



327 South Woodard Avenue – Absarokee, Montana 59001

www.absarokee.k12.mt.us

Home of the Huskies

Issue # 5

January 2021



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

Well 2020 is behind us and hopefully the difficulties with it. We are looking forward to a time we can resume normal activities, not wear the masks and enjoy people again. We are fortunate in that we continue to have low numbers in our school and this makes it possible for us to maintain in person learning and sports. The efforts of our staff, students and community is to be commended for this.

I would like to take the opportunity to share with our community the efforts of our high school principal, Mr. Tim Zumbrun. He retired at the end of 2020, after serving 33 years in the Air Force. His efforts landed him at the highest level of civilian duty as the Chief Master Sergeant. Mrs. Zumbrun and their children were instrumental in this effort as well. They kept everything going on the home front as he served overseas or spent time at guard duty. Congratulations and thank you for your service to our country.

Congratulations to our 2019-20 staff members of the year as well. Mr. Rob Yates our Agriculture Education teacher was selected by the high school students for his commitment to their learning. Mrs. Cross, our then 3rd grade teacher, was chosen by the elementary students as their educator of the year. Thanks for all you do for our students.

We have already had some national assessments cancelled as the Coronavirus Pandemic continues to keep other parts of the country in limbo. We may discover that our state assessments are cancelled in the near future if the numbers of positive cases are not reduced across the state. The state as the nation did, will not give assessments if some schools aren't participating. We are continuing to give district assessments to measure any learning regression or gaps. We are meeting in data teams to adjust students learning in order to be responsive to the needs of our students.

Ms. Heard and Mrs. Gunderson continue to work on ways for students to have college and career opportunities. They took students in grades 6-8 to Zoo Montana to learn about jobs they have available there and then the students went on a self-guided tour. There have been opportunities with colleges online and there was a Skype a Scientist call for high school students.

Our little Huskies will be spending some days in January with outdoor education. We have three ski days planned for them to explore and get some physical education in at Red Lodge Mountain. While the experience may be a bit different this year our students are excited to be participating.



JH/HS Principal *by Mr. Zumbrun*

By the time you all are reading this, it will be 2021. I probably echo the thoughts of many when I say "I hope that 2021 is better than 2020". goes better than the last. I look forward to the day when we can resume life as normal and we don't have to socially distance ourselves and wear masks all the time.

I'd like to extend my sincere appreciation to the many people from across our community who have shared so many welcome comments regarding my recent military retirement. It was a wonderful career and "part-time job". I am very blessed to have had great opportunities presented to me throughout my military career, as well as wonderful leaders and comrades who supported me along the way. In addition to my fellow service members, I also enjoyed the support of wonderful family, friends and employers. The "Holidays" is a time of thanksgiving and I am so thankful for all of these people I mentioned.

On to school stuff: The first semester will soon come to an end, concluding on January 15th. When the new semester begins, we will welcome two foreign exchange students into our school community. One is from Italy and the other hails from South Korea. We look forward to having the chance for our students and staff to get to know them and share in an exchange of learning and appreciation for cultural differences.

As a reminder, JH & HS students in grades 6-11 will be taking MAP tests beginning the week of January 18th. These assessments are important to each student and we encourage parents to help their children be well-prepared by encouraging them to get enough sleep and to eat healthy and hearty meals prior to taking the tests.

Over the course of the last month, Absarokee Schools had two separate canine inspections on campus. Inspections are designed to be a deterrent to bringing illegal substances onto campus and were performed by Interquest Canines and the Stillwater County Sheriff's Office, respectively. I am very pleased to report that nothing of concern was discovered during either inspection and I am proud of our kids for their help in keeping our campus drug free.

As I wrap up my thoughts for this newsletter, I'd like to tell you about something I was recently made aware of. It's a heartwarming example of generosity, compassion and caring. Our community recently experienced a tragedy and a young person decided to help out the family by building various hand-made items, advertising and selling them online, with the entirety of the proceeds being donated. This is just one example of the kind of stories I wish our news contained more of; an example of kindness we need more of throughout our society. I applaud this young person and appreciate the fact that someone else's day may be a bit brighter because of the difference he/she made to them. "Pay it forward" they say. This young person has done that!

FCCLA *by Carolyn Story*

"Do you have shoes in your closet, or your garage, or laying around the house that you don't even wear anymore? Or, do you have some run-down shoes that you want to get rid of? They may seem like worn-out shoes to you here in Montana, but in a third world country, they could be a game-changer." Our FCCLA chapter is collecting shoes to donate to Provision International who will get them to the people that need them. There is a collection barrel in the foyer at the high school until December 23rd.

Our District meeting will be virtual in the form of a slideshow that we can view at our convenience after December 7th. We usually elect our next year's district officers at this meeting, but this will be done online after Christmas Break. District 10 includes Laurel, Park City, Bridger, Harlowton, Columbus, Red Lodge, and Reed Point.

Stillwater Valley FFA and Shop News *by Mr. Yates*

FFA news

The Stillwater Valley FFA chapter has been busy the past few weeks. Martinson's candy sales did very well this year. Thanks to all of you who bought and supported the FFA chapter this year.

We participated at John Deere Ag days the second week of November. The following students participated in the following in-person events: Logan Young, Tysen Young, Colt Hoines, and Jacob Martin were on Mechanics Team 1 (placed 2nd in their division). Colton Young, Taytin Young, Westin Stevens, and Trevor Zumbrun were on Mechanics Team 2 (placed 2nd in their division). Nile Dawson, Tandy Planichek, Emily Routen, and McKayla Walson were on the Sales team. The team placed 2nd and Emily placed 4th in individual sales. Alexia Feddes, Keagan Sandlin, Shayla Russell, Nila Dawson, and Emily Routen were the Vet Science Team. The team placed 3rd, and Shayla placing 3rd Alexia placing 4th in individuals.

The following students participated in John Deere Ag Days virtually. Colton Young competed in Extemporaneous Speaking and Keagan Sandlin participated in Creed Speaking. The Livestock Evaluations teams consisted of; Logan Young, Alli Nobel, Amber Peterson, Ella Schlacter, Julianna Feddes, Wyatt Kornick, Haylee Baver, Alexia Feddes, Justin Heimer, Keagan Sandlin, Shayla Russell and, Bailey Kornick. The Hores Evaluations team consisted of Keagan Sandlin, Shalya Russell, and Justin Heimer. There were two Quiz Bowl teams. Team 1 consisted of Colton Young, Taytin Young, Trevor Zumbrun, MaKayla Walton, and MaKenzie Walton. Team 2 consisted of Jacob Martin, Nila Dawson, Keagan Sandlin, Kaitly Lohof, Justin Heimer, and Tandy Planichek. Team 1 placed 1st and team 2 placed 5th congratulations to both teams.

The First Round of FFA Districts was held in Joliet Virtually. In Extemporaneous Speaking; Colton Young placed 3rd and Jamie Tucker placed 5th. In Job Interview; Emily Routen placed 5th and Jamie Tucker placed 8th. Keagan Sandlin, Shayla Russell, Logan Young, and Ella Schlacter competed in FFA Creed. Logan Young was in the top 5 placing 4th.

Alexia Feddes, Shayla Russell, and Trevor Zumbrun applied for the National FFA Supervised Agriculture Experience Mini-grants. Trevor received a \$1000 grant from General Mills. Alexia's and Shayla's applications will be sent to the FFA Montana Foundation and will be judged at the state level.

In January, the Seniors will be busy filling out scholarship applications and working on their Montana FFA State Degrees. Colton Young has signed up to participate in the Torgerson's Growing our Leaders' Development Gold Conference in Billings in mid-January.

Shop news

Students have been busy finishing up their own projects for the year in their classes. My 2nd-period Auto-Cad class have been working on some great projects. This past week they have been introduced to working with Plasma Cam. Each student learned how to take a picture of their choice and download it into the cam software and then edit the picture to be cut out. They have been busy the past few days getting their final metal projects cut out on the plasma table.

BPA News *by Chad Baver*

Business Professionals of America members will be competing virtually in the Regional BPA Competition on Wednesday, January 27th. Our eight members are competing in 5 team events and 29 individual events. The Huskies will have a strong showing from these dedicated and talented young adults. BPA will also be starting to raise money for Special Olympics through a program called "Special Dots". All the proceeds from this service project will be donated to Special Olympics Montana.

Robotics News *by Heidi Gunderson*

Our high school robotics team is working on getting the robot ready for our first competition. All competitions will be remote this year. We do not have a date yet for our first competition but we are looking forward to showcasing our robot!

Career Exploration Day *by Heidi Gunderson*



Absarokee Junior High School completed a Career Exploration Day December 11 and it was a wonderful day! All students in 6th through 8th grades participated in the event. Students learned about the career and volunteer opportunities at ZooMontana in Billings. The zoo employees made a video exclusively for our students. The video discussed the education requirements and skills needed to work at a zoo.

After the video, we took students to the zoo. They were able to watch a feeding of some of the animals and see some of the workers in action! The students had a wonderful time and it was a great learning experience!

We are working on career activities for the high school students but it has been difficult this year. We are coordinating a "Skype with a Scientist" day. This entails us meeting with a scientist online to learn more about science careers. We are also hosting an online tour with Montana State University and Gallatin College in Bozeman, Montana. This occurred Tuesday, December 22nd. We have a few other "irons in the fire" that we are hopeful about but we are currently awaiting confirmation.

Counselor's Corner *by Jodi Heard*

FRESHMEN GUIDANCE APPOINTMENTS:

All freshmen will meet with Ms. Heard in January. We will review transcripts and preregister for next year's classes. Parents are encouraged to discuss what sophomore classes their student will be signing up for prior to the student's visit.

AMERICAN BOYS AND GIRLS STATE:

Boys and girls state have taught students important lessons in leadership, citizenship, sportsmanship, and helps to develop them into effective future leaders of Montana. High achieving juniors with strong leadership skill are encouraged to apply. Please contact Ms. Heard for more information.

HOBY:

Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership is an organization dedicated to training and nurturing the young leaders of tomorrow. This year's Absarokee High School representative is Tandy Planichek. She will be attending HOBY in the spring of 2021. Congratulations Tandy on receiving this year's HOBY nomination.

Visual Arts *by Matthew Mullen*

High School Beginning Studio and Advanced Studio: Students are making progress on their 4th major studio projects. One area of focus for this project is the Montana Visual Art Standard of Connecting in which they attempt to synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art. There is an online gallery of high school student artwork from this fall semester on this link. Check the Absarokee School Facebook page for the link.

Elementary: Students are learning to combine mixed media and experiment with collage, printmaking, and watercolor. Artworks created by artists such as Van Gogh and Monet are used as inspiration starting points.

Absarokee HS Food Drive *by Catherine Frazer*

During the week of November 16-20 students at Absarokee High School held a food drive. The Student Council sponsored this event to collect food for the Absarokee Food Bank. In an attempt to increase participation, the Student Council came up with the idea to have a competition. A box was placed by each teacher's classroom. Students and staff donated non-perishable food items into these boxes. The three teachers with the most food in their boxes got the "prize" of being hit in the face with banana cream pies.

A total of 628 food items were collected overall. The teachers with the most donations were Chris Gunderson, Gregg Feddes and Rob Yates. On Monday November 23 these three lucky guys were hit in the face with banana cream pies made by Keagan Sandlin. The pies were thrown by the Students of the Quarter, Hattie Baver and Brody Pelton, and by another teacher Mrs. Reissig. The entire student body watched the teachers get pied, which made for a very funny end of the day. Mr. Gunderson, Mr. Feddes and Mr. Yates were great sports.

Husky Music Notes *by Debbie Seibert*

Better late than never!! Covid restrictions did not allow appropriate recognition to be made of our Fine Arts students last year. An AWARDS Assembly was held Dec. 23 in the AHS gym where students who were due to receive honors and awards last SPRING were finally able to be recognized. Among these were several Music/Drama students. These included: "LOUIS ARMSTRONG" OUTSTANDING JAZZ MUSICIAN AWARD - Claire Hatch; "J.P. SOUSA" OUTSTANDING BAND STUDENT AWARD - Kaiya Holmquist; "DIRECTOR'S AWARD" for BAND - Jamie Tucker; OUTSTANDING CHORAL STUDENT AWARD - Mackinzie Allen/Trinity Danielson; "DIRECTOR'S AWARD" for CHORAL PERFORMANCE - Alexis Meier/Zayda Kober; "SENIOR MUSICIAN" AWARD - Breezy Williams; OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE by FEMALE for THEATER/DRAMA - Skylar Hawkins; OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE by MALE for THEATER/DRAMA - Isaac Walker; The "KAYDEN CURTIS" Just-for-the-Fun-of-It AWARD for the Fine Arts - Brent Kelley. CONGRATULATIONS to all!! Be forewarned, however, this year's BAND/CHOIR/DRAMA students are working hard to outdo last year's awards recipients!! GO HUSKIES!!

Board of Trustees Meeting *by Tanya Lester*

The Board of Trustees of School District 52 & 52C met at a regular meeting on Wednesday, November 18, 2020 at 7:00 P.M. in the Elementary Gym with the following in attendance: Diana Scollard, Donna von Nieda, Kayce Arthun, Clayton Young, Justine Dawson, Mike Pasecznyk, Superintendent Feddes, Principal Zumbrun, and Clerk Tanya Lester. Trustees Eric Esp, Terry Ekwortzel, and Joshua Royce were absent. Also present were Jessica Griffin, Joan Howe, Gregg Feddes, Trevor Zumbrun, Johna Zumbrun, Dawson Lester, Heidi Gunderson, Chris Gunderson, Jeannie Eaton, and Cameron McCormick. After standing for the pledge, Chairman Scollard recognized all visitors.

There were no agenda changes. **Young/Pasecznyk moved to approve the agenda as set. Arthun/Von Nieda moved to approve the consent agenda including the following: minutes from the October 12, 2020 regular board meeting, pay the elementary and high school bills, and approve the activity account. Chairman Scollard assumed both motions.**

Supt. Feddes gave her report. Our Continuous School Improvement Plan was completed by John Sullivan and submitted to OPI. Changes have been made in the second quarter based on the recommendations of the consultants. All e-grants have been submitted, although there will be some amendments to align with our curriculum needs. The TEAMS report has been submitted to OPI. COVID-19 has continued to be a challenge for the school. Elementary ski days are scheduled for January. The elementary has gained four students this month.

Principal Zumbrun reported the high school has gained one student while the junior high enrollment remained unchanged. The junior high and high school are facing many issues pertaining to quarantining. Twenty-two junior high students have had their second quarter schedules changed for interventions in reading fluency and comprehension. There is an additional request for an out-of-district student. Fifty-four of seventy-five students in the high school qualified for driving privileges. Junior high student of the quarter for 1st quarter is Brody Pelton and for the high school is Hattie Baver. Bob Binstock came in today to provide a drinking and driving avoidance presentation. Student Council is planning a food drive. Emily Routen was selected for District Honor Band. Both grant consultants visited the school in November. Title IX training was provided on November 10th by Marilee Duncan of attorney firm Felt-Martin. Principal Zumbrun updated the board on a number of transportation issues. Ski days have been scheduled with Red Lodge Mountain. Winter MAPS testing will be taking place in January.

Athletic Director, Chris Gunderson reported on the end of fall sports. The final week regular season was full of schedule changes. The District Volleyball Tournament went off without a hitch thanks to all those who helped. Junior high basketball has adopted some of the same rules used during the volleyball season. Winter sports have been pushed off. Practice is to begin on December 7th and games can be scheduled as early as January 2nd. District ADs will be meeting November 24th to finalize schedule.

Chairman Scollard read the Student Council report. Student Council will be hosting a food drive in November. There will be a box with each teacher's name on it, and at the end of the week the teacher with the most food will get a pie thrown in their face. The student council appreciates the communication there has been since the beginning of the year between the Board, Administration, and the Student Council.

The Curriculum/Comprehensive Committee reported that they met Nov 5th. Von Nieda thanked Supt. Feddes and the team for their work so far. The Board Goals included improving one of the criteria in the Continuing School Improvement Plan. The first criteria has been met. The committee is working on a second criteria to show continued work. The committee is impressed with consultant Wayne Callender. Arthun thanked the staff for their willingness to step up to work on these goals in the midst the COVID19 crisis.

Items in the Facilities Report included: the well at the elementary, paving both ends of high school parking lot, football sound system, carpet for the 3rd & 4th grade rooms at the elementary, asbestos abatement in the elementary, upgrade junior high hallway heating system, and sandstone issues. The well at the elementary school along with the football sound system are on this agenda. Paving at the high school, carpet at the elementary, and asbestos abatement will be added to the December agenda. The heating system upgrade in the junior high hallway will be added to the January agenda.

Young explained that he has been in discussion with Mr. Boyce about the possibility of a mobile sound system that could be used at the field and in the gym if necessary. More information is needed before a decision can be made. **Young/Arthun moved to table the contract for the football field sound system until next month to get more information. Chairman Scollard assumed the motion.**

Supt. Feddes went over the required 8000 series policies and recommendations. **Arthun/Young moved to remove current policy 8301. Motion carried. Von Nieda/Young moved to approve required policies 8200, 8225, 8425P, 8430 with no changes. All trustees voted in favor. Young/Arthun moved to approve required policies 8205, 8210, 8210B, 8301, 8425 with recommended changes. Motion carried.** Recommended policies were discussed and will be voted on at the next board meeting.

A bid was received from Aaqua Drilling to drill a well for irrigation at the elementary school. This well would decrease the amount of water that is purchased each summer to water the lawns. **Young/Arthun moved to accept the estimate from Aaqua Drilling in the amount of \$3,854.22 for a well at the elementary school. All elementary trustees voted in favor.** The estimate is attached as part of the minutes.

There is a second foreign exchange student coming to live with the same family as the one that was approved at the last meeting. The family has asked if the Absarokee High School would accept a second foreign exchange student. **Von Nieda/Pasecznyk moved to approve a foreign exchange student for the spring semester. Motion carried.** This foreign exchange student will be an out-of-district student. There is also another out-of-district student from Columbus requesting approval. Supt. Feddes recommended approval of both applications. **Pasecznyk/von Nieda moved to approve out of district forms on both high school students. All trustees voted in favor.**

In the Sports Policy Update, there was discussion regarding possible winter sports proposals. The board gave AD, Chris Gunderson, the Board's ideas to take to the district meeting. Some of the issues that concerned the Board were busses, bus drivers, and class time. There was a great deal of discussion about issues pertaining to COVID-19. Some students and staff members have tested positive. Many have been out due to contact tracing. The elementary is going to do a trial of on-line learning the week of Thanksgiving. There is some thought that athletes may need a couple of practices before returning to games after quarantining. The Board felt that it should be left to the coach's discretion to decide if a player is ready to play, but the policy should be in the player contract. Virtual learning may be required if more than 4 staff members are out in either school building due to the lack of substitute teachers. There was discussion about what to do if an administrator was unable to be in the building. The Board expressed that making every attempt to stay open for in-person classes is the best for students.

MTSBA is changing voting methods between meetings due to COVID19. It is necessary that the board agrees to vote electronically. **Von Nieda/Young moved to allow Chairman Scollard to place an electronic vote per Article XII – Conducting Business Through Electronic Means. Motion carried.**

In public comment, Dawson Lester asked the school to provide supervision in the weight room for an hour from 6:30 AM to 7:30 AM Monday through Friday. Joan Howe spoke about a friend of her son's that was killed by self-asphyxiation and the need for education about this issue in Absarokee Schools. With no further business, **Young/Pasecznyk moved to adjourn at 8:45 P.M. All trustees voted in favor.**

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BOXHOLDER

TRUSTEE POSITIONS OPEN

The following board positions will be open on the Absarokee School Board District 52 & 52C for the May 4, 2021 school election: Two 3-year terms on the elementary board, one 3-year term on the high school board in the Fishtail District, and one 3-year term on the high school board in the Nye District. The deadline for filing is Thursday, March 25, 2021 at 4:00 P.M. Forms may be picked up from Tanya Lester, Business Manager at the high school office and returned to the same. Elections will be held on May 4, 2021 at the following locations: Absarokee Elementary Gym, Roscoe Community Center, Fishtail School, and Nye Fire Hall.
If you have any questions, please contact Tanya Lester at 328-4583.

VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINE

If you are not currently registered to vote, you must be registered by Monday, April 5th in order to vote in the May 4th school election. Registration forms can be picked up at the Absarokee High School office or Stillwater Clerk & Recorder office in Columbus.