

February 2020 / March 2020

WEST CENTRAL WIRE

West Central Public Schools
Humboldt/Hartford
SD District 49-7



"To prepare all students for learning and living in a changing world."

www.westcentral.k12.sd.us

-West Central Schools Mission Statement



GREETINGS

from the
Superintendent's Office

Student Achievement - Part II

In the December-January newsletter I shared information about the state test results in Math, English Language Arts, and Science for West Central. I also shared that an Ad hoc Learning Committee consisting of parents, teachers, school board members, and administrators would be meeting to address questions/concerns brought forward at the November 11 school board meeting.

The Ad hoc Learning Committee met on December 2 and again on December 19. The committee identified the most common questions/concerns in four areas: Personalized Learning, Standards Based Grading, Lack of Communication to Parents, Lack of Student Interest in Learning. This was an important first step in identifying the areas of greatest concern. The findings from the Ad hoc Learning Committee follow this cover letter.

By its nature an ad hoc committee is a group that is formed for a specific task and is then dissolved. In this case the task was to identify concerns related to the four areas mentioned above. The next step is to prioritize the findings and bring ideas or recommendations forward. Work on this has begun. A Learning Advancement Committee consisting of teachers, administrators, and school board members met for the first time on January 21. At this meeting the members prioritized the findings from the ad hoc committee. The Learning Advancement Committee continued their work on January 30. It is unknown at this point how many times this committee will need to meet. It is known that this is a very dedicated group of volunteers, ready to roll up their sleeves in the best interest of our students.

Student achievement will continue to be a focal point at West Central. Specifically, efforts will continue to help all students achieve at a higher level. We know that each student brings a different set of learning skills to the classroom, the challenge is to determine what those skills are and improve those skills. We are fortunate to have staff dedicated to doing just that.

Brad Berens, Superintendent of Schools

DISTRICT-WIDE NEWS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

February / March

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Superintendent Article | Front Cover |
| WC School Board / WC School Directory | 2 |
| Early Dismissals | 2 |
| School Calendar | 3 |
| Nondiscrimination Statement | 3 |
| School Closing Information | 4 |
| 2020 Driver's Education Class Time | 4 |
| Ad hoc Learning Committee Findings | 5-8 |
| Nurse's Notes | 9 |
| West Central Teacher of the Year | 10 |
| Thank you to the West Central Community | 11 |
| Elementary News | |
| Winter Carnival | 11 |
| Kindergarten Options at West Central | 12 |
| West Central Winter Symposium | 13 |
| Middle School News | |
| Message from the Principal | 14 |
| Math Minds in Motion | 15 |
| High School News | |
| Message from the Principal | 16 |
| Co-Curricular Activities | |
| Message from the Activities Director | 17 |
| Band News | 17 |
| WCHS Theater | 18 |
| Food Service | |
| National School Lunch Week | 19 |
| Organizations | |
| PTA Father Daughter Dance | 20 |
| Transportation | |
| Register to Ride | 21 |
| Library | |
| Golden West's Donation to the Library | 21 |
| West Central School District Snapshot | 22 |
| High School Snapshot | 23 |
| Middle School Snapshot | 24 |
| Elementary Snapshot | 25 |

WEST CENTRAL SCHOOL BOARD

Craig Habben, President 528-3169
46355 257th St, Hartford, SD 57033
Craig.Habben@k12.sd.us

Paula Hawks, Vice President 254-2440
405 S Tessa Ave, Hartford, SD 57033
Paula.Hawks@k12.sd.us

Amy Larson 751-9068
112 W Opal Ln, Hartford, SD 57033
Amy.Larson@k12.sd.us

Alison McGillivray 701-650-1397
508 Mulligan Cir, Hartford, SD 57033
Alison.McGillivray@k12.sd.us

Alexia Klinkhammer 201-3495
509 N Sagehorn Dr, Hartford, SD 57033
Alexia.Klinkhammer@k12.sd.us

Please note: Regular school board meetings are held the second Monday of each month in the Board Room at the Administration Office, unless otherwise indicated by published agenda. Meetings begin promptly at 5:30 p.m. unless otherwise posted. All meetings are open to the public. If a person desires to have an item placed on the agenda, please contact the Administration Office one week prior to the scheduled meeting. All meeting agendas can be located on the West Central webpage under District Board of Education. All school board proceedings are published in the Minnehaha Messenger.

WEST CENTRAL SCHOOL DIRECTORY

| | |
|--|----------|
| Brad Berens , Superintendent | 528-3217 |
| Melinda Jensen , High School Principal | 528-6236 |
| Mark Rockafellow , Middle School Principal | 528-3799 |
| Matt Alley , Humboldt Elementary Principal | 363-3131 |
| or | 528-3325 |
| Ashley Bahrenfuss , Hartford Elementary Principal | 528-3215 |
| Krista Stuessi , Business Manager | 528-3217 |
| Michelle Becker , Director of Special Services | 528-3217 |
| Phil Barrios , Activities Director/Dean of Students | 528-6397 |
| Chris Waltner , Director of Technology | 528-3217 |
| Tori Wittrock , Food Service Director | 528-6238 |
| Rick Coker , Transportation Supervisor | |
| (Bus Garage Office) | 528-6235 |

EARLY DISMISSAL FOR 2019-2020

School will dismiss early for parent/teacher conferences and the last day of school. **School will dismiss at 1:30 pm** on the following days:

February 10 May 19

2019-2020 SCHOOL CALENDAR

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| February 10 | School Dismissal at 1:30 pm - Parent-Teacher Conferences 2:00-9:00 pm |
| February 14 | NO SCHOOL |
| February 17 | NO SCHOOL-President's Day |
| March 13 | End of 3rd Quarter (43 Days) |
| March 19-20 | NO SCHOOL |
| April 10 | NO SCHOOL |
| April 13 | NO SCHOOL |
| May 11 | NO SCHOOL-Staff Development |
| May 16 | Graduation |
| May 19 | Last Day for Students -School Dismissal 1:30 pm -End of 4 th Quarter (43 Days) |
| May 20 | Last Day for Teachers |

Inclement Weather or Make-Up Days: The first five make-up days are built into the school calendar, and if there are five or fewer days where school is cancelled, we will not need to lengthen the school calendar. If we exceed five days of absence, one day will be scheduled onto the end of the school year for each day missed. The days that will be utilized if necessary are: May 20, 21, 22, 26, and 27.

WEST CENTRAL
ON
THE WEB

www.westcentral.k12.sd.us

West Central School events and activities can be located on the website calendar at:

<http://westcentral.mhsoftware.com>

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The West Central School District #49-7 does not discriminate in its employment policies and practices, or in its educational programs (including career and technical education programs) on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, age, sex, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, or other human differences and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

Requirement for admission to the Career and Technical Education courses is completion of prerequisite coursework of each area.

