CoThe Lynden LINK

~ Chairman Report ~

As mentioned in the last Link, I would like to use this space to review how we are doing with our 10-year strategic plan. You may recall that the plan was designed to be re-evaluated after five years, and that is where we are now. Since the start of the plan implementation in 2017, the Board and principal have worked to implement the action and improvement ideas, which are grouped into six goals. Of course not everything is done, but we have made significant progress!

Let's take a look at the first goal: <u>Governance and Administration - Ensuring our mission is carried out; serving effectively and efficiently</u>. The strategic plan projects that this is how things will look when this goal has been met:

- 1.The Board interacts with the Strategic Plan as a "living" document and works to reach its recommended goals over the next 10 years to further CCS's mission.
- 2. The Parent Handbook has an updated introduction, including a new vision statement and revised goals.
- 3. The Board and its subcommittees each have a new handbook to guide orientations, assist in hand-overs and ensure accountability for all committee members.
- 4. New members of the Board and its sub-committees receive an orientation at the beginning of their term.
- 5. The workload for Board members and administration staff is manageable.
- 6. Teaching staff are qualified, Reformed teachers who are ideally

December 24, 2023

already qualified to work in the USA.

For each goal, we can ask a couple of questions: how are we progressing, and are the actions and improvements still relevant and/or necessary? I won't attempt to give a comprehensive answer to these questions myself, but I will point out some highlights.

Regarding #2, we do not have an updated introduction to the Parent Handbook, nor do we have a new vision statement. This was discussed by a previous Board, but it was decided that the existing wording still captures our mission well. However, as a "big-picture" item, it is something the Board could consider again at this halfway mark.

You may notice that this list includes things relating to CCS documentation and internal training (3-5). This is a work in progress. We currently have a documentation subcommittee, and we are working to improve our ability to reference the correct version of any given policy or procedure. This will help with orientation of new Board members, and should improve our overall efficiency (thus reducing workload).



Volume 22, Issue 3



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Upcoming Dates

Jan,8- First Day of 2024

Jan.15 - Martin Luther King Da
Feb.1 - HS 2nd Qtr Reports
Feb.5,6 - HS P/T Conferences
Feb. 16 - PD Day
Feb. 19 - Presidents Day
Feb. 28 - Fine Arts Evening
Feb. 29 - Mid Winter Break
Mar. 1 - Mid Winter Break

Dec.25- Jan 5 - Christmas Break

Next LINK Submission Due Date:

February 21, 2024

Create in me a clean heart, O God - Psalm 51:10

With regard to #6, we gratefully acknowledge that we have a full roster of qualified, Reformed teachers! But, as we know, this is an ongoing difficulty, especially finding those qualified to work in the US. This topic has the Board's attention on a regular basis, and we are seeking to expand our understanding of, and contact with, the pool of teacher candidates in the US.

Hopefully this review of the plan is beneficial for the

membership. Next time, I'll cover Goal 2: Infrastructure and Campus Resources.

With Christmas and New Year's break coming up, I would like to extend a hearty thank you to the staff and volunteers for their work thus far this year. May you have an enjoyable and refreshing time off, and may our commemoration of the Lord's birth be a joyous occasion!

Steve Hofford

~ From the Ed Comm ~

As I reflect at this Christmas season on the past three years as a member of the Education Committee, I am thankful for the many productive evenings spent around the staff room table with fellow Ed-Comm members and the enjoyable mornings spent visiting the school to see the staff and students. We have so much to be thankful for in Cornerstone Christian School, its dedicated staff and principal, and the many, many volunteers that help the school run smoothly.

This year the committee has already completed two evenings of Senior Project Presentations; it is unprecedented in our history to have so many projects completed by this time of year. We look forward to three more evenings of presentations in the early part of 2024. Once again, a wide range of projects is being presented by our 12th grade students: swimming instruction, a vet job shadow, a counselling course, and so much more. We have found these senior projects to be a very beneficial part of the educational experience at CCS.

