



School District of Altoona

"Home of the Railroaders"

RAILS REVIEW

SPRING • 2021

SUPERINTENDENT MESSAGE

Dear community members,

At the time of writing this greeting, we have seen a significant improvement in the health of our community. This gives us hope that we are on the way to recovery from this incredible challenge we have been facing, not just in schools but in our greater community.

This feeling of hope is causing us to cast our eyes forward, beyond conversations about hand-sanitizer, physical spacing, and contact tracing. It's funny to think about things that we miss that, perhaps, we took for granted, like a warm handshake with a new introduction, getting to high-five our students when they come to school, and connecting with parents and community members when we come together for athletics, concerts, or plays.

We have learned a lot through this year. What we have learned will undoubtedly change the way we look at education in the future. While we know that virtual learning is not a preferred way of learning for many students, there are some who have thrived in that environment. We are in the planning stages now to develop programming that will allow families a virtual learning option next year and beyond.

Additionally, having missed so much time linking with our community, we have begun planning a community event that will allow us to connect with stakeholders from across our community. This will be a half-day facilitated event that will help us understand the vision for the future of Altoona and what we can do as a school system to help build that future. If this is an event you believe you will be interested in, I encourage you to **Save the Date for Saturday, May 1st**. We are looking forward to a meaningful and engaging event that will springboard us into planning for the future of the School District of Altoona.

Tomorrow's community is in our schools today! Walking through our halls are tomorrow's business owners, elected officials, healthcare workers, manufacturers, and community leaders. We understand what an honor, but also what a responsibility, we have in preparing our students to be tomorrow's community.

Today, Altoona is a great place to live, learn, work, and play. How incredible to know we can make tomorrow even better. We in the School District of Altoona look forward to sharing this opportunity with you.



Heidi Eliopoulos

Dr. Heidi Eliopoulos
Superintendent

OUR VISION:
Engage • Equip • Empower

OUR MISSION:
"Offering large
school opportunities
with a small
school approach."

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www.altoona.k12.wi.us

RAILROADERS IN ACTION



ALL CONFERENCE CHOIR

Seniors, Madison Doney and Ashley Stashek; junior, Reagan Conklin; and freshmen, Olivia Everson, Jayla Saenwong, and Kalie Strehlau have been selected as Cloverbelt All-Conference Choir student members! They represent the top student musicians from 15 Cloverbelt schools.

“In a year unlike any other in our student’s lives, it’s great to recognize the talent and dedication of our students here at Altoona. These six young ladies represent the current and future of our program, and I’m proud of them for this accomplishment. Unfortunately, they won’t have the excitement of performing as a member of the Cloverbelt Honor Choir this year, but they all still deserve this distinction.” Mr. Ranek, Vocal Music Teacher, AHS

STUDENT SHOWCASE

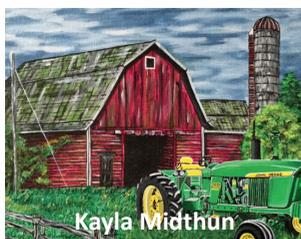
Selected by a panel of staff judges from across the district, congratulations goes out to the AHS Fall Student Showcase winners mentioned below. View the art and read the essay at <http://bit.ly/2NUj9Gx>.

First Place: Olivia Midthun, artwork

Second Place: Kalin Thunstrom, artwork

Third Place (Tie): Elizabeth Weiss, writing; Anna Nelson, photography

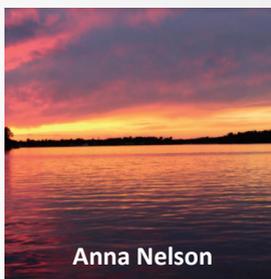
Honorable Mentions: Angie Allard, Delaney Anczak, Tatiana Hernandez, Kali Strehlau, and Xeng Her



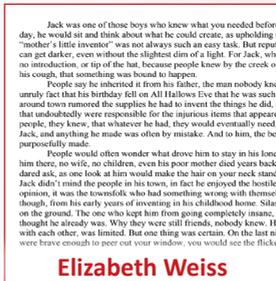
Kayla Midthun



Kalin Thunstrom



Anna Nelson

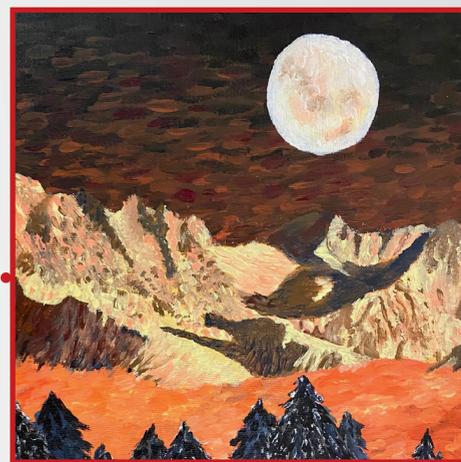


Elizabeth Weiss



THE RESULTS ARE IN!

