

# the MESSENGER

Indianola Community Schools

Spring 2022

## Superintendent's Corner

**W**elcome to the Spring 2022 edition of *The Messenger*. We had a relatively quiet winter weather season, which I appreciate from a school cancellation and delay standpoint. Weather calls are on my list of things I won't miss when I am no longer a superintendent, a day which is rapidly approaching. As retirement from a thirty-four-year public education career nears, I want to thank the community, boards past and present, school staff, and students for the wonderful opportunity I had to serve as Indianola CSD superintendent and complete my career here. I am thankful for all of the great people I got to meet and work with and couldn't be prouder of our students, staff, school, and community! Indianola truly is a great place to work and learn and live. When I arrived eight years ago, I felt like it was to the best of both worlds: a progressive 4A district with resources in a small town. I feel the same today. I don't think there is another district like it in the state. Thank you, everyone, for your role in that. Congratulations to all who have persevered and delivered a great experience these last couple of years. Thank you for having me as your superintendent, and best wishes in the future.



### Art Sathoff

Indianola Superintendent

## Educator of the Year

**I**ndianola Middle School Social Studies Instructor and Varsity Volleyball Coach Kent Halstead was named the 2021 Chamber Educator of the Year and honored during the annual virtual luncheon. Mr. and Mrs. Halstead were joined by Middle School Principal Kristy Ellis, school board members, and district office administrators to celebrate and have lunch February 10. Mr. Halstead is pictured below with Chamber Executive Director Brenda Easter and Superintendent Art Sathoff.

Mr. Halstead is recognized for his creativity and ability to deeply engage students in social studies content. His



classroom is an active space where students are up and collaborating. It is likely to find students role playing or reading primary source documents like the Constitution or Bill of Rights.

Mr. Halstead appreciates the opportunity to come to school every day and work to get better. He is quick to say that Indianola CSD has many excellent, deserving teachers and that he is just a representative of the whole staff. Thank you for your hard work and enthusiasm, Mr. Halstead, and congratulations on the well deserved award!

## Indianola School Board Names New Superintendent

**M**r. Ted Ihns will serve as the next superintendent of Indianola CSD, starting July 1, 2022. Mr. Ihns has been the superintendent of Howard-Winneshiek Schools since July 2017. Prior to becoming superintendent at Howard-Winneshiek, he served in other administrative roles in Minnesota: elementary principal in Inver Grove Heights, MN; associate high school principal in Roseville, MN; and assistant high school principal and dean of students in Farmington, MN. Prior to becoming an administrator, Mr. Ihns worked in school districts both in Minnesota and Iowa for 12 years as a K-12 physical education teacher while also serving as a coach or advisor to the following activities: football, basketball, baseball, student council, junior class sponsor and peer mediator sponsor.

Mr. Ihns received his Bachelor of Science Degree from Concordia University, St. Paul; his Master of Science Degree in Educational Leadership along with K-12 Principal and Superintendent License from Winona State University.

Board President Rob Keller commented on behalf of the board, "We are very excited for the future of our district and community. We believe Mr. Ihns will provide exceptional and enthusiastic leadership for our staff and board as we work as a team to provide the best educational experience for all our students. We are happy to welcome Mr. and Mrs. Ihns to the Indianola Community."

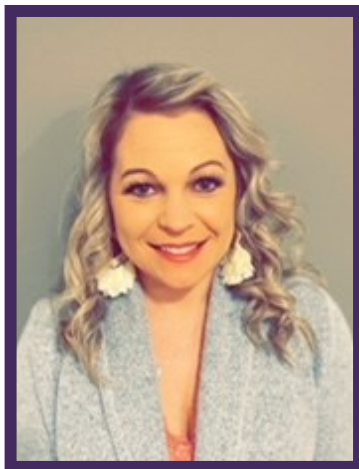
## New Principal at Whittier Elementary

**M**s. Brooke Mendoza will be joining the team at Whittier Elementary as the principal in the 2022-23 school year. Ms. Mendoza follows Mr. Ed Johnson, a beloved leader who is retiring at the end of the year. Ms. Mendoza and Mr. Johnson have been working together this spring to ensure a smooth transition.

Ms. Mendoza comes to Whittier Elementary with over 15 years in education, working with students from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. After successful years in the classroom, she has found fulfillment and inspiration as an instructional coach and administrator. Ms. Mendoza earned her Bachelor of Science Degree in Elementary Education from Western Kentucky University, her first Master's degree as a K-12 Reading & Writing Specialist from the University of the Cumberland and then went on to obtain her PK-12 Principal and PK-12 Supervisor of Special Education endorsement from Northwestern College.

