

WINTER 2021-2022

CHEESEMAKER PRIDE

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF MONROE



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#CHEESEMAKERPRIDE

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ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER**
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608-328-7171

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

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

MONROE PUBLIC LIBRARY
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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.

LABOR SHORTAGES PRESENT NEW CHALLENGES TO SCHOOL DISTRICT



Rick Waski
District Administrator

The labor shortage in our country is very real and has impacted the public and private sectors in a variety of ways. The causes of the labor shortage are numerous. First and foremost, a vast majority of the Baby Boomers have now retired and the subsequent generations have had smaller workforces, leaving many jobs unfilled. We also are seeing the impact of the pandemic where many people got a taste of working from home and have found it to their liking enough that they have been willing to switch jobs in order to have that flexibility. Also, the enhanced unemployment benefits that were present for much of the last 18 months have certainly had an impact on people's desire to return to positions they once held.

Regardless of the reasons, school districts around the state and nation are seeing the greatest labor shortage I have witnessed in my 26 year career in public education. The shortage of professional staff (people whose job requires a state license like teachers, counselors, and administrators) can be attributed to a number of factors. First and foremost, there are simply fewer educators in the pipeline. Whether it is the long-term impact of Act 10, the increase in need for college graduates in other sectors, or the profession not being as attractive of an option as it once was, there are fewer educators for the same or a greater number of jobs. Also, the challenges of teaching during the pandemic had a substantial impact on some teachers and that has led to more people leaving the profession than we saw years ago. Thankfully in Monroe we have not seen greater attrition over the last two years than we had seen in the previous four years (on average), but it has been noticeable how many fewer applicants there are than there had been five, ten, or twenty years ago.

When I started teaching in the mid 1990s, it was common to have well over a 100 applicants for elementary teaching positions along with middle and high school positions like physical education, social studies, and English. In the same time period, you would always have 10 to 20 applicants for other teaching positions, regardless of the certification or grade level. While these numbers slowly declined through the 2000's and early 2010's, we have very few positions where we see more than 30 applicants anymore and we have many positions where we have 5 to 8 applicants, several of which are not fully certified. We are very excited that we have been able to find some great staff in the last few years, but it is a much more competitive process to attract new staff than it once was.

The labor shortage has also affected support staff (primarily hourly) positions. While hourly jobs in the public sector were once very attractive jobs due to much better fringe benefits than the private sector, the escalation of hourly wages in the private sector has led to great competition for aides, secretaries, custodians, and food service workers. Additionally, almost all of these jobs

Labor Shortages...(continued on page 2)

Labor Shortages... (cont. from pg. 1)

require working in person. This limits the applicant pool because many people are choosing other employment options with more flexible hours and the ability to work remotely.

As this labor shortage has continued, many businesses and some government entities have decided to substantially increase wages and/or offer significant signing bonuses when new employees are onboarded. This is extremely difficult for school districts to do for two reasons. The first is that our revenues are limited by the state through revenue caps. The second is that such bonuses and wage increases lead to hard feelings among experienced employees that worked through a lower wage scale and entered the organization at a time when the bonuses were not available. Employee morale is a significant factor in education and people being upset about how others are paid can be toxic to the work environment.

In the end, what is our solution? This is a simple question that has a series of complex answers. We need to make the School District of Monroe the best work environment we can as we serve our students and families. We need to continually look for new ways to provide flexibility in salaries and benefits that give employees choices. We need to be committed to ensuring that our workplace is safe (physically and emotionally) for all that work here, and we need to be committed to acting upon employee feedback when this is not the case. We need to recruit employees earlier than we ever have (seek good people for our organization while they are still in college or even high school) and we need to build a sense of community among our employees that makes them feel connected to being a Monroe Cheesemaker.

It is likely that this employee shortage will persist for the next several years. While this is occurring, we have to look critically at any and all opportunities we have to bring good people into our organization that truly care about making our school and community a better place. In the meantime, we are proud of the dedicated and caring staff we have and we are grateful for the support we have had from this great community in making our schools a wonderful place for kids.

Happy Holidays and GO CHEESEMAKERS!!

NORTHSIDE BUILDING RENOVATIONS

When the community of Monroe approved the Northside Elementary referendum in April 2021, the construction team immediately began the planning and preparations for renovations to begin on the last day of school. The amount of work that was accomplished over the summer months was remarkable and the finished products have been given “two-thumbs up” by the students, staff, and visitors!