Two of our own, teachers Colleen Chmelik and Lauren Lierman, took the #2 and #3 spots in Volume One’s “Best Of the Chippewa Valley” Best Teacher/ Professor category. Selected by you, and we agree, they represent the best of the best.



PABLO CENTER EXHIBITION

Now through April 25, visit this year’s “Everything You Can Imagine Is Real: An Exhibition of High School Artwork.”

This annual exhibition features artwork from 52 area high school students, including AHS, and is available virtually at: www.pablocenter.org/visual-art/virtual-exhibits/high-school-art-exhibit-2021/

4K REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN

by Laura Trachsel, Altoona 4K Coordinator

You are invited to participate in the Altoona school district 4K Program at our new Early Education Center, located at 754 Bartlett Avenue, Altoona. Our 4 year old Kindergarten program is an enriched, play-based program designed to prepare your child for their educational career. We provide an enriched curriculum that provides school readiness skills, social emotional development, and school expectations. We know that our children learn best through play and provide age appropriate activities in all areas of development. We are the only 4K program connected with our school district, we work closely with the Elementary staff to make this a simplified transition to Kindergarten, and our program is provided at no cost. **Transportation options are available.**



Transportation is provided to/from childcare centers located within district boundaries.

Our 4K program is a half day program (morning and afternoon options) that runs four days a week. It's a program

designed for all children who live in the Altoona school district who will be four years old by September 1, 2021. Four year old children who have been accepted for open enrollment will also be eligible to participate: <https://www.altoona.k12.wi.us/parents/open-enrollment>.

4K Enrollment is completed online. Please visit our website to complete the necessary paperwork: <https://www.altoona.k12.wi.us/parents/registration>. If you do not have access to complete the required online forms, we will be able to provide online access at the Elementary School for you.

While enrolling online, we require the following forms to be uploaded:

- Original Birth Certificate (we verify the information and return it to you)
- Proof of Residency (mortgage documents or utility bill with your name and address on it)
- Immunization Records
- Other important documents if applicable (IEP, court documentation, etc.)

If you are unable to upload the required documents, please bring the above listed forms to the Altoona Elementary School



office, located at 157 Bartlett Avenue, between the hours of 8:30 A.M. and 2:00 P.M., before Friday, May 28th, to complete the enrollment process. Contact Shannon Ross at 715-839-6050 to coordinate a time to come into the Elementary School office.

We encourage you to take advantage of Altoona 4K! If you have questions, please contact Laura Trachsel, Altoona 4K Coordinator, at: ltrachsel@altoona.k12.wi.us. Please pass this information on to others who may not have received it. We want all Altoona families with four year olds to be aware of this exciting opportunity!

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL UPDATE

by Mary Begley, Interim Principal

It's hard to believe we are entering the last part of the school year! Kudos to families, staff and students for working hard to keep us in school by sanitizing, masking and practicing social distance protocols. Throughout the school year we have had many new and unique experiences. From arrival to dismissal and everything in between, we have made adjustments and created opportunities for our students to thrive.

Part of our Altoona Elementary School vision that helps students thrive is engaging them in several developmental areas. Students have had opportunities to engage in academic learning as well as activities to enhance their social and emotional development.

One activity we celebrate to enhance their social development is the 100th day of the school year. Students enjoy activities that involve the number 100. Kindergarteners wear crowns that say, "I'm 100 days smarter." Other students played math games and did 100 jumping jacks! It was a fun and busy day!

Thank you for supporting our students and our community.



MIDDLE SCHOOL UPDATE

by Steven T. Buss, Middle School Principal

PERSEVERANCE IN ACTION

While what school looks like has been very different this year, the work our staff has done and continues to do to make the learning experience for your child the very best it can be is unwavering. Whether your child has been learning in the hybrid model or from home in the virtual model, we still see, and are proud of, the strides they are making.

While having students split their learning between school and home has challenged our teachers to rethink how they teach, the opportunities they are offering your child are still amazing.

Beyond the classrooms, we are still extremely excited to see our sports and other activities as viable options for our students. Speaking of options, two new clubs were recently created for our students. Creative Writing with Ms. Kassera and Weightlifting with Mr. Martin are two additional options any student in grades 6-8 can enjoy.

