

Butts' Briefs March 2019

It is a bit more difficult to write the March "briefs" going into Spring Break when snow still covers the ground and more predicted to be on the way.

After Spring Break we hit the ground running! We have 5 school days and Qtr 3 is finished, so on to 4th Qtr. It is the last quarter for the seniors. They will be putting the finishing touches on their high school careers, planning for the next step and graduating on May 26.

The juniors enter the testing season. A letter will arrive home very soon with the details for the Testing Days Apr 2-3, where all juniors complete the Smarter Balanced tests in English/Reading and Math. Plus, a SD Science test. It will be a full two days of testing.

Sophomores also test on Apr 2. They will complete the Pre-ACT test. It is a great measure of where they stand in preparation for the ACT in their junior year. Watch for a letter home.

Freshmen will attend classes as normal during the testing days while the Jr and Soph are testing. Seniors will be assigned to Study Hall if they are not passing classes or finished the senior checklist. Seniors will attend NTHS and Dual Credit classes during testing days.

Juniors and Seniors also have set their sights on Prom April 13. The Grand March begins at 8:00 with the dance to follow. Prizes will be given at regular intervals during the dance with big prizes given very near the end. The Prom is followed by the Post-Prom Party. The doors open at 11:30 and close at 12:00. All Post-Prom attendees must be in the door by 12:00. There is food, games and great prizes. The highlight is the Hypnotist starting at 2:30. All WHS juniors and seniors (with good attendance 90% or higher) can attend Prom or Post-Prom. No date is necessary to take part in the events.

Lastly, March is a time of planning for next year. Students have requested courses for next year and we are working to build a schedule that gets them all of their requests. It is also a time when we interview perspective new staff members to replace some of those that are leaving.

Hang in there Arrows! Brighter days are coming. Spring will eventually arrive.

Dr. Michael Butts
WHS Principal

Social-Emotional Learning in the Watertown School District

By Amanda Devries, MS Counselor and Alyssa Larson, School Psychologist

Edutopia.org states, “Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all.” The Watertown School District Mental Health Support Team has received a great gift this year of being able to meet and collaborate to take our current, successful School Mental Health Program to the next level of greatness in educating our student’s hearts. Our mission is to work together with teachers, parents, students, and administrators to empower all students to proactively enhance their social-emotional, relational, career, and academic skills in order to become successful, lifelong learners and positive contributors in an ever-changing world.

The Watertown School District Mental Health Support team consists of school counselors, Project Success Coordinators, school psychologists, and a school social worker. School counselors teach and educate students about effective strategies to enhance skills in the core Social Emotional Learning (SEL) areas through individual or group counseling, classroom lessons, and crisis management. The school social worker and Project Success Coordinators connect families with resources and support in our community. School Psychologists conduct psychological and academic assessments to help improve student achievement and consult with parents, teachers, and administrators to develop interventions to help students be successful.

The team’s focus this year has been on Social Emotional Learning (also known as SEL). Social Emotional Learning is the process by which one acquires & effectively applies the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to be academically, socially, & professionally successful. SEL spans the lifetime as one progresses through the various life stages: infancy, childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. These skills are explicitly taught, re-taught, and reinforced throughout the student’s school day. SEL focuses on five main areas that will be introduced here and further explained by the WSD Mental Health Team in future articles. The five main areas include: Self-Management (manage emotions & behaviors), Self-Awareness (recognizing one’s emotions and values), Responsible Decision-Making (making ethical, constructive decisions), Social Awareness (better understanding those around us), and Relationship Skills (building positive and sustainable relationships). These skills are addressed through the Multi-Tiered System of Support. Through these tiers, students have access to evidence-based social, emotional, and behavioral interventions. Students are supported through Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports within each building, where common language and expectations are taught. Other supports students have access to include: social emotional classroom curriculum lessons, social skill group instruction, increased opportunities for reinforcement and feedback, and individual student intervention plans.

Research supports the importance of teaching students ways to improve their social emotional skills throughout their educational year. Students who have strong social emotional skills perform better academically in school, have more positive relationships with peers and adults, and have stronger coping skills. Investing in high-quality programs will increase the number of well-adjusted adults in our community and in turn yield economic benefits.

Social emotional learning is a collaborative effort amongst all adults in a child’s life. Parents can help support these skills by creating a home environment of trust, respect, and support. Modeling proactive ways of dealing with situations and working collaboratively with school staff can increase the child’s

ability to become a self-aware, respectful individual, who can resolve conflict, and make responsible decisions.

