## BEAR'S BULLETIN





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#### **Innovative Education**

As we begin a new school year, we're excited to consider the ways our students reach academic excellence utilizing innovative educational opportunities.

Through a lens of student-centered instruction, we recognize all students grow and learn in different ways and at different rates, and that all students can achieve. Our varied programs aim to develop deep relationships to understand each and every student as a whole person with individual strengths, unique academic interests, and personal needs.

We offer a variety of academic opportunities for students to explore their interests, excel and design their future. Whether a student is interested in programming a robot, singing on stage, learning how to build a car engine, or earning free college credits while in high school, the opportunities abound.

We know that learning happens best when students are agents and owners of their own learning in an environment that is safe, supportive and challenging — with high expectations for student success. Behind the scenes, we employ strategies that build intentional relationships and use real-time data and feedback that enable students to achieve academic, social, emotional and personal goals.

Our educators inspire, facilitate, and challenge students, nurturing curiosity and confidence. We provide a window to their future. Our employees understand that they play a role in our students' experiences, that we're all educators regardless of our job title.

Continued on District News page III

#### Translations:

Fall (2023

Para Español por favor llame al 651-407-7625 Xav tau ntawv Hmoob hu rau 651-407-7623



White Bear Lake Area School District Community Services & Recreation Department 4855 Bloom Avenue White Bear Lake, MN 55110-2371

Non-Profit Org US Postage Twin Cities, MN Permit #183

#### New Hires & Assignments



#### Birch Lake Elementary Principal

II

Julian Stanke is the new principal at Birch Lake Elementary. Stanke comes to the district from South St. Paul Public Schools, where he served as assistant principal at South St. Paul Middle School. Prior to his most current role, he held multiple positions in the SSPPS district, including K-6 Spanish teacher and student support specialist.



#### **Central Middle School Associate Principal**

Lonal Van begins this fall as associate principal at Central Middle School. He formerly served at Sunrise Park Middle School as dean of students and has worked with the WBLAHS credit recovery and district's Freedom Schools programs. Prior to working in White Bear, Van worked for the Minneapolis Public School District for 10 years. He also has experience in the classroom teaching fourth grade.



#### Central Middle School Dean of Students

Edward Davis will begin his time with White Bear Lake Area Schools this fall, serving in the role of dean of students at Central Middle School. He comes to the district from Minneapolis Public Schools, where he has served as dean of students at Olson Middle School. Earlier in his career, he taught fourth and fifth grade in the Minneapolis Public Schools system.



#### White Bear Lake Area High School - North Campus Principal

Long-time district administrator Carrie Barth, who most recently served as associate principal at WBLAHS -South Campus and served as Sunrise Park Middle School associate principal prior to moving to the high school, will serve a one-year assignment as principal at WBLAHS - North Campus before the unified high school houses all White Bear Lake Area High School students in the fall of 2024.



#### Otter Lake Elementary Principal

District administrator Ang Nelson, who has most recently served in the principal role at White Bear Lake Area High School - North Campus, is the new principal at Otter Lake Elementary. Prior to her time as principal, Nelson served as associate principal at North Campus. She came to White Bear from the Forest Lake Area School District.



#### Principal on Special Assignment

Cynthia Mueller, former Otter Lake Elementary principal, will serve as a Principal on Special Assignment as a member of the district-wide Teaching and Learning team for the 2023-24 school year. Mueller will provide instructional leadership through collaboration with principals and instructional coaches to support student literacy outcomes and the implementation of the district's strategic plan.



#### White Bear Lake Area High School - South Campus Associate Principal

Chandra Hanke will serve as the interim associate principal at White Bear Lake Area High School - South Campus for the 2023-24 school year. Hanke comes to the district after serving in a student management specialist position at Maple Grove Senior High School, and with prior experience in the roles of online academy lead, dean of students, and instructional leader at Fridley Online Academy.



#### Sunrise Park Middle School Dean of Students

Brian White, who formerly served as coordinator of the district's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), is the new dean of students at Sunrise Park Middle School. Prior to working in White Bear, White served in the roles of dean of students for KIPP Academy Charter Schools and special projects manager in the Equity Office of Saint Paul Public Schools.



#### Unified White Bear Lake Area High School Principal

Russell Reetz is the new principal for the unified White Bear Lake Area High School. He will facilitate work being done this year as the two campuses prepare to come together into one unified building in Fall 2024. Reetz comes to us from Eden Prairie High School, where he was an associate principal. He has also served in director of activities roles, formerly served on the Minnesota State High School League Board of Directors and is an active mentor to athletic directors throughout the country with the InsideOut Initiative. He began his career teaching physical education, health and DAPE, and he has coached football and track and field.









#### **Construction Updates**

Since 2019, when the community supported a bond referendum, the list of completed facilities projects has grown to include new Transportation and North Star Elementary buildings, South Campus gym and classroom additions, ALC renovations, and elementary additions at Birch Lake, Lakeaires, Lincoln, Matoska, Otter Lake, Vadnais Heights and Willow Lane.

