

the MESSENGER

Indianola Community Schools

SUPERINTENDENT'S CORNER

Fall 2019

I hope you all enjoy this fall edition of *The Messenger*. We always enjoy sharing information about what is happening in the school district and understand that the community has a leading role in what we are able to do for our students. Like every new school year, we have some new faces on staff and others in new roles. We introduce you to some of our new employees in this issue. For the first time in decades Indianola CSD will have a school resource officer this fall, too, and this edition introduces him to you. We also continue to leverage technology to personalize learning and engage students. The high school's Online Learning Program and the expansion of a digital learning environment throughout the middle school are examples of that. We hope you have had an enjoyable summer and a good start to the school year. Thank you for being part of a community that is a tremendous place to work and learn and live!



Art Sathoff

Indianola Superintendent

Indianola CSD and Indianola PD Partner to Add School Resource Officer

One of the beliefs of the Indianola CSD is, "We will provide safe and supportive schools." The district has done a tremendous amount of work with school security in the form of secure entries and emergency operations planning. Beginning this school year, a school resource officer will also split time between Indianola Middle School and Indianola High School. Here is a introduction released earlier this summer by the school district and police department:

The Indianola Community School District and Indianola Police Department are pleased to announce the assignment of Officer Jay Hackett as School Resource Officer. This new position is a partnership between the city and school and will begin when school starts in August. Officer Hackett will maintain a office at the high school but will split his time between the high school and middle school. He will handle all law enforcement issues at the schools that were previously handled by patrol officers. Officer Hackett will also focus on building relationships with students and will partner with staff developing strategies to resolve problems affecting students. Indianola Police officers will continue the successful practice of stopping at the elementary building throughout each week.

A native of Mt. Pleasant, Hackett continued his education at Simpson College. He graduated with a degree in Criminal Justice and served as a captain on the Storm football team. He has been a patrol officer with the Indianola Police Department and graduated the academy in 2014. Officer Hackett is a firearms and defensive tactics instructor and has led the department's Junior Police Academy the last four years. Officer Hackett has also served on the wrestling coaching staff for the school.

Hackett has received training from the Iowa Association of School Resource Officers as well as the National Association of School Resource Officers. Emphases in the training include the following: juvenile drug culture, adolescent mental health, human trafficking, juvenile violence and victimization, and developing successful relationships with diverse students.

If you have questions about the SRO program, please feel free to contact Chief Dave Button at City Hall or Superintendent Art Sathoff at the District Administration Building.



School Resource Officer Jay Hackett gets to know some students.

Meet Our New Teachers

We are delighted to introduce the talented new and veteran teachers who have joined our staff this year. Many already have roots in Indianola as graduates of IHS or Simpson College. Others come to us from the mid-west and even farther abroad. What they have in common is their passion for teaching and motivating students to become the driving force for individual learning and success..



Benjamin Anderson - High School Social Studies/At-Risk

Benjamin is originally from Durant, IA and graduated from Hampton-Dumont High School. He is a recent graduate of Drake University and served as a substitute teacher in the Waukee and West Des Moines CSDs before coming to Indianola High School. Benjamin believes that "Differentiation is the key to addressing the wide range of skills within the classroom. Students learn in different ways, so it is important that content is presented in a variety of ways so all student shave the best opportunity to learn."



Katherine Bendon - Elementary & Middle School Orchestra

Katherine has served as a middle school and high school orchestra teacher in the Pella CSD since 2007. She is a graduate of Indianola High School and earned her Bachelor's degree in Music Education from St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN in 2006. Katherine states, "I love music and I love teaching. I work hard to inspire and motivate my students but they, in turn, inspire and motivate me. It makes my day when a student has been struggling and finally 'gets it'. It is especially rewarding when I realize that they're starting to share my passion for music."



Kris Birkland - Middle School Science

Kris is a 2003 graduate of Indianola High School. She graduated from Simpson College with a Master's degree in teaching in 2015. Since then she has been serving as a high school science teacher in the Bondurant CSD. Kris always puts the needs of her students first: "If I create a lesson that works for 80% of the students, I continue working until I can find a way to make the learning meaningful for the remaining 20%." She considers it "a privilege to serve the students and families in the community I am proud to call home."



