



LEARNING & SUCCESS FOR ALL

WEATHER CANCELLATIONS & DELAYS:

Be sure to update your contact information in Infinite Campus to receive weather-related school phone messages and texts. If we start late on a Wednesday, we **WILL NOT** dismiss one hour early.

HUMBOLDT Community School District

ADMINISTRATION OFFICE
23 3rd St. N.,
Dakota City, IA 50529

515-332-1330



www.humboldt.k12.ia.us



@OfficialHCSD



@humboldt_csd

Message from Superintendent Jim Murray



I begin this school year as optimistic as I have been since COVID. I am pleased to share that we are fully staffed in our custodial and food service departments for the first time since 2020. We are very close concerning hiring special education associates. Fifteen dollars per hour starting is the sweet spot to attract new staff. When I started in 2020, the beginning wage was \$9.65. Fifteen new certified teachers are joining our team. Our administration and directors have done an excellent job hiring, and I am confident that new employees will contribute positively to our excellent learning environment. We have three areas of professional development focus this year. We have lots to do during the Wednesday professional development dates and appreciate the parent support we receive to continue learning. The school board approved our new teacher evaluation process, including a framework defining effective teaching. Our staff will reflect on those components and design a growth plan. All buildings are focused on ensuring that classrooms are welcoming and safe places for students to learn. Teachers will continue to work in teams to collect achievement data and discuss how we can meet all students' socio-emotional and academic needs. I enjoy seeing our district improve, whether it be achievement, financial health, culture, or facilities. I am very excited to watch the students' activities and love the effort, culture, and competitiveness they consistently display. As always, I welcome opportunities to talk personally with any of our district stakeholders about how I can improve our district or my service.

The Real Deal

I continue to get great feedback from this portion of the newsletter. Our community members don't want to hear that everything is well; they know education is challenging.

- We have several building improvements going on. The building improvements include new classroom cabinets, lights and ceiling tile, bathroom updates, cafeteria remodels, painting, and electronic door access systems. It has been challenging to manage all of them. We are a bit of a "work in progress," so students and staff may have to be flexible and accommodating while they finish.
- The Iowa legislators were impactful last spring. We continue to receive guidance to implement mandates related to student id cards, discipline, reference checks, bathroom access, and age-appropriate library materials.
- I am excited about all of the construction projects in place, but it is challenging to keep up with the decisions needing to be made on short timelines and manage the finances required for completion. I can't express enough how much I appreciate our local contractors who take personal ownership while offering advice to ensure our students have the best possible facilities we can provide vs. just doing the job.
- I can't believe I am sharing how excited I am for restrooms:) The new bathrooms out at the field complex are on schedule for completion. Fans attending the ball games, especially women, will see a noticeable difference in lines and facilities.



Creighton Jenness Director of Special Education & Middle School Assistant Principal

I'm excited about the beginning of this school year. The Middle School has spent time this summer preparing for our best school year yet. Throughout the summer, teachers advocated by asking how to get students into the right classes and more involved with school activities. Multiple staff members reviewed our schedule to ensure students received their needed support.

We've also spent time learning about how we can best support teachers, students, and families. One critical professional development initiative is a new evaluation process. That doesn't seem too exciting for most people, but the new system is based on teacher reflection and growth, "where you are and where you can improve" your teaching craft for our students. Our staff has continued identifying and designing ways to support student's academic and mental health needs. Last but not least, we are working to communicate available resources to our families better. If you've been around 5th - 8th graders, you know that developmentally, they have a lot going on physically and mentally. Serving their needs requires a great partnership between the parents and our staff.

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Jessica Goodenow Assistant High School Principal Director of Safety and Mental Health



August is exciting for administrators as we reflect on prior practices and look to improve for the incoming staff and students. At the high school, we will have some fantastic facility updates that will "wow" our staff and students as they arrive from summer vacation. With any construction project, we may have areas that are behind schedule and will call for flexibility. All additions add to the Wildcat Pride you can experience walking onto the campus!

As I am finding traction as the director of safety and mental health at Humboldt Community School District, I have heard positive feedback from community members that make up the emergency management team. This team partners with the district on the crisis plan. To make this plan accessible to all school employees, the district will implement an app, QuickAccess, at the start of the 2023-24 school year. QuickAccess allows all employees' mobile devices to receive threat notifications quickly and have district crisis policies at the click of a button. We are also aligning the visitor processes in each building to focus on safely identifying adults outside of school staff. When visiting any HCSD building, always check in with our front office staff.

