

# Royal Roundup

## Focus on Learning

### Hybrid Learning Model

By Director of Teaching and Learning Allison Arndt



Students and staff returned to school on August 31, five months after the shelter in place order started, and it has been so wonderful to have our students back. COVID-19 brought many changes to how we deliver school to students in the Watertown-Mayer school district. Although school isn't back to business as usual, we have safely brought students back to school with the guidance of three Learning Models: In-Person Learning, Hybrid Learning, and Distance Learning. Based on criteria put forth by the MN Department of Education and the MN Department of Health, Watertown-Mayer Kindergarten through grade 4 students had the option of choosing either the In-Person model or Distance Learning model. Students in grades 5-12 could take part in Hybrid Learning or the Distance Learning model.

### Hybrid Learning Model

Hybrid learning is an educational model with some students attending class in-person, while others take part in learning virtually from home. In this model, students have face-to-face learning time with teachers, but they also have time to do learning on their own, sometimes at their own pace. Hybrid learning develops students academic skills and abilities, as well as encourages the development of many skills needed to be successful outside of school, such as responsibility, communication, creativity, and organization.

**HYBRID continued on page 2**



**Watertown Mayer**  
Public Schools

Connections • Opportunities

## Get To Know Darren Schuler

### Superintendent of Watertown-Mayer Public Schools



Darren Schuler grew up just north of St. Bonifacius attending Watertown-Mayer Public Schools from Kindergarten through grade 12. After graduation he attended Mankato State University where he earned a Bachelor of Science in

Elementary Education. Darren married his high school sweetheart Jennifer (Nelson) Class of 1988 (he is very fortunate to have a very supportive wife) and they have two lovely children: Claudia, a junior at St. Ben's majoring in Nursing and Sam, class of 2021 senior at Delano High School. When he's not busy being superintendent, he enjoys biking, fishing, and traveling with his active family.

Now the Class of '87 Royals graduate has returned home to where it all started. Enjoy this candid conversation with Superintendent Schuler and get to know him a little better!

### ***Did you have a favorite teacher/class while in high school?***

My favorite class was Civics with Mr. Mike Dressen in high school. I have always been an avid newspaper reader and enjoyed the conversations in class about current events in our nation and our world. Mr. Dressen also had his Friday current events "pop quiz" that were based on what you knew about what was happening in the world around us. I actually loved those quizzes!

**SCHULER continued on page 2**

## HYBRID from page 1

In the Hybrid Learning Model, students at Watertown-Mayer attend class in-person two days a week and take part in distance learning three days a week. Over 90% of students in middle and high school have chosen this learning model and have been split into two cohorts attending school either Monday/Thursday (group A) or Tuesday/Friday (group B).

Teachers are using various strategies to support all students during hybrid learning. Live streaming allows teachers to work with students who are sitting in the classroom and attending from home remotely at the same time, reinforcing concepts when working from home. Flipped learning allows students to use their time at home for learning via online activities, pre-assigned readings, and pre-recorded videos. Students then use in-person learning time working with their teacher on projects and getting extra support. Video conferencing supports students through small group work, discussion forums with classmates, provides additional opportunities to develop conversation and presentation skills, and gives them another opportunity to have access to their teacher. 🏰

## WM School Board Election 2020

Watertown-Mayer Public Schools has four seats open on the school board. All seats are for a four year term, which begins January 2021. School board candidates will appear on the ballot in the November 2020 General Election. They are Jim Burns, Darrel Bimberg, Josh Guetzkow, Heidi Guetzkow (incumbent), and Katy Jo Danielson.

A huge thank you to all candidates willing to do the best for students, staff, and families of Watertown-Mayer Public Schools.

**Election is November 3.**

## SCHULER from page 1



### ***Walking the halls at Watertown-Mayer High School, what déjà vu moment have you experienced?***

Walking past the high school trophy case and seeing our 1986 Class B Football Championship trophy. Seeing that photo and trophy brings me back to one of the most memorable moments in my life. Bringing home a state football championship back to the Watertown-Mayer school communities still gives me great Royal pride!

### ***What are your dreams and aspirations for Watertown-Mayer as Superintendent?***

I want to see Watertown-Mayer Public Schools continue to grow in enrollment and in student achievement. At the end of the day it is our responsibility to make sure Watertown-Mayer students are proud of their PreK-12 educational experience and have had authentic learning connections to help them be their best. I also want our students to leave Watertown-Mayer schools with the skills to be successful in whatever career they may choose and always be proud to be a Royal!