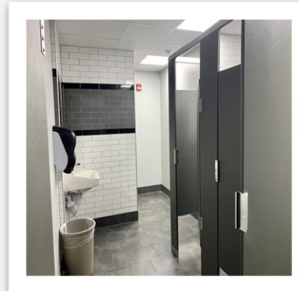
In order for the restrooms to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the number of toilets, urinals, and sinks had to be reduced. This required a complete renovation of plumbing, electrical, and flooring.

There has been a need for an additional student bathroom on the east side of the building and this was accomplished by converting two staff bathrooms into three individual stall restrooms.

Student cubbies or mini-lockers are a welcomed addition to the multi-purpose areas. Students finally have adequate space to hang their belongings.

New drainage systems, sidewalks, and gutters were installed around the majority of the building due to the constant hazards and safety issues with standing water and/or icy sidewalks, depending on the weather. Due to serious deterioration, the siding was replaced with a composite material that will not need to be painted every year.

The flooring in the cafeteria has been on the maintenance list for over ten years and was finally accomplished!

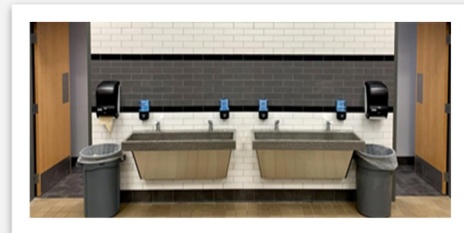


Other Accomplished Work

- New water main
- New fire line
- New and more water bottle filling stations

Summer 2022 Work

- Replace HVAC system
- Add air conditioning to the gym
- Upgrade lighting to energy-efficient LED
- Add sprinkler system
- Replace PA system
- Replace roofing and finish gutters



IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



Joe Monroe
Director of Pupil Services

I was recently leaving Monroe High School after a series of meetings. As I walked through the parking lot and prepared to enter my car, I heard someone call for my attention. When I turned around I saw a friendly woman with a kind smile that I recognized, but could not immediately place. She saw my confusion and shared her name. It was “Sarah,” the mother of a special education student I have known for years named “David.” I was embarrassed that I didn’t immediately recall her name, but it had been a few years since I had last seen her. After exchanging pleasantries, she shared some important news about her son. What she said to me that day was so impactful that I felt compelled to share this story.

First, it is important to know a little bit about her son. David transferred to the School District of Monroe in 3rd grade after attending another school. It was clear from the start that he was an incredibly bright child, but he had some significant mental health needs that were interfering with his ability to be successful in school. He had a team of medical and psychiatric specialists that supported him, but despite their efforts, David continued to have difficulty regulating his emotions and behavior. David’s parents were unbelievably supportive of him and provided endless amounts of love and encouragement. You couldn’t have asked for two better people to advocate for their child. They were very clear about their son’s strengths, but also honest about his challenges. Together, the school staff worked with the parents and carefully created a plan of support as we prepared for David’s first day of school.

To be clear, things didn’t start well. In fact, it was a bit of a disaster for David. I remember one of his first days of school with us. Despite the best efforts of the staff, David was very agitated, frustrated, and scared. He was so upset that we asked Sarah to come to school to help us calm him down. Upon her arrival, she saw her little boy in crisis. He was frightened and confused and he began screaming as he ran through the halls. Staff members were genuinely concerned and students were scared. At that point a decision was made to restrain David to ensure his safety

and to protect others. As I held this student to secure him in place, Sarah knelt down next to us. She was trying to soothe her son, but it wasn’t working. She had tears in her eyes, and she asked, “what are we going to do?” I tried to reassure her that everything would be alright, but truthfully, we were unsure of what the future would hold for David.



As time went on, the staff invested endless amounts of time, patience, and love into this student. David received a lot of explicit training in emotional regulation while also being offered flexible instructional options to accommodate his needs. It wasn’t easy. In fact, it was often frustrating. Despite setbacks, our staff continued to provide the time and care necessary for David to progress through school in a way that fit his needs. While I was an active member of David’s team meetings in elementary and middle school, it wasn’t necessary for me to be as involved after we transitioned him into the high school. He had started to find his way and was experiencing some success.