Positive relationships will be my top priority as the school year begins at Humboldt High School. Building an atmosphere of belonging directly affects discipline and attendance in the building. When students are seen and valued, they are less likely to skip class or disrupt the learning environment. I love seeing staff interact with students. Their faces light up as they reconnect, and moments that build positive connections are cherished.

If you have questions, stop by the high school office (1500 Wildcat Rd), send me an email (jgoodenow@humboldt.k12.ia.us), or give me a call (515-332-1430 ext 6930). I will be at activities this summer and throughout the school year. Introduce yourself as we cheer on the cats!

Cassie Smith Middle School Principal



Welcome to the 23-24 school year! I am looking forward to building on the progress and gains we made this past year. I know that with the support of our parents and community, we will continue to make great strides in preparing our students for their future.

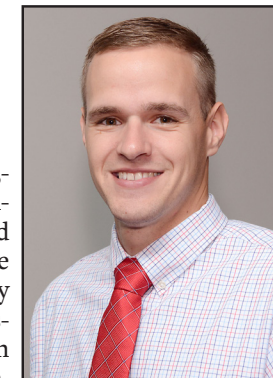
We welcome six new teachers into the middle school, some have been teaching for a while and some are new to the profession. Either way, our district does a great job of providing each new teacher with a mentor who will help guide them, answer questions, and support them on their journey. We know they will be great additions to our staff and will bring new ideas to the table to support our students!

As we progress through the 23-24 school year, our staff will continue to work in their Professional Learning Teams (PLTs) to enhance their curriculum so that they can support all learners, from remediation to extension and everything in between. We will also continue to enhance our toolbox with strategies to support student's social and emotional well-being in the classroom.

One of my priorities for this year is to build on our Positive Behavioral Intervention System (PBIS) so that students are celebrated for demonstrating positive behaviors around the building. We saw the benefits of PBIS last year with a significant decrease in office referrals, we want to continue that trend this year!

My office is available if you have any ideas on how to create better pathways for our student's success. Feel free to contact me at the middle school to set up a time to meet at 515-332-2812.

Ryan Fedders Taft Elementary Principal



Welcome back to the 2023-2024 school year, Wildcat families! The staff at Taft is excited to have students return in the coming days. We have a busy year ahead of us with a professional development focus on a new math curriculum implementation (Kendall Hunt - Illustrative Math), along with a continued focus on meeting students' social and emotional needs through morning meetings to begin each school day. These meetings are designed to enhance student-student and student-adult relationships while building a supportive classroom community. I am optimistic that these two initiatives will greatly impact student learning and well-being here at school! We will also continue to focus on PLC work, some report card/grading changes at the elementary level, and learning a new district-wide evaluation system.

Including transfers from other buildings, we have four new teachers and four new associates joining us this year. Andrea Paterson, Lauren Odland, Claire Vento, and Emilee Moranville will join our teaching staff, while Shondel Beman, Jayda Hoefler, Jamie Jergens, and Mikenzi Clary Fields will join us as associates. We are fortunate to have a positive, teamwork-driven culture in our building; all new staff will have access to supportive teams and mentors to help ensure as smooth a transition as possible. New staff bring new ideas and perspectives to a building; we are excited to have each of them join us!

A few priorities that I have for the upcoming school year are to support, monitor, and lead the initiatives above, along with staying ahead of the learning curve on our new teacher evaluation system. This system utilizes rubrics to guide teacher reflection and observation conversations, so I am looking forward to using them to provide better feedback to our teachers in the school year(s) ahead!

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions that you may have this school year. Email or phone are the best ways to initially reach me. The number for Taft is 515-332-3216, and my email address is rfedders@humboldt.k12.ia.us. Have a great school year!

Mark Wenzel Twin Rivers Elementary Principal



Dear Twin Rivers Families,
We hope this letter finds you well and filled with excitement as we gear up for the start of a brand new school year at Twin Rivers Elementary School! The halls have been buzzing with anticipation, and we cannot wait to welcome back our amazing students and families.

We trust you all had a fantastic summer, filled with unforgettable memories and enriching experiences. As we embark on this new journey together, we are thrilled to introduce some exciting updates and additions to our school community.

Facility Upgrades: We are delighted to share that over the summer break, we have been hard at work enhancing our facilities to provide an even better learning environment for our students. From freshly painted classrooms to improved common spaces, we are committed to ensuring that Twin Rivers remains a warm and inviting space for everyone.

Morning Class Meeting: This year, we are introducing a new addition to our daily schedule - the Morning Class Meeting. Our primary goal is to foster a strong sense of connection with each and every student. We believe in creating a safe and supportive platform where students can openly share their achievements, express any concerns, and engage in meaningful discussions. By understanding their unique needs, we are better equipped to provide the best possible educational experience.

