



## LEADERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

### **Elementary:**

#### **Jenn Bostic visits our Elementary Schools**

We opened the month of December with our favorite Waconia alum, Jenn Bostic. On Monday, December 2nd, Jenn Bostic shared her gift of music through a school-wide assembly at each of the elementary schools. We are truly fortunate to have her presence at our schools and for our students to experience a private concert.

#### **Elementary Report Cards are online**

We are now in the last month of 2019 and this is the end of our first trimester of school. Grades were posted on-line Friday, November 22, 2019. This is a wonderful opportunity for parents to compliment their children for working hard at school and encourage them to persevere through the rest of the school year using their grit, perseverance, or determination. Here are some of the ways we are explaining these words at school:

- I can finish whatever I begin.
- I can stick with a project or activity for a period of time.
- I can keep trying even after I experience failure.
- I can stay committed to my goals.
- I can keep working hard even when I feel like quitting.

#### **Backyard Wishes**

Showing compassion in our own backyard by supporting families and empowering kids. Backyard Wishes is a 501(c)3 registered non-profit, founded in 2010 by Laura Cowley. The organization is dedicated to ensuring children in the Waconia community feel a strong sense of belonging. Backyard Wishes is the answer to the effects a family's struggle, can have on a child. The focus is on providing opportunities for students to participate in activities that allow them to belong to their school community or school team. Backyard Wishes entertains special requests that align with their vision/mission of inclusion and sense of belonging for all.

Requests come by way of the watchful eyes and hearts of our school district's staff. If you would like to make a Backyard Wish request, please contact your school principal or school counselor. If you would like to make a donation, please visit: <https://backyardwishes.org/>

#### **A Month of Gratitude**

The first Monday of each month is an invitation to practice GRATITUDE ~ Saying Thank you and Being Thankful! In the month of December, we are creating a list of things we are grateful for in our lives!

*From our schools to you: We wish you a restful and joyful Winter Break! Happy Holidays!*

**Middle School:**

2nd quarter midterm Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held from 3:45-7:45 on Thursday, December 12th. We host one evening of conferences during the second quarter because family participation has typically been lower and many of the teachers have remained the same as the 1st quarter in student schedules. Students are not required but rather encouraged to join the conversations at conferences.

This week we welcomed two new staff members to the WMS team. On Monday, Liz Roberts started as our new Head Cook and Amanda Hope-Olson as our new assistant Head Cook. Liz comes to us with previous head cook experiences in Illinois and Amanda has worked on food service teams in multiple ISD 110 buildings. We are excited to have both of them join our team and utilize their skills in continuing to provide excellent meals and service to our students and staff.

This week we recognized the November Character Counts award winners. These students were caught by WMS staff going above and beyond to show their Core Values of Respect, Responsibility, Integrity, and Kindness. Winners for November include: Yamila Alza, Hannah Beix, Jake Benson, Matthias Bergstrom, Chase Britz, Michael Butler, Daekim Colon Oviedo, Blake Dahl, Nolan Elg, Averi Graham, Emma Hanson, Hunter Hath, Dylan Johnson, Alex Kearney, Reed Klatt, Ryan Kurtz, Mackayla Laumann, Hannah McCarthy, Jake Meuffels, Enzo Natali Mathias, Mitchell Nelson, Sam Swanson, and Hayden Vaughn. Thank you for showing your Core Values and making WMS an amazing place to learn and grow!

Congratulations to Ms. Snorek, the WMS November Teacher of the month. Ms. Snorek was nominated by two 6th grade students, Bella Melcher and Megan Templin. Bella wrote in her nomination letter, "She is kind, funny, and helps us when needed. Every morning her springy attitude wakes me up and starts my day." Megan wrote, "She gives off a special spark of positive energy everywhere she goes. It would make my day to know that she has been recognized for her amazingness." The students and Ms. Snorek each received gift cards and sweet treats from the PTO. This month the PTO received over fifty nominations for teacher of the month-- amazing! Congratulations again to Ms. Snorek and thank you to Megan and Bella for sharing their experiences.

**High School:**

A number of WHS students have been inducted into the International Thespian Society. Payton Baumann, Elsa Bruellman, Bryan Frahm, Ruth Frahm, Sarah Golden, Amara Jones-Myers, Brady Schmiege, and Lauren Strei have each attained the Rank of Thespian. In addition, Sarah Golden and Amara Jones-Myers were named President's List Scholars based on their 4.0 GPA. Congratulations to all of these students and their faculty advisor, Amanda Byrne.

The annual Yuletide Festival played to packed crowds in the Performing Arts Center both Thursday and Friday evening. The festival has become a holiday tradition for many members of our community and is a great showcase for our music program.

The Honor Roll for the first trimester is available on the High School website. 927 students are being recognized as either A or B Honor Roll students.

The International Club will be conducting their annual shoe drive entitled "Soles for Souls". This year they have expanded the drive to all the schools in the district. During the month of January, their goal is to collect and donate over 4,000 pairs of shoes.

