finish State
Gage Mueller, #160, 6th place finish State
Alex Riley, #170
Max McEnelly, #182, State Champion

Honorable Mention: Maverick Mueller, Alex Torres, Bradee Dwinell, Josh Wagener, Gage Mueller



WACONIA
LAKETTES
DANCE

All Conference:
Parker Hoiosen,
Trista Peitz

All State: Parker
Hoiosen, Trista
Peitz, Kenzie
Bartley



GYMNASTICS

All Conference: Li Li Raidt



BOYS SWIM

All Conference:
David Sinclair, Sam Sinclair, Matthew Krogman

State: David Sinclair finished 12th in the 50 freestyle
and Sam Sinclair finished 15th in the 200 IM. As a team,
the Wildcats finished 32nd in the state.

WACONIA MIDDLE SCHOOLERS REACT, REFLECT ON PANDEMIC YEAR OF LEARNING AND THE RETURN TO IN-PERSON SCHOOL

WMS seventh and eighth graders responded to the following three questions via email, after returning to in-person school, mid-March 2021:

Q1: What was your reaction when you learned about the return to in-person school this past Tuesday, March 16?

Q2: How has the return to in-person school been?

Q3: Is there something specific that you have gained/learned through experience during this past year that you'll use going forward?

Responses below represent a wider sample of student perspectives and have been edited for clarity.

I was surprised, because, between the new variant and Spring Break traveling, I thought we would at least do hybrid for another week. The return to in-person has been pretty good... a little stressful though, because of all of the people together now. In the past year, I've learned how to manage my time better. – 7th grader

When I found out, I was extremely excited. I would get to see all of my friends again after not seeing them for a very long time. It has been great so far! The only thing that isn't perfect, is that we don't really have enough seats at lunch since almost half of them aren't being used. I think what I've learned this past year and that I will use going forward is definitely how important going to school is to me. I used to complain regularly about going to in person school, but I'm certain that will never happen again. – 7th grader

I think most people prefer being back in person, so schools are happier than ever, on the inside and out. It is a lot different from when we were in hybrid because we are now 3 feet apart in some classes instead of 6 feet, and that's kinda weird. I have really learned how to type faster and navigate through many different websites such as schoology, google classroom, ZOOM, etc. All and all, I think online school was for the better and many kids got a lot of new technology skills out of it, so it wasn't all bad. – 7th grader

I had thought it would be really bad, but it was not as bad as expected. I got to see people I had not seen since last year, and I can live with having to get up an extra hour if I get to go to school every day. I have learned I am good at managing myself and staying on track with my work even when I am home alone. – 7th grader

It's gone good. I've learned to listen closely to the teachers. – 7th grader

Distance learning was hard for me, and I was excited to see everyone. It has been great. I like seeing my friends every day and slowly my grades are going up. I have learned that no matter what obstacles get in your way, to keep going and to try your best to succeed. – 7th grader

I was nervous and a little stressed about getting to all my classes because of the massive crowds. [The return has been] a little overwhelming with all of the people and less individual time with the teachers, but good. I have gained new friends and new skills that I will use when getting a job, and it's always great to have friends. – 7th grader

I love distance so much, and I just got so used to it. Also, seeing the new variant virus cases go up and knowing how I like to go to my grandparents, it's just a better idea to stay home. In my opinion, and my parents too, I am doing better with distance than (being at school), which is a shock to me. – 8th grader

If I learned anything over this past year, it is that our teachers work much harder than I thought. The pandemic has been tough on everyone, but teaching over a computer must be hard, especially if you've been teaching in person. – 8th grader

The return to school is good because it's easier for me and others to learn in-person than online. – 8th grader

Honestly, I didn't really care that we were returning to full in-person learning because it didn't affect me (as a distance learner), but I know that many people were very excited for this change. I learned how to take notes, which I had never done before, but really helps. – Distance Learner

The return to school has gone well in my opinion, I like it a lot more than being stuck at home all day. I'm grateful because of all of the teachers that tried hard to still make things interesting and interactive while we were all at home. I know that definitely wasn't easy. – 8th grader

I was really excited to get back and put things back to semi-normal. Returning has been really good. I feel like I'm learning and keeping up with things better. I gained more confidence because I feel like I can go up and ask a question easier without overthinking things. – 8th grader

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

2021

MAY

30 Graduation–Class of 2021

31 No School K-12
Holiday

JUNE

2 Last Student Day

AUGUST

23–26 Teacher Workshop

25 K-12 Open House

30 First Day of School (Gr. 1-12)

SEPTEMBER

1 First Day of School (Kindergarten)

2 Early Childhood Open House

6 Labor Day (No School K-12)

30 WMS Conferences (evening)

OCTOBER

1 2-Hour Early Release (K-12)

4 WMS Conferences (evening)

11 WHS Conferences (evening)

18 WHS Conferences (evening)

19 K-5 Conferences (evening)

20 K-5 Conferences (day)
WMS & WHS Flex Day
(No School K-12)

21 Ed MN State Conference
(No School K-12)

22 No School K-12

NOVEMBER

2 End Quarter 1 - WMS

12 Teacher In-Service Day
(No School K-12)

19 End of Trimester 1 – K-5/WHS

22 Teacher Work Day/
WMS Flex Day
(No School K-12)

23–24 Teacher Flex Days
(No School K-12)

25–26 Thanksgiving Holiday
(No School K-12)

DECEMBER

9 WMS Conferences (evening)

23–31 Winter Break
No School K-12

JANUARY

17 MLK Day (No School K-12)

19 WHS Conferences (evening)

20 End Quarter 2 -WMS

24 WHS Conferences (evening)

FEBRUARY

3 K-5 Conferences (evening)

4 K-5 Conferences (day)
WHS In-Service/WMS Flex Day
(No School K-12)

18 2-Hour Early Release (K-12)

21 Presidents' Day/Teacher Flex Day
(No School K-12)

24 WMS Conferences (evening)

28 WMS Conferences (evening)

MARCH

3 End of Trimester 2

4 Teacher Workday/WMS Flex Day
(No School K-12)

7–11 Spring Break (No School K-12)

APRIL

1 End of Quarter 3 – WMS

15 2-Hour Early Release (K-12)

18 No School K-12

20 WHS Conferences (evening)

25 WHS Conferences (evening)

MAY

29 Class of 2022 Graduation

30 Memorial Day (No School K-12)

JUNE

2 Last Student Day

3 Last Teacher Work Day

For All Academic Calendars and High School Activities
visit isd110.org

CommuniCAT is a publication of Independent School District 110, Waconia Public Schools, 512 Industrial Blvd., Waconia, MN 55387. Please direct questions and comments to Paul David, Director of Communications & Community Relations, at pdavid@isd110.org or call (952) 856-4531. This edition of the CommuniCAT was produced in color, which is comparable in price to black and white, using recycled paper content and soy-based inks.