



SUMMER EDITION 2020-2021

# CHEESEMAKER PRIDE

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MONROE

## DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER

925 16TH AVENUE SUITE 3  
MONROE, WI 53566  
608-328-7171

## ABRAHAM LINCOLN ELEMENTARY

2625 14TH AVENUE  
MONROE, WI 53566  
608-328-7172

## NORTHSIDE ELEMENTARY

3005 8 1/2 STREET  
MONROE, WI 53566  
608-328-7134

## PARKSIDE ELEMENTARY

920 4TH STREET  
MONROE, WI 53566  
608-328-7130

## MONROE MIDDLE SCHOOL

1510 13TH STREET  
MONROE, WI 53566  
608-328-7120

## MONROE HIGH SCHOOL

1600 26TH STREET  
MONROE, WI 53566  
608-328-7122

## MONROE PUBLIC LIBRARY

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[WWW.MONROESCHOOLS.COM](http://WWW.MONROESCHOOLS.COM)

## MISSION STATEMENT

*The School District of Monroe will prepare each student for the future by developing academic, life, and employability skills. To this end, we will foster partnerships with family and community to ensure student success.*

## COVID-19 — LOOKING FORWARD



Rick Waski  
District Administrator

The last 15 months have created a challenge for schools that we have not seen in modern history. Working diligently to educate students during a pandemic provided great challenges, but I cannot be more proud of our staff in how they have stepped up to the challenge.

They did their best to create a virtual school, in days, during the spring of 2020. They persevered this year, when we worked to provide some form of face-to-face instruction when the impact of COVID-19 fluctuated in our schools and community. Parents and community members certainly have had their opinions, but I am also proud of our Board of Education in making the best and most informed decisions they could considering the unknowns we were facing. In the end, I am exhausted emotionally and physically and the same goes for our students, staff, families, and community.

In my role, I get to be a decision-maker and an advisor to the Board when we make policy decisions related to the pandemic and our school operations. I, like any other district leader, am a human being and I can acknowledge that over the 15 months we have made some very good decisions, and we have made some decisions that, with the benefit of hindsight, we would do differently if we had the chance to have a do-over. In the end, I think it is a good lesson to our students that sometimes in life, decision-makers make decisions based on the best information they have at the time and we cannot reasonably expect perfection.

I feel very strongly that we have to strive for a school environment that is as close to normal as possible next year, but it is too early to ensure that September of 2021 will look exactly like September of 2019. We need to learn to live with COVID-19 still being a factor in our lives, yet we can't pretend the pandemic is over just because we are sick of safety protocols. Here is what I expect the 2021-2022 school year will look like writing this article in late April:

- All students that want to be in school five days a week will do so. We will provide virtual instruction through our partnership with CESA 2's JEDI Virtual Program but our staff will be focused on in-person instruction.
- We understand that wearing masks is controversial. I have received feedback from many parents that feel that masks should not be worn and they insist the science they use to draw that

**COVID-19... (continued on page 2)**

**COVID-19... (continued from page 1)**

conclusion is the science that should be followed. While I respect their opinion, it is likely that we will need the CDC, DHS, and/or Green County Public Health to provide us guidance that masks are no longer recommended indoors before we remove that requirement.

- Teachers will have a virtual platform as a backbone to all classes they teach in case we need to pivot to virtual instruction for a short period of time or in the case of quarantines. I sincerely hope these instances are infrequent but we are foolish if we do not prepare for them.
- There will still be quarantines. It is likely that positive cases will be less frequent with vaccinations, however, until public health indicates that the pandemic is over contact tracing and quarantines will still be part of the 2021-2022 school year.

I never would have imagined the last 15 months would have played out as they have, and I am not sure exactly what we will see in the near future. However, I am very optimistic we will be back to something much closer to normal and I am grateful for the understanding and consideration the community has shown as we have worked through this unique period in history.

Have a great summer and GO CHEESEMAKERS!!



