

WASECA PUBLIC SCHOOLS



📞 507-835-2500

www.waseca.k12.mn.us

October 2022

DID YOU KNOW ABOUT THE PTO?

Did you know that Waseca Public Schools has a Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) in each of our buildings? Hartley, WIS, and the JHHS all have their own PTO under the overall umbrella of the Waseca Public School District PTO. The District PTO organizes the annual Bluejay Blast and then distributes the funds from that fundraising event to each of the building PTOs. The building PTOs use those funds to approve funding requests made by the staff within those buildings. Each building has its own PTO executive board with a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer. They hold meetings three times each year and all parents and teachers/staff at the buildings are automatically members of the building PTO. As a member, YOU are invited to attend these meetings and help decide how to spend our fundraising dollars. Funding requests are granted for a wide variety of items at each building including field trip transportation, author visits, staff appreciation, classroom support items, and so much more! Also, PTO is more than just deciding what happens with our fundraising money - it's a place for parents and community members to express concerns, ask questions, and give input into our children's education. Connect with PTO and you're better connected to our schools! Our annual Bluejay Blast Fundraiser is on Saturday, November 19! Find us on Facebook or look on the school website to learn more about PTO events and ways YOU can be involved! Email wasecaschoolspto@gmail.com for more information.

HARTLEY Elementary

📞 507-835-2248

We are excited to be back for the 2022-2023 school year! It was a great summer and a busy one at Hartley. We did some painting, upgraded some old computer labs and turned them into classrooms. Those will be great spaces for students to access.

Also on facilities - we are excited to continue having the conversations about how to best move with the Hartley facility. Please reach out with questions, or to come visit the school.

Hartley Elementary also has a cohort of staff working through 6 days of training in PBIS-Positive Behavioral Intervention Systems. This is an 18 month process and we are 4 months in right now! This training will help build our "We are for the Bluejay Way," behavior model. We are excited about the impact this will have on students and staff for Hartley's building culture.

We had a great turnout for our Back to School Conferences. We value that time and appreciate the parents that took time to attend. We had a great assembly in September to kick-off the year with 440 Kindergarten - Third grade students and are looking forward to a **GREAT** year!

How Does a Student Receive SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES?

The school districts special education programs and services are designed to meet the needs of students with various disabilities from birth to age 21. If a student has met Minnesota eligibility through a comprehensive evaluation, then a multi-disciplinary team of parents and professionals will meet to write goals to improve the areas of educational need identified for the student. These goals will be written on a document called an Individual Educational Program (IEP), an Individual Service Plan (ISP), an Interagency Individual Intervention Plan (IIIP) or an Individual Family Services Plan (IFSP) for students ages 2 and under. Special education programs require parents to participate in making decisions for their child. If a parent is not available, a surrogate parent will be appointed. Specialized instruction may be provided in the areas of need. Special education areas of need may include:

- Reading
- Writing
- Math Skills
- Self-Help Skills
- Motor Skills
- Communications
- Communications
- Organizational Skills
- Social Skills
- Transition Skills
- Emotional Skills

Related services such as occupational therapy, Physical therapy, Speech, Developmental Adaptive Physical Education (DAPE), etc. are provided if it is determined the child would not be able to meet their instructional goals without this service. Related Services cannot be provided unless the student is already receiving a special education service in a disability area, such as a learning disability. The related service is only provided if the student requires the service in order to make progress on IEP/ISP/IIIP/IFSP goals.



WASECA INTERMEDIATE School

507-835-3000

Waseca Intermediate Recognizes the Good Around Us

With the fast-paced and busy lives we live, it is difficult to slow down and remember the good things. Frederick Keonig, a famous German inventor once wrote, "We tend to forget that happiness does not come from getting something we do not have, but rather recognizing and appreciating what we do have." At Waseca Intermediate School, we are slowing down to reflect on all the good things we have.

