

Dear School District of Wisconsin Dells Community Members,

I know it sounds cliché, but the 2024-25 school year is flying by, and it is hard to believe I am writing this December newsletter. The first three months of the academic school year have been hectic, and as we look ahead to December and early January, the same will remain. December will also remain a busy month due to the month being compressed with the winter break. Specifically, winter break will begin at the end of a full school day on Friday, December 20, 2024, and classes will resume on Tuesday, January 2, 2025. Before winter break begins, it's vital to encourage all students to demonstrate excellent attendance patterns.

Over the winter break, WDHS will be hosting a boys' and girls' basketball tournament, with games scheduled for Friday, December 27th, and Saturday, December 28th. The RWD Hockey team will also play in the annual Monks Cheeseburger Classic Tournament at Poppy Waterman Arena in Lake Delton. I encourage you to attend a future game!

As a reminder, inclement weather will likely occur in December, and the district will utilize the following four methods as our primary ways of communicating with the public. The first will be the school messenger service. Parents and guardians will receive a phone call at the number you have provided to the district within the Skyward student management system. The other media sources are the district's Facebook page and WISC-TV 3, which are the district's earliest contacts. If the district deems it necessary to release students from school early because of inclement weather and you have elementary-age children, please ensure that we have your alternative daycare arrangements in advance and on file at one of the elementary offices. This will significantly assist the office staff, the classroom teachers, and aides in ensuring that your children are on the correct bus or for any alternative pre-approved arrangements.

At our November 13, 2024, board meeting, Director of Curriculum & Instruction Brian Grove outlined a detailed report on our students' academic achievement for the past school year. Overall, SDWD students performed well as a group. In his report, Mr. Grove provided updates on literacy and corresponding comparison data with our fence line neighboring school districts. In several comparative data points, our students are at the top of the list and exceed the state average in nearly every category. You can find the details of his report here: [C&I Assessment Report](#). As you will read, there is a great deal of focus on ensuring all students achieve academically, and it is a team effort to achieve these results. Thank you to all our staff members for their daily commitment to our students.

Please take note that the 2023-24 school report cards have been officially released. Below is a quick summary of how the district and each school have fared.

2023-24 DPI Report Card Scores		
<i>Building/District</i>	<i>Score</i>	<i>Rating</i>
District	66.8	3*
WDHS	74.7	4*
WDMS	56.6	2*
LDES	80.4	4*
SHES	63.0	3*

These annual report cards indicate what items the district and, more specifically, our students are collectively performing well on and what areas need greater attention. Often, the district is aware of the areas of strength on the cards as well as the areas the district is striving to improve upon. Despite WDMS receiving a two-star rating, its academic performance remains solid; however, the lack of academic growth is the primary item it must correct to improve its future report card score, and they have already begun to address its previous year's shortcomings. The report cards provide a great deal of academic data detail however, they do not measure any of the work our educators do with social emotional learning. Thus, as a reminder, the district has always taken a measured approach to reporting the details in the report card. Thanks to our students, parents, and our teaching staff for your efforts to produce these outcomes!

Alternative to the state-mandated report cards, the district is committed to many forms of project-based learning. These activities are taking place daily at both the middle school and the high school. Tech Ed/Skills USA students will be selling holiday goods via social media. The students are using their creative skills via high-tech equipment such as CNC machines, laser engravers, water jet cutters, and CNC plasma cutting tables to create their products. It's great to see the collaborative efforts of the Career & Technical Education departments working together for the students to incorporate a wide variety of bookkeeping, marketing, and promotion to make this year's WDHS Manufacturing sales even better than last year's!

In closing, we hope you take a few moments to enjoy the monthly edition of our e-newsletter. Our students and staff are striving to reach our vision statement of cultivating academic excellence today for a stronger community tomorrow, and we recognize there will always be challenges to get better. We thank you for the opportunity to serve our communities' children, for they are both our highest priority, and it is our privilege to do so!

Sincerely,

Terrance R. Slack