



Absarokee Public Schools

327 South Woodard Avenue – Absarokee, Montana 59001

www.absarokee.k12.mt.us

Home of the Huskies

Issue # 7

March 2022

Superintendent's Report & Lil Husky News *by Meredith Feddes*

By the time this newsletter arrives we will be $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way through this school year. The year has been successful in many ways. Some of the highlights include our FFA chapter earning awards in the areas of Sales, Mechanics, Greenhand and Farm Business Management, our bus drivers have carried 65 students to and from school over 28083 miles, our janitors have kept our schools and hallways clean and healthy for our students, our teachers have learned new strategies and taught through multiple modalities to have students demonstrate their knowledge in all subject areas, and students have shown through eligibility and tests taken the progress they have made. We have staff working to earn additional degrees to benefit the district and themselves.

Even with the many accomplishments and progress made, the district continues to have needs the community can assist with. Budgets are always tight and this year is no exception. We have been fortunate to continue to receive funds through a competitive Literacy Grant. The funds received for this grant may not be used to take the place of personnel or supplies that were previously part of the general fund. We have added a Behavioral Specialist, Child/Family Therapist, Literacy Consultant, and Literacy Coach to our staff to help with students' needs. Programs recommended by our Literacy Consultant may be purchased with these funds as well. We are also fortunate in that our Technology Fund is supported through a permissive levy and does not require we ask for any additional funds. One area that will require support from the community is the General Fund. The general fund is used for the instructional Programs and general operations of the school district. Budget Limits are established per §20-9-308, MCA. State law establishes a BASE (minimum budget) and a Maximum General Fund (01) budget limit for each district.

The "BASE budget" (minimum) is calculated using:

1. 80% of the Basic Entitlement; and
2. 80% of the Per-Student Entitlement; and
3. 100% of the Quality Educator Payment; and
4. 100% of the At-Risk Student Payment; and
5. 100% of the Indian Education for All Payment; and
6. 100% of the American Indian Achievement Gap Payment; and
7. 100% of the Data for Achievement Payment; and
8. 100% of the State Special Ed "Allowable Cost" Payment (special education block grants to the district and reimbursement for disproportionate costs); and
9. 40% times Special Ed "Allowable Cost" Payment plus the state special education payments made to the district's Special Ed Cooperative.

The "Maximum budget" is calculated using:

1. 100% of the Basic Entitlement; and
2. 100% of the Per-Student Entitlement; and
3. 100% of the Quality Educator Payment; and
4. 100% of the At-Risk Student Payment; and
5. 100% of the Indian Education for All Payment; and
6. 100% of the American Indian Achievement Gap Payment
7. 100% of the Data for Achievement Payment; and
8. 100% of the State Special Ed "Allowable Cost " Payments (special education block grants to the district and reimbursement for disproportionate costs); and
9. Between 75% and 100% times State Special Ed "Allowable Cost" Payments plus the state special education payments to the district's Special Ed Cooperative, depending on the ratio of actual special education allowable costs compared to the state special education funding for 2 years prior.

Voter approval is necessary for a district to increase Over-BASE taxes from the prior year as referenced in §20-9-308, MCA, and §20-9-353, MCA. Unless Non-Voted Levy Authority

transferred to the General Fund (01) from the Transportation Fund (10), Bus Depreciation Fund (11), Tuition Fund (13), or Adult Education Fund (17)

Voting requirements vary depending on:

- The district's prior year adopted budget compared to the ensuing year BASE budget and Maximum budget;
- The amount of district taxes budgeted to fund the Over-BASE budget for the prior five years; and
- Other revenues available to fund the Over-BASE budget.

This is where the voters' help comes in. Should the board vote to reach our maximum budget through the next fiscal year there will be a vote on the levy. At the February board meeting, a resolution was passed to run a levy in both the elementary and the high school districts (The resolutions must be passed 70 days before the election even though final budget reports are not available). At the March meeting after budget reports have been received from OPI, there will be a discussion on the amount needed for each levy. If it is decided that a levy is not necessary in either district the mill levy elections can be canceled. If the decision is made to run a levy, your vote for the levy will mean we can keep our current staff and programs running as they are now. A vote against the levy can mean we would need to cut programs or staff in order to meet our budget for the year. A meeting to discuss the school budget will be held in the elementary gym on March 29th at 6 pm to answer additional questions or concerns you may have regarding school budget and finances. You may also stop in the school and visit with either Tanya Lester or Meredith Feddes to get your questions answered.