We have discussed the "Reformed Education – Four Hallmarks" document that was briefly mentioned by Debbie Johnson last month in the Link. We have expanded on each point and included the revised document in this Link. This document is worth reflecting upon!

It's good to regularly review how our teachers incorporate these hallmarks in their teaching. This year the EdComm is tasked with reviewing the Science curriculum. Keeping these hallmarks in mind, we are creating a survey to be completed by the teachers, then will be reviewing their responses and crafting a report with recommendations, if needed.

Finally, as Sharon Veldman and I complete our terms on the Education Committee, we welcome the new members, Ryan VanDriel and Rianne

Kruyswijk. We are sure their enthusiasm and experience will be of great benefit to the committee! For the Education Committee, Debby Lodder

In relation to this,

Reformed Education – Four Hallmarks

A. Reformed education is **covenantal in character**. The binding relationship of love which God has established with his people is the framework within which children are to be nurtured in godliness and equipped to live out their calling as prophets, priests, and kings. This education will:

- 1. Bring out the grandeur of God's work before the learner.
- 2. Acknowledge that man is ruler over creation.
- 3. Demonstrate an understanding of man's fallen nature.
- 4. Show that God's people must fight against their sinful nature.
- Show that God's people must strive to live according to the will of God in all good works.
- 6. Foster a joy and delight in learning more about God's world and our task.
- 7. Recognize the diverse abilities and gifts of the learner.
- 8. Encourage students to exercise and carry out their obligations as God's people.
 - * Instill in the students a proper stewardship of the world to show glory to God.
 - * Encourage students to spur one another on to love and good deeds.
 - * Acknowledge the uniqueness of being covenant people who use their talents to praise God.
 - * Equip students with the knowledge and skills to:

Serve God

Serve the neighbor

Be thankful for the gifts God has given

- B. Reformed education is **confessional in character**. Education is normative because all of life is governed by the Word of God. This education will help teachers:
 - 1. Submit to the authority of God's Word as the basis for truth.
 - 2.Use God's Word to guide the students.
- 3. Show and teach a proper sense of respect to those in authority.
 - 4. Recognize the work of the Holy Spirit.
- C. Reformed education **recognizes the antithe- sis**. Children are equipped with the knowledge and skills to recognize the battle lines of the struggle to which Christ calls them to live in holiness by doing the will of their Father. This education will:
 - 1.Allow the students to identify the antithe ses; point out the on-going battle between God and Satan, in which Christ is completely victorious.
 - 2. Allow the students to grow in discernment through guided confrontation.
 - 3. Discern a positive or negative worldview.
 - 4.Help students to acquire a discerning mind and godly character.
- D. Reformed education functions in a unity of purpose of home, school, and church. When

home, school, and church are united with respect to the education of the children, the work of each benefits all in the communion of saints. This will:

- 1.Allow for home, church, and school to work effectively together.
- 2. Allow for interaction with the home and church.
- 3. Assist in telling the next generation to set their hope in God.

Come read all about what's been going on here at Cornerstone in the :

Term 1 Edition December 8, 2023

CCS NEWSPAPER

Put together by our yearbook team. You can check it out on our website:

<u>cornerstoneschool.us</u>

under the "For Parents" tab.

~ From the Cornerstone Foundation Board ~

At the last meeting of the Cornerstone Foundation Board, we expressed a hearty "Thank You" to the outgoing Chairman, Henry Klos and outgoing Treasurer, Derek Willis, and we express those same sentiments here.... Thank you, gentlemen, for your service to our School Community!

We also welcomed the newest members on the CFB: Rick Faber and Darren Leyenhorst. Rick was appointed to serve as Chairman, Darren was appointed to serve as Secretary, and Ian Davis (former Secretary) was appointed as Treasurer. Fellows, may God grant you wisdom in your roles on this Board. The Cornerstone Foundation Board isn't necessarily exciting or action packed, but it is an important part of the functioning of our School Society!