Fast forward to my encounter with Sarah in the parking lot. She once again had tears in her eyes, but this time they were tears of joy and pride. She informed me that David had made incredible progress and that he was wrapping up some tests that would allow him to graduate from high school early. She then said this, “thank you and the District for sticking with David and never giving up on him.” That message from Sarah meant more to me than she will ever know. It validated the hard work and commitment of our staff. It honored the sacrifice and persistence of the many teachers, aides, therapists, and principals that did all they could for this young man. Most importantly, it sent a clear message that what we do matters.

I just wanted to take this opportunity to say thank you to all of the educators in our schools that work so hard to support the success of our students. This profession is difficult in that we don’t often get to enjoy the fruits of our labor. The nature of the job often results in a deferred return on the investment of all the efforts that go into educating children. At the end of the day, it is important to remember that our work matters for our schools, our community, and most importantly, for students like David.

**The names of the individuals in this story were changed to protect their privacy.*

IMPACT OF A TEACHER



Todd Paradis
Director of Curriculum & Instruction

We all know that a great teacher leaves a mark that lasts long after a student leaves the classroom. We can all remember the one or hopefully the many who have impacted us and have left positive

memories that we still reference today in our professional or personal lives.

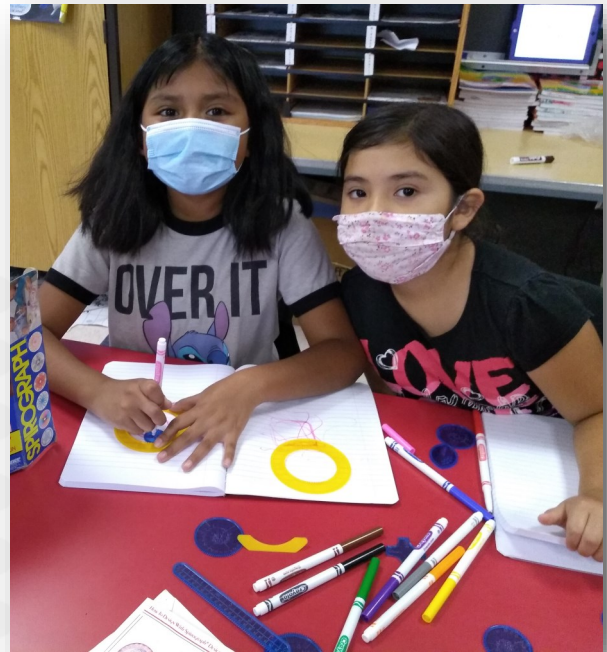
Can you think of the teacher that has made an impact on you? Why do you think of them today 10, 20, 30, or even 50 years later? Did they say or do something that made you feel special? Did they believe in you when no one else did? Did they provide you with extra support?

The teachers we think of have many of the same traits and their success with students isn't because they are experts in their content, or have the most experience, or even have more schooling than others. What they have is the belief that they can have a positive impact and overcome any challenge to help a student. They are passionate, energetic, whole-child oriented, challenging but supportive, believe all students can learn, and make everyone feel safe and included. They have the unique ability to balance the importance of building a fun classroom environment and having high expectations for the learning. These teachers build strong relationships while helping students acquire the necessary skills they need to be successful inside and outside of school.

As a district, we are evaluated by our ability to raise test scores and help students reach proficiency and beyond on high stakes testing in ELA and math. This is important work, but our teachers impact the lives of our students in areas that aren't measured strictly on tests.

A great example of this is what happened in the Spring of 2020 when our "normal" schooling was lost for a period of time. As parents, grandparents, siblings, etc. worked collaboratively with teachers to support the learning, it became very apparent the impact our school and teachers have on students goes well beyond academics. Our teachers did amazing work in creating plans to support students whether they were at home or at school. They responded to this challenge by creating virtual classrooms and online instruction to continue supporting academic learning. But more importantly, they found ways to stay connected to families and made the time to reach out to students who may have been struggling socially or emotionally. They set up individual Zoom meetings, made home deliveries, and even met with students on their front lawns to offer support. They found ways to make an impact....because that is what they love to do.

The School District of Monroe is fortunate to have great teachers that have had, and are making, those long-lasting impacts on our students.



Did you know:

- The average teacher affects over 3,000 students during their career.
- 75 percent of students say teachers are mentors and role models.
- 79 percent of students say a teacher has encouraged them to follow their dreams.
- 83 percent of students say a teacher has boosted their self-esteem and confidence.