Even during these interesting times, our staff and students remain committed to staying connected with the community the very best we can. Our 6th grade

students Care Crow project, and their cards for shut-ins project, were huge hits. We didn't let anything get in the way of being able to recognize our Veteran's. On Veteran's Day we filled the halls with individual flags and students added a personal note recognizing a veteran or expressing their thanks.

Through the challenges this year has brought, we have found many positives. During the days our students are here at school, our teachers are able to provide more individual attention than maybe ever before. Based on our discipline data, our students are doing an amazing job at following our school expectations. Most importantly, with the help of everyone, we have been able to stay safe and keep our doors open this entire school year.

While we have already been looking ahead planning for next school year, very soon you will see information coming home regarding registration for next year. Once you receive this information, which will come home with your child, we ask that you complete and return it as soon as possible. Please reach out to us with any questions regarding these materials when you receive them.



We greatly appreciate the work your child has put in this year to be successful. In addition, we thank you for the extra effort needed from you as parents this year to help guide them on the right path.

Without a doubt there have been additional burdens and challenges we all have had to shoulder. Thank you for the huge part you play to help your child to be successful and all of us at AMS safe. Together with you as parents, we will continue to make the rest of this school year the very best.

INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL UPDATE

by Andrea Steffen, Intermediate School Principal

We are officially into our second semester of school! In the month of January, our students met their "kindness" goal, and we celebrated this on the 8th. Our next behavior goal focus was respect. Students met this goal mid-February and celebrated school-wide on the 19th. Students also have an opportunity to walk with or have lunch with Donut, the Altoona PD therapy dog, and Donut is indeed in high demand.

In January we welcomed some new faces into our school. In addition to several new students who moved to our district, we've welcomed back a number of students who were virtual for the first semester. We are also pleased to welcome Mrs. Jessica Bucki, our new Administrative

Assistant, in the front office. While we are sad to see Mrs. Gilmartin go, we are happy that we still see her smiling face and hear her awesome Australian accent periodically as she just moved to the high school.



Parent Teacher Conferences were February 23rd and 25th. We were above 95% attendance. Thank you for attending virtually!

We had to figure out some safety measures for trading cards, bringing in treats, and having a Valentine's party, and we were able to do so. In a time when so much has been different for kids, it was nice to be able to continue this celebration.

While immigration, mysteries, and social issues were just a few subjects recently studied, fifth graders were especially excited to apply their understanding of coordinates by applying these concepts when coding our CUE robots.

THE WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY & HOW OF SPECIAL EDUCATION – PART 2

by Katie King, Altoona Elementary School Special Education Teacher

The second part of an ongoing series of information on special education services for students is explaining what special education is. To review, the purpose of this series is to give the reader a basic overview of the program, which can often be confusing, misunderstood, overgeneralized, and stereotyped.

Special education is a service. In the past, when the term special education was used, a special place came to mind. People may think of a room, a school or a separate place to which children with disabilities went to receive different and special education. It is important to note that this notion has changed over time. It is not limited to a specific location. Rather, special education is a portable service that can be brought directly to an individual child. It is part of their general education. Special Education is a system of supports to help the student learn the general education curriculum.

The legal definition under IDEA 2004 of the term “special education” is “specially designed instruction, at no cost to the child’s parents, to meet the needs of a student with a disability” (20 U.S.C. 1401 [25]). To explain further, special education is individualized instruction designed to meet the unique needs of individual students. This may require a student to have accommodations or modifications to their classwork. Accommodations are adaptations that give greater access to the curriculum and do not alter or lower standards. Modifications are changes to the curriculum that do alter expectations.

As you learned in the last article, there are 12 areas that a student might meet eligibility for special education services. Some children may have difficulty learning, behaving or physically accessing general education, and because of such disabilities, need individualized supports to help them build their skills and abilities to reach their full potential in school.

IDEA 2004 is a law which guarantees all students with disabilities have access to free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). Each of these terms is defined below:

FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION

In order to understand FAPE, it is useful to consider each term separately.

FREE

Free means that all students with disabilities have the right to attend public school and that the supports, aids, services, and accommodations and modifications necessary to meet their unique needs will be free to them, paid for at public expense.

APPROPRIATE

Appropriate means that all students with disabilities must be provided the assistive technology, supports, aids, services, and accommodations and modifications that allow them to participate in both academic and nonacademic activities, and that they are able to make progress in their learning over time.

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Special Education for students with disabilities is guaranteed in any public school setting.

LEAST RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT

LRE means that, to the maximum extent appropriate, a school district must educate any student with a disability in the regular classroom with appropriate aides and supports, alongside peers without disabilities, in the school they would attend, if they didn’t have a disability.