The members of the School-Based Mental Health Team include:

School Counselors:

- Elementary: Pam Luecke (Lincoln & Jefferson), Stephanie Danielsen (McKinley & Mellette), Kelsey Popham (Roosevelt & Jefferson)
 - Intermediate School: Paula Wilde
 - Middle School: Amanda DeVries (A-K), Jason Buechler (L-Z)
 - High School: Shelley Gauer (A-G), Christ Christensen (H-Q), Felicia Reed (R-Z)
- Elementary School Social Worker:** Dana Martens (McKinley and Roosevelt)
- School Psychologists:** Alyssa Larson, Ruth Fodness, JodyAnn Jongeling (District-wide)
- SPED Counselor:** Connie Kieso (MS & HS)
- Project Success Coordinators:** Wendy Olson (HS), Jo Kjetland (MS)

Child Find Notice

The Watertown School District has an ongoing "Child Find" system, which is designated to locate, identify and evaluate any child residing within its geographical boundaries who may have a disability and be in need of Special Education or 504 services. This includes children who are not in school; those who are in public, private, or home school; those who are highly mobile such as children who are migrant or homeless; and those who are advancing from grade to grade, who may need but are not receiving Special Education or 504 services.

The Watertown School District will make sure any child enrolled in its district who qualifies for Special Education or 504 services will be no cost to the parents of the child.

If you know of a child who lives within the boundaries of the Watertown School District, who may have a disability, and may need but is not receiving Special Education or 504 services, please contact Jennifer Heggelund, Director of Special Services, at 882-6398.

"Child Find" activities will continue throughout the school year. As part of these efforts the Watertown School District will use screening information, student records, and basic assessment information it collects on all children in the District to help locate those children who have a disability and need Special Education or 504 services. Any information the District collects through "Child Find" is maintained confidentially.

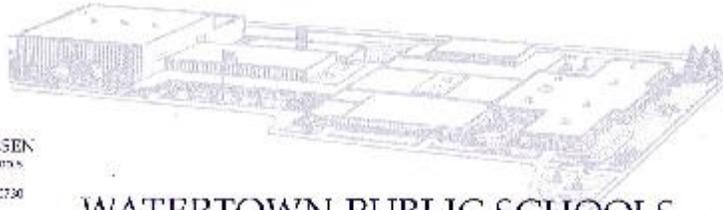
Notice of Non-discrimination

The Watertown School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

Dr. Jeff Danielsen, Superintendent
P.O. Box 730, Watertown, SD 57201
605-882-6312

Darrell Stacey, Assistant Superintendent
P.O. Box 730, Watertown, SD 57201
605-882-6312

For further information on notice of non-discrimination, see list of Office for Civil Rights (OCR) enforcement offices for the address and phone number of the office that serves your area, or call 1-(800)-421-3481.



DR. JEFF DANIELSEN
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Watertown, SD 57201-0730

TELEPHONE
605-850-4312
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WATERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Dear Staff, Students and Parents of the Watertown Public Schools:

Congress enacted the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) in 1986 that required public and private, secondary and elementary schools to identify asbestos containing building material (ACBM) in their school buildings and take appropriate actions to control the release of asbestos fibers. The US Environmental Protection Agency finalized a regulatory program in 1987 which enforces the AHERA mandate which states that every school building must be inspected for asbestos and it requires that the inspection must be done by an EPA certified inspector. The law also requires that each school building have an "Asbestos Management Plan". The purpose of this plan is to assure occupants that any asbestos contained material that may be present in the building are kept in a "safe, undamaged" condition.

Part of this law requires that each school keep a copy of this Asbestos Management Plan on file and that this plan be available for public viewing. It is the intent of this letter to inform you of the asbestos in the School District and the availability of the management plan.

The asbestos in the District is confined to the following areas:

- Senior High School – Pipe insulation, floor tile
- Intermediate School – Floor tile
- Garfield School – Pipe insulation, floor tile
- McKinley School – Pipe insulation
- Roosevelt School – Floor tile

In general, asbestos containing materials that are hard, such as floor tile are not dangerous. Therefore, the floor tile is of little concern as long as they are maintained intact. The floor tile has been put under an ongoing surveillance and maintenance program which mandates the material be kept intact and free of damage. Pipe insulation that could contain asbestos is located only in the mechanical areas.

It is the intention of the Watertown School District to keep all building occupants and public informed and to be advised that the "Asbestos Management Plan" is available for viewing during normal business hours at the Watertown School District Business Office.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Jeff Danielson
Superintendent