Madison Briggs - Emerson 1st Grade

Madison graduated from Simpson College in December 2018. She completed a portion of her student teaching at Whittier Elementary. Madison is originally from Russell, IA. She believes "Every child is unique in their own way and needs to be able to show and express it in and out of the classroom." She explained, "It is my job as a teacher to bring out all of the students' abilities by engaging with them, showing interest in them, encouraging them, and promoting determination."



Nathan Carlin - High School Math

Nathan is a 2019 graduate of Simpson College. He is originally from Huxley, IA, where he attended Ballard High School. Nathan student taught at Indianola High School. He comes from a long line of educators and believes that "every high school graduate should be equipped with the critical thinking, collaboration, and communication skills to be successful in any career or higher education path they choose to enter after school."



Tiffany Cochran—Middle School Counselor

Tiffany is originally from Animosa, IA. She earned her Bachelor's degree from the University of Iowa and her Master's degree from Capella University. Tiffany is a resident of Indianola and completed her counseling practicum at Indianola Middle School. She believes "that every student should be afforded the opportunity to learn in the least restrictive learning environment." As a counselor, she understands that "a student's learning is connected to their social and emotional well-being. A student will struggle to reach their full potential if their social and emotional needs are not being met."



Nicholas Dau - High School At-Risk & Online Learning Coordinator

Nick has served as an At-Risk teacher in the Ankeny, Norwalk, and Chariton school districts. He earned his Bachelor's degree from Simpson College and is earning his Master's degree from Morning-side College. Nick student taught at Indianola High School and served as a varsity football coach for four years. Nick believes that "all students, no matter their background or current ability level, can learn at a high level." According to Nick, "Building positive relationships and demonstrating that I care about student's individual needs is the most important factor in the way that I teach. . ."



Kelli Ehrhardt - Whittier ECSE

Kelli grew up in Osceola, IA and is a 2016 graduate of Simpson College. She taught preschool in the Center Point-Urbana CSD before coming to Indianola. According to Kelli, "Teaching is my passion and this passion motivates me to maintain a caring and safe classroom community through team building activities. In my experience, this creates confident students who are willing to take risks and move forward to enhance their goals."



Jessica Frye - Middle School SPED

Jessica recently earned her Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from Buena Vista University. She has served as a special education associate in the Waukee CSD, a direct care associate at Mosaic and a respite care provider at ChildServe. Jessica is a graduate of Lincoln High School in Des Moines. When characterizing the attributes of an effective teacher, she points to a variety of qualities: "From passion to compassion, flexibility to high expectations, and leadership skills to strong classroom management, all of these attributes are necessary to make a teacher outstanding."



Reid Hannam - Middle School 7th Grade Math

Reid is a graduate of St. Ansgar High School in St. Ansgar, IA. He earned his Bachelor's degree from the University of Northern Iowa in 2014. Reid previously taught in the Waterloo and Jesup CSDs. Reid believes in the importance of relationships: "Relationships with the students and other staff members are crucial to having success." He also believes that "being consistent with expectations, as well as being able to explain to students the rationale behind those expectations will also help build that trust and respect."



Abby Hart - Whittier ECSE

Abby is a graduate of Indianola High School. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education from Iowa State University. For the past two years she has served as a special education teacher in the Chariton CSD. Abby believes that "learning is for everyone. All it requires is a teacher who is willing to try different approaches and find the best style for each student."

the MESSENGER

Indianola Community Schools

Fall 2019



Emily Henry - Whittier/LI Wilder Music

Emily has been teaching 4th grade in the Perry CSD for the past four years. She is originally from Gretna, NE. Emily is a 2015 graduate of Simpson College and recently earned her Master's degree in STEM education from Drake University. She believes that "learning is about experiences." She "structure[s] lessons and units so they can be more collaborative and work on life skills while students learn content."