At the same meeting, we 'surveyed the landscape', and noted the following:

Some of the money from the Foundation has been moved into an Ameriprise account where it will be invested for long term growth.

A few years ago, much work was done to establish a simple way for our Canadian family and friends to

donate to Cornerstone Christian School and still receive a Canadian tax benefit (this is the Foundation For Reformed Education, or FFRE)... and we have started to receive donations from Canadian supporters using that simple set up!.... Contact a board member if you'd like to know more.... We have a simple brochure with instructions that can be easily sent via email.

We encourage the members of our School Society to add Cornerstone Christian School as one of their beneficiaries in their estate planning.

An Endowment Fund (we call it the Cornerstone Foundation) is a long term endeavor, that takes time to grow, and will benefit future generations of Cornerstone families. It started small and modestly, and continues to grow. With careful stewardship, it can grow substantially over time. We pray for God's continued blessing over this work. May He grant wisdom and diligence to those involved.

For the Cornerstone Foundation Board Cason VanDriel

~ Keystone Foundation ~

A quick update from the Keystone Committee....

We completed our eighth house in the fall of 2022. We put it up for sale but were not able to sell it before the housing market slowed for the season. We took the house off the market and were able to rent it out for a few months. In May 2023, we put it back on the market and it quickly sold and we closed in the middle of July. Our eighth house was SOLD. Once again, the Lord blessed our project and provided the right buyer in a slow housing market.

Reflecting on the Keystone journey – How amazing it has been to take a concept and through consistent planning and hard work turn it into eight sold houses in seven years. In June 2016, after a year of planning, we sold our first Keystone house on Woodsman Drive. I remember one of the Keystone committee members saying in that first year, "If we make \$20,000 on this house, this is worth it". Well, we made more than \$20,000 on that first home and we were off to the races, building spec homes to raise money for the school.

Over the years we have been able to donate close to \$200k to Cornerstone Christian School. With the expansion project starting soon, we are able to donate an additional \$300k to the pledge drive. In addition, we are able to provide a sizeable, interest free loan to cover some of the expenses until some of the money pledged for the future arrives

In this season of gratitude, we often spend extra

time focusing on our blessings. We are truly thankful for the blessings given to the Keystone project. Eight years of willing committee members who gave freely of their time and expertise to get us to where we are today. And our volunteers! We regularly saw people of all ages get together and help outfrom the first scoop of dirt to the locking up after the last cleaning was completed – we are grateful! Whether you donated funds, reduced invoices from your own businesses, poured concrete, seeded lawns, cleaned construction dust or brought refreshments for the hard-working crews – THANK YOU! You are the blessing that helped make this a huge success story.

And for now, we are taking a break. We are certain that you will be using your God-given talents for the school expansion and we think your willingness to volunteer will be gratefully appreciated at the school in the foreseeable future. The state of the housing market is also a factor in this break – high interest rates, increased raw material costs and a slow-moving market are not the best time to be building a Spec house.

It was our prayer that this project would be a success, not just to donate to the school, but also to have our school community come together to work towards a common goal. God answered our prayers over the past 7 years and provided many blessings. To Him alone be the Glory.

Keystone Project

~ From the CBM ~

Happy holidays everyone! We hope that you all will have a great Christmas and an eventful New Year.

The CBM committee welcomes two new members and says goodbye to two as well. We have enjoyed Dave Hofford being by our side for so so long and though we will miss him we understand that it is his time to move on. We also say goodbye to Nathan Chase thanking him for his general help but also with his help as the secretary. We welcome Harvey Pelleboer as the CBM Liaison to replace Dave and Rick DeMooy as a new member replacing Nathan, and look forward to them helping out with the school.

Lately we have been busy with finding a replace-

ment for Lisa Pelleboer as the head of the cleaning committee. We have been helping Teacher Hannah Gonzalez get situated in the art/science/etc room. We have been busy with odds and ends at the school and are happy to report that the larger plumbing issues have been fixed. We are watching the rain/water issues in the school and making sure that there isn't any flooding issues or septic backups. We are also looking forward to the use of a lift to work on any maintenance issues in the gym, which will be done soon.