Career and Technical Education offered at the West Central School District

Agriculture – Floriculture, Horticulture, Animal Science, Natural Resources, Bio-Technology, and Agriculture Leadership

Architecture and Construction – Introduction to Technology, Production Technology, Computer-Aided Drafting, Carpentry, and Building Trades

Food and Tourism Classes – Independent Living, Food Management, and Family Relations

Technology – Multi-media, Web Design, Animation, Computer I, and 3-D Programming

Inquiries specifically concerning the application of Title VI, Title IX, or section 504 may be referred to:

Title VI (discrimination based on national origin/race) Special Services Director

Title IX (discrimination based on gender) Activities Director

Section 504 (discrimination based on disability) Special Services Director

Both Special Services and Activities Director can be reached at:

West Central School District
705 E. 2nd St.
Hartford, SD 57033
605-528-3217

Or

Kansas City Office
U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights
8930 Ward Parkway, Suite 2037
Kansas City, MO 64114-3302
Phone: 816-268-0550
Fax: 816-823-1404; TDD: 877-521-2172
E-mail: OCR.KansasCity@ed.gov

SCHOOL CLOSING

The Campus Messenger System is our primary notification system for parents/guardians and staff. It will be utilized for school closings, delays, or early dismissals. Please call Caryl Nolz at 528-3217 for changes in phone numbers.

In addition, the following TV stations will be notified in the event that school should be cancelled or dismissed early due to inclement weather conditions:

Television Stations: KELO, KDLT, KSFY

We make every effort to provide this information to families prior to 6:30 a.m. However, the changing weather in South Dakota may make this a challenge on some days. In any case, we will notify these stations as soon as possible.

We care very much about your children and do our best to make appropriate decisions based on student safety and student achievement. Please remember that as a parent or guardian, you have the right to keep your child home on any day that you feel it is unsafe for your student to travel to school due to weather conditions.

2020 Driver's Education

The Driver's Education Program offered at West Central will begin on Monday, March 23rd. Students are required to attend 30 hours of classroom, so attendance is a must. Missing a session should only be used in the event of an emergency or sickness. There are currently no middle school or high school events scheduled during these class times. If you are in activities outside of school, you still must attend driver's education classes. Driving behind the wheel will start this summer after school is out. Plan accordingly and reserve these dates now if you are going to take Driver's Education this year.

Classes will be held in the auditorium

| | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| Monday, March 23rd | 6:00pm to 9:00pm |
| Thursday, March 26th | 6:00pm to 9:00pm |
| Monday, March 30th | 6:00pm to 9:00pm |
| Thursday, April 2nd | 6:00pm to 9:00pm |
| Friday, April 3rd | 6:00pm to 9:00pm |
| Monday, April 6th | 6:00pm to 9:00pm |
| Friday, April 17th | 6:00pm to 9:00pm |
| Monday, April 20th | 6:00pm to 9:00pm |
| Monday, April 27th | 6:00pm to 9:00pm |
| Monday, May 4th | 6:00pm to 9:00pm |

- **Registration forms will be available in the middle school and high school offices on March 1st. You may pay online, but everyone must fill out a paper registration form.**
- **Students must be 14 by August 1st, 2020.**
- **Class size is limited. If enrollment exceeds maximum allowed, West Central students will be given first consideration based on grade level, date registration is received, and age.**
- **Cost: \$250**

**West Central School District
Ad hoc Learning Committee
Findings from December 2, 2019 Meeting**

Members Present – Paula Hawks, Lexi Klinkhammer, Lacey Roberts, Kim Lanham, Dusine Hoff, Belinda Prostrullo, Justin Eich, Cheryl Prunty, Nicole Harmon, Derek Bahrenfuss, Jessica Bos, Madison Anderson, JoAnne Bohl, Matt Alley, Mark Rockafellow, Melinda Jensen, Sarah Weber

On December 2nd the committee met to address questions and concerns related to:

- Personalized learning
- Standards-based grading
- A lack of communication from the district to parents
- A growing lack of interest among students for learning

West Central staff also shared a presentation on student achievement, curriculum, teaching/learning practices, and changes made to address student achievement concerns. Following the presentation the committee worked in small groups on personalized learning and standards-based grading. The most common questions/concerns for each item are as follows:

Personalized Learning

- Allowance to take unlimited retakes, kids may just retake so they don't have to learn. Same test is given and kids click thru knowing the answers not the info.
- Motivation varies - for those that move quick, what do we do? Am I stretching for the gifted? Also at the lower level students, are they really understanding? Do they get to all the math in that level? Teaching to the middle....
- How student progress is being tracked?
- Learning grit and responsibilities to keep them going.
- What resources do we have to keep these things going?
- How can we meet students where they are?
- More work for teachers. Do they get more planning time?
- Communication between teacher and parents and how that looks based on what is happening in each classroom.
- Are we reaching students where they are and preparing them to progress, and are we tracking that?
- How are we reaching students where they are and supporting them to be successful based on their needs?
- Do we have the necessary tools, training, and time to motivate learning for all students while tracking that data to support their future learning?

Standards Based Grading

- Overwhelming amounts of information for teachers and parents when it is so much.
- Transition from elementary, to middle school, to high school.
- Lack of motivation to get a four.
- Are we not preparing them for high school?
- Student progress tracked - how do you keep them going?
- Resources
- Redefining better way to get a four and how to get it - how do we better explain it?
- Generally high achievers do not get 4s and not a clear definition and it can vary between the grades for anyone.
- How are we supporting teachers, parents, and students with all of the information?
- How are all learners motivated to work to their ability, especially those who should be able to achieve 4s?

The committee is scheduled to meet again on Thursday, December 19. The committee will focus on items three and four:

A lack of communication from the district to parents

A growing lack of interest among students for learning

Committee members are encouraged to share this information with stakeholders.

**West Central School District
Ad hoc Learning Committee
Findings from December 19, 2019 Meeting**

Members Present – Paula Hawks, Lexi Klinkhammer, Lacey Roberts, Kim Lanham, Dusine Hoff, Belinda Prostrullo, Justin Eich, Cheryl Prunty, Nicole Harmon, Derek Bahrenfuss, Jessica Bos, Madison Anderson, JoAnne Bohl, Matt Alley, Mark Rockafellow, Melinda Jensen, Sarah Weber

On December 19th the committee met to address questions and concerns related to:

Personalized learning

Standards-based grading

A lack of communication from the district to parents

A growing lack of interest among students for learning

The meeting started with a review of the findings from the December 2 meeting. Some additions/clarifications were made to the Personalized Learning list and to the Standards-based Grading list. The additions/clarifications are as follows:

Personalized Learning

- Learning grit and responsibilities to keep them going. *Develop the ability to push thru challenges

Standards Based Grading

- Resources *The lack thereof for our teachers
- How are we supporting teachers, parents, and students with all of the information?
 - *Empower-
 - student mastery levels may not reflect actual level of mastery.
 - May also provide parents more information than they desire.
 - Has been a valuable tool for teachers to gather student data and extract reliable data.