JH/HS Principal by *Cameron Barber*

I hope that everyone's new year has started off well. It is hard to believe that we are over halfway done with the school year already. The teachers, staff, and students are continually working hard at everything that they do.

With the new year here, it was time for our students to take our Maps winter benchmark. All of our students tried their best, and the results show. The students take a test in reading, language, math, and science. Across the board, we saw a majority of the student's scores go up. I have to give huge credit to all of our teachers and support staff for working so hard with our students to help them achieve this.

Along with the new year, we also reached the end of the 2nd quarter. Once again, the students worked hard, and it shows in their GPAs. In high school, 52 out of 57 students had a GPA of 3.0 or higher, and 18 of those students had a 4.0 or higher. In the Jr. High 45 out of 55 students had a GPA of 3.0 or higher, and 4 students earned a 4.0. Overall that is 87% of our students with a 3.0 or above. I also want to thank the students for their hard work and dedication to their classwork.

Absarokee hosted their annual Spelling Bee Contest. All of the students tried their best and it was a great competition. I would like to congratulate Tristan Russel for being the Absarokee School Spelling Bee Champion! Congratulations to Quinn Rosser for second place, Marshall Hull for third place, Jaycee Heskett for fourth place, and Jaylin Helbert and Dalton Kennedy for a fifth-place tie. These students will be going on to compete in the Stillwater County Spelling Bee on February 23 at Columbus Middle School gym at 7 pm. We would like to wish them all the best of luck!

The Jr. High and High school got the chance to go to Red Lodge Mountain for a ski day. We had great participation and the students had a lot of fun. Some of the students got a chance to take some lessons before they were allowed to take on the mountain. Some of them explored the entire mountain while some stayed close to the lodge. They all had a wonderful time and it was a great experience for those students that went.

The Jr. High students are also working hard on their Science Fair projects. They have been conducting their experiments. They had to come up with a question to answer, make predictions, gather data, analyze the data, and then draw a conclusion from their data. They will present their projects to the school and the public on February 23rd.

We're fortunate to work with your students every day. Thank you for allowing us to play a role in their development. Go Huskies!

Board of Trustees News by *Kayce Arthun, Board Chairperson*

Greetings from your Absarokee Board of Trustees!

As the Montana weather tries to make up its mind whether it's winter or spring, the school year is charging forward. By the time you read this, we will be near the end of the 3rd quarter sprinting towards the finish of another school year!

Your school board continues to work on keeping the school's finances on track, strategic planning for our district's future, filling positions that will be open next year and working to provide the best education possible to the students of our community.

With school finances in mind, we will be holding a Community Meeting on Tuesday, March 29th at 6:00 p.m. at the Cobblestone School. This will be an opportunity for the community to learn more about the school finances, as well as, the restrictions the district has in regards to different funds and budgeting, levies and all things finance. We encourage you to come, learn and ask questions as most likely we will be coming to you as a district on the May 3rd ballot asking you to pass a levy in both the elementary and high school districts to assist us in keeping

our current staffing levels and existing programs up and running. School finance can be confusing and often misunderstood, so please join us on March 29th or if you are unable to attend and have questions, please contact Superintendent Meredith Feddes, Clerk Tanya Lester or Board Chair Kayce Arthun. We look forward to the discussion and thank you for your consideration of support come May.

Also, on the May ballot will be two elementary trustee positions. One 3-year position and one 1-year position. **If you are interested in running for the Absarokee School Board, your Declaration of Intent and Oath of Candidacy for Trustee Candidates must be turned into Tanya Lester by 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 24, 2022.**

Strategic planning for the future of the district continues to move forward. We did not meet in February as moved the board meeting to accommodate a play in game for the boys' basketball team for district (awesome work Huskies!) and in March we will be holding our Community Meeting which has resulted from our strategic planning. **We will meet again on Tuesday, April 19 at 6:00 p.m. in the Elementary Gym to fine tune our goals, flush out our plans of action and make certain we have taken all stakeholder input into consideration.** Thank you to those who have been able to join us at these planning sessions and we encourage you to join us April 19th if you would like to add to the discussion.