**FIND YOUR FUTURE WITH S.O.A.R.**

The Student Occupation and Academic Readiness program, or S.O.A.R., at Monroe High School provides Juniors and Seniors with the opportunity to participate in work experience, internships, and youth apprenticeships with local businesses in a variety of fields. Work Experience allows students who are currently employed to earn school credit for working instead of taking a class. Internships and Youth Apprenticeships require a one-year commitment and students work alongside a mentor to gain valuable real-world experience. This year, 78 students participated in S.O.A.R. and 9 local businesses hosted youth apprentices. Thank you to our community partners who make this program possible. Watch our Facebook page to learn more about our students' experiences in the S.O.A.R. program. For more information on how you can participate in S.O.A.R. as a student or a business, please contact:

**Kim Schaaf**  
kimschaaf@monroe.k12.wi.us  
608-328-7128

**Dan Saunders**  
danielsaunders@monroe.k12.wi.us  
608-328-7355



## NORTHSIDE ELEMENTARY FACILITY IMPROVEMENT REFERENDUM—NEXT STEPS



Ron Olson  
Business Administrator

I wanted to start out by thanking all of our community for your input on the referendum to repair and update Northside Elementary School. We appreciate everyone who voted, whether for or against the referendum, for exercising their civic duty and taking the time to vote to help provide the guidance and authorization for whether we could move forward with the project or not. I am pleased to say that over 71% of all community members who voted supported the project. This project is a key second step in our process of addressing and updating the facility needs of our District. We are excited to get started with the project and look forward to it being completed. We also are pleased that we could address this project while not increasing the District tax levy rate.

As a reminder, the project will address heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) replacement and upgrades, ADA compliance upgrades, safety updates and additions, lighting and electrical upgrades, maintenance and repair.

As I write this, we have just completed our first project meeting where we are beginning to lay out the timeline and sequence of the work. By the time you are reading this, we may have already gone out for proposals on much of the work and plans for starting the work may be underway.

We will again be working with Plunkett Raysich Architects (PRA) and CG Schmidt Construction. As we did with the Parkside Project, we will be working with a guaranteed maximum price on the project and we will be “bidding out” or getting proposals on all of the major systems and components of the project. We intend to get pricing and select those sub-contractors for all aspects of the project this year. That will allow the contractors to purchase their materials at a lower cost and to plan out their needed labor which should also help contain cost for the District.

We know there are currently some delays in availability of HVAC equipment. The final design components of exactly how the HVAC system will be configured within Northside also have to be completed. With the start of summer break only two months away (as I write this) there is no way we could get the materials and install the HVAC this summer without either paying a premium price and/or risking not having it completed by the time students return in the fall. Therefore, we will take the time to finalize the design components, bid the project and order materials in advance so that we can start first thing next summer. Since the new HVAC system requires much of the building to be opened up above the ceiling, we will hold and do the other similar projects at the same time. So we will also plan and prepare for the new sprinkler system, fire alarm system, speaker system, data wiring, new lights and new ceilings to all be completed in the summer of 2022.

There are, though, several parts of the project that we will move forward with in the summer of 2021. These are still being finalized, but the primary work would be on updating and expanding the fully renovated ADA bathrooms. We will also likely bring the new water main into the building. Work will begin on moving the sidewalks away from the building, adding a drainage system immediately adjacent to the building to take water away from the building siding, and putting in new walks that are a bit further out from the building. Work will likely begin on replacing portions of the roof this summer. The roof has many sections and roof lines. We know a couple of the roof sections include much of the old and new HVAC equipment, so we may wait to address those sections next summer after the old HVAC equipment is removed and new HVAC equipment is installed. We would also hope to address the addition and repair of eaves and soffits as well as the replacement of the building siding this summer.

It will be a very busy next two summers (2021 and 2022) at Northside Elementary making all of the repairs and upgrades that were planned. While many of the large building systems improvements won't happen until the summer of 2022, having the year to prepare for them and locking in prices this summer should set us up to finish the project on time and on budget. In the meantime, the community and students will hopefully get to see and experience some of the upgrades and repairs to the exterior of the building and to the bathroom facilities that will be completed in the summer of 2021.