* Indicates added information

Following the review of the first two items, the committee proceeded to the third and fourth items:

3. Lack of communication from the district to parents
4. Student lack of interest in learning

The committee reviewed a list of communication mediums currently used at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. The mediums are as follows:

West Central Communication Mediums

Elementary School

- Class Dojo – behavior tracking, classroom work, parent messaging, class photos, calendar
- Email
- Newsletters – grade level, building newsletter, district
- Phone Calls
- Social Media

Middle School

- Grade-level newsletter
- District newsletter
- Email
- Periodic message from Mr. Rockafellow
- Teacher-level class messages via Campus and Empower
- Automated messages via Campus and Empower
- Social Media

High School

- Newsletters - District
- Registration session in August - we give parents lots of information then (credits, ideas to help students be successful, behavior/discipline, computer, etc)
- Personalized emails-letter depending on circumstances to parents and students - reference the policy or handbook info.
- Email responses to parents about questions

- Text messages from teachers and coaches
- School counselor sends information to parents about topics (stress, vaping, etc)
- School counselor has sessions for parents (financial aid, scholarships)
- Missing assignments information to specific parents every Thursday
- Teachers send emails to parents and students about upcoming assignments, tests, study options, deadlines, volunteer opportunities, activity schedules. These go out from some on a weekly basis; many send out a message at the beginning/end of every unit; many send notices before unit/quarter/semester tests.
- Social Media

Small Group discussions identified the following most common concerns/questions:

Lack of communication from the district to parents

- Class dojo has been great just want to make sure it's being used consistently and make sure that all of the teachers know what the others in their grade level are doing
- More [information] is better - we will decide what we want to read and what we do not
- MAPS/NWEA testing – notify parents in advance. Parents could make sure kids are in bed on time
- Positive feedback on dojo - putting everything in one place
- Email seems to work best in MS on a case by case situation
- More communication regarding leadership and practices
- Being notified sooner when kids are struggling
- Elementary parents are only able to see one core teacher where in MS they are able to visit with all teachers that work with their kids
- Communicate the plan for SBG (Standards Based Grading) and our version of personalized learning

Lack of student interest in learning

- Busy lives for kids - they need to work on facts at night - kids tell teachers they are too busy- family units are different now than when we all grew up
- No easy answer - some of it is personalities, some of it is teachers' ability to find student interests, but even that won't work for all students -different abilities in teachers and in students - world is different - bigger and more complicated
- Communication ties in because if parents are in the know then they can support
- Kids have more freedom and flexibility [in the classroom] that they feel it's up to them to learn so the drive to learn is not there, why study
- Are we preparing them for the next grade level, each building is different - does that cause there to be too much going on and takes away from learning
- Retesting, retakes, no due dates seem to be making students less responsible
- More concrete on what learning looks like no matter if they are receiving a letter or a number score- we feel that interest in learning is impacted by this because expectations are not clear
- Society problem - lack of interest and what can teachers and parents do together to battle that - always has been a problem
- You have some students that are battling things at home that are bigger than school, mental health issues. How do we help them beat those odds so they want to succeed in life?

Committee members are encouraged to share this information with stakeholders.

NURSE'S CORNER

Flu Season is closely monitored at the federal and state level. South Dakota Department of Health posts numbers on the website regarding the current flu activity in the state. The number of influenza cases has continued to rise each week for the last month. As we are in the heart of influenza season, I want to remind everyone about the West Central influenza policy and about the signs and symptoms of influenza. Thank you for taking the time to review the information.

West Central School District policy is that a child with influenza will be excluded for at least 5 days and until fever and behavior changes are no longer present. This policy is in place to protect the health of students and staff in school and the student who is sick. An individual diagnosed with influenza is contagious for at least 5-7 days.

| Cold vs Flu | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Cold | Symptoms | Flu (Influenza) |
| Rare, Mild (less than 100) | FEVER | Almost Always High (Greater than 100) |
| Rare | HEADACHE | Common |
| Slight | General Aches & Pains | Usual/Often Severe and Chills |
| Gradual over a few days | ONSET | Rapid Onset |
| Common | STUFFY NOSE | Rare |
| Common | Runny Nose | Common |
| Common | Sore Throat | Sometimes |
| Mild to Moderate | Cough | Common-Can be Severe (Dry) |



Above is a guideline to use if your child is ill. Please remember this is only a guideline and only your primary care physician can make a diagnosis.



Influenza is not the only illness we have been battling in the schools, but it is the one illness with the longest exclusion from school and the one illness that can wipe you out for that many days.

We have seen strep throat, stomach bug, and mononucleosis also in the schools. Remember students must be fever-free for 24 hours without medication before returning to school. Also any medication, including cough drops sent to school must have a parent note or medication authorization form. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.
 Annette Sichmeller, RN
annette.sichmeller@k12.sd.us
 605-528-3799 ext 1235

West Central Teacher of the Year

Each year WC teachers have been nominated by other staff members, students or parents to become the *Teacher of the Year* for the district. This year the designated area for teacher nominations are teachers in specialty areas in the district. This will include art, music, PE, technology integrationist, library, counselor, special education, Title I, or speech teacher. Students, former students, parents, colleagues, administrators, or members of the general public may also nominate teachers.

The Selection Process

The Teacher of the Year designation will alternate yearly between the following categories of teachers:

| | | |
|------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2016-2017 | Teacher in a Specialty Area | Grades K-12-Daniel Eye |
| 2017-2018 | Elementary Teacher | Grade K-5-Greg Anderson |
| 2018-2019 | Secondary Teacher | Grades 6-12-Nicole Harmon |
| 2019-2020 | Teacher in a Specialty Area | Grades EC-12 |

An impartial selection committee comprised of the former teacher of the year, one representative from each area (Elementary, Secondary, and Early Childhood-12 Specialty Teacher), a school board member, an administrator, and the superintendent selects the *Teacher of the Year* from those nominated through a screening process using specific criteria.

Applications are due February 12, 2020. This year's *Teacher of the Year* will be announced February 21st. We plan to offer the *Teacher of the Year* gifts from the Hartford/Humboldt communities. If you would be willing to donate, please contact Michelle Becker @ 528-3217.