(Research facts were provided by the following: ING Foundation Survey, National Center for Education Statistics, The Harris Poll, and EdWeek.)

The evidence is very clear, teachers make a difference and have one of the most important and rewarding jobs. I challenge each of you to thank a teacher this month and reach out to one of your former teachers to tell them how much they have impacted your life! These messages are the greatest rewards educators can get.



DISTRICT LEVY RATE LOWEST IN DECADES



Ron Olson
Business Administrator

The biggest and best news that came out of the annual meeting and subsequent finalization of the budget and levy by the Board of Education at the end of October was that our levy mill rate is again the lowest it has been in over 35 years. Same title and almost the same first sentence as this time last year. Last year we had achieved the low and this year the levy rate came in even lower. I can track the District levy back to 1984-85. I know levy rates in Wisconsin were historically higher in the 70s and early 80s so I am guessing it may be the lowest for even quite a few more than 35 years. The levy rate of \$9.20/thousand of valuation is only the fifth time the District mill rate has been less than \$10 in that time and is nearly \$.60 lower than the next lowest time.

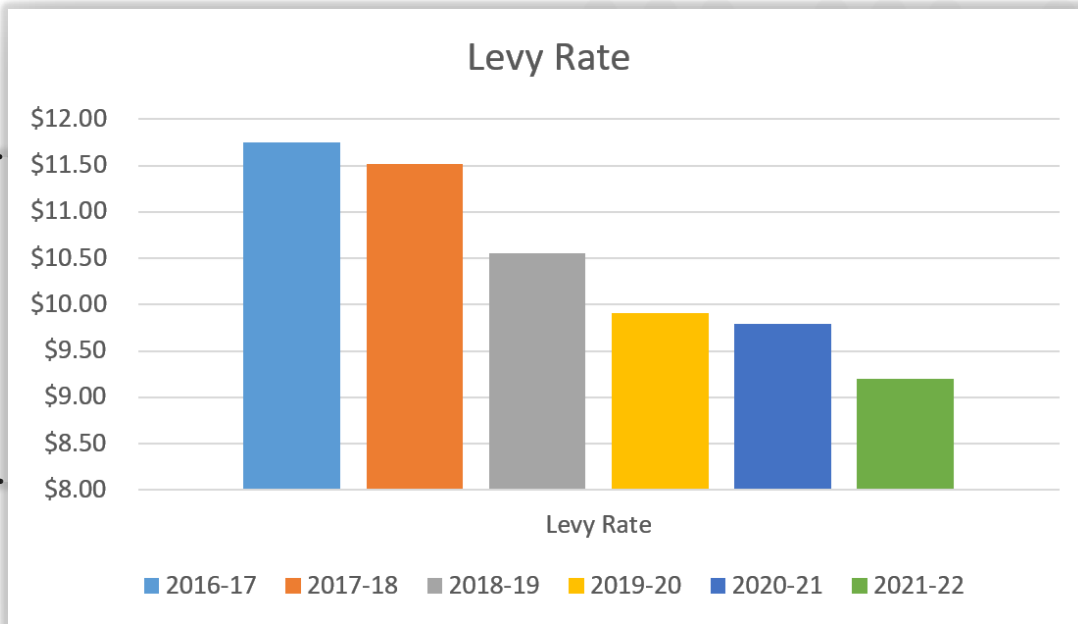
The District levy has remained relatively flat the past six years, varying from just under \$12M to nearly \$12.7M. This year's levy of \$12,414,655 represents a \$39,872 or 0.32% increase over the prior year. At the annual meeting, it was projected the levy might come in a little lower than the previous year, however a decrease in the final aid certification on October 15th from the initial state projections resulted in the slight increase. The levy rate of \$9.20 is within \$.02 of what was projected at the annual meeting. It is a \$.59 or 6% reduction from the prior year. The levy rate has dropped \$2.55 over the past five years.

