

Royal Roundup

District Voters Have Choice to Make on November 3rd

Superintendent, **Darren Schuler**
@DarrenSchuler



This fall, Minnesotans will have a unique opportunity to support public education directly on their ballots. A proposed constitutional amendment aims to modernize the Permanent School Fund, an essential educational asset that has supported our public schools since statehood in 1858.

The fund has grown dramatically over the years—from \$675 million in 2010 to over \$2.3 billion today. However, because of outdated restrictions written into the Minnesota Constitution, school distributions have lagged behind this growth. The proposed amendment updates the distribution formula to increase funding for today's students while fully preserving its long-term purchasing power for future generations.

HERE IS WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW AS A VOTER:

- **No Tax Increase:** This amendment simply changes how an existing trust fund distributes its revenue. It does not create or raise property, income, or sales taxes.
- **Every District Benefits:** If approved, every public school district, charter school, and tribal school in Minnesota will receive increased per-pupil funding.

- **Your Vote Matters:** Because this formula is embedded in our state constitution, voter approval is strictly required. Crucially, leaving this question blank on your ballot counts as a "No" vote.

This change was unanimously recommended by both Republicans and Democrats and a task force of investment, legal, and education experts. Please remember to vote as this is a rare opportunity to boost school funding without



raising taxes. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at darren.schuler@wm.k12.mn.us, 952-955-0480, or scan the QR code to review a FAQ.

We look forward to another successful 2026-2027 school year. Go Royals! 🏆



Watertown Mayer
Public Schools

Connections • Opportunities

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Welcome, Ms. Hansen!

Watertown-Mayer is pleased to welcome our new elementary school principal, Jody Hansen!

Ms. Hansen comes to Watertown-Mayer with over twenty-eight years of educational experience working for Minnetonka Public Schools, Shakopee Public Schools, and, most recently, South St. Paul Public Schools.

Even though she has been a part of large metro school systems, her heart is in small town communities. Ms. Hansen states that, "Small town life is not unfamiliar to me. I grew up in Redwood Falls, went to college in St. Peter (Go Gusties!), and completed my student teaching in Glencoe, Minnesota." She is excited to be a part of a smaller school community.

In her spare time, she enjoys swimming, yoga, walks, knitting, music, and volunteering both at her church and with the PACER program which is a non-profit supporting children and families with disabilities.

"I enjoy many things about being a principal, but most of all, I love celebrating learning with students and staff. I am thrilled to be the next principal at WMES! It is evident that WMES is a wonderful learning community filled with energetic students and extremely talented staff." 🏰

Mark Those Calendars & Be a Part of the WM Royal Experience!



Watertown-Mayer has so many things for you and your family to enjoy at the beginning of the school year and into the fall! Be sure to mark your calendars for these events and don't forget to check our website with the most up-to-date information on ALL things Watertown-Mayer.

www.wm.k12.mn.us > **Activities > WM Activity Calendar**

Homecoming Week: September 14 - 19

- **Homecoming Coronation**

Monday, September 14 • 7:30 PM
@ WMHS Performing Arts Center (PAC)

- **Homecoming Games**

Girls & Boys Cross Country @ Baylor Regional Park, Tuesday, Sept. 15
Girls & Boys Soccer Tuesday, Sept. 15
Girls Swimming & Diving Thursday, Sept. 17
Volleyball @ Dassel-Cokato, Thursday, Sept. 17
Varsity Football Friday, Sept. 18

- **Homecoming Parade**

Friday, Sept. 18 • 4 PM in Downtown Watertown

- **WM Band Homecoming Tailgate Dinner & National Honor Society Carnival**

Friday, September 18 • 5:30 PM

- **2026 Watertown-Mayer Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony**

Halftime of home football game on

Friday, September 18

- **Community Learning Center: Storybook Trail in the Woods**

Saturday, Sept. 26 at 10 AM

(meet in the WM high school parking lot)

Fall Musical *The Sound of Music* on Nov. 19, 20 & 21

Fall Band Concert Dec. 7 @ WMHS PAC

Fall Choir Concert December 14 @ WMHS PAC

SCHOOL LUNCHES



The Minnesota Free Meals Program continues to be permanent. Second breakfast, second lunch, and a la carte (middle & high school only) can be purchased for an additional cost. Milk can also be purchased at an extra cost for those who choose to bring home lunch. Please see the chart below for updates in pricing for the 2026-27 school year.