The Nomination Process

Nomination forms are available on the school district website (www.westcentral.k12.sd.us) and all West Central school buildings and the Administration Office. All nominations must be returned, with all supporting materials and documentation, to

West Central Administration Office
Teacher of the Year Selection Committee
PO Box 730
Hartford, SD 57033

We prefer that nominations be typed or reproduced on a computer or word processor, but we will accept (without prejudice) neatly printed applications. Do not use more space than is permitted by the word limit. Please provide to the selection committee a thoroughly completed nomination form; incomplete nominations will not be considered after the deadline for nomination filing. Use specific examples whenever possible in describing the teacher's contributions.

The Eligibility Requirements for Nominees

- Teachers who may be nominated for the 2019-2020 Teacher of the Year award are teachers in a specialty area.
- Nominees must be contracted teachers with a minimum of 3 years of teaching experience in the West Central School District, and must be currently teaching in the West Central School District.
- Additionally, the teacher should possess and demonstrate consistently:
 - The ability to create a love of learning in students of all abilities and backgrounds.
 - High expectations for all students.
 - A strong sense of values, integrity and professional ethics.
 - The ability to learn and experiment with new ideas in order to expand their professional knowledge base.
 - Strong human relations/strong cooperative skills with students, parents, colleagues, administration, and the West Central communities.
 - Knowledge of subject and curriculum content, of student growth and development, or instruction and assessment.
 - Clear understanding of their beliefs and practices.
 - Strong communication skills.
 - Energy, enthusiasm, a positive attitude, and dependability.
 - Commitment to community service.

Thank You to the West Central Community!

Thank you to those who donated to the West Central Giving Trees. Because of your generosity, we were able to fill every tag on every tree in our district. Your gifts and donations brought holiday cheer to many students and families in our community!

Numerous donations were given above and beyond our tree tags - Hartford Hometown Christmas with Hartford Bucks, Humboldt and Hartford area churches providing meals for families, Buffalo Ridge Brewing Company donating their December bingo proceeds, and various anonymous donors. In addition, West Central's 3rd grade class donated their spare change to be used towards gift tags.

Thank you for your continued support!

ELEMENTARY NEWS

Matt Alley, Humboldt Elementary Principal
605-363-3131 or 605-528-3321

Ashley Bahrenfuss, Hartford Elementary Principal
605-528-3215

Winter Carnival



Hartford Elementary students were sent in to their Winter Break with a bang this year! On Friday, December 20th, all students were treated to a Winter Carnival, thanks to Central States Manufacturing. Central States and their staff provided four stations for students to explore and have fun with during the carnival. The stations consisted of a winter craft, air brush tattoos, games, and cookie decorating! They also donated The Balloon Squad and their services to the school so that each student could take home balloon animals and objects! The students (and staff) had a blast! A special THANK YOU to Central States Manufacturing for their generosity and for making our students smile!





Kindergarten Options at West Central

West Central School District offers several options for children of kindergarten age. Children who turn five years old on or before September 1, 2020 are eligible to enter kindergarten in the fall of 2020.

Junior Kindergarten is offered for children who turn five by September 1, 2020 as well, but need more time to mature (either socially or academically). The Junior Kindergarten Program is half days of school, five days a week at WC Hartford Elementary. Transportation is

provided within the district at mid-day. Children who attend junior kindergarten will attend regular kindergarten the following year.

All day, every day kindergarten is offered to all kindergarten students at West Central. There are currently 4 sections of kindergarten and 2 sections of junior kindergarten at the WC Hartford Elementary School. There is one section of kindergarten at the WC Humboldt Elementary School.

Kindergarten Screening and Call-In Registration

West Central kindergarten screenings will be held at the following dates/times:

Humboldt Elementary
Thursday, February 27th 4:00pm - 8:00pm

Hartford Elementary
Friday, February 28th 8:00am - 4:00pm

The West Central School District requires that all kindergarten-eligible children (who turn 5 on or before September 1, 2019) are screened! *Please plan on attending this event!*

Parents are asked to **call Pam at 528-3215** between January 6th and February 13th to register their child and schedule an appointment for a screening time. Appointment times start every half hour. The screening takes about one hour to complete. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to choose the day and location that works best with their schedule. Please remember that the screening location of Hartford or Humboldt does not determine the school placement.

Parents/Guardians and children should plan to attend the screening together. The children will be screened by the kindergarten staff while parents complete registration forms and necessary enrollment information. Parents **NEED** to bring a **certified copy** of their child's **birth certificate** (state law).

It is very important that families register by February 13th so West Central School District can appropriately plan for the upcoming kindergarten classes. If it is not possible for a family to attend on February 27th or 28th, parents/guardians should call the school to complete the screening another time. An alternative screening day will be arranged.

No School for Kindergarten

There will be **NO SCHOOL** for current junior kindergarten and kindergarten students on Friday, February 28th, due to kindergarten screenings.

West Central Winter Symposium

On Monday, January 20th, our Elementary staff along with the other West Central staff, had the opportunity to participate in the West Central Winter Symposium, which is a day filled with professional development provided by teachers and outside experts. This year, our keynote speaker was Trevor Ragen. Trevor is the creator of The Learner Lab, as well as Train Ugly. His focus is on learning and development. He has worked with countless teams and organizations and has helped them understand the science behind learning and development, with the ultimate goal of cultivating better learning. His message to our staff supported them in many ways, including encouraging them to see any obstacles or setbacks as an opportunity to learn and grow, to actively seek new opportunities for learning and challenging themselves, and coaching for more Growth Mindset.

Having a Growth Mindset and positive attitude towards learning greatly impacts anyone! It focuses on changing your perspective from a “can’t” attitude to a “can’t YET” attitude. Often times, we find ourselves in a fixed mindset where we reiterate that we can’t do something and that trying won’t change the outcome. Changing to a Growth Mindset means focusing on trying and the belief that even if you can’t do something quite yet, you will be able to do it if you keep trying.

We are so grateful for all of the professional development we were provided that day, especially the opportunity to hear Trevor speak on the importance of mindset, attitude, and development in the learning of both staff and students!



MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

Mark Rockafellow, Principal
605-528-3799

February has arrived. Where did January go? The school year is rapidly progressing and is as busy as ever. Academic activities, winter fine arts and athletic activities are keeping our students busy. Before we know it, testing season, spring activities, preparations for next year, and warmer weather will be here.

Speaking of testing season, the middle school recently completed the second round of NWEA Growth assessments. All students were assessed in math, reading and language usages. The results of those assessments will be mailed prior to conferences on February 10.

Continuing with the topic of testing, eighth-grade students will kick off state testing the week of April 13 with Science. All students in the middle school will be taking the English language arts assessment April 20-24 and math assessment April 27-May 1. It is anticipated that students will only spend forty minutes each day they test and should only test for one or two days each week. Each test is untimed so it is difficult to predict how long each student will take.