The proposed Fund 10 budget, the District's general fund, has a budgeted deficit of \$494,177. However, on a normal year the District operates with a budget deficit in the \$500,000-700,000 range and then relies on bringing expenditures in 1-3% under budget over the course of the

year to allow for nearly balanced ending revenues and expenditures by year end. We will expect that by the end of this fiscal year, we will maintain our fund balance at its current levels or perhaps increase it. If not, the District will have to utilize some of its fund balance. The primary purpose of the District fund balance is to cover costs and avoid short term cash flow borrowing interest costs due to revenues coming in later in the year than when expenditures occur. The other purpose of fund balance is to deal with significant, unexpected items that may come up on a rare occasion. Our current fund balance allows us to not have to borrow money for cash flow purposes.

Fund 10 expenditures for 2021-22 were approved at \$31,219,134, a 2.44% decrease from the previous year. The 2020-21 budget had higher than normal expenditures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Revenues have remained relatively flat over the last 10 years as any allowed increases by the state have often been offset by a slight decline in enrollment over that time. The current year saw a \$537,349 or 3.2% reduction in state general equalization aid caused in part by the loss of enrollment from not having summer school in 2020 at the outset of the pandemic and due to reductions in 4K and KG enrollments for the 2020-21 school year as parents delayed sending their children to school.

In summary, this year's budget proved to be good news. The levy remained flat with the levy rate falling. The projected deficit is at a level that we expect to be able to make up with savings over the year so we should be able to maintain our current fund balance. We were able to accomplish all of that while we continue to navigate the pandemic and despite a revenue limit freeze and a significant reduction in state aid.



SUPPORTING FUTURE EDUCATORS



Jenna Trame
Principal, Parkside Elementary School

During the first nine weeks of the school year our building was fortunate enough to host 3 student teachers from UW-Whitewater and UW-Platteville. One of these student teachers will stay to finish the semester at Parkside and the other 2 will move on to experiences at the other elementary schools. Our student teachers are working alongside classroom teachers in Early Childhood/1st Grade, Kindergarten/3rd Grade and 1st Grade/3rd Grade. The benefits for students, district staff and the student teachers are endless. We are proud of the incredible work happening in our district and hope our student teachers will return to us in the future when positions become available!

Cooperating teachers Jennifer Neuenschwander, Megan Cessna and Claire McMannes shared their reflections on working with a student teacher this year.

What are the benefits of having a student teacher?

- An extra adult to start the year is incredibly helpful as 5 year olds navigate a new school, adjust to a full day, foster friendships, and engage in exciting activities that will help them develop a love for school.
- I was excited to gain a fresh perspective on education and get some new ideas to engage my young learners.

What have you learned from your student teacher?

- Working with a student teacher encourages me to be more thoughtful in my planning, assessment, and overall use of resources. I want her to get the best experience possible and to have the most efficient and productive classroom environment modeled.
- It has helped me to be more reflective of my practices as I discuss how and why I choose activities and progressions and adapt lessons.
- She asks great questions that push me to be more evaluative. She has also shown me many hands-on and engaging activities that she has created or discovered that always leave me asking, "Can you leave me a copy for next year"?



Early Childhood Teacher Jennifer Neuenschwander and Student Teacher Casi Blosch



Why did you agree to take a student teacher?

- I have recently learned so much in my masters program in reading that I wanted to share this knowledge with someone who could impact another classroom for years to come.
- I've worked with student teachers in the past and they often take jobs in the District. I hope to see this pattern continue!
- The passion and enthusiasm from student teachers is contagious and enjoyable to work around.
- Lastly, who wouldn't love some extra help in a class of 21 kindergartners?

1st Grade Teacher Claire McMannes and Student Teacher Katrina Carter

Supporting Future Educators (continued on page 7)



Kindergarten Teacher Megan Cessna and Student Teacher Griffin Koester

Student teachers Casi Blosch, Griffin Koester, and Katrina Carter shared their reflections on their student teaching experience.

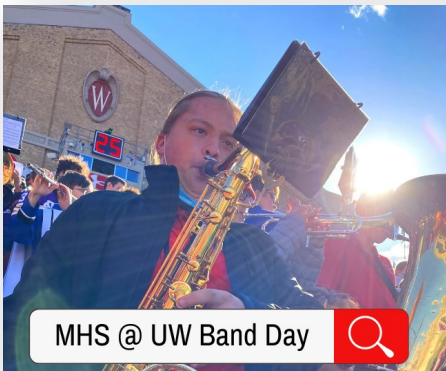
What is the best part of student teaching?