Welcoming New Staff: Join us in extending a warm welcome to our two new staff members who have joined the Twin Rivers family. Ms. Ally Thompson, our new school secretary, comes to us from the LuVerne School District and is already proving to be an invaluable addition to our team. We are also excited to introduce Ms. Rinman, our new music/band teacher, who will be sharing her talents and passion with both Humboldt and Twin Rivers School Districts. Their dedication and enthusiasm are infectious, and we are fortunate to have them on board.

Team Effort: As the new school year approaches, we would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to our support staff and custodians who went above and beyond in getting our classrooms ready after the construction projects. Your unwavering dedication truly exemplifies the spirit of teamwork that makes Twin Rivers a special place.

Teacher Preparations: Our dedicated teaching staff has been busy preparing their classrooms, eagerly anticipating the return of their students. They are eager to hear all about the exciting adventures our students had during the summer and are ready to embark on a new educational journey filled with growth and discovery.

In Closing: As we embark on this new school year together, we want to express our sincere gratitude for allowing us the privilege of being a part of your lives and your children's educational journey. Your trust and support mean the world to us, and we are committed to making this school year a memorable and enriching experience for every student.

Here's to a fantastic school year filled with learning, growth, and cherished memories. We can't wait to see our classrooms bustling with energy and enthusiasm once again.

Warmest regards,
Mr. Wenzel

Travis Sprague Humboldt High School Principal

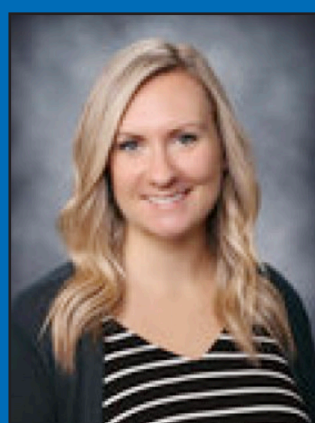


We are preparing for an outstanding 2023-2024 school year at the high school. The high school building and exterior have and will continue to go through significant updates and renovations this school year including the cafeteria, restrooms, front entrance/office, and a new athletic/activity facility. I am optimistic and intrigued with the opportunity to lead Humboldt High School's new building leadership team to have a positive impact on student learning and staff pedagogy through informed data-driven decisions, robust conversations, and overarching support of our students. We want to build on the foundation of success already forged at Humboldt High School and harness our resources to make an extraordinary impact on our students and community.

The high school welcomes six new teachers and three new administrators to the Wildcat family. Setting these educators up for success is paramount. This will be accomplished by focusing on continual progression, not perfection. Through consistent team communication and an educator support network, our new teachers and administrators will have the opportunity to thrive as they become integral members of our staff and community.

I will be a visible fixture in our hallways, classrooms, and at high school sporting events and extracurricular activities. My goals are to bring clarity of purpose and data analysis to the forefront to support student learning and teacher professional development. I am excited and honored to be leading Humboldt High School and working alongside such dedicated educators and tremendous students.

Jenna Haselhuhn Mease Elementary Principal Director of Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment



There are so many things that excite me about this new school year. I am really optimistic about digging into the middle school and high school curriculum work. Being at the elementary level my whole career, this will be a new challenge for me. The new math curriculum is something that I will be learning along with the teachers, but it will be a great new learning experience for our students! I plan to get into classrooms and see the hard work teachers are doing, but also learn alongside them to ensure everyone's needs are being met, students and teachers. Implementing a new curriculum is hard work but I know we will see the benefits of it in our students.

This year we have some new faces at Mease Elementary. I believe we have hired the right people for the job who are ready to do the work. I am excited to help new staff transition into our building and district. We have such a great mentor program for new teachers and I truly believe through support from coaches, administrators, and other staff members, they will be successful here in Humboldt. Seeing the staff come in and work during their summer shows how much they take ownership of their job and want to be ready for students when August hits! I have met individually with teachers to hear the positive things that are going on and how I can best support them. It's been wonderful to get to know people in this new capacity.

We are focusing on some new learning this year with our professional development. I am really excited to share that at the elementary level, teachers will be learning about Morning Meetings. This is a great way to start off the day with students so they feel seen, heard, and cared about. It is so important for students to know that we want them here at school and Morning Meetings are a perfect way to ensure that happens.

I can't wait to continue working alongside teachers and ensuring we are doing what's best for kids. My door is always open to welcome questions and concerns. This work is hard but so rewarding. As a team, we can make great things happen this year!