Eva Letran-Rios - High School Spanish

Eva has over 15 years of teaching experience in both Spain and the United States. She holds a Bachelor's degree from the University of Seville (Spain) and two Master's degrees: one in Education Theories and Teaching Methods from the Universidad de Cadiz and one in Modern Languages, Literature and Linguistics from the University of Seville. She most recently served in the Interstate 35 CSD. Eva's primary objective "...is to think critically." She believes, "Students should be able to experiment with likes and dislikes, and to realize their strengths and weaknesses."



Kimberly Mennen - High School FCS

Kimberly has served as the Family Consumer Science teacher at Collins-Maxwell Middle/High School since 2017. She served in the same capacity at Horicon Jr.-Sr. High School, in Horicon, WI from 2015-2017. Kimberly is originally from Appleton, WI and earned her Bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. She believes that successful teachers are "organized, creative, and have a positive attitude." These traits characterize her teaching style.



Sara Pirtle - Emerson 1st Grade

Sara comes to us from the Winterset CSD, where she served as a 2nd grade classroom teacher. She is a 2016 graduate of Iowa State University. Sara strives to go above and beyond typical expectations. She believes that "teaching has to be more than good instruction, it has to include personal relationships, teamwork, differentiation, parental communication and a growth mindset for students and educators."



Nick Reinert - LI Wilder 1st Grade

Nick grew up in Indianola and graduated from Simpson College in 2015. He has taught in both the Knoxville and Winterset CSDs. Nick also serves as an assistant varsity boys' soccer coach at Indianola High School. "To be an outstanding teacher," Nick believes "it is important to understand the whole child and give the students an academic choice."



Macayla Ringler - LI Wilder 5th Grade

Macayla graduated from Iowa State University with a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education in 2018. Since then she has served as an assistant preschool teacher in a private childcare center and a long-term substitute teacher in the Southeast Polk CSD. Macayla believes in putting the needs of students first: "In my classroom I put students first by being a reliable and hard-working teacher. I show up every day with prepared lesson plans modeled off of the best teaching methods and strategies that will support my students."



Courtney Simons - Middle School 8th Grade Language Arts

Courtney has served as an English Language Arts teacher in the Fort Dodge and Marshalltown school districts. She is a 2014 graduate of the University of Northern Iowa. She recently earned a Master's degree from Viterbo University. Courtney believes that both she and her students "can always learn, grow, and change." She designs her lessons "...around collaboration and discussion because students are able to deepen their learning and strengthen their growth when they are able to share their insights with their peers."



Laura Stevenson - District ESL

Laura is a 2016 graduate of Simpson College. She has served as a 1st grade teacher at Winter-set Elementary school for the past three years. Laura is a graduate of Clarion-Goldfield High School. She believes the most important attributes of an outstanding teacher are "flexibility, empathy, enthusiasm, and passion."



Justin Theisen - High School SPED

Justin has nearly 15 years of teaching experience. He served as a special education teacher in the Des Moines Public Schools since 2008. Justin earned his Bachelor's degree from the University of Northern Iowa and a Master's degree from Morningside College. Justin believes that "all students deserve a safe, positive, welcoming, and encouraging learning environment." He wants his students to know "[his] classroom is a place where they can take risks and make mistakes...mistakes are proof of learning."



Jennifer Wolf - High School SPED

Jennifer holds both a B.A. degree from the University of Northern Iowa and a B.S. degree from Northwest Missouri State University. She is currently taking Master's courses at Morningside College. Before accepting a teaching position at IHS, Jennifer served as a substitute teacher and special education associate in the Indianola CSD. She believes that "all students are able to learn. The learning styles of each student are not the same, so this requires an educator to be open and willing to adapt the curriculum in order to meet the individual instructional needs of every student."