- The best part of student teaching so far is being able to be with students in person. Throughout my college experience this is the first time I have been able to be in a classroom with students in person.
- The best part of student teaching so far has been watching the students learn how to read. I love watching how excited they get about reading books from our classroom library.
- Learning about how to theoretically teach students while sitting in a classroom is one thing, but being able to be there with real life students is a completely different and eye opening experience.
- Being able to see a student's progress and improvement has been so exciting and continues to put a smile on my face!
- The best part of student teaching is just being in that school environment and getting a real feel for what being a teacher is like.

What is something you've learned from your cooperating teacher?

- I have learned that being a fun, creative, and outgoing educator is very important! She has taught me that stepping out of your comfort zone is okay and if you are nervous about it, it's because you care and just want what's best for the students.

- I am learning how to work with kiddos with special needs and some challenging behaviors. This is something I haven't been able to learn/apply in a classroom setting. I am very thankful for the special education experience I am receiving at Parkside.
- Everyday I have been learning from my cooperating teacher! I've been learning attention getters, classroom management techniques, lesson planning, transitions and much more.
- I think the main thing that I have learned from my cooperating teacher is just how to be an overall caring, compassionate, and committed teacher.
- She has of course taught me about lesson planning and classroom management, but she has also taught me how to make sure that your classroom is a safe place for students where they are excited to come and learn. She has shown me how to celebrate every achievement that a student reaches no matter how big or small it is.
- She has shown me how to make sure that every student feels included in lessons and activities. I can never even begin to thank my cooperating teacher for everything that she has done for me!



MHS @ UW Band Day



Pre-Game Tailgate



MHS German Week

THE NURTURED HEART APPROACH AT MMS AND CELEBRATION ASSEMBLIES



Brian Boehm
Principal, Monroe Middle School

Monroe Middle School is in its 8th year of using the Nurtured Heart Approach (NHA) as our way to build a positive school climate. The Nurtured Heart Approach is a relationship-focused methodology. It was created to help children build their inner wealth and use their youthful intensity in successful ways. It has become a powerful way of awakening the inherent greatness in all children while increasing classroom success.

NHA is Built on Three Stands:

1. **Absolutely No-** We refuse to energize negativity. We will not accidentally reward negativity with our energy, connection, or relationship.
2. **Absolutely Yes-** We will relentlessly create and energize positivity and success. We energize and nurture with appreciation and recognition when students are on target academically, emotionally, and behaviorally.
3. **Absolutely Clear-** We will set and enforce clear limits and clear consequences in an unenergized way. We will always provide true consequences. At MMS, absolutely clear starts with the expectations of Mutual Respect and Personal Responsibility.

With the Nurtured Heart Approach as our backdrop, this year we are adding in Grade Level Celebration Assemblies. We will have them each trimester for each of the three grades during Homeroom time. We completed our first trimester assemblies two weeks ago, and they were fantastic!

We Celebrated:

- Grade Level performance on our Fastbridge Assessments in September.
- Student participation in our 19 Co- and Extra-Curricular activities.
- Our 30+ 8th grade WEB leaders for their work mentoring our 6th graders.
- Homerooms for their camaraderie and teamwork.
- Individual classes for their focus and achievement.
- Small groups of students for cooperation, perseverance, and willingness to help other students.
- Individual students for thinking of others by helping peers and teachers.

Not just in these assemblies, but each day our staff is working to celebrate students who are displaying the traits listed below:

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| • Being Prepared | • Being a Leader |
| • Maintaining Focus | • Being a Problem Solver |
| • Trying Even When it is Hard | • Working Well with Others |
| • Having a Positive Attitude | • Making Others Better |
| • Being Respectful of Others and Being Kind | • Being Organized |
| • Doing What is Right Without Being Asked | • Actively Participates in Class |

We actively celebrate these because they are crucial to a successful life for our students. The students and staff loved this experience, and we look forward to our next round of Celebration Assemblies.