This time of year also brings about preparations for next year. Our staff is continuously working to effectively educate students and to effectively communicate with parents and students. The middle school transitioned to standards-based grading about a year and a half ago as a more effective way to measure and communicate what students know and are able to do. The transition brought two major shifts in how learning is measured and how learning is reported.

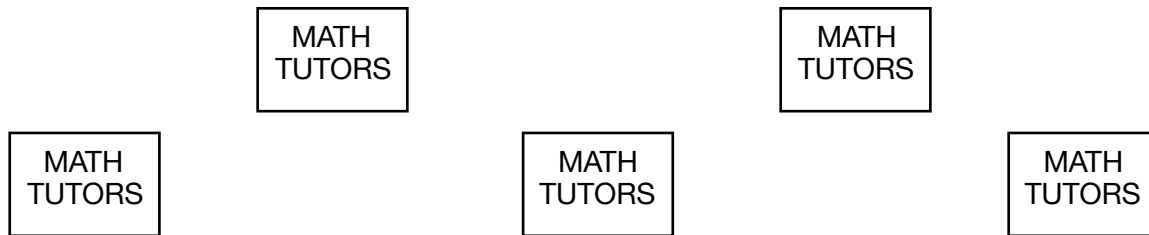
The first shift, how learning is measured, required teachers to move from a traditional percentage-only basis for measuring learning. Proficiency in meeting standards is the current way of measuring learning. Student learning is assessed through the use of rubrics and other tools that define levels of proficiency. Teachers have long used standards as a basis for planning lessons and assessing student work. The shift required them to rely more heavily on rubrics that defined the products of learning.

The second shift, how learning is reported, was to move away from Infinite Campus as the reporting tool to Empower. Empower has served both as a reporting tool and as a learning management system (LMS). It has served our staff and students well as an LMS. However, Empower as a reporting tool has provided many challenges to teachers, parents, and students. Therefore, we are reviewing other tools such as Infinite Campus to serve as our reporting tool. We are also reviewing indicators for the levels of proficiency: 4, 3, 2, 1.

The process of reviewing our current practices is nothing new. We are constantly seeking more ways to effectively educate the students. Each student and each day presents new opportunities and challenges to reach the diverse needs of the students in our classrooms.

Please contact me if you have questions or concerns regarding the topics discussed in this message or any other matter.

-- Mark Rockafellow, Middle School Principal



WC - Math Minds in Motion.

WHAT: A brand new program aimed at tutoring students in mathematics.

High School students with a strong math background who are passionate about learning will work with Middle School students.

FOR WHOM: **WC Middle School students in grades 6, 7 and 8.** Together they will focus on skills students need (identified by their teachers and/or the program's advisor).

INDIVIDUALLY OR SMALL GROUP: Learners will work individually or in small groups and focus on specific standards, helping build a positive outlook and foundation for math going forward.

NO COMPUTERS: Ideally, these sessions will be entirely 'unplugged' and student learning and interaction will be entirely offline.

TIME AND PLACE: The sessions will be offered from 8:00am-8:30am on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of every month. A sign up sheet will be emailed out to students every month, and the middle school teachers will also be sent a link to the Googledoc to share with their classes.

WHERE: MEET IN MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMONS.

Depending on the demand and success of this new program, additional personalized tutor sessions or expansion of this program into the elementary grades will be considered.

CONTACT: If you have any further questions please contact advisor, Janel Merkwon : Janel.Merkwan@k12.sd.us

HIGH SCHOOL NEWS

Melinda Jensen, Principal
605-528-6236

Winter comes and goes - one day it's snowing, blowing, and so very cold! In the same week, we have 30-degree, sunny days. Maintaining focus is tough! Here are a few suggestions to discuss with your teens:

1. [Embrace a healthy life style](#) - Adequate sleep, good food, stress-reducing exercises and activities, exercise, socializing ... Help your teen **determine healthy priorities**.
2. [Time Management](#) - Help your teen identify the most productive time to get school work done, prioritize a to-do list, and set some limits on commitments.
3. [Organizational Method](#) - Each student received a planner at the beginning of the year. (Replacements available in the office). Parents - ask your child to show you the planner (or other system). Talk about how obligations are noted, scheduled, and done.
4. [Communicate with Teachers](#) - Many parents want **more** frequent communication from teachers. This can be accomplished by simply emailing a teacher for an update and sharing information you think is important. Please allow 24 hours for a response.
5. [E-Cigarettes, JUUL, Vaping INFORMATION:](#)

VAPING is a real problem among teens, including IN school. Please talk to your teen.

- [3-minute video for PARENTS](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fn1-qiTWPWk)..https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fn1-qiTWPWk
- Info for [PARENTS: Talk With Your Teen Fact Sheet](#): https://e-cigarettes.surgeongeneral.gov/documents/SGR_ECig_ParentTipSheet_508.pdf
- DID YOU KNOW: About 18% of 8th graders, 32% of 10th graders, and nearly 37% of 12th graders at U.S. schools reported using a **vaping** device.

PERFECT ATTENDANCE: [THANK YOU, Students and Parents!! We had almost 50 WCHS students with PERFECT Attendance in the first semester! \(and 70 more missed less than 1 day!\). AWESOME!](#)

REMEMBER: Students are expected to attend school at least 94% of the days we are in session (that's fewer than 11 days of absence over the whole year).

FORMAL DANCE: Because of severe weather, the Formal is rescheduled for Feb 22nd.

SCHEDULES: Mrs. Lupkes, our HS Counselor, is visiting junior, sophomore, freshmen, and 8th grade classrooms to help students determine class schedule for next year. Decisions should reflect **a student's after-High-School goals**: (1) college/university. (2) tech/vocational school (3) military, or (4) entering the workforce. [Please discuss options and choices with your child](#). Questions? Please email Mrs. Lupkes or me.

NWEA TEST: We've finished the second round of NWEA MAP testing. Students will be given a summary of results the first week of February - including a comparison to last fall's test. Results will also be available at conferences.

Let's continue emphasizing attendance, learning, and respecting the work students and staff do at school.

[THANKS](#) for your support, Parents.

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Phil Barrios, Activities Director - 605-528-6397

As I was thinking about what I would share in this issue of our newsletter, I came across an article that I liked and would like for you to think about. The name of the article is "Five Reasons Good Sportsmanship Matters". The author/writer talks about sportsmanship in pro sports and how it will occasionally carry over into the high school arena. But let me share the "reasons" he believes sportsmanship is important;

#1 - Your behaviors define who you are

#4 - It emphasizes playing fair

#2 - It teaches teamwork

#5 - It provides opportunities for life lessons

#3 - Kids learn to win and lose with dignity

I think we would all agree that ALL of these reasons are by-products of being on a team. Sportsmanship can and should be taught at an early age. It should be taught and expected from our coaches at West Central. I believe that we have coaches who are doing a great job of not only teaching sportsmanship but also modeling the behavior that is needed for our student-athletes to learn from.