We live in a town that supports students and their learning. The vast majority of students come to school prepared to learn on a daily basis. Our parents encourage their students to get involved and support them both inside and outside of school. Parents help their students by role-modeling great work ethic and helping them to understand how important learning is for their futures!

We live in a community that cares about kids. Community involvement in our schools is tremendous. Whether it is volunteers spending hours in the school, business owners teaching and employing our students, adults supporting school activities, or providing consistent financial support, our community takes pride in their schools and our schools are a reflection of their support.

We house professional educators willing to work towards continual improvement for students and finding ways to meet the needs of all learners. The Waseca Intermediate School is staffed with individuals working to build relationships and belonging for our students. Every member plays an important role in providing a successful learning environment.

We have fantastic students. They are willing to try new things and respect the people and property around them. They put forth the effort it takes to get the most out of their learning. They understand it is their job to grow positive relationships and learn how to learn.

We feel extremely fortunate to educate students in Waseca. This is a special place. We will continue to make efforts to allow every student to find their spark in learning. In the spirit of gratitude, we will all continue to focus on the great things we have in Waseca and at Waseca Intermediate School.

**John Huttemier, Principal
Waseca Intermediate School**

SPECIAL EDUCATION District Services

507-835-5046



Minnesota Public Schools are required by law to provide a free, appropriate education to all children with handicaps birth through 22 years of age. As part of our district's commitment to this law, we encourage parents who have questions regarding the special needs of their children to contact the Director of Special Education, Heather Harms, at 507-835-5046.

"Special Education" is instruction, specific to the child, at no cost to parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability. It is important to note: Students with disabilities are general education students first. They receive special education support services in conjunction with the general education curriculum. Special education is an instructional service, not a place. Special education services must be reasonably calculated to allow the student to benefit from instruction. If the student is receiving benefit from the special education services, the student will progress at his/her own individual rate. A student who has a disability will always have a disability and would not be expected to progress in all areas at the same rate as his/her regular education peers.

WHAT IS A DISABILITY?

A disability is a lifelong disabling condition often associated with a physical, mental, or communication impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, including education.

Who Can Receive SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES?

The child must meet MN state eligibility criteria in one or more of the following areas:

- Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Deaf-Blindness
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- Developmental Cognitive Disability: Mild/Moderate
- Developmental Cognitive Disability: Severe-Profound
- Emotional or Behavioral-Disorder
- Developmental Delay (birth to age 7)
- Other Health Disability
- Specific Learning Disability
- Physical Impairment
- Severe Multiple Impairments
- Visual Impairment
- Speech/Language Impairment
- Traumatic Brain Injury

An evaluation is used to document the existence of a disability. Below average academic performance alone does not qualify a student for special education.

What Should I Expect WHEN MY CHILD RECEIVES SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES?

Parents should expect to participate as a team member in decisions regarding their child's' special education program. A student should receive instruction that has been individualized to meet their specific needs. Special education teachers will work with general education teachers to provide the appropriate adaptations within the general education setting. Adaptations can include highlighted textbooks, shortened assignments, class notes, as well as other aids to assist students to succeed in school.

WASECA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

In a tradition of excellence, Waseca Public Schools empowers each learner to thrive in an ever-changing world.

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What is the Status of HARTLEY ELEMENTARY?

Hartley elementary serves students in Waseca Public Schools grades kindergarten through third grade. Over the last several years, district staff along with community task force members and facility consultants have assessed the status of the building and how it serves student learning needs. A survey was also done to gather community insight. It is possible you've heard some of the conversations to this point, but here are some of the additional highlights about Hartley.

Hartley was built in 1959 and is just under 58,000 square feet. This includes some additional classrooms that were added in 1989. Approximately 28,000 square feet of this space is instructional space, with the remainder being offices, the kitchen, and hallway areas. In the last few years, some repairs and updates have been made to the building, specifically exterior lighting, sidewalk approaches, air purification systems, asbestos abatement and plumbing work.