We have already begun interviewing for positions that we have open from teachers retiring next school year. Thanks to teacher shortages and a lack of housing in our community this is not an easy task, but we are appreciative to the team of individuals who are working hard to assemble the best team possible for the students and staff of our district. **If you have friends in education who are looking for a new opportunity, please have them contact the school at 328-4581. Also, as we bring new teachers into our community if you have a housing opportunity that might be available, please contact the school as that is one of our biggest challenges once we hire someone.**

As we head into the final quarter of the school year, we would like to once again thank everyone who keeps our school up and running through the school year. **Thank you to our administrators, office staff, teachers, paraprofessionals, counselor, therapists, IT support, janitors, kitchen staff, bus drivers, coaches, substitute teachers and volunteers!** Without you we wouldn't be able to keep the doors open and things running smoothly and with a year that has once again seen schools closing and going online due to challenging situations, we THANK YOU for doing everything in your power to keep our students in person and in school. We appreciate each of you!

Spring also brings a ton of activities and schedule changes, so please keep checking our school calendar at <https://hgunderson6wixsite.com/absarokee-schools>. We also try to post happenings and schedule changes on our official Facebook Page "Absarokee Huskies". If you ever have a question about a posting or schedule change, please contact the school at 328-4583. We hope to see you at our spring school events and as always thank you for your support of the Absarokee school district. Go Huskies!!

Stillwater Valley FFA by Bailey Kornick, Reporter

In January, we attended round 2 of FFA Districts in Rapelje. The contest consisted of FFA Creed Speaking, Extemeranpue Speaking, and Job Interview. Logan Young placed 4th in Creed Speaking and Nila Dawson placed 3rd in Job Interview.

The JV mechanics team traveled to Lewistown on January 29 and participated in the Fergus Mechanics contest. The teams consisted of Dillon Ferster, Wyatt Kornick, Cooper Hoines, Philp Jensen, Gage Martin, Will Barnett, Brody Pelton, Tristan Russell, and Garret Ferster. The teams placed 4th and 6th with Tristen Russell placing in the top 10, placing 7th overall individually.

On February 2nd, the chapter attended round 3 of FFA Districts in Joliet. The senior mechanics' team consisted of; Trevor Zumbrun, Colt Hoines, Jacob Martin, and Dillon Fester. The SR team placed 1st. Individually Trevor placed 1st, Colt 3rd, Dillon 4th, and Jacob 10th. The JV. teams consisted of Logan Young, Will Barnett, Cooper Hoines, Phil Jensen, Garret Fester, Brody Pelton, Tristan Russell, and Jakson Heimer. The Teams placed 3rd and 6th and Tristan Russell placed in the top 10 placing 4th individually.

On February 14th, the chapter attended the Farm Business Seminar hosted by the Columbus Chapter. The team consisted of Haylee Bayer, Nila Dawson, Bailey Kornick Trevor Zumbrun, Tandy Planichek, Hattie Bayer, Saige Nye, Shayla Russell, and Keagan Sandlin. This was an all-day event, where we listened to professionals in a business field talk about their profession. We listened to an Independent Contractor for Marketing, Real Estate, Insurance, Banking about credit, and an Economics professor from MSU. Then we took a test over the five stations. The chapter placed 2nd with Bailey placing 6th and Trevor placing 7th.

Art by Matthew Mullen

High School Visual Arts -Students are exploring artistic mediums and developing their own style and self-expression. Advanced students have been practicing realistic portraiture drawing. They have deconstructed parts of the human portrait drawing process. Senior art students are also preparing artworks for the upcoming Quickdraw silent auction event in March.

Junior High Art- Students have completed their clay animal sculptures. They have started working on a painting unit.