I don't believe being a good sport means that you shouldn't play hard and expect to win every contest that you participate in. In fact, to me that is the only way to play. We need to understand also that once a contest is over, we need to look back at not only how we played but also how we acted/reacted to different situations that arose. At the end of the day, we should always be proud of how we play and how we react.

Upcoming start dates for spring activities are: **March 2nd - Track, March 30th - Girls Golf**

Go Trojans!

BAND NEWS:

The instrumental program is in full swing during these cold months! In addition to playing pep band for the winter activities, high school students have the opportunity to perform at the Region II Solo/Ensemble contest held at Augustana University on February 3rd. They will perform a solo or small ensemble piece for a rating.

The high school jazz band will be traveling to Mitchell on February 11th for the annual Palace City Jazz Festival. Students will perform three contrasting styles of music at the Performing Arts Center. Following their performance, they receive a 45 minute clinic from some of the region's top jazz educators.

At the end of February, Emily Hofer (flute) and Mandy Wolles (clarinet) will be performing on the campus of South Dakota State University at the SDSU Honor Band Festival. Emily and Mandy were selected to represent West Central with the top musicians from eastern South Dakota and western Minnesota. The concert will be in the Performing Arts Center on February 29th.

Five 7th & 8th grade students will be selected to perform at the Middle School Celebration of Music festival in Brandon on March 4th. Students are nominated by their directors to perform with students from South Dakota, Minnesota, and Iowa.

The Middle School Band & Chorus concert will be held on March 24th at 7 pm in the gymnasium. The concert will feature all 6th grade, 7th grade, and 8th grade students in band and choir.

Daniel.Eye@k12.sd.us

<http://danieleye.wix.com/westcentralband>

Director of Bands



West Central High School Theater MUSICAL AUDITIONS!!!

Auditions for the WCHS spring musical, *The Addams Family Musical*, will be held Wednesday & Thursday, February 5th & 6th from 3:30-5:30 pm in the WCHS Auditorium. Auditions are OPEN TO ALL WCHS STUDENTS and will involve singing, dancing, and reading scenes from the musical. Students who audition should attend both audition days if possible, but will still be considered for roles if they are only able to attend one day. This show has an ensemble cast, so anyone hesitant to sing solos or nervous about memorizing lines will still have a great opportunity to be a part of the show, and be involved in the energetic group dance and music numbers. The more students we can get involved, the more fun we all have, and the more exciting our musical will be!



WEST CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL THEATER PRESENTS

THE ADDAMS FAMILY

Public Performances: April 23-25th at 7pm

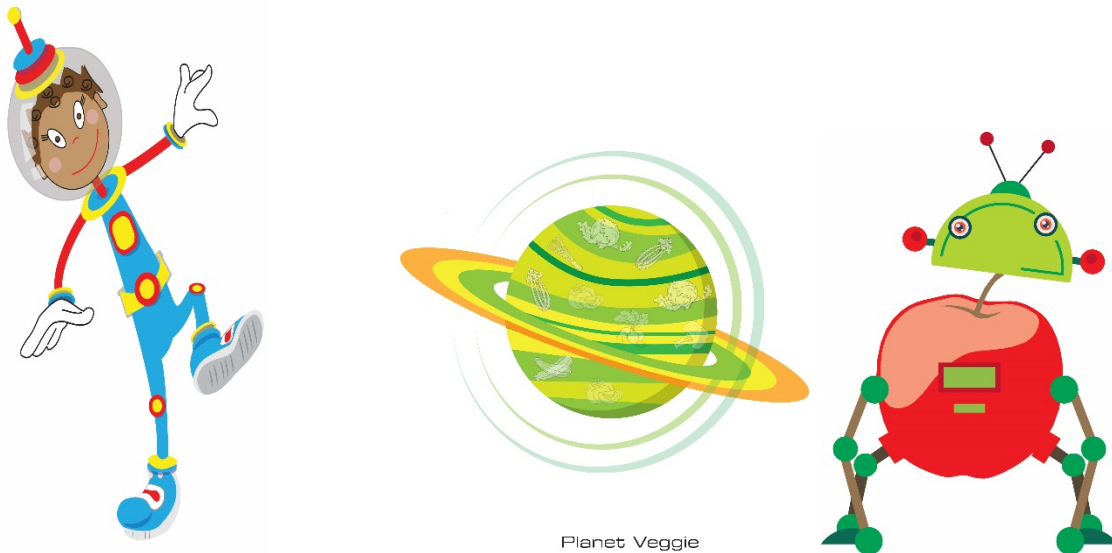
In the kooky, spooky, upside-down world of the Addams Family, to be sad is to be happy, graveyards make great party spots, and the Spanish Inquisition is a perfectly good source of furniture. Nonetheless, Gomez and Morticia's quirky family is soon forced to deal with a challenge any normal family gets: Wednesday, their dark, macabre, beloved daughter, has fallen in love with - gasp! - a "normal" young man from a "normal" family, from "normal" Ohio - the most un-Addams sounding person one could be! And she has invited his family to their home for dinner. As the two families meet one fateful evening, chaos ensues and the two families find themselves admitting deep secrets and coming together in ways they never would have imagined.

Tickets will be available starting April 13th online. You may also purchase tickets at the doors of the Auditorium starting at 6:30 pm on show nights. SEE YOU AT THE THEATER!

FOOD SERVICE

National School Breakfast Week March 2-6 2020

SCHOOL BREAKFAST OUT OF THIS WORLD!



- Reaching higher levels in math and reading.
- Scoring higher on standardize tests.
- Having better concentration and memory.
- Be more alert!
- Maintaining a Healthy Weight
- School Breakfast program serves over 14 million school children every day.

Each year, NSBW (National School Breakfast Week) is celebrated with a theme to promote the well-being of having a school breakfast. A school breakfast provides benefits that far outweigh the cost helping your student thrive, grow and learn. Eating a healthy breakfast each morning gives your student an equal playing level to do their best. For students who are receiving free/reduced meals, the meal is either free or just over \$.30. A full pay student will cost \$1.55. Breakfast times are from 7:45am-8:25am at each site in the district. We would love to have you join us!