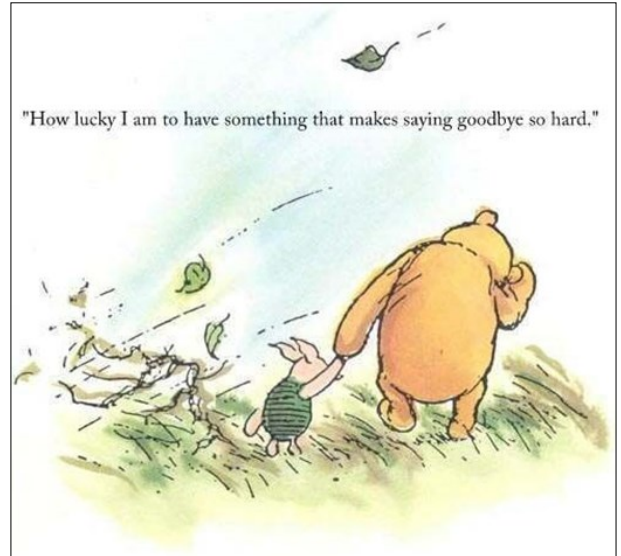
## CURRICULUM UPDATE



Terri Montgomery  
Director of Curriculum  
& Instruction

This year has been a “year” to say the least and now it is time for me to say goodbye as the Director of Curriculum and Instruction. I want to thank all the great people that work at the School District of Monroe and our wonderful community who support our district.

My career at the Monroe School District spans more than 2 decades. Beginning at Monroe Middle School as a Special Education Teacher, transitioning to Northside Elementary as a Special Education Teacher, and then moving to Abraham Lincoln as the Reading First Coordinator. Additionally, I was asked to assume the responsibilities as the District Reading Specialist, Gifted and Talented Coordinator, and Mentor Coordinator while at Abraham Lincoln. For a couple of years, secondary education was a focus as a reading coach at Monroe Middle School and Monroe High School. After teaching for many years, my career moved from classroom teaching to administration. First as Monroe Middle School’s Dean of Students and finally as the Director of Curriculum and Instruction. I have served in this position for the last 7 years, but it feels like yesterday. Part of that stems from the ever changing educational environment. COVID sure did a number on how we educate our students. This year was a challenging year, yet it brought new found ways to conduct instruction! Looking outside the box was exciting and exhausting. I’m very excited to see where all the new technology and instructional strategies lead our teachers and students. Monroe School District is a place where, if you work hard, you can develop your skills and make a career which allows you to touch many students’ lives. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to use my skills at a job I love while serving students, staff, and the community all at the same time.



Todd Paradis is another example of how this district “grows its own” leaders. Todd will be moving from Parkside Elementary as the Principal to the district office as the new Director of Curriculum and Instruction beginning July 1, 2021. I wish him the best and hope he enjoys this position as much as I did.

I am saying goodbye to my position, but I’m not saying goodbye to the school district or the Monroe community. I plan on volunteering as much as I can and don’t count me out when it comes to running for the Board of Education. My plan is to continue to give back to the community. Thank you all for a wonderful career and I am truly blessed to have worked in this great community and great school system.



## REFLECTIONS OF A GRATEFUL CHEESEMAKER



Joe Monroe  
Director of Pupil Services

Tuesday, March 10th of 2020. This was the day that I first realized the talk of the COVID-19 pandemic was going to have an enormous impact on how we do business as a school district. While I had followed the news of the spread of this virus up to this point, this was the day when I fully understood that everything was about to change.

The challenges associated with the pandemic were unlike anything I had ever experienced in my 22-year career in Monroe. The scope of the problems was enormous and touched just about every phase of the work we do as public school educators. We had to figure out how we were going to safely deliver necessary technology and school supplies, how to feed children that depend on school meals, how to provide critical therapies, how to support emotional needs during this stressful time, and oh by the way, also build a new way to deliver meaningful instruction to our students. All while keeping people safe and healthy, and knowing that we were going to disappoint many along the way. At times it seemed overwhelming and almost impossible. People were working day and night to solve problems we had previously not considered. We were frustrated, tired, and unsure of our ability to rise to this challenge. To put it bluntly, we were scared.