CELEBRATING POSITIVE BEHAVIOR THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL DAY



Sarah Judd
Principal, Abraham Lincoln Elementary

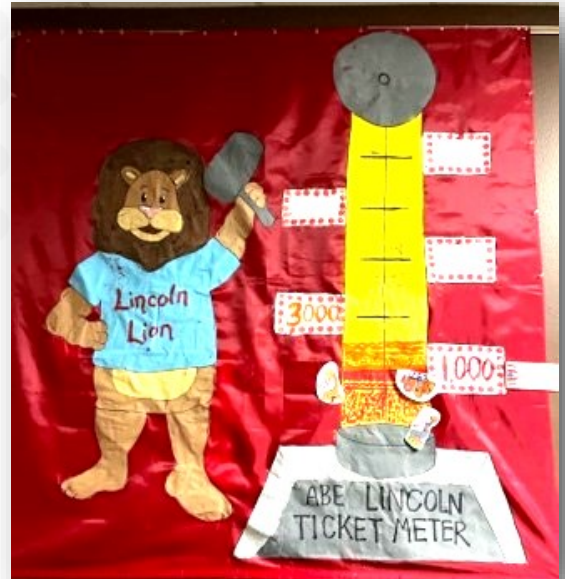
Students at Abraham Lincoln Elementary are excited to already have met two goals this school year! The staff is continuing to use the evidence-based, three-tiered framework called Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support (PBIS) which incorporates practices that affect student outcomes every day.

At the beginning of the year, staff members taught the students the appropriate behaviors expected in every part of the school, as well as on the bus. Each day, students, individually or collectively, can earn Pride Tickets for following our school rules: be respectful, be responsible, and be safe. The tickets are counted weekly and recorded on the Abe Lincoln Ticket Meter hanging in the library.

The first school goal of earning 1,000 Pride Tickets was met in September. During our first school-wide celebration, each class earned additional recess time and a freeze pop party. After earning 1,000 Pride Tickets, students across campus worked together to meet their next goal of earning 3,000 Pride Tickets! Students celebrated their second goal by participating in a makerspace party featuring a variety of activities including coding, engineering, building, circuitry, and robotics.

In addition to meeting school-wide goals, each week student tickets are drawn and the winners receive a trip to the Principal's Treasure Box during our school-wide Monday meetings.

Learning can more likely happen when positive behaviors are in place and PBIS is a way to achieve that in our school.



If you're interested in promoting positive behavior at home, here is one activity that you could try:

1. Choose 3-5 expectations for your child, using positive language of the behavior that you want to see.
2. Model the behavior that you want your child to learn.
3. Give attention to the desired behavior by using specific praise when you notice it.
4. Create a plan where students can earn stickers, tokens or points when the expectations are followed and set a goal for them to achieve (example: 10 earned stickers = meeting goal)
5. Reward your child by letting them earn something special once their goal is met.



School Closings, Delays, and Early Dismissals

The School District of Monroe's school closing information is posted to the district webpage and district Facebook page minutes after a decision to close, delay, or dismiss early is made. Parents and guardians of current students will also receive an automated phone call from our Skylert messaging system.

The district contacts the following TV and radio stations when these events occur:

RADIO

WBGR FM 93.7 (Monroe)
WEKZ FM 95.5/AM 1260 (Monroe)

TELEVISION

WISC CBS 3 (Madison)
WMTV NBC 15 (Madison)
WKOW ABC 27 (Madison)

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR ACT SUCCESS AT MHS



Jeriamy Jackson
Interim Principal, Monroe High School

The State of Wisconsin requires that all students in grades 9 and 10 take the ACT ASPIRE assessment and that all students in grade 11 take the ACT. Monroe High School staff have been working tirelessly to ensure that what we are teaching is essential to our students, is aligned with our state and national standards, and is also assessed by the ACT. Although this work makes a tremendous difference in being effective with what our students must know, sometimes it is not enough. Large standardized assessments are daunting and anxiety-provoking for many of our students. Therefore, our goal is to prepare all of our students so well that when it comes to the actual assessment, they are confident and ready to show what they know.

This is where MasteryPrep comes in. We've researched and talked to many different test prep vendors and resources that would help our students be prepared and confident for the state assessments. Monroe High School decided to contract with MasteryPrep to give ALL of our students access to this resource. MasteryPrep includes three major components: True Score, Study Hall and Snap Course. This is HUGE for students and families because it gives every student in grades 9-11 a resource that will improve their academic skills, inform them how to take these types of assessments, and prepare them to be more successful on these measures. Many parents spend a lot of money and time on classes and programs to help their students achieve better results on the ACT, and now, all students have access to it through MHS.



True Score is MasteryPrep's practice ACT. Students are able to take several versions of retired ACTs and get instant results on how they performed in all areas, including the sub-categories under English, Reading, Math and Science.