To summarize, special education is individualized instruction designed to meet the learning needs of students with disabilities in order to give them access to general education. Therefore, special education is a part of general education and should be thought of as a system of support to help a child learn along with their general education peers.



Care Closet

While the Care Closet remains closed to the public, we know there are significant needs. We have put a process in place for our families to let us know what they need. Please see our webpage to access our request forms:

<https://www.altoona.k12.wi.us/parents/care-closet>

HIGH SCHOOL UPDATE

Welcome to Spring! This should arrive in your mailbox shortly after our students have taken the ACT test on March 10th, and the end of third quarter is just around the corner on March 26th. Please make sure to check in with your children and them how their classes are going. Are they getting the grades they feel they have earned? Do they need additional help?

As we wrap up three quarters of learning in a global pandemic, we could not be more proud of our students. They have adapted to hybrid learning, Covid protocols, completely modified athletic and club activities, while keeping a positive attitude. Railroader Nation is as strong as ever.

Our goal has been to give our students as many opportunities as possible during this unique year. To that end, we continue to work on how to provide a junior/senior Prom on April 24th, and are eagerly planning a May 28th Graduation. While we don't know what the remainder of the year will look like, we know that if we keep focusing on helping our students learn and grow we will be able to finish strong.

Going forward, please look for the information in this newsletter on the Altoona High School's switch to a trimester system. We look forward to a schedule that will allow our students to focus on deep learning in five classes at a time. Note: your student and you should have received emails containing this information as well.



TRANSITION TO TRIMESTER SCHEDULE AT AHS

The Altoona High School Leadership Team consisting of teachers from different departments, counselors, and administrators have recommended that starting with the 2021-22 school year the building switch to a trimester schedule. We researched many schools that currently offer trimester schedules including Bloomer, Stanley-Boyd, Elkhorn, and Wisconsin Rapids as well as relevant research on student schedules. We are making this decision based on the following goals:

1. Maintain the total minutes of instruction for each course
2. Decrease the number of courses a student is taking at one time to increase the focus on learning
3. Decrease the number of students teachers are working with at each term
4. Decrease the stress and mental health pressures caused by managing school, extra-curricular activities, and work
5. Allow students more opportunities for remediation during the school year
6. Allow students more opportunities to explore elective courses including dual credit opportunities

Trimester Plan:

- Daily schedule of five periods of 70 minutes, plus intervention time
- Students will take 5 courses as opposed to the 7 courses under current schedule
- Year is divided up into three trimesters
 - » Fall - September to late November
 - » Winter - November to early March
 - » Spring - March to June
 - » There is a significant benefit that the year long schedule will align with the athletic seasons; in addition, finals will not come shortly after winter break.

The trimester system offers the following advantages:

- Fewer classes for students and teachers to focus on
- Teachers have less students at any one time allowing for more personalized feedback and relationship building
- Schools report an increase in positive school culture and a decrease in student discipline issue
- Fewer transitions throughout the day, slower "pace" to the day
- More time for hands on learning and activities in a 70 minute period
- Increased opportunities for students to make up courses they struggle in. Example: Algebra 1 students who struggle with the first trimester can retake that course during the winter trimester then move on during the spring trimester
- More opportunities for electives with an extra 0.5 credit available each year

As we proceed developing the trimester schedule, we are addressing any concerns or questions. The counseling department is currently working with students to select courses for the 2021-22 school year. As always, student enrollment will drive what courses are offered which will lead to the development of the master schedule.

Please take a moment to read the FAQ sheet on page 7. Please feel free to contact me directly with any questions. We will continue to update you as we go through the transition to the trimester schedule with the goal of improving the Altoona High School learning environment.

TRIMESTER FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What will change for my child?

- Five 70 minute class periods each day
- Same teachers each day for 12 weeks
- Three 12-week terms in a year, 3 Report Cards
- 2.5 credits per trimester, 7.5 credits per year (up from 7)

Why Change?

- Developing deeper relationships with our students
- Giving more effective and timely feedback on assignments
- Providing more opportunities to students
- Providing extended class periods for more in depth and hands on learning
- Allow more opportunities for remediation during the school year

What is the difference between a trimester schedule and the current semester schedule?

Students will take 5 different classes for each of 3 trimesters. Classes will be 70 minutes in length and will meet for approximately 12 weeks. Currently, students have 7 classes for 16 weeks. Students earn 2.5 credits per trimester and 7.5 credits per year. Currently, students earn 3.5 credits per semester and 7 credits per year.

Are there other schools that have implemented trimesters from which we can learn?