**Activites:** [www.waconiaathletics.com](http://www.waconiaathletics.com)

### **Community Ed:**

Our 2020 Winter/Spring brochure has been mailed out! The brochure went out to the community the week of November 18. This brochure includes many youth and adult enrichment classes. Along with registration information for spring soccer, lacrosse, baseball and softball leagues. This brochure is full of lots of opportunities for families to take advantage of.

### **Human Resources:**

The School District's Insurance Advisory Committee reviewed summary medical claims data during its December meeting and received some positive news. Overall medical claims per member each month are running lower than during the same time period last year. The School District expects to receive its renewal rates in early February for the next insurance plan year, which begins on July 1, 2020. During last year's proposal process, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota provided an 8% rate cap for the 2020-2021 insurance plan year. The Insurance Advisory Committee meets regularly during the school year to help ensure the district's insurance benefits meet the diverse needs of all ISD110 employees.

Planning has also begun for our 2020-2021 teacher staffing. Superintendent Devine, our principals and directors will come together in mid-February to discuss student enrollment estimates for the new school year and any upcoming teacher retirements and/or resignations. We'll work together to develop a list of any expected openings to ensure that we can begin the recruitment process as early as possible. As in past years, job openings for any available teaching positions will be posted beginning in March. School district representatives will attend the Minnesota Education Job Fair in early April to meet students and alumni of participating Minnesota colleges and universities interested in learning more about employment with our School District.

### **Superintendent:**

**Tis the Season for Gratitude and Celebrations**

Hopefully, everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving break and you were able to have some family time and express gratitude. Gratitude has been a theme at [All's Well](#) and is something we at ONE10 totally support. Finding ways to show gratitude has been [scientifically proven](#) to give you benefits. We at ONE10 wish to offer sincere gratitude to our students, parents, staff, and community for all they do to make Waconia Public Schools a great place for kids!!

As you gear up for the holidays may you find ways to celebrate in a welcoming and inclusive way for all. We have been training our staff with cultural competency work and our most recent Unconscious Bias training helps us all to reflect on how we best welcome all. Over this holiday season, ONE10 will be doing our best to make sure all are included with our celebrations and that we keep a balanced approach to doing so. Happy Holidays!

### **Explore Wild Ideas**

This is our second year of “Explore Wild Ideas” when we gather great ideas from staff through a crowdsourcing process. This process brought us 54 submissions last year in which we had about 10 move forward to enhance our school, such as, the senior walk, sidewalk lights for safety at one building and a new sidewalk at another. We use the Human-Centered Design process to refine the bigger ideas. Those bigger ideas from last year are scheduled to go through the process on Monday, December 9. We are looking forward to all the great ideas submitted this year that will help make our school district even better. As one of my favorite quotes states, “The smartest person in the room is the room”. We really appreciate all the great ideas from staff.

### **Flex Learning Days being Explored**

ISD 110 is exploring Flex Learning Days. Many other school districts in Minnesota have implemented Flex Learning Days to help when school is canceled due to weather. A ONE10 design team researching ideas from other districts and putting together an initial pilot to look into the options. We will be communicating with staff, students, and parents what this might look like in the near future, but for now, we are just in the conceptual planning stages. Hopefully, we have a couple of months before we are at a third weather cancelation day. Warm thoughts!

### **Crisis Communication Enhancement Planning Continues**

This year one of the learning goals in our strategic roadmap operational plan is to enhance the communication for crisis events. There is a design team that has been exploring many options to enhance our crisis communication to staff, students, parents, and the community. We continue to make great progress in this work and are very close to selecting a software company that will provide us an app that can help centralize and drive all our communication needs (internal, external, first responders, emergency personnel). The advanced technology that is available is amazing and it comes at a reasonable price. We are able to bring this safety and security technology to Waconia by utilizing “safe schools funds” that we received from the state. We will be ready to report on this work and demonstrate the vast capabilities in the spring.

Check out the upcoming events at our schools:

**SV:**

12/20 Winter Parties

**LT:**

12/6 Ugly Sweater Day

12/13 Red/Green (or any other Holiday colors of your choice)

12/20 PJ Day (winter celebrations)

**BV:**

12/6 Kindergarten Gingerbread Houses are being constructed

12/20 Grade 1 through 5 Winter Parties

**WMS:**

12/10 WMS Choir Concerts 6PM

12/11 7th Grade to Guthrie to see A Christmas Carol

12/17 WMS Band Concerts 6PM

12/18 7th & 8th Grade Band to perform at Southdale Mall

**WHS:**

12/6 Yuletide Festival' 7PM Performing Arts Center

12/7 Winter Formal, 8PM

12/7 Snow Queen performed by River Valley Dance 6:30PM

12/15 Lorie Line, 3:00PM

**Have a Great Weekend!**

**We are ONE10!!**