Study Hall allows students to work through every area of the test they just took, get feedback on how they did, and review further explanations of things they did not understand. Then, they have access to targeted practice to see if they can apply what they learned directly to test questions.

Snap Course is a 40-hour ACT bootcamp that is self-paced, and students can work through it on their own or at school. This is instruction in "how" to take the test, such as tips and tricks for how to best answer the questions given the time constraints and large passages.

So what are we doing with MasteryPrep at MHS? We are giving two practice ACT assessments to all students in grades 9-11; the first was given in October of 2021, and the second will be given in January of 2022. We will be looking at our overall student performance and then targeting areas that we need to work on as a school. At the individual student level, we will be providing time during FLEX for students to work through Study Hall and Snap Course. We will then be measuring growth from the first assessment to the next and will continue with this plan as we work toward the state assessments in early Spring. One great benefit for students and families is that students can do this prep work from home at any time, not just during school. Whether you are a student who struggles with learning or a student who does very well, we are looking for growth and for ALL students to have better skills.

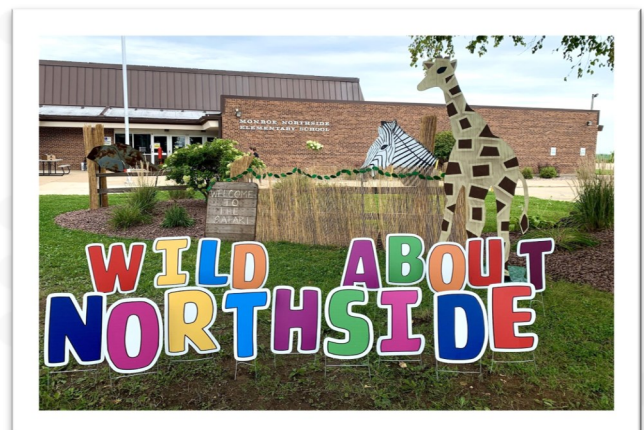
NEW SCHOOL YEAR, NEW BEGINNINGS



Amy Timmerman
Principal, Northside Elementary School

The theme for this school year is an animal safari twist with "We are WILD about Northside!" The last one and a half years have been difficult on everyone and the staff is committed to making this a productive, meaningful year by focusing our efforts on relearning positive social-emotional skills and trying to make up for the academic loss.

As anticipated, there has been a noticeable loss of the "soft skills" (i.e., self-regulation, social skills, problem-solving,



New School Year... (continued on page 11)

collaboration, hard work, listening, etc.) that are necessary during the school day. Due to these needs, a “reset” on our Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) was necessary and the following are some highlights of the supports and systems being implemented.

Special Fridays

New this year is a rotation of Friday morning events and celebrations.

- Monthly all-school assemblies that celebrate a theme and recognize students following the 3 Be’s--Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Safe.
- Goal-setting--Students create goals for the month surrounding the theme. For example, students wrote a Responsibility goal for the month of October that included how they were going to show greater responsibility as a student.
- Buddy Friday--each classroom is “buddied” with another class and special activities are planned to allow for the “big” buddy to share/play/teach with their “little” buddy.
- Grade Level Choice--grade levels always plan special events, activities, or even special rewards.



Future Special Events

- Community Weeks--raking the yards of our Northside neighbors; picking up trash around the school;
- Food Drive for the local food pantry
- Toy Drive for the Women’s Club
- Service Day
- Career Day
- Northside Olympics

New & Returning Virtual Students

Nearly thirty new students joined Northside this year and many returned to in-person school after a year of virtual learning. Due to the high number, all students had the option to join small groups to get to know others and learn more about the building through a scavenger hunt, led by the school counselor, Ms. Trumm.



Student Recognitions

- Positive acknowledgment of students is an important focus this year and students are earning Brag Tags to add to their individualized collection over the course of the year. There are school-wide and special grade level Brag Tags that students are awarded monthly for mastery of such skills as multiplication and division facts, sportsmanship, 100 Book Challenge, Perfect Percussion, etc.
- Student of the Week

School District of Monroe

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School District of Monroe Calendar

Friday, December 24th - Friday, December 31st

No School - Winter Break

January 17th

No School - Staff Inservice

March 21st - 25th

No School - Spring Break

April 15th

No School

May 30th

No School - Memorial Day

June 2nd

Last Day of School - Half Day, No Lunch



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.