Again, happy holidays and let us all pray for God's blessings in the new year!

~ Ladies Aid Report ~

The Apple Pie fundraiser has wrapped up for the year, earning \$10,940 in profit! A big thank you to the organizing committee and to all those who helped.

The new 2024 coupon books are here! They are at the front desk and cost \$15.

Wishing everyone a good break and God's blessings this Christmas season!

On behalf of Ladies Aid, Jessica Chase

~ From the Principal ~

Recently I've been thinking about school culture. What is school culture? On one educational website it was described in this way, 'a school's culture is made up of the traditions, routines, expectations and interactions that take place' in the educational institution. That makes me think about what those are here at Cornerstone. We certainly have our traditions and routines. For example, we begin the first week of every month with a school-wide assembly. But what is the culture at Cornerstone, and does it need improving? If we want to improve our school's culture, the biggest difference I think we could make would be in our expectations and interactions. What expectations do we have for our students, for our teachers and for our parents? This same website I referenced earlier (UCDS Institute) also points out that making a difference in developing a positive school culture is a 'shared responsibility of all members of the community". So, could I ask that you take a moment to truly reflect on what our expectations are for our students? What truly is our goal? It can be a simple answer. Our school's mission statement says the answer well. We want our students to be prepared "for a life of Christcentered service and stewardship in the kingdom and Church of God". As I write this mission statement again, I think back to recent student-led events. We have many students at CCS that truly are willing, able and ready to serve. What about the academics then? Do we encourage students in their love for learning? A secular institute will speak about a desire to learn, too. How is our Christian school different? We certainly also want to instill a desire for learning. Proverbs 18: 15 "The mind of the prudent acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge." Of course, this first of all references knowledge of The Truth and of God, but we believe that God makes himself known also 'by creation, preservation, and the government of the universe'. (BC, Art 2) The more we know about our world, the more we know about our God; the more we know about history, the more we know about how God deals with our world; the more we develop our language skills, the better able we are to share God's truth and the gospel with others. The more

we learn, the more we can praise our God! It really needs to be the expectation of everyone in the Cornerstone community that we desire to learn. This is true for students, teachers, parents and supporting community. We all need to be excited about these things. As teachers we are tasked with making the learning inspiring and stimulating in the students this desire to learn. As parents you can do the same, as well as supporting the teachers in what they are striving to accomplish. We all need to speak positively about our school and the importance of investigating God's world. In the broader culture of our world we have a lot to fight against. Technology has a range of distractions and the media loves to take us on diverse paths away from what's truly important. A proper life focus is crucial for all of us, and formal education is pivotal in laying the groundwork for having lifelong skills of discernment and communication of the truth. I pray that our school culture continues to develop in a positive direction of a fascination and eagerness to learn. Thank you, as always, for your faithful sup-

School events

Since the last LINK a lot of exciting learning has taken place at Cornerstone. A lot of school community activity has kept us busy. November is Reading Month at CCS, and this past November was a successful one! A string of paper links stretched down the hall growing week by week showing the reading accomplishments of students and teachers. On the final day of November everyone poured out of their classrooms to see if the goal had been reached. Would the chain really make it from one end of the hall to the other? There was great excitement to see that it had! This was a school-wide challenge, and students from across the grades showed enthusiasm for this challenge. This was in addition to the buddy reading times we had throughout the month once again. High school students and elementary students reading with each other is a wonderful way to bring our students together.

I am impressed with our high school students' leadership skills. One of the culminating activities of Reading Month has become our annual pancake breakfast, where all the students dress up from the same book as their reading buddy. This breakfast is prepared for by the students, including shopping for ingredients. The event itself is led and organized by the students. They did a fabulous job once again. They set up the gym, with a seating arrangement. They led in devotions and organized a game to set the order for getting food. Another event where our leadership teams shone was the games afternoon. This was the reward for reaching our reading goal. The STAMP leadership planned all the games, ran the afternoon activities, and closed the day with prayer. We are grateful for their willing hearts to serve fellow schoolmates in these events. Reflecting on our high school students in this way is positive. It's encouraging to see their talents and abilities being developed.