***What is the most challenging?*** Currently, the most challenging part of being a superintendent is making sure that students and staff are safe in the midst of a national health pandemic. It has been extremely challenging to meet all the required COVID-19 health guidelines while trying to provide the best and equitable learning experience of all Watertown-Mayer students. These are trying times for our students, staff and families.

### ***What do you want the greater WM community to know about you?***

I will always keep students first in our decisions. In over twenty years as a school administrator, I have always taken pride in listening and building relationships within our school community. I am excited to be an active member of the WM school community! 🏰



**Follow Superintendent Schuler on Twitter @DarrenSchuler**

# Kids' Company starts school year after a successful summer of fun!

Watertown-Mayer Kids' Company is excited to be starting the 2020-2021 school year as a year-round licensed and certified child care, serving children 6 weeks to 12 years.

This time last year, the program was embarking on a construction project for expansion. The addition of the licensed program was a community need that has been greatly received.

Starting with Summer Programming, Kids' Company adapted to Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) COVID-19 safety regulations to ensure a safe and developmentally appropriate environment for children, staff, and families. Guidelines such as wearing masks and social distancing in small groups were handled with ease by all. Children enjoyed the summer months engaging in small group activities mainly outside. The adjustments made to meet COVID-19 guidelines went much smoother than expected and the summer flew by. As we enter into the 2020-2021 school year, Kids' Company is working to support students who are engaged in all three Learning Models. The support of the community, the district, and its staff has made all the difference in the success of the program, and has helped us prepare to meet and adapt to the ever changing world we live in. This has also allowed us to increase our small group size to fourteen children. 🏰



For more information about Watertown-Mayer Kids' Company Caring Hands or our Out-of-School Time program please contact Amy Dimmler, program coordinator at 952-955-0283 or [amy.dimmler@wm.k12.mn.us](mailto:amy.dimmler@wm.k12.mn.us).

WM SPORTS  
LIVESTREAM



## Royal Booster Club Livestreams Sports on YouTube

Livestreaming has become the norm with the onset of COVID-19. From musical performances and theater productions to sporting events, every online social media platform has been utilized to provide access. For the last 6 months, the Royal Booster Club investigated different livestream options, landing on YouTube for its platform to stream sports and to further grow support in the school district.

Livestreaming is the ability to capture video and audio in real time and stream it online for immediate viewing, while the sporting event is happening. The streaming committee's focus was to capture memories in high definition video and provide this opportunity to the greater Watertown and Mayer communities at no cost. This became a necessity since fan attendance at sporting events has been limited due to COVID-19.

The Royal Booster Club has streamed three girls soccer games, one boys soccer games, and 2 swim events to date. The feedback from viewing these events online has been positive. The Royal Booster Club is committed to stream as many events as feasible but needs support. For our streaming schedule, as well as how you can support the booster club in this endeavor, visit [www.wmhs livestreaming.com](http://www.wmhs livestreaming.com). Please consider joining the Booster Club to continue programs like this for the community. 🏰



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*At Watertown-Mayer Public Schools, we make authentic learning connections with each of our students, providing them with the opportunity to reach the full potential of their passions and strengths.*

## Bond Referendum Project Highlight

Fall is the season of change and some exciting transformations are taking place throughout the District. Since the successful voter approved \$25 million facilities/bond levy passed in November 2019, design teams have been busy planning for and overseeing various facility improvement projects at all three schools.

The high school gymnasium has been upgraded with unobstructed views for spectators. With added full-height openings on the east wall, all action on the floor can be seen from any seat. The gym was painted from top to bottom including a new accent stripe. Bleachers will be installed this fall to further enhance this improved space.

The elementary school playground received a fresh new look after it was damaged by fire last spring. The playground equipment was quickly replaced and upgraded to improve both quality and safety. New rubber surfacing was installed throughout,



which will provide critical fall height protection and also meets ADA compliance.

Up next are improvements and upgrades to the high school track, installing artificial turf on the field, replacing the concession and ticket building and other site improvements including lighting and bleachers.



To learn more about the projects, go to the Facilities & Planning link under the About Us tab at [www.wm.k12.mn.us](http://www.wm.k12.mn.us)