Elementary Art- Elementary students have been working on art materials such as acrylic painting and clay sculpture. Inspiration has come from studying historical artists such as Caspar David Friedrich, Zhang Da Qian, and Pablo Picasso.

 **Say “Yes” to the Prom Dress** *by Heidi Gunderson*

Absarokee High School is planning a prom dress swap event for our local communities. If you have a prom dress that you would like to donate, please feel free to drop them off at the High School office or reach out for a pick-up plan. Our goal is for every girl to have a dress they love. Everyone is welcome to attend. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Heidi Gunderson or Nicki Reissig at the high school.

Businesses, if you'd be interested in donating to offset the cost of refreshments or advertising a product or service at this event, please contact either Heidi or Nicki at the high school. We are so thrilled to be hosting this event!

 **Spelling Bee** *by Jessica Griffin*

Absarokee Schools would like to congratulate Tristan Russel for being the Absarokee School Spelling Bee Champion! Congratulations to Quinn Rosser for second place, Marshall Hull for third place, Jaycee Heskett for fourth place and Jaylin Helbert and Dalton Kennedy for a fifth-place tie. These students will be going on to compete in the Stillwater County Spelling Bee on February 23 at Columbus Middle School gym at 7pm. We would like to wish them all the best of luck! We would also like to congratulate all of the following Absarokee Spelling Bee Participants: Quinn Rosser, Marshall Hull, Summer Braswell, Bella Riddle, Zebiah Reyes, Tristan Russell, Brody Pelton, Adrianna Labard, Dalton Kennedy, Hayden Gunderson, Dusty Williams, August Baker, Jaycee Heskett, Jaylin Helbert, Keegan Kelley, Tristen Wilcox, Molly Arthun, Savannah Heskett, Grier Smith, and Jayd Hanson.

 **Absarokee Lending Library** *by Roseanna Lohof*

Living Within a Line Drawn on the Ground

The public is invited to a presentation concerning the MDOT 2011 archaeological dig conducted south of Absarokee along Highway 78 at the Crow Indian Agency site. Senior Archaeologist Stephen Aaberg will be providing history, discovery and thoughts from the dig site and surrounding area.

Aaberg's consulting service, Aaberg Cultural Resources, was hired by the Montana Department of Transportation when the highway underwent a sectional upgrade. The project included excavation, oral history and archival research which continues today.

The presentation will take place Sunday, March 13, 2 p.m. at the Absarokee Elementary Gym. Admission is \$10 for adults and \$5 for students 17 and under. Advance admission is also available by contacting Sara Kerr at 406-321-1224. This event is a fundraiser for the Absarokee Lending Library with all proceeds going toward the library mortgage.

 **Job Shadowing/Career Exploration** *by Heidi Gunderson*

We are starting a new job shadowing program at Absarokee High School! All of our seniors will be completing two days of job shadowing in the Billings/Absarokee area. Some of our exciting opportunities are the Yellowstone Art Museum, McCabe Electric, and Physical Therapy in Motion. We are so excited about these student opportunities.

To provide our students with more opportunities, we are taking all of the juniors and seniors to Job Jamboree on March 16th in Billings. This is a huge event showcasing hundreds of employees from the greater Billings area. It is a great opportunity for students to meet with potential employers and understand how the application process works.

 **Adult Education – Quilting** *by Mary Byron*

Beginners Quilting: Sundays, March 13th, 20th and 27th from 1p – 5p

Learn all the essential of quilting or come practice with us on a beautiful 4-patch pattern. Choose your own fabrics at Cloud Nine Quilts. Taught by Jane Oltrogge. Class fee paid by Absarokee Adult Education. Class kit is \$50 including fabric, matching thread and detailed instruction book with multiple patterns and all the information a quilter needs. Stop by or call the store at 406-328-4032 to sign up.

 **Robotics** *by Heidi Gunderson*

Our high school robotics team will compete in the state tournament Saturday, March 5th in Belgrade. We are so excited to compete in person! Cheer on our Husky Robotics team!

Our elementary robotics team will begin in April. More information will come out later this month for elementary robotics.