With our two-week break landing a little differently than local schools, renting the skating rinks was not possible. In reality it is always very challenging to get a rental at the ice rink, but this year was a quick negative response. Thankfully an opportunity to rent the Volli facility became available. It is hoped that the scope of options provided gave everyone the opportunity to enjoy themselves. Back at school, the students in K-6 enjoyed an Arctic animals documentary with short clips on a variety of animals. Watching this as a large group made this even more of a special event. It was also a joy to sing about the birth of our Lord and Savior with eve-

ryone as we closed out the school year.

Looking ahead to the new school year, we already have a few events on the calendar. On January 10th Prof. VanRaalte of our Theological Seminary will be at the school to speak. We are thankful that he has made time to share some of his thoughts with us. Further details on time and topic will be shared in the new year.

We also are planning for our Fine Arts Evening on February 28th. Again, details of this event will be shared in the new year. Please keep this evening free, so you can spend a bit of time exploring and enjoying the various facets of the artistic achievements of our students.

There are so many blessings associated with Cornerstone. A new year is often a time of reflection, and so it is valuable to do the same for Cornerstone. The Lord has blessed the work that has been done here, not just this school year, but for over 20 years! He is so good to us. May you all have a blessed season of celebrating the greatest gift, the gift of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. May we all return to our tasks again in January with renewed energy and focus. "Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good, for His lovingkindness is everlasting." Ps.136:1 God sent his son, and "the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace". Is 9:6b And this Prince of Peace is our Savior.

Have a blessed Christmas!

Severe NUT Allergy

A child in 1st grade has a life-threatening allergy to most nuts, with walnuts and peanuts very high on the list. In consultation with the parents we are expecting grade 1/2 to be NUT-FREE, and the rest of the school to be NUT-AWARE! Nut-aware means that students need to eat any food with nuts in their own classroom only and also NOT on the playground. All students must wash their hands after eating any food containing ANY nuts!

~ From the Athletic Department~

The Northwest Youth Basketball League has had a good start to the season. This year we have a total of 13 teams making a total of 80 players in the league. This year Cornerstone has two Junior Varsity teams led by Steve/ Wesley Hofford and Brooke Vreugdenhil/ Reagan Berends. We also have two Varsity teams lead by Aaron Bosscher/ Keiran Willis and Jeff Brown. The boys' teams have had some good competitive games already. We would have loved a few more girl teams in the league, however it didn't work out that way this year and therefore we had to combine the A and B divisions.

Games are played Tuesday and Thursday evening, check the website at www.nwyouthbb.com to see when Cornerstone plays and come cheer them on! The middle school basketball teams will be sporting new basketball jerseys thanks to a Ladies Aid donation. We thank them very much for that! They will have their first games beginning in the new year. They will be led by Janice Dykstra and Craig Vreugdenhil/Grant Heystek.

We would like to invite any students (Gr.8 & up or anyone older who missed the last one), who would like to learn more about referring, to a clinic to be led by Harry Pelleboer. This will be held on the evening of January 4 at 7:30-9:00. We do thank Mr. Pelleboer for his willingness in leading these clinics to help bring more interest in this area, as refs have begun to be very hard to find in most leagues.

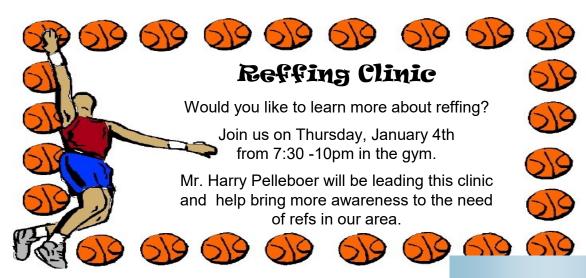
One last item to bring your attention to is a new online way to purchase your Cornerstone School Swag. We have been working with Advantage

Sports in order to make this happen. They have created a web page (below) where you can now find hoodies, pants, beanies, shirts for the whole family. You will pay online and receive your items shipped to you. We have some very lovely new designs thanks to our very own Lydia VanDriel.