ORGANIZATIONS



FEBRUARY 21, 2020
7-9pm

HUMBOLDT COMMUNITY CENTER

\$20
PER
COUPLE
Grandpas, Uncles,
Etc...
\$5 each
additional guest

DJ
PHOTO BOOTH
CRAFTS
CONCESSIONS

SPONSORED BY WC PTA

TRANSPORTATION

REGISTER TO RIDE IN-TOWN

Second semester in-town bus requests and payments were due January 13th. It is important that we have parents complete a request each semester so we know who will be riding and are able to keep emergency contact information up to date. If you have not yet completed your on-line request and submitted the appropriate fee, please do so as bus pass checks will be underway. Request forms are available on the school website at <https://www.westcentral49-7.com/transportation>. Payment may be made on-line at <https://westcentral.revtrak.net/> or by mailing the appropriate fee to the administration office at PO Box 730, Hartford, SD 57033. Payment is required before busing may be provided. The fee for in-town busing is \$60 per child per semester with a family maximum of \$135 per semester. Please contact the business office at 528-3217 if you are unsure if a reduced rate is applicable for your child. Reduced rates are \$30 per child with a family maximum of \$67.50 per semester.

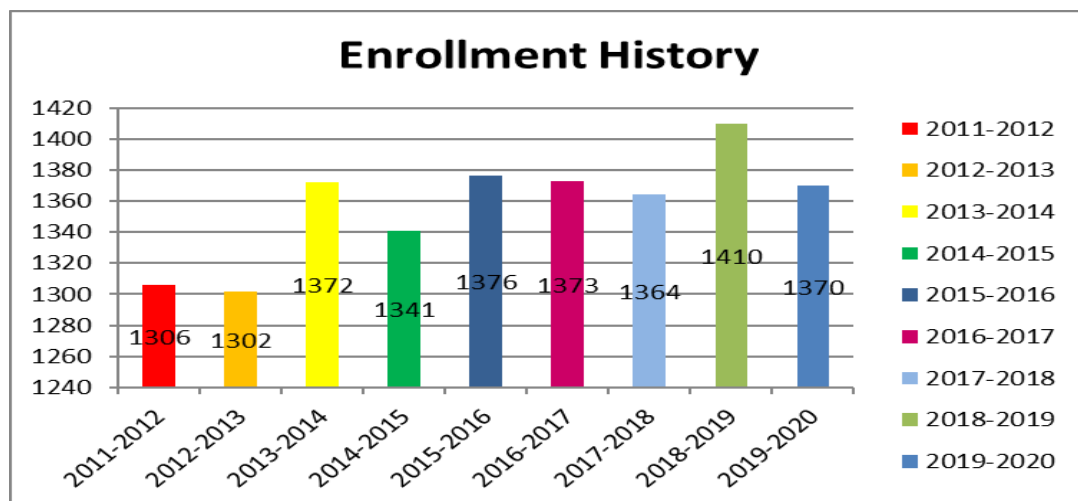
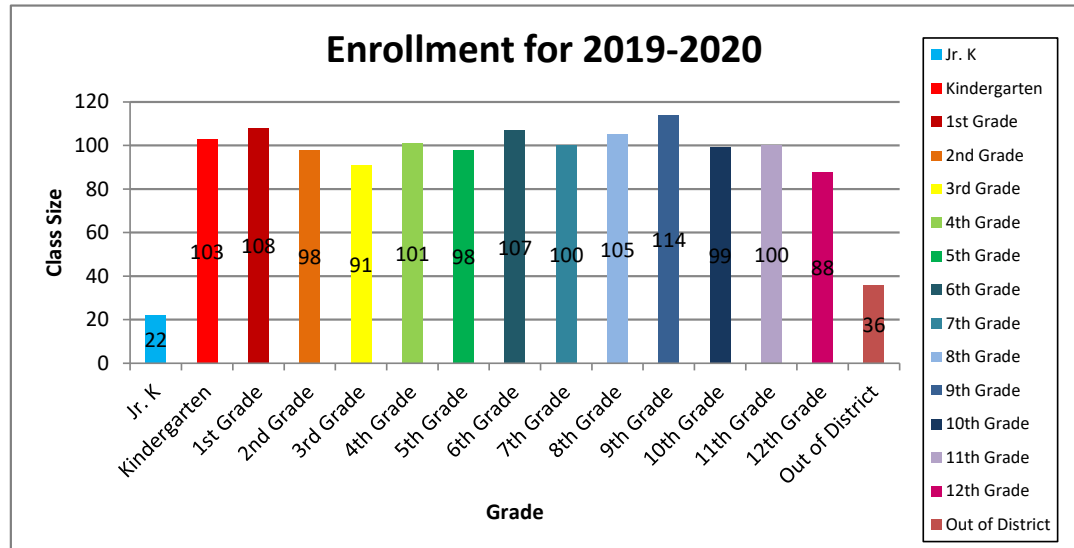
LIBRARY NEWS



Thank you to Golden West Telecommunications for the generous gifts to the WCHS / MS Library Makerspace! Students will be able to enjoy a variety of puzzles, model kits, strategy games, art activities, and 3D printing projects when they visit their library. Pictured is District Librarian, DaNann Kistler, with the donated items from Golden West.

West Central School District 49-7 District Snapshot

- Enrollment as of September 30, 2019 - 1370
- Percent Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch – 16.8%
- Percentage of Special Needs Students – 15.1%
- District Attendance Rate – 90.3%
- Certified Teaching Staff in 2019-20 – 96 FTE
- Average District Teaching Salary for 2019-2020 -- \$48,897
- Average Years of Experience- 14.13 years
- Starting Salary for 2019-20 -- \$41,000



District Budget 2019-2020

General Fund – 10,078,512

Capital Outlay -- \$2,717,874

Special Education -- \$1,964,309

Pension Fund -- \$59,706

Debt Service -- \$750,683

Food Service -- \$884,469

Community Activities -- \$225,803

The State of South Dakota compiles data on school district expenditures and ranks districts based on the amount of money it costs to educate a student in a given district. In the 2018-19 school year, it cost \$7,805 to educate a student in the West Central School District. This ranks West Central 143 out of 149 districts, indicating the district spent less money per student than all but 6 districts in the state of South Dakota.

West Central High School

"Preparing all students for learning and living in a changing world"

| Grades: | Varsity Sports: | Activities: | Fine Arts: | Club Sports: |
|--|--|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| 9-12 | Football, Golf, Volleyball, Cross Country, Cheer, Wrestling, Dance, Basketball,, Gymnastics, Track, Soccer | Student Council, FCCLA, FFA, SADD, TATU, HOSA, NHS, Quiz Bowl | Theater, Choir, Marching, Jazz, and Concert Band, Oral Interp, Choir, Madrigal, News Media, DI, Yearbook, | Baseball, Softball, Bowling, Rodeo |
| Student Population: 405 | | | | |
| Student-to- Teacher Ratio 19:1 | | | | |



At **WCHS** ... our focus is on **QUALITY**

If it's top quality you are looking for in a high school, **WCHS** will provide a great experience. Our highly-qualified staff offers classes that prepare students for a future at college/university, vocational and technical school, military, or the world of work. Most students are involved in many sports, clubs and activities. **West Central** has a safe, modern, well-kept facility. Students and staff are committed to the **PBIS** code: **Be Responsible, Be Respectful, Be Safe.**

West Central High School offers a quality education for everyone.