Now as I look back over the last year, I am in complete awe of the work that was done by our staff. Our teams persevered to meet the above-mentioned challenges and so many more. It wasn't easy and it wasn't always pretty. We made some mistakes along the way, but in the end, we rallied together to achieve the goal of serving the needs of our students and their families. I couldn't be more proud.

It is important to acknowledge the efforts of the teams that have made this success possible. Here is a small sample of the incredible work that was done over the last year:

- The custodial and maintenance staff transformed our schools to create spaces that conformed with newly developed health and safety practices.
- Foodservice staff worked tirelessly to prepare and pack countless meals that could be delivered to the homes of children that depended on receiving school breakfast and lunch to ensure they had something to eat each day.
- Secretaries provided support to students and families via a newly formed Family Support Help Desk program all while coordinating the offices which serve as the heart of each school.
- Bus drivers bravely took on the challenge of transporting students when there was no clear understanding of whether or not this could be done safely.
- Our school nurse and the health assistant team stepped into leadership roles that required them to make difficult decisions while managing the various equipment and supply needs of our schools.
- Administrators navigated impossible challenges that were sure to please some and upset others.
- And finally, teachers and instructional assistants developed skills that they previously did not have in order to deliver creative, engaging lessons that allowed students to continue to learn and grow.



While they are not employees of the district, I would be remiss to ignore the efforts of the parents in our community. Our parents were thrust into a situation that they did not ask for, nor did they have the time to manage. Mothers, fathers, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and family friends were now tasked with the responsibility of supporting the daily educational needs of the children in our community. As we all discovered, this is no easy task. Despite the difficulty, everyone rolled up their sleeves and learned to facilitate instruction at home, and we couldn't be more appreciative of their efforts.

Clearly, we are not out of the woods yet as it relates to the pandemic. This is not a suggestion that the job is done, but instead, it is an acknowledgment of the efforts of the special people that make up our district and this community. Our hope is for some measure of normalcy to return to our schools as soon as possible. While we don't know what the future holds, we do know that this school district and community

will continue to work together to ensure the safety of our students and staff while striving to meet the educational needs of all students. This is what makes me proud to be a Cheesemaker. Thank you!

## SUMMER SCHOOL 2021



Todd Paradis  
Summer School Coordinator

The School District of Monroe is excited to be able to offer our families a return to in-person summer school courses for students this summer. Summer School is a great opportunity for students to stay engaged in a structured program that provides students with both academic and fun opportunities. As you well know, it's been a challenging year that has disrupted the learning for all of our students. The district feels that it is extremely important to provide summer programming to assist in children's growth and development.

Because of COVID-19 precautions, Summer School 2021, like everything else this past year, will have a new look to accommodate social distancing and safety measures to keep our students and staff members healthy.

For students entering Grades 1 through 4, we will be offering groups of classes for each grade level, called "Clusters". The purpose of clusters is to minimize person-to-person contact for our youngest learners. This complements other strategies to reduce the spread of germs including mask-wearing, frequent hand washing, social distancing, and the frequent disinfecting of surfaces. We've designed clusters that give students a variety of classes to engage in; music, art, physical activity, and other enrichment activities.

For students entering Grades 5 through 8, we will be offering courses without clustering, as in past years. Students will be able to sign up for a course for each time period of Summer School, based on their preferences. Band, digital art, babysitting basics, basketball, fishing, and chess club are just some of our great summer options.

We also are excited to introduce some new Summer School course offerings this year, including Makerspace and the Boomwhacker Ensemble. What's a Boomwhacker, you ask? A Boomwhacker is a lightweight, hollow, color-coded plastic tube, tuned to a musical pitch by length. Boomwhackers are used as musical instruments in the percussion family. Makerspace will provide students an opportunity to learn about towers, mazes, and bridges. What is the largest tower in the world? Can the mouse find its way through the maze? What is a truss bridge? Discovery awaits our students as they take a look at and build different towers, mazes, and bridges from around the world.

The School District of Monroe is very fortunate to have so many creative and innovative educators that sign up to teach our students in the summer.