III

This fall, the Oneka Elementary addition and updates will be completed. Progress will be made throughout the school year on the Unified WBLAHS so that it can open to grades 9-12 in Fall 2024, when the current WBLAHS - South Campus will open as Mariner Middle School. Work will also continue for the phased projects at Central Middle School and for the current Sunrise Park Middle School, which will be ready in Fall 2025 as a multi-use facility to include District Offices, Early Childhood, Transition Education Center (TEC) and the Senior Program.

Recently, a popular topic of conversation has been the expanded indoor and outdoor spaces for student and community activities. The WBLAHS Field House has seen its share of action, with the indoor walking track being opened to community members last spring, the Boys' and Girls' Track Teams hosting season-opening indoor track and field meets, and a variety of camps and activities taking place at the five-court indoor space. The stadium and turf fields surrounding the current North Campus have seen practices and contests, along with community use when the spaces are not reserved for activities. The new courts on Bald Eagle Avenue, which are painted and lined for both tennis and pickleball, are scheduled to be completed in mid-August to be used for the fall sports season and available for community use.



The district's building projects are made possible by the community's support of the 2019 Building Our Future bond referendum.

Complete information about the district's facilities projects, including construction details about individual projects, videos and presentations that have been shared at School Board meetings, can be found at isd624.org/BuildingOurFuture.

## WE ARE HIRING! Find Employment info at *isd624.org/employment*

Competitive wages / On the job training / Flexible work hours Chance to work near home / Opportunity for: benefits, time off, holidays Make a difference for kids in your community



#### Continued from front page

We encourage students to dream about their aspirations, explore opportunities, design their future and create their success.

We are transforming learning. Our flexible learning spaces and learning studios ignite opportunities for communication, collaboration, creativity and critical thinking. The community's support of the 2019 bond referendum resulted in visible structural changes, but the invisible changes that have occurred are even more important. The students' connection to their learning has been strengthened by their changed environments.

We have a lot to look forward to this school year, and we're excited to begin!

Dr. Wayne Kazmierczak Superintendent



#### Awards & Honors









#### **Nutrition Services Award**

IV

White Bear Lake Area High School - North Campus Kitchen Manager Natalie Sagdalen was surprised last spring, as part of the national School Lunch Hero Day, with the news that she was selected to receive the Minnesota School Nutrition Association Hero Award. The state-level award recognizes an individual who goes above and beyond each day at their job. Those who are considered for the award must be nominated by any staff member within the school district.

#### **National Communications Awards**

The district was recently awarded national honors from the National School Public Relations Association. The 2022-23 Activities Calendar and a 2022 Capital Projects Levy postcard mailer were given Awards of Merit, while the 2022 Annual Update and "A Few of Our Favorite Things" video received Awards of Excellence, which is the highest honor given.

Links to the award-winning projects can be found on a News Post on the district's website, *isd624.org*.

#### Teacher of the Year Honors

WBLAHS - North Campus Social Studies and AVID Teacher Mark Domschot was chosen from a pool of six finalists to represent the district as the 2023 Teacher of the Year. The process, which took place in the spring, includes an open nomination process, submission of written responses to a series of questions regarding teaching and learning and personal educational philosophies, and a finalist interview panel.

The district's 2022 Teacher of the Year recipient Mae Haley continued on to the statewide program and was named a semifinalist in the 2023 Minnesota Teacher of the Year program this spring.

#### **District Receives Bus Stop Arm Grant**

White Bear Lake Area Schools has been awarded a grant of \$122,000 through the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety for the installation of stop arm cameras on all 36 school district buses. Data from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety estimates drivers disregard stop arms, which are meant to help students cross the street safely as they get on and off the bus, more than 100,000 times in a given school year. Buses outfitted with a series of cameras will now be able to record a violator's car, their face and their license plate, so that if they drive through a stop arm they could have to pay a hefty fine.

#### Calendars

The 2023-24 and 2024-25 academic year calendar one-page flyers are now available online on the district's website, directly at *isd624.org/about/calendar*.

The 2023-24 Activities Calendar will be mailed to all district families in late-August. Community members who would like a copy of the printed calendar are invited to pick one up in September at District Center (4855 Bloom Avenue, White Bear Lake).

The online calendar available at the district's website allows users the ability to subscribe to building-level and program-specific calendars.

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White Bear Lake Area Schools

#### Planning for Student Success

As we begin the 2023-24 school year, our district's updated Strategic Plan strategies provide us with a focus moving forward:

- We will create and sustain a safe, equitable and nurturing environment.
- We will promote, encourage and support students' personal learning experiences and aspirations.
- We will ensure our organization continuously transforms to fulfill our mission.
- We will establish healthy and vital engagement with our entire community.

Last spring, the School Board approved a fifth strategy that was developed throughout the year by an Action Team made up of community members and district staff members. The Foundation of Success will be used to help us achieve systemic alignment to ensure that we provide educational experiences that are designed to develop skills and competencies vital to students' eventual postsecondary success and engagement: fundamental learning, flexible and critical thinking, community engagement, character, communication, and teamwork.