Yes. Trimester schedules have been in place at many schools for many years around the country. Locally Bloomer, Stanley-Boyd and Chetek have offered trimesters for years and are very happy with the results.

Which courses will meet for one trimester, two trimesters and three trimesters?

The general rule is current one semester courses will meet one trimester, current year long (two semester) classes will meet two trimesters, and band and music will meet three trimesters.

What impact will trimester schedules have for students that struggle?

Students will be allowed to re-take courses during the school year. Also, they will only have five classes to prepare for on a daily basis.

What impact will trimesters have on AP courses?

Every effort will be made to schedule AP courses fall and winter trimester which will increase the number of hours of study before the exam. Additionally AP students will have an opportunity to take an "AP study hall" spring trimester to prepare for the exams.

How will credits be determined?

A half credit (.5) will be earned for each trimester course. Students will earn 7.5 credits per year.

Is there a concern for the potential gap in instruction that will occur if a student has a course first (Fall) trimester then has the second half of the course third (Spring) trimester?

Studies show that "gapping" did not result in loss of retention with the students at the schools who have implemented the trimester schedule. Comparing students who took a course in sequential terms with those that took courses Fall and Spring terms netted no measurable differences. Furthermore, comparing the GPA's of the students that had 1-credit courses for two trimesters in any combination (1-2, 2-3, 1-3) were substantially identical.

Is it true that there will be less minutes of instruction in the trimester format?

No. Students will actually receive more instructional time in classes each week. Students will receive 350 minutes of instruction each day (70 minutes X 5 classes). Under the pre-Covid schedule students attended 329 minutes of classes (47 minutes x 7 classes). Over the course

of a ½ credit class under trimesters students will have 4200 minutes of class (70 min x 60 days) as opposed to a semester class being 4,230 minutes of class (47 min x 90 days); however these are essentially equal do to the minute or two it take teenagers to settle in each day.

What are the disadvantages of the trimester schedule?

Master scheduling is complex. Students receive a new schedule each trimester although many students view this as a positive. Music courses also face the challenge of playing for a 70 minute period and it disrupts their concert schedule. The administration is committed to working with the music and guidance department to overcome these challenges.

How will a trimester affect athletic eligibility?

While this is still being finalized, trimesters actually more closely align with the athletic seasons. The six week midterm, and end of trimester grades will be used to determine eligibility for participation.

What is next in the process?

Administrators and staff will study instructional methods and review the existing curriculum for scope and sequence. A new master schedule will have to be created. Policy and procedures will need to be revised (i.e. parent teacher conferences, athletic eligibility, attendance policy, etc.) We will continue to communicate with parents, students, and stakeholders.

Our livestream athletics & events are FREE.

Alert!

We will NEVER ask for a credit card to view our livestreams. Spammers will.

ALTOONA

Spam alert! Our livestreams to athletic and other events are always free. You will never be asked to enter a credit card to view our event-streams.

Please be sure to only use the livestream links accessible from RAILS TV or our Facebook page.

WINTER SPORTS RECAP



GIRLS BASKETBALL

Head Coach: Michelle Peplinski | Instagram/Twitter: @AltoonaGBB

The girls basketball program began their season with a new defensive system, new offensive system and new Head Coach, Michelle Peplinski. The JV team finished the season 9-8, with many of the games the team left them with only 6 or 7 players due to injuries/protocols. A notable win for JV was on the road vs. perennial powerhouse program, La Crosse Aquinas! The battle they brought to that game will serve them well in their future mindset for being able to beat any team.

As a Varsity, our overall season record was 10-12. The start of the season with the first 12 games was with an overall win-loss record of 4-8, but the team finished the next half going 6-4. This late surge earned them a 4-seed for the WIAA Tournament & a home court game vs. 5-seed Ellsworth where the team had an impressive 19 pt win. After which, the girls earned a 1 point upset of the 1-seed New Richmond. Having been beat by New Richmond earlier in the season, this upset was an additional testament to the improvement as a team. The season ended in an excellent back and forth battle that resulted in a 1pt loss to 3-seed Somerset in the Regional Final.

A big congratulation to Averie Varsho with her career-high night against Ellsworth in the first round of regionals. Averie set a new school record for points in a single game, scoring 37.