Please follow ICSD Teaching and Learning on Twitter to learn more about what is taking place in Indianola schools. Teachers and their classes are highlighted.
@ICSDTeach_Learn

the MESSENGER

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2019-20 Calendar Highlights

Fall 2019

TRADITIONAL CALENDAR

September 27

Professional Development - No School

October 29 - 31

Parent Teacher Conferences

October 31 - November 1

No School

November 27 - 29

Thanksgiving Break - No School

December 20

1 Hour Early Dismissal

December 23 - January 3

Winter Break - No School

January 20

Teacher Workday - No School

February 18 - 20

Parent Teacher Conferences

February 20 - 21

No School

March 16 - 20

Spring Break - No School

April 13

Professional Development - No School

May 22

Last Day for Seniors

May 24

Graduation 1:00 pm

May 25

Memorial Day - No School

May 29

Last Day of School 11:30 am Dismissal

June 1 - 4

Teacher Workdays

YEAR ROUND CALENDAR

September 23 - October 4

Fall Intersession - No School

October 7 - 11

Fall Break - No School

October 31

Professional Development - No School

November 1

No School

November 27 - 29

Thanksgiving Break - No School

December 20

1 Hour Early Dismissal

December 23 - January 10

Winter Break - No School

January 20

Teacher Workday - No School

February 18 - 20

Parent Teacher Conferences

February 20 - 21

No School

March 16 - 20

Spring Break - No School

March 23 - 27

Spring Intersession - No School

April 13

Professional Development - No School

May 25

Memorial Day - No School

May 29

Last Day of School 11:30 am Dismissal

June 1 - 4

Teacher Workdays

Weekly Early Dismissal: There will be a weekly, one hour early dismissal on Wednesdays for professional development.



District Day

While a number of Metro schools began classes Friday, August 23, the first legal start date, Indianola CSD kept its proud tradition of “District Day” on Friday. District Day is a great way to bring district staff together, including Irving staff, who went back to school on July 10 this year.

City State Bank provided breakfast for school employees, as they have done for years, and Pizza Ranch provided educator discount cards. Shottenkirk Auto pays a randomly drawn teacher’s car payment each month and gives a support staff member a \$50 gas card. August winners were announced at District Day. Superintendent Sathoff welcomed employees and spoke about our district vision, mission, and goals. The keynote this year was delivered by 2019 IHS graduate Tyler Juffernbruch, who is headed to Stanford in the fall. Board President Dacni Gabel was in attendance as well.

After the morning events, a meeting for district coaches and sponsors was facilitated by Activities Director Lee Nelson and Assistant A.D. Jon Fitzpatrick. Final building preparations and meetings took place in the afternoon. District Day is a great, positive way to bring people together to connect and to focus on the upcoming school year. We wish everyone a productive and enjoyable 2019-2020 school year!



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District Technology Updates

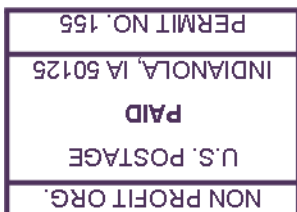
One of the school district's goals is, "Effective Technology Growth and Integration." We are making exciting strides in that area as we enter the 2019-20 school year. Parents of sixth and seventh graders have noticed during online registration that Chromebooks will be available for all sixth and seventh grade students this year, expanding the digital learning environment that eighth graders had second semester last year. There are acceptable use agreements and digital citizenship training required to ensure safe, responsible use by students. The additional Chromebooks at the middle school have allowed the district to move Chromebook carts to the elementary schools. Each elementary school has a lab of desktop computers and some lap tops already, in addition to iPads that have been generously donated by PTOs. The additional carts of Chromebooks will help students to access technology. Our elementary computer science efforts have won the district a state grant and led to the governor using Indianola CSD as an example in a speech to other leaders throughout the nation.

Indianola High School continues to maintain its digital learning environment with MacBooks, and students and teachers are very accustomed to technology being integrated into classes. A number of teachers have completed course work on blended and flipped instruction, which moves content delivery into the digital world, allowing more class time for application of knowledge and collaboration. This fall marks the official roll out of the Online Learning Program, too. High school students can elect to take self-paced online courses, with the possibility of earning a totally online diploma if that is desired. While many students may choose to take few, if any, online courses, the district is excited about the personalization and flexibility that online courses provide. Our own high school teachers have been trained as online educators and written these courses, which are more rigorous and better aligned with standards than online courses available elsewhere. We are very proud of our staff's efforts and our partnership with the AEA, which have made us a state leader in online learning.

We're on the web: www.indianola.k12.ia.us



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