There is a page for general Cornerstone wear and a more specific page for Basketball wear that might be of more interest to some. You will also be able to order new PE shirts this way as well (yet we still have some on hand so perhaps ask before you buy). The online store will be open at a few different times throughout the year, and as of right now it is officially OPEN till January 1. So, get your orders in for your new Cornerstone apparel for Grandmas/ Grandpas, kids. Mom and Dad. www.shopadvantagesports.com/cornerstonechristian/

Katrina Lodder

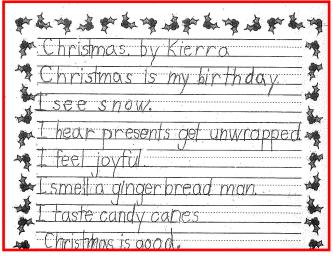




~ From the 1st & 2nd Grade Classroom ~

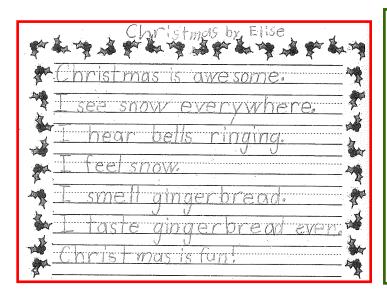


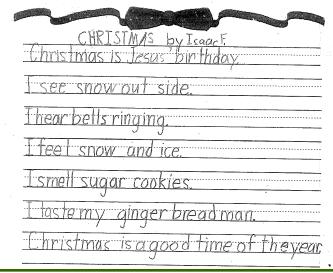




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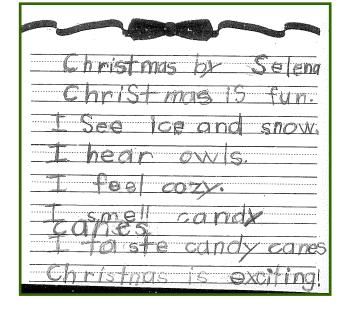


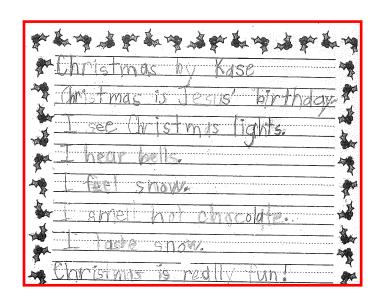


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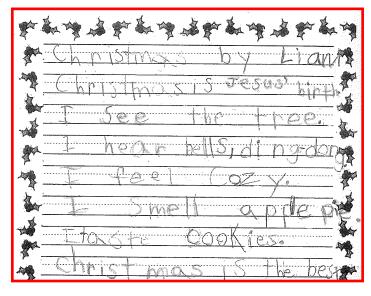
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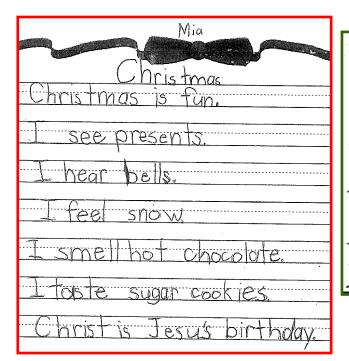
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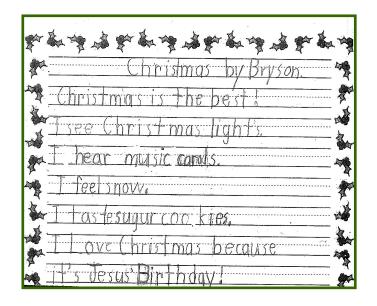