 **National Center for Women in Technology Awards** *by Heidi Gunderson*

Monique Mondragon and Callen Gunderson have been awarded student winners of the Montana NCWIT Awards. Monique was also a winner last year. This award shows their ambition and talent in technology and STEM. Each winner receives a trophy and some Montana colleges provide them with an additional scholarship for these awards. Monique and Callen join the ranks of our former graduates and winners Maggie Howes and Rebecca Lester.

 **Close Up** *by Johna Zumburn*



THANK YOU, ABSAROKEE COMMUNITY!!

The Absarokee High School Close Up program would like to thank the Absarokee Community for their support of this amazing program. Thanks to all of you who have bought little blue coupon books, pizza kits, and students at the Workers Auction. Also, thanks to Rick, Peggy, Brian, and Mindy Young for making our workers auction a success, again. We couldn't do it without your help, time and talent. We will be heading to Washington D. C. April 9th. Again, thanks so much for your support!

 **AVAC Quick Draw and Art Auction** *by Kayce Arthun*

The Absarokee Vocational Advisory Council (AVAC) is happy to announce that the 30th Annual Quick Draw and Art Auction will be held on **Saturday, March 26th with doors opening at 5:30 p.m.** Come enjoy an evening featuring live entertainment with the American West sound of Mercedes Carroll from Bozeman, Montana and local artists from across the region. Both a silent and live auction will feature multiple art mediums; as well as, the art of several "Quick Draw" artists that will be on site the evening of the event finishing their pieces live.

If you are interested in purchasing a table, please contact Kayce Arthun at 328-7880. For tickets, go to the high school office. If you are a local artist and are interested in donating art to the auction, please contact Kayce Arthun at 328-7880.

Funds raised from the evening support scholarships for graduating seniors from Absarokee High School. The AVAC appreciates the generous support of the community for 30 years and we look forward to seeing you once again on March 26th at the Annual Quick Draw & Art Auction!

The Absarokee High School Vocational Advisory Council
presents the 30th annual **2022**



& Art Auction
Saturday, March 26th
Absarokee High School Gym

Doors Open/
Silent Auction:
5:30 pm

Entertainment:
7:00 pm

Live Auction:
8:00 pm



Tickets:
Bleacher Seats
~\$12 in advance
~\$15 at the door

Available in the
HS Office

Featuring: Mercedes Carroll

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March

2022

Absarokee Elementary | I Love to Read

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Iditarod! Help our school read 1100 books this month. We will move our dog sled along the route of the Iditarod each week with books read.	2 National Pig Day! Bring a pig to school day. Mrs. Feddes will read Give a Pig a Pancake!	3 Dr. Seuss Birthday! Read a Seuss book. Ski Day for 2-5	4 Book Face Challenge. Have an adult take a picture of you reading your favorite book and send it to the school.	5 Hats Off to Reading! Students can wear a crazy hat to school.	
6	7 Readers are Great Leaders! Dress as a Future Career.	8 Wow Words! Write a summary of your favorite book.	9 Electronic Black Out Day. No electronics today.	10 Share the Love of Reading! Read to an adult of your choosing.	11 Wearable Words! Wear a shirt you can read.	12
13	14 National Learn about Butterflies Day/ Pi Day! Research a butterfly. Pastries with Parents 2:30	15 Reading is an Adventure (Animal Prints)	16 Everything is Right Day! Nothing special here it is alright.	17 Sam I am Day! Wear Green	18 Fair Tales, Tall Tales, Superheroes! Wear something superhero and read a tall tale.	19
20	21 National Taco Day! Although it is not on a Tuesday this year.	22 Poetry Appreciation! Read or write a poem.	23 National Math Day! Games for math. Prizes for each class.	24 It's Always a good Time to Read! Read about time in some way.	25 No School! Read something you enjoy!	26
27	28 Crocs and Crazy Socks!	29 Book Color! Read a book with a Color in the title.	30 National Virtual Vacation Day! Research a place you would like to vacation.	31 Campout Day! Read in Tents	Celebrate our accomplishment! If we reach 1100 books, Mrs. Feddes let you have a snowball fight.	