The strategic work continues into this coming school year. Teams from schools and programs came together this summer to review their site's current reality, consider alignment with the district's new Strategic Plan strategies, and work on building a school- or program-level Action Plan.



Complete information about the district's Strategic Plan, including mission, beliefs, objectives and strategies, can be found on our website at *isd624.org/about/strategic-planning*.



#### Important Info

#### See what we're up to!

• E-NEWSLETTER The Community e-Newsletter is sent out each week, with alternating text and video editions. The text editions cover student and staff successes, school and Community Education offerings, and School Board proceedings. Those who wish to be added to the recipient list may contact us via email at *communications@isd624.org*.

#### CONSTRUCTION UPDATES

Find periodic updates about the construction projects happening throughout the district at *isd624.org/BuildingOurFuture*.

#### STAY SOCIAL

Join White Bear Lake Area Schools' social media circles - Facebook, Twitter and YouTube for 624 Fact posts and The Week in 62.4 Seconds video share-outs. Find links on the District's website.





Community members are invited to stop by throughout the academic year for an informal chat with Superintendent Kazmierczak over a cup of coffee.

Find us at Caribou Coffee in Downtown White Bear Lake:

- Nov. 15, 2023 from 4-5 p.m.
- Feb. 22, 2024 from 12-1 p.m.
- May 7, 2024 from 7:30-8:30 a.m.

#### **FREE Senior Activity Pass**

VI

Almost 1,000 Senior community members (those who are age 65+) who live in the District participate in the Lifetime Activity Pass program and enjoy complimentary admission to school activities.

Apply online at *isd624.org/SeniorActivityPass* and your pass will be mailed to you. If you have questions, please contact Rachael Markuson at 651-407-7563 or *rachael.markuson@isd624.org*.

## Senior Community Member Lifetime Activity Pass

This Senior Community Member Activity Pass grants free admission into home activities\* for

#### YOUR NAME

Validated by Dr. Wayne A. Kazmierczak, Superintendent



## **Digital Backpack**

The district's Community Services Department distributes electronic flyers from the school district, as well as local organizations that offer opportunities for youth, on the first and third Thursday of each month.

The Digital Backpack and submission instructions can be found at *communityservices*. *isd624.org/about/digital-backpack*.

#### **Requesting an Interpreter**

Families can request that a district staff member call them through the use of an interpreter who speaks the language they speak.

Information about how to make the request can be found in text and audio translations, in all languages spoken by students in the district, on the district website or at the QR code below:



## **IMPORTANT DATES**

- » SEPTEMBER 5 FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL: GRADES 6 & 9
- » SEPTEMBER 6 FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL: GRADES 1-5, 7-8, 10-12+
- » SEPTEMBER 7 FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL: KINDERGARTEN
- » SEPTEMBER 11 FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL: EARLY CHILDHOOD
- » SEPTEMBER 11 SCHOOL BOARD REGULAR MEETING 5:30 p.m. at District Center
- » SEPTEMBER 25 COFFEE WITH DR. K 10:30-11:30 a.m. at Senior Center (Normandy Park)
- » SEPTEMBER 25 SCHOOL BOARD WORK SESSION 5:30 p.m. at District Center
- » OCTOBER 9 SCHOOL BOARD REGULAR MEETING 5:30 p.m. at District Center
- » OCTOBER 18-23 NO SCHOOL
- » OCTOBER 23
   SCHOOL BOARD WORK
   SESSION
   5:30 p.m. at District Center
- » NOVEMBER 13 SCHOOL BOARD REGULAR MEETING 5:30 p.m. at District Center
- » NOVEMBER 15 COFFEE WITH DR. K 7:30-8:30 a.m. at Downtown WBL Caribou Coffee
- » NOVEMBER 27 SCHOOL BOARD WORK SESSION 5:30 p.m. at District Center

ISD624.ORG



## White Bear Lake Area Schools

Leading minds to learning, hearts to compassion, and lives to community service.

Serving the communities of Birchwood, Gem Lake, Hugo, Lino Lakes, Little Canada, Maplewood, North Oaks, Vadnais Heights, White Bear Lake, and White Bear Township.

# Join us!

#### **Translations:**

Enrollment

information at

isd624.org/enroll

Para Español por favor llame al 651-407-7625 Xav tau ntawy Hmoob hu rau 651-407-7623

## Why Be a Bear?

## Our students benefit from:

- Safe, nurturing and challenging environments.
- Student-centered instruction.
- Hands-on learning.
- World language experiences.
- Focus on academic, social and personal development of each student.
- Career Pathways opportunities and College-level courses.

## Stav Connected

• E-NEWSLETTER

The Community e-Newsletter is sent out each week, with alternating text and video editions. The text editions cover student and staff successes, school and Community Education offerings, and School Board proceedings. Those who wish to be added to the Community e-Newsletter list may contact us at communications@isd624.org.

• STAY SOCIAL

651-407-7500

Join White Bear Lake Area Schools' social media circles - Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

**| /isd624** 