BREAKFAST	1st Meal	2nd Meal
Grades K-4	FREE	\$2.85
Grades 5-12	FREE	\$2.85
Adult	\$2.85	\$2.85

LUNCH	1st Meal	2nd Meal
Grades K-4	FREE	\$5.25
Grades 5-12	FREE	\$5.25
Adult	\$5.25	\$5.25

MILK Grades K-12: \$0.65

Families are still encouraged to fill out the application for educational benefits. The school's funding from the state is affected by the number of families that qualify based on their income. (If families have received a letter from the district stating that they are directly certified anytime after July 1, 2026, there is no need to fill out the application.) Please see this Royal Roundup edition's insert under 'School Lunch' for more information. 🏰

Watertown-Mayer Unified Earns GOLD!



The Watertown-Mayer Unified Basketball Team was honored with being the ONLY Minnesota High School chosen to represent Minnesota at the Special Olympics USA Games and they did not disappoint!

THE HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDED:

- Unified Basketball winning GOLD!
- Landon Johnsrud and AJ Kane participated in the special ESPN Sports Challenge – winning GOLD with their Minnesota Vikings coach, Josh Matellus!
- Unified Pair Isabella Ernhart and Lauren Bean were chosen for the Athlete Leadership Experience!

This Unified Team demonstrated what it means to #OwnTheCrownWM in a big way! 🏰



Congratulations to this entire team and its coaches!

Zackary Miller, Austin Latham, Micah Schmidt, Tristan Johnsrud, Ellie Lommel, Isaac Ostlie, Wyatt Hartfiel, Kendall Kuhnau, Angel Ernhart, Kailyn Denault, and coaches Elliott Boersma, Shawn Perez, Andy Johnsrud.



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POSTAL CUSTOMER

2028 Strategic Plan Vision Statement: At Watertown-Mayer Public Schools, we create environments where all students feel connected and experience opportunities to grow and thrive.

Watertown-Mayer Education Foundation Success



What a year it's been for the Watertown-Mayer Education Foundation! We're thrilled to share that we awarded over \$88,000 in scholarships to the Class of 2026 graduating seniors.

SCHOLARSHIP FUND EVENTS

We also had four successful fundraisers in July — the Alumni Reunion at Back Channel Brewing, Own The Crown Trap Shoot competition at the Watertown Rod & Gun Club, Mega Meat Raffle at Riverside Bar & Grill, and Designer Purse Bingo at the Luce Line Lodge. None of this happens without you: our incredible donors and sponsors!

ENDOWMENT FUND

Your generosity has also helped grow our Endowment fund to \$48,000, and in May we honored our first donors to reach the 3-Crown level (\$10,000 +): Paul and Joan Nesvold.

A ROYAL EVENING FOR EDUCATION EVENT

Now it's time to look ahead — and this fall brings our biggest event yet: **A Royal Evening for Education "Casino Night" on September 26** at the Watertown Community Center! Grab your friends and get ready for a night of great food, games, prizes, and giving back. Stay tuned to our Facebook and Instagram pages for ticket info and sponsorship opportunities — you won't want to miss this one. 🏰



Ready to be part of the momentum?
Scan the QR code or visit www.wm.k12.mn.us/community/wmef to make a gift today.

WMEF is a private 501(c)(3) non-profit that operates independently of the School Board and District, and every gift is tax deductible.