Unfortunately, there also is additional work that needs to be done that has not been able to fit in our current budgeting plan. We will work to get to these in the upcoming years as budget allows, and as they fit into our district facility plan. Some updates needed are mechanical to heat and dehumidify the building properly, plumbing to allow potable water in more areas of the building, structural such as roofing and parking lot areas, as well as some electrical work and ADA compliance work.

Although the district will continue to work on maintenance and improvements, it is also important to recognize that fixing these items does not update the learning environment for students; rather it maintains the building in the shape it is in. In order to fully update to a modern learning environment, a more significant project would need to take place. The district is considering those options and will continue to communicate with the community as they are developed.



JR./SR. High School

507-835-5470

Everything has come together for a great start to the 2022-23 school year at Waseca Junior & Senior High School. Our 7th graders and new students have acclimated to the school well, and things are running smoothly.

We have welcomed four international students this year: two from Germany, one from Poland, and one from Spain. They have all joined various activities which have helped them connect with other students and our school community.

From the Marching Jays to all of our sports teams, the students have competed well and done a fine job representing Waseca.

Homecoming Week wrapped up the month of September with a celebration of all our teams; a bean bag tournament with 93 teams competing; an evening Coronation and dance; the annual Homecoming Parade; and the football game where we recognized the Classes of 1973, 1998, and 2013. It is always a busy start to the year, but it is also always fun!



A Word From Our SCHOOL BOARD

What keeps your School Board busy and engaged in the business of Waseca Public Schools? To be honest - it's a lot of committee meetings! Our seven school board directors currently sit on thirteen different committees throughout the district. Usually, between 1-3 board members serve on each committee that meets anywhere from monthly, quarterly, or as needed throughout the year. The work of these committees operates in conjunction with the superintendent and other administrative leaders to oversee finances, set district policy, establish and review curriculum, develop and revise facility plans, negotiate contracts, and so much more. A full list of our committees can be found on the school board website. These committees are open to the public, although it's best to confirm meeting times with the District Office if you wish to attend.



Long-time school board director, Katie Youngberg, has these thoughts to share on her own committee work:

In the eight years that I have been on the board, some of the best ways for me to understand how the many cogs work within our district was to be active on multiple committees. By being on the DAAC committee, I've gotten to learn how each school addresses student progress over the years and how the teachers have re-looked at how they use the information given to them to ensure our youth are learning the skills they need to be successful throughout their school years here. The PD&G committee shows how important it is to develop our staff as they learn how to use new technology and concepts to teach our youth. The finance and facilities committees have taught me that it takes everyone in the district to achieve a strong and sustainable base for when unexpected issues arise that we need to take care of and not depend on going out to seek funds from our taxpayers unless we need to address complex issues, like the safety of our buildings.

What I have loved the most about these committees is the staff involved. They have been so willing to explain the intricacies of their jobs and repeat it a few times to make sure I understand what they do on a daily basis. The staff has always welcomed the school board to learn more about their jobs so that we can work together in such a collaborative way. I get to ensure that they have the tools to use and they use the resources in innovative ways to make sure the Waseca youth are the best prepared kids in Southern Minnesota.

In addition to our District committee work, the school board holds two meetings every month. The first meeting of the month takes place on the first Thursday and this is our monthly workshop. We take the time to learn about different topics affecting our District, such as finances and budget, facilities, or curriculum. We also have a monthly "staff spotlight" where a staff member or department is invited to share what they do for our District with the School Board. Our second meeting of the month takes place on the third Thursday and this is our regular business meeting. We approve financial transactions and take action on a number of business items for the District. This meeting also includes an update from our superintendent and our business manager. Our meetings are OPEN to the public and we encourage you to come to our meetings! However, we do also broadcast our meetings on the District Facebook page and the recordings are posted on our website.

School board members are always open to questions and conversations from our wider school community. Our contact information is listed on the school website, but we're also open to being approached by community members when you see us out and about in Waseca. The seven board members were elected "at-large," which means we represented everyone within the Waseca Public Schools district and consider ourselves to be the link between the community and the district.