All-Conference Cloverbelt Selection:

1st Team: Averie Varsho (2021)

2nd Team: Alyssa Wirth (2024)

RAW WRESTLING (ALTOONA, REGIS CO-OP)

Head Coach: Shawn Albee

This year's season has brought a lot of challenges which were different from any other year. As a team we rose to the occasion, adapted and conquered for the love of the sport. We couldn't be more proud of our wrestlers. This year our team was the biggest we have ever had with 19 wrestlers. They gave their all during practice and at meets. We ended the season 7-3 turning a lot of heads giving our athletes recognition well deserved! With the opposition of only one dual match a week and no weekend tournaments these kids used every minute they had to train for end of season tournaments ahead. The RAW team excelled individually at regionals with 4 champions (Payton Kostka, Chase Kostka, Brayden Albee, Caden Weber), as well as 2nd as a team. In addition Deaglan O'Connell and Noah Knowblock were also sectional qualifiers. At Sectionals Payton Kostka took 1 st place, and as a team we took 5 th place. At the state tournament in Adams/Friendship Peyton Kostka took 3rd place, wrestled tough and closed out his high school career. Years ago when the program restarted, Peyton was our only wrestler and this year he was the leader of our 19, pretty amazing career for him, congratulations! We are certainly looking forward to next year's season with a growing team in numbers and experience.

ECA STARS HOCKEY

Head Coach: Tom Bernhardt | Twitter: @ECA_STARS

ECA Stars returned to the 2021 State Girls Hockey Tournament this season with an OT win over Wisconsin Valley Union. They skated in the state semifinals on Wednesday, February 17th against University School of Milwaukee. The Stars fought hard, but came up just short of the WIAA State Championship game, losing 0-1. Their overall season record was 11 wins, 5 loses and 1 tie. Congratulations to Alesha Smith receiving the Wisconsin Prep Hockey Jessie Vetter Award this season!

All State 1st Team: Alesha Smith

Big Rivers All Conference Team: Alesha Smith (Goalie, 2022)

BOYS BASKETBALL

Head Coach: Paul Henrichs | Facebook: @altoonabo

The program consisted of 4 teams; Varsity, JV, C-Team Red and C-Team White. All of our teams made the most out of the season, having improved in each game. C-Team White for example had lost earlier in the season to Menomonie, but came back to win. The Varsity Railroaders finished with an overall record of 16-8 along with a D2 Regional Championship. This makes Altoona Boys Basketball back to back Regional Champs!

All-Conference Cloverbelt Selection:

Co-Players of the Year and 1st Team: Brayden Turk ('21)

2nd Team: Evan Moss ('21), Evan Peterson ('22)

Honorable Mention: Blend Sabani ('22)

DANCE

Head Coach: Sarah Winkelmann

The Altoona Dance Team has done an incredible job navigating a strange season. The small but mighty team of 4 dancers, performed at one football game and several basketball games during the 2020/2021 season. These were the only opportunities to perform in front of an audience this season. Despite all the obstacles, the team constantly placed in competitions. There was only one in-person competition this year at River Falls High School and the team placed 3rd for Varsity Jazz and tied for 2nd in Varsity Pom. Senior Morgan Waters also took home 1st place for her Varsity solo. A virtual competition at East Troy High School, the team placed 2nd in Varsity Jazz and 3rd in Varsity Pom. Most recently the team competed virtually at UW-Stevens Point and received 3rd place for both Varsity Pom and Varsity Jazz. Still to come, they will compete at regionals on March 20.

RAM HOCKEY (ALTOONA, BLOOMER, MCDONNELL, REGIS CO-OP)

Head Coach: Nick Stirmel | Instagram/Twitter: @weareramhockey

RAM Hockey went 8-11 overall, but had clear improvement to make a huge push in the playoffs. To get to the sectional finals, the team earned an upset of fourth-seeded West Salem in Round 1 before eliminating the top-seeded Baldwin-Woodville Blackhawks in the sectional semis. The Sectional Final game marked RAM's first appearance since 2013. Regarding the Sectional Final game, Coach Stirmel commented, "it's tough. We knew coming in that we were coming into a tough goalie, an all-conference goaltender. We knew we had to put up a lot of shots, a lot of opportunities. I thought we did that really well. Unfortunately, we just didn't get that last one to fall our way." "The last three games have been hands down the best hockey we've played all year. They did everything they could. It just didn't go our way. I'm definitely proud of them."

All-Conference Middle Border Selection for Altoona:

First Team: Drew Goettl (2021) Regis

Honorable Mention: Evan Gustafson (2023) Altoona

A MESSAGE FROM THE ATHLETICS DEPARTMENT

by Elissa Upward, Athletics & Activities Director

In the aspects of an athletic program - the hiring of coaches, scheduling contests, compliance of our programs - all fall under the role of the Athletics and Activities Director. The foremost responsibility and commitment, however, is to ensure that student athletes are provided with a safe, inclusive learning environment that leaves them with a positive experience; an experience that helps develop their athletic ability, ensure personal growth and academic achievement in preparation for life.