Historically, one-third of WCHS graduates qualify for the SD Opportunity Scholarship.

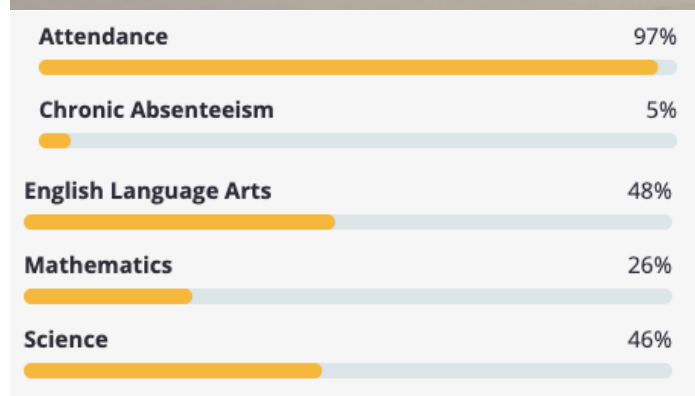
Technology: Unique opportunities

For over 10 years, all **West Central HS** students have been provided an Apple MacBook Air, supplied with a padded bag for transporting and protection. Students have the opportunity to use their computers 24/7; they are responsible for the daily care of the laptop. Curriculum is a blend of on-line and paper resources. Students have endless possibilities to expand the curriculum and teachers provide solid educational opportunities for all **WCHS** students.

Challenging and Unique Academic Opportunities

- Online: Dual Credit, Advanced Placement, and Credit Recovery
- 4 Advanced Placement classes
- Honors English and Chemistry
- Variety of CTE courses: FACS, Agriculture, Business, Tech, and Industrial Technology
- Residential Construction class builds a house, small projects, and storage sheds each year.
- An Internship program connects students to the world of work available to all seniors.
- Career development activities including a day-long Job Shadow for all juniors.
- Semester-long ACT (test) Prep class offered to all students.

By the numbers: ACT test was taken by 87% of students in the 2019 class, with an average ACT score of 22.5. **WCHS** consistently scores above the State average (21.6). **WCHS** has an average graduation rate of 98%. College/Career Readiness ratings are some of the highest in the area.



1:1 iPad environment

Enrollment: 318

Teacher to Student Ratio: 1:16



Academic and Other Programs

Core Classes

6th - Reading, Math, Language Arts, General Science, World History

7th - Reading, Math, Life Science, Language Arts, Geography

8th - Reading, Math, Earth Science, Language Arts, American History

Encore Classes

All Grade Levels - Health/Wellness, Physical Education, Band, Chorus

6th - Guidance, Robotics, Creative Writing, Art, & Leadership

7th - Spanish, Computers-Coding, Digital Citizenship, Art, Civics

8th - Financial Readiness, Art, Computer-Coding, Family & Consumer Science

Extra Curricular Opportunities

Volleyball, Golf, Soccer, Basketball, Cross Country, Oral Interpretation, Football, Drama, Dance, Wrestling, Track and Field, Gymnastics, Quiz Bowl, Improvisation Troupe, Destination Imagination, Student Council, Drum Line, Jazz Band, Robotics

Club Sports offered through the West Central community include: Baseball and Softball

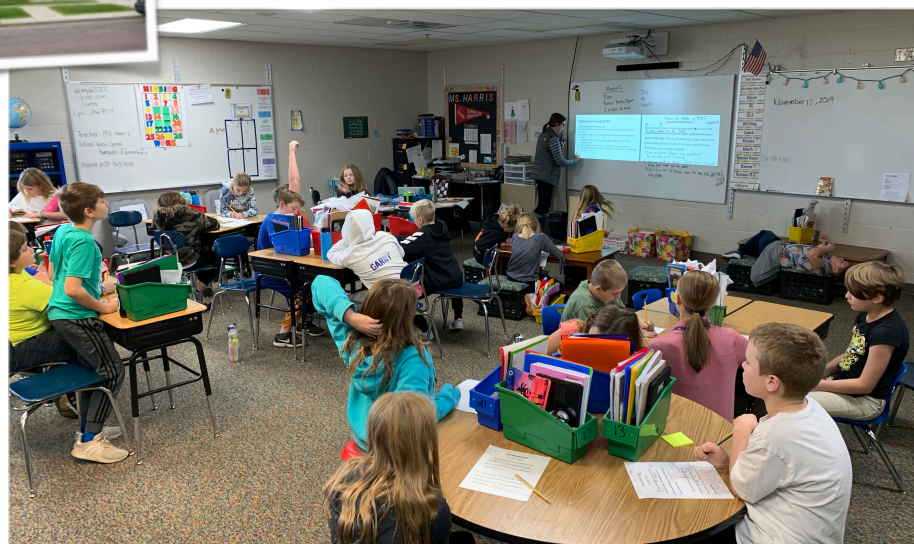
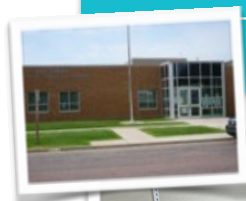
Counseling and Support

- Advisory/Advisee Program
- Student Support Counselors
- Gifted Education Coordinator
- Technology Coordinator
- Mentor Programs
 - Student Mentors
 - School Based Adult Volunteers

WINTER 2020

West Central Elementary

District Data Sheet



**100% Highly
Qualified Staff
Educational
Programs**

Special Education

Title I

School Counselors

Physical Therapy

Occupational Therapy

Speech Therapy

English as a Second
Language

Differentiated Instruction

**Elementary
Technology:**

iPads K-2
1-to-1 iPads 3-5
AppleTVs in K

Technology
Integrationists @ both
Buildings

2018-19 Testing Results:



| Reading Results | Percent Proficient |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| 3-5 West Central ELA | 54% |
| 3-5 State of SD ELA Average | 50% |
| Math Results | Percent Proficient |
| 3-5 West Central Math | 46% |
| 3-5 State of SD Math Average | 46% |

Mission Statement

"To prepare all
students for learning
and living in a
changing world"

ENROLLMENT

**Hartford Elementary:
286**

**Humboldt
Elementary:**

348

1:22

Average Student/
Teacher Ratio