Ms. Mendoza and her husband Jon have five children and enjoy spending their free time traveling, watching athletic or school events, and supporting their children's hopes and dreams.

Ms. Mendoza commented on the move: "I am so excited and honored to be serving as your new principal for Whittier Elementary School. It is an honor to lead a school with such persevering students, an extremely dedicated staff, and a wonderfully supportive school community. I am looking forward to building positive relationships with students, families, staff and our community members. I also look forward to continuing the amazing work already happening at Whittier daily that ensures students have access to proud traditions and unlimited possibilities. I can assure you that I share the dedication our school district and community have to achieving excellence and a lifetime of success for each and every student we serve." Welcome, Ms. Mendoza!





## Equine Therapy Program Coming to Indianola CSD

Indianola CSD School Board has approved a pilot program with Barnum Center at Wesley Woods in partnership with Stavig Counseling Services, LLC to offer an afterschool relational, mental, emotional and social health program for children in the middle and high schools. The pilot is being funded with mental health grant dollars and will utilize equine therapy.

People often feel like they are at the mercy of their bodies because they do not have the skills necessary to regulate and be in control of themselves. The ability to develop a relationship with a horse provides the individual a safe relationship in which to begin to explore their patterns and how their patterns impact themselves and others. Horses respond and react to what is happening in the present moment. Horses do not have the capability to make comparisons or do much thinking about the past, present and future.

Working with a horse allows a person to change a thought, belief, feeling, or behavior and get an immediate, honest response from the horse. Making changes in human relationships does not offer this same type of immediate, honest feedback since humans are often thinking about past behaviors or potential future consequences. This constant and immediate feedback from the horse is non-judgmental and increases an individual's self-awareness, allowing them to be more emotionally and physically connected to their body. When an individual is aware of what they are doing and how they are in the present moment, the individual is more mindful, less anxious and less fearful. The person has the opportunity to make changes in the way they are behaving in relationships with others.



This pilot program will target a small group of up to six Indianola community middle and/or high school students at a time. Participating students are to be identified by school counselors and the school-based mental health therapist. Students will participate in an equine assisted learning and activities program which is expected to have therapeutic benefits for participants. A Natural Lifemanship Institute trained, licensed mental health professional and staff will lead small group activities in a relational, recreational setting on-site at Barnum Center @ Wesley Woods Camp and Retreat Center.

The goal of the program is to teach, model, mentor and grow skills using trauma informed care based on the Natural Lifemanship Institute relationship building principles in a small relational group setting:

- To help students learn to regulate their nervous system by teaching one or more coping/brain/body regulation skills each week. (education pieces will be sent home to parents by email or with participants)
- To practice and model these skills each week while working with horses and humans.
- Participants/parents/teachers will report improvement or growth in mental, emotional, social, and relational health of the participant.



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## DECA

Indianola DECA had twenty-six students competing at the state competition February 20<sup>th</sup> in Des Moines. From that group, fifteen students in ten different events qualified for the international competition in Atlanta, GA April 23<sup>rd</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>!

The following students qualified by placing in the top three in their respective role-play events:

- **Carter Erickson & Malachi Thomsen** - Sports & Entertainment Marketing Team Decision Making
- **Taylor Powers & Hannah Price** - Buying & Merchandising Team Decision Making
- **Maci Darr** - Restaurant & Food Service Management
- **Lake Martin** - Accounting Applications
- **Hayden Laschanzky** - Hotel & Lodging Management
- **Logan Piper** - Retail Merchandising
- **Jordyn Brown** - Food Marketing

The following students qualified by placing in the top two in their written & presentation events:

- **Selia Becker, Lauren Blake & Kate Jordan** - Start-Up Business
- **Hayden Laschanzky & Casey Stecker** - Business Services Operations Research
- **Maren Haynes, Logan Piper & Katie O'Neil** - Community Giving Project





## Middle School Counselors Focus on Students

Over the course of the 2021-2022 school year, Indianola Middle School counselors have implemented a variety of new activities focused on students' social emotional health, college and career readiness, and academic achievement. These activities include:

- **LUNCH BUNCH GROUPS:** Small groups of grade-level students focusing on building connections among peers and adults
- **XELLO:** College and Career Readiness software
- **PLEASE PASS THE LOVE:** Stomp Out Stigma group empowers students to make positive changes in our school climate through student-led initiatives
- **MVP:** (Mentors in Violence Prevention) a research-based program that teaches students to challenge and change social, cultural and institutional norms that support abusive behavior
- **LEADERSHIP/FRIENDSHIP GROUP:** Led by Employee and Family Resources (EFR) utilizes the Youth Connection curriculum, a research-based program that is designed to increase resilience and protective factors in children and youth
- **HIGH SCHOOL MENTORS:** Connecting with middle school students
- **REFLECTION ROOM:** Area of the building located outside of the counselor's office designed to encourage students to utilize coping strategies to build resilience and self-regulation.



## Come Be a Part of the I CSD Team!

### Multiple Job Opportunities:

#### Teaching

5th Grade - Whittier Elementary  
Upper Elementary - Laura Ingalls Wilder  
Physical Education - Laura Ingalls Wilder  
6th Grade Math - Middle School  
Project Lead The Way - Middle School  
Vocal Music - Middle School

#### Support Staff

District Secretary - Transportation  
Building Secretary/Attendance - High School

#### Child Care

Child Care Provider - Before & After School  
Child Care Provider - Summer

#### Coaching

Assistant Middle School Wrestling  
Head High School Girls Track (22-23)  
Assistant High School Girls Basketball

#### Other

Seasonal Grounds & Maintenance Support  
Custodians

Visit our website to view current job listings & apply! [Indianola.tedk12.com/hire](http://Indianola.tedk12.com/hire)

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## 2022-23 Calendar Highlights

Spring 2022

### TRADITIONAL CALENDAR

#### August 23

First Day of School

#### September 5

Labor Day Holiday

#### October 11 & 13

Parent Teacher Conferences

#### October 14

No School

#### October 17

Professional Development - No School

#### November 22

One Hour Early Dismissal

#### November 23 - 25

Thanksgiving Break - No School

#### December 22

One Hour Early Dismissal

#### December 23 - January 3

Winter Break - No School

#### January 13

Teacher Work Day - No School

#### January 16

Professional Development - No School

#### February 14 & 16

Parent Teacher Conferences

#### February 17

No School

#### March 13 - 17

Spring Break - No School

#### April 3

Professional Development - No School

#### May 23

Seniors' Last Day

#### May 28

Commencement

#### May 29

Memorial Day Holiday

#### May 31

Last Day of School - 11:30am Dismissal

### YEAR ROUND CALENDAR

#### July 13

First Day of School

#### August 19 & 22

Professional Development - No School

#### September 5

Labor Day Holiday

#### September 20 & 22

Parent Teacher Conferences

#### September 23

No School

#### September 26 - October 7

Intercession - No School

#### October 10 - 14

Fall Break - No School

#### October 17

Professional Development - No School

#### November 22

One Hour Early Dismissal

#### November 23 - 25

Thanksgiving Break - No School

#### December 16

1.5 Hour Early Dismissal

#### December 19 - January 9

Winter Break - No School

#### January 16

Professional Development - No School

#### February 14 & 16

Parent Teacher Conferences

#### February 17

No School

#### March 13 - 17

Spring Break - No School

#### March 20 - 24

Intercession - No School

#### April 3

Professional Development - No School

#### May 29

Memorial Day Holiday

#### May 31

Last Day of School - 11:30am Dismissal

**Weekly Early Dismissal: There will be a weekly, one hour early dismissal on Wednesdays for professional development.**





## Winter Activities

This winter we had 365 students participating in our various activities. Winter activities include Cheer, Impulse, Show Choir, Jazz Band, Mock Trial, Speech, Wrestling, Boys' Swim, Girls' Basketball, and Boys' Basketball. Here is a glimpse of the action on the court and stage.





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## Graduation Week

May 16: Senior Finals

May 17: Senior Finals

May 18: Senior Awards Assembly TBD - North Gym

May 18: Baccalaureate Practice 1:00pm, St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church

May 18: Baccalaureate 7:00pm, St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church

May 19: Parade of Graduates 8:00am

May 19: Dollars for Scholars 5:00pm, High School Auditorium

May 19: Scholarship Night 6:30pm, High School Auditorium

May 20: Graduation Practice 9:00am, Blake Fieldhouse

May 22: Graduation 1:00pm, Blake Fieldhouse

We're on the web: [www.indianola.k12.ia.us](http://www.indianola.k12.ia.us)

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