For Altoona student athletes, life skills are taught in and out of season. Time management, respecting others, communication, hard work - all attributes that are enhanced through participating in organized team sports. Add in facing the challenges of a global pandemic, these same student athletes could have easily thrown in the towel. Instead, when faced with adversity, our student athletes have shown strength and resiliency.

After a loss in the fall playoffs, a senior captain addressed her team with words that I will never forget: "I'm proud of us - - and I'm happy we were able to play this season." Knowing her passion for the game, knowing that every member of the team wanted to compete and wanted to win...the captain told her team that she was proud and grateful to play.

In the past few months, our student athletes have cultivated an attitude of determination, hard work and an ability to overcome. They have instilled pride in our school and in our community. I am certainly proud of all they have done and all that they continue to do. Thank you student athletes for showing all of us what it means to be a Railroader.

CONGRATULATIONS to the following student athletes:

WIAA Scholar/Athlete: Evan Moss, Morgan Dekan

Cloverbelt Scholar/Athlete: Averie Varsho, Connor Camlek



SPRING ATHLETICS UPDATES

HIGH SCHOOL START DATES

April 19th
Track & Field
Softball
Baseball
Boys Golf

April 26th
Girls Soccer

May 3rd
Boys Tennis

MIDDLE SCHOOL START DATE

April 6th
Girls Soccer
Boys Tennis
Track & Field

ATHLETIC MEDIA FOLDER

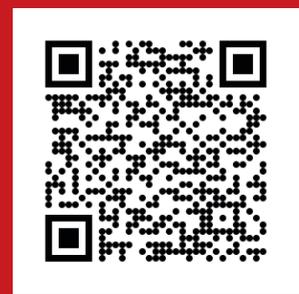


Photos by Chris Colbert are posted to our website and can be accessed by the QR Code.

ATHLETIC DIRECTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Elissa S. Upward
Athletics & Activities Director
eupward@altoona.k12.wi.us
Phone: 715-839-6031 ext. 416
Fax: 715-839-7334

ATHLETIC CALENDAR



Athletic calendar can also be found on our school website by clicking on the "Athletics" and the "Athletic Calendar" tabs.

Due to COVID-19, the athletic calendar will be a working document. Please keep this in mind as we navigate through changes.

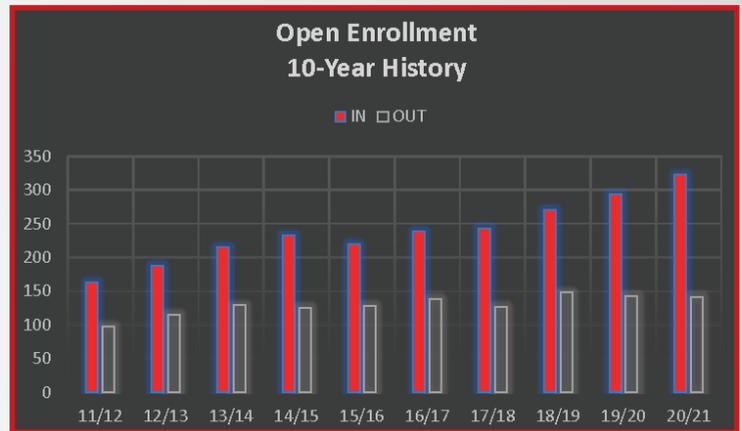
SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ALTOONA “A DISTRICT OF CHOICE”

by Joyce Orth, Communications Coordinator

Public school open enrollment has been an option for Wisconsin families for 15 years and the School District of Altoona has been a popular choice for families since the very beginning. There’s something about our “large school opportunities, with a small school approach” that has resonated with families over the years making our district a top pick.

In September, 2020, we had 323 students open enrolled into our district, compared to 141 resident students that were open enrolled to another district, a difference of 182 students.

This impacts the district’s revenue positively. Business manager, Mike Markgren provided this overview of the budget impact. “Open Enrollment has provided the District with a continually growing net revenue stream. The positive gap has widened from just under \$600,000 in 2015/16 to over \$1,400,000 in 2019/20 and a projected \$1,550,000 in the current year (2020/21). The trend is expected to continue in 2021-22 at a net of \$1,700,000 based on



historical enrollment trends cast forward. It is important to note that this revenue does not affect our State General Aid, nor does it raise our local property taxes.”

See answers to some frequently asked questions on the next page.

We recently heard from some of our open enrolled families, and here’s what they had to say about our District.

