

Just Trying to Keep Up

by James Stanton,
Superintendent

In case you have been reading in the papers about schools having a choice of basing their school calendar on hours or days next year, that is the truth. We have made the decision to use the hours model instead of the days model, which will be totally revamped for next year. It gives us a little more flexibility. The end product calendar you will see will not look much different. The big difference will be how I track our attendance using hours instead of days. When I was in Nebraska, we used the hours model, and it truly does give us a little more flexibility as far as Professional Development, etc. We will schedule 180 days just like now and have snow makeup days. Everything will be the same, but we will be tracking hours instead of days.

There are several new initiatives going on in Iowa and Dunkerton right now that you have either heard from us recently, or you will be hearing about from us in the near future. I will present these in a nutshell hoping that if you have any questions, you will stop in and talk to me, Mr. Hlas, or Mr. Urbanek. To go into details would take the entire paper, and it would also be rather boring.

- K-3 Early Literacy development— This is the initiative that will pay for an after school Reading program for our kids and make summer school available as well. This is limited to K-3 students. Mr. Hlas sent home a letter before the break, and it started Monday, January 6th.
- SES—SES stands for Supplemental Educational Services. This is part of our SINA plan and will affect a

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small segment of our population (K – 6 students with low Iowa Assessment scores), and if your child is eligible, you will be receiving a letter in the mail from Mr. Hlas.

- MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports)— Formerly known as RTI (Response To Intervention). This program will be a K – 12 initiative and will affect virtually everyone as it will change how we look at data, how we analyze data, and how we respond to that data. This is a general education initiative that is designed to deliver multiple levels of instruction in the general education setting instead of pulling students out for special education instruction.

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Cake War!

On January 31st, the Four Year Trip committee put on a Cake War fundraiser during the home basketball games. Contestants decorated cakes to showcase Raider Pride, and participants voted for best cake in three categories: Spirit, Design, and Taste. Congratulations to the following winners!

Spirit—Cari Cox

Design—Jessica Cox and Adam Manahl

Taste—Missy Christians, Cindi Rigdon, Edye Johnson,
and Karena Donohue

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Pictured Left:
Cari Cox's
winning cake for
Spirit.

Pictured Right:
Jessica Cox and
Adam Manahl's
winning cake for
Design.

Cake War Winners!



Music at Dunkerton

A huge congratulations to vocal students Andrew Winkers, Harley Schuety, Morgan Finck, and Jacob Cox who were selected to perform at Luther College's 64th Annual Dorian Vocal Festival. They performed with the nation's largest honor choir, numbering more than 1,200 participants. Students performing in this ensemble received world-class instruction from several members of Luther's faculty. Andrew Winkers was given the opportunity to perform for a voice faculty member, receiving critique and encouragement. Andrew performed "Gottist Mein Hirte" ("God is My Shepherd") by Antonin Dvorak, a composer who spent a significant amount of time in Spillville, Iowa near Decorah. The singers enjoyed their time on Luther's campus, and the final performance, which included a set performed by Luther's internationally acclaimed Nordic Choir, was stunning.

January ended with two strong performances. January 25: Wartburg's Meistersinger Honor Choir (involving Bethanie Fish, Andrew Winkers, Maddie Steffen); January 27: State Jazz Band at

Pictured Below: Missy Christians, Cindi Rigdon, Edye Johnson, and Karena Donohue's winning cake for Taste



Union-LaPorte City.

Upcoming Dates/Calendar Change: March 6: Junior High Talent Show, 7 p.m.; March 13 (Calendar Change): Music Aid Dinner and Performance, 5:30 p.m. for dinner and 7 p.m. for show; March 29 (Calendar Change): Junior High Solo/Ensemble, Gilbertville; April 12: High School Solo/Ensemble Contest, Gilbertville; April 22: Junior High Honor Choir, Oelwein; April 29, Elementary Honor Choir, Oelwein.

Elementary Counselor's CORNER Amber Kuntz

The fall seemed to fly by, and it's hard to believe that we're back from break for the second half of the school year. This fall I enjoyed getting to know many students better through individual, group, and classroom counseling. I also enjoyed meeting more families through conferences and other events, such as Family Math Night. Here is what we have been up to in classroom counseling lessons (Guidance) the past couple months:

October- This was a busy month with both Character Counts Week and Red Ribbon Week. Our celebration included dress up days and the 'Caught With Good Character' contest. School staff worked together to 'catch' students showing the character pillars. A drawing for prizes was held at the end of the week from the names of students who were 'caught'.

Classroom lessons this month focused on the character pillar of Respect. Topics included conflict resolution and diversity. During Red Ribbon Week, lessons addressed making safe and healthy choices. Much of our discussions on conflict resolution centered around 'Kelso's Choices.' This program teaches students the difference between small problems they can try to solve themselves and big problems for which they need an adult's help.

Read more about the program here:
<http://kelsoschoice.com/community/parent-page/>

November- Lessons in November introduced students to a 3-word definition of bullying: "Repeated intentional harm." The definition was discussed and explored as developmentally appropriate for each grade level. Students learned how they can be upstanders, or those who see bullying happening and do something to help, rather than bystanders who let it go on. Informing and involving adults was discussed as part of the process, as this is also a very important part of approaching the problem and helping our students feel safe and respected. Helpful sites:

<http://www.stopbullying.gov/index.html>
<http://www.pacer.org/bullying/>

December- The short month of December was spent wrapping up the bullying units, as well as beginning lessons on Responsibility: Listening, Following Directions, and Self-Control.

Coming Up- Current and upcoming lessons will address:

Responsibility, including online safety.
Resources available here:
<http://www.netsmartz.org/parents>

Caring & Kindness
Academic Success/ Test taking

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns regarding your student(s).

akuntz@dunkerton.k12.ia.us
319-822-4295, Ext. 111

Develop our Diamonds

The Develop Our Diamonds committee thanks everyone who came out on Friday, February 