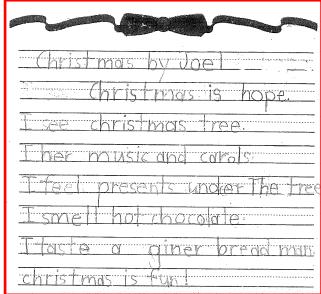
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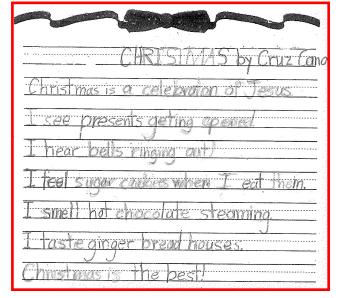
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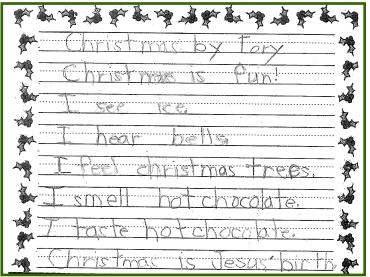
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2023/2024 School Calendar

August

29- First Day of School

September

4- Labor Day

13- Student Picture Day

October

6- PD Day

9- Columbus Day

27- PD Day

November

10- Veteran's Day

14 - College & Careers Evening
 17- HS 1st Qtr report Cards

17 - Thanksgiving Program

20,21- High School P/T Conferences

23- Thanksgiving Day

24- Thanksgiving Break

December

8- Elem 1st Term Report cards 11- Early Release -11:55am

11,13- Elem P/T Conferences

22- Last Day of 2023

25- Jan 5 - Christmas Break

January

8- First Day of 2024

15 - Martin Luther King Day

February

1- HS 2nd Qtr Reports

5,6- HS P/T Conferences

16- PD Day

19 -President's Day

29- Mid Winter Break

March

1- Mid Winter Break

15- PD Day

22- 2nd Term Elem Report Cards

25- Early Release (11:55am) P/T Prep

25/27- Elem P/T Conferences

29- Good Friday

April

1-5- Spring Break

12- HS 3rd Qtr Reports

18- Grandparents Day

May

3- PD Day

9- Ascension Day

24- Sports Day

27- Memorial Day

28- Sports Day Backup

June

7- Eighth Grade Graduation

14- Last Day of School

14- Senior Graduation

Board

Chairman: Steve Hofford Vice-Chairman: Jan Kottelenberg

Secretary: Stephanie Bareman

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IT Liaison: Dave Hofford

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Athletic Committee

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Ladies Aid Committee

Pres - Bea Kleyn VP - Malorie Burger Sec - Jessica Chase Treas -Jolene Vreugdenhil

Staff

Office Administration:

Debbie Johnson - Principal, Art 7-10

Kari VanDiest- Secretary

Karla Leyenhorst - Bookkeeper

Full Time:

Jeanette Janssen - Science 7-12, Math 9-12

Jolene Groves- PE, Bible, Hist. 3/4, L.A., Math 3, PE, Science Gr.1/2

Lynette Van Hofwegen - Gr. 5/6

Stephen Chase - PE 5-8, Eng 9-10, Hist, 7-10, Per Fin 9 Stephen Houweling - Math 4,& 7/8, Bible, L.A., 7/8

Wayne Chase - Bible 9-12, Math 11, English, & History 11/12

Part Time:

Christine Hofford - Ed Support

Hannah Gonzalez - Spanish 11/12, Sci, Music, Geog. 3/4

Janice Dykstra - Ed Support Director
Jolene Vreugdenhil - Culinary Arts 11/12

Julie Thompson - Ed Support

Karen DeMooy - Art 3/4

Kathleen Stevens- Yearbook, L.A 4

Katrina Lodder - Ed Support Kaylene Hofford - Ed Support

Kristina Wendt - PE HS

Melanie Kottelenberg - Music 5/6

Shari Kruyswijk - Gr.1/2 Bible, Math, Music, Art, History

Sharon Veldman - Culinary Arts 11/12

Tessa Kooiker - L.A. 1/2