For 2021, the District is only offering a June session – 3 weeks in length – from June 14 to July 2, 2021. There will be no session in July to give both students and teachers a much needed break.

As immunizations continue in the State of Wisconsin, we hope that a return to more in-person learning is on the horizon. The School District of Monroe hopes you participate in the 2021 Summer School program and that we can offer you more classes and sessions next summer "to prepare for the future, one child at a time"!

A promotional banner for the Summer School Program. The background is dark with colorful paint splatters. On the left is the Monroe School District logo, a large red 'M' with 'MONROE' written across it in white. To the right, the text reads: 'SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MONROE' in white, 'SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAM' in large white letters, 'JUNE 14TH - JULY 2ND, 2021' and 'AT MONROE MIDDLE SCHOOL' in smaller white letters. At the bottom, it says 'VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION' and 'WWW.MONROESCHOOLS.COM' in white.

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MONROE

**SUMMER SCHOOL  
PROGRAM**

JUNE 14TH - JULY 2ND, 2021  
AT MONROE MIDDLE SCHOOL

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION  
[WWW.MONROESCHOOLS.COM](http://WWW.MONROESCHOOLS.COM)

## SUMMER SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE



Eric Ekum  
Director of Food Services

The School District of Monroe will be participating in the USDA Summer Food Service program which provides free nutritious breakfast and lunches to the students of the School District of Monroe.

The Summer Meal Program is a federally-funded, state-administered program. Attendance in the Summer School Program is not required to receive a free Breakfast and Lunch. The free Breakfast and Lunch is available to all students in the City of Monroe June 14<sup>th</sup> to July 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Monroe Middle School.

### MONROE MIDDLE SCHOOL

- Breakfast will be served from 7:45 AM to 8:15 and will consist of Grab and Go options of fruit, juice, milk and whole grain breakfast items.
- Lunch will be served from 11:45 to 12:30 and will consist of a fresh fruit & vegetables, milk, whole grain item and a rotating selection of entrees.
- If your student has any allergies, please make sure they alert the food service staff of them.

### OTHER LOCATIONS

The YMCA and Abraham Lincoln will be providing free meals as well but only for the students attending classes at those locations.

### AUGUST

In August, the School District of Monroe is planning to offer a Jumpstart program for a select number of students from August 2nd through August 13th. During the August Jumpstart program, we will be offering free Breakfast and Lunch. Breakfast will be served from 7:45 AM to 8:15 AM and Lunch will be served from 11:00 AM to 11:30 AM. More details about the Jumpstart Program will be provided at a later date.

If you have any questions regarding the Summer Food Service Program please contact Eric Ekum, Director of Food Services at 608-328-7260 or [ericekum@monroe.k12.wi.us](mailto:ericekum@monroe.k12.wi.us).



### BREAKING NEWS

### USDA Extends Free Lunches Through 2021-2022 School Year

The School District of Monroe will be providing healthy, delicious meals for all students throughout the 2021-2022 school year!



#CHEESEMAKERPRIDE



**SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MONROE**

925 16TH AVENUE SUITE 3

MONROE, WI 53566

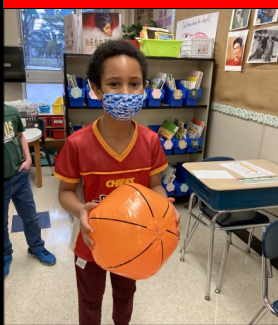
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## SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MONROE CALENDAR

Follow us on Facebook @MonroeSchoolsWI  
all summer long for photos from Summer School, Northside  
construction updates, and important information.



Visit our District Calendar at [www.MonroeSchools.com](http://www.MonroeSchools.com)  
for up-to date information on upcoming events.



### ATTENTION NON-RESIDENTS OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MONROE

This newsletter is provided to all residents of the School District of Monroe. The most affordable process used to circulate this newsletter throughout the district is to use saturation mailing. It is costly to avoid a few non-residents from receiving our newsletter. We apologize for your inconvenience but wish to provide important information to all residents. Thank you.