THE STOKKE FAMILY

“My husband Brad and I both grew up in small communities. We bought a home in an area we love before we had our two boys. We researched the schools in the area and decided Altoona would best fit our needs. Our boys are in 8th grade and 5th grade and have developed life-long relationships. Our son Bennett had knee surgery a few weeks ago, and the school has been so accommodating as we were getting him ready to go back to school. The football coach and school counselor even came by to drop off some finals and see how we were doing. This district goes above and beyond to make sure the students and families are taken care of. We look forward to watching our boys grow and develop over the rest of their middle school/high school years in the Altoona school district. GO RAILS!”

-Megan Stokke



THE OLSON FAMILY

“Open enrolling our child in the Altoona school district was the best decision. We once thought smaller districts had less to offer. We were so wrong! In addition to the core curriculum, our 4th grader is learning Spanish, experiencing hands-on Tech Ed, and is exposed to more advanced technology than in our former, much larger district. We still cannot believe how much Altoona has to offer. We love how much the Altoona School District communicates with parents! And if we have questions, it is easy to reach out and hear back from administration. We no longer hear our child say she is bored in school.”

-Michelle Olson

OPEN ENROLLMENT FAQs

What is Open Enrollment?

The inter-district public school open enrollment program allows parents to apply for their children to attend public school in a school district other than the one in which they reside.

Who can apply?

Any Wisconsin resident in 4K to grade 12 may apply to attend a nonresident school district under the open enrollment program. However, a child may transfer to a nonresident school district for early childhood education or 4K only if the child's resident school district offers the same type of program and only if the child is eligible for that program in the resident school district.

When can parents apply?

The regular open enrollment application period for the 2021-22 school year began on February 1, and ends at 4:00 pm on April 30, 2021.

How can parents apply?

Our open enrollment landing page includes a link to our grade-level and program space limits, program brochure, and important dates for this application cycle, as well a link to the online application portal. Please start here: <https://www.altoona.k12.wi.us/parents/open-enrollment>

AIS PRINCIPAL SELECTED AS 2021 HERB KOHL EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION PRINCIPAL LEADER

In 2016, the Herb Kohl Foundation first added the Principal Leadership Award, and this year, Altoona Intermediate School principal, Ms. Andrea Steffen has been selected as one of only 16 principals statewide to receive the award! In recognition, Ms. Steffen and Altoona Intermediate School will each receive a \$6,000 grant from the Herb Kohl Foundation.



Leadership Award recipients are recognized for setting high standards for instruction, achievement and character, and creating a climate to best serve students, families, staff and community.

"Ms. Steffen is an extraordinary leader who has changed educational outcomes for students. She is deserving of this award, and I am grateful that Senator Kohl's selection team sees her the way we do." Dr. Heidi Eliopoulos

About the Program & Award

The purpose of the Herb Kohl Principal Leadership program is to recognize and support administrative leadership and support Wisconsin school principals in pursuit of their unrealized goals for their schools or professional development. Twelve public school principals and four religious and independent school principals/administrators are selected for a Leadership Award. The 16 recipients and their schools each receive \$6,000 grants from the Herb Kohl Educational Foundation.

FREE MEALS YOUR PARTICIPATION

HELPS ALL RAILROADER FAMILIES

HERE'S HOW:



MORE MEALS SERVED =
MORE SCHOOL FUNDING =
MORE STUDENTS SERVED

+ LOWER YOUR GROCERY BILL
+ REDUCE STRESS OF MEAL
PLANNING & PREP

FEED YOUR KIDS & HELP ALL
RAILROADER FAMILIES!

THROUGH JUNE 2021:

TUESDAY'S & THURSDAY'S
4:30-6 PM
AMS MAIN ENTRANCE
1903 BARTLETT AVE

LET'S BE FRIENDS



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**PLEASE FOLLOW US, LIKE,
AND COMMENT!**

School District of Altoona
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SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ALTOONA

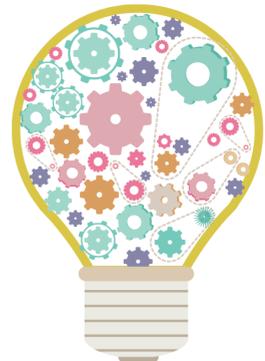
**SHAPING OUR FUTURE
COMMUNITY EVENT**

"THE FUTURE OF OUR
COMMUNITY IS IN OUR
SCHOOLS TODAY"

SATURDAY, MAY 1ST
8:00 AM-NOON

Save the Date

www.altoona.k12.wi.us/district/shaping-our-future-community-event



WE VALUE YOUR FEEDBACK!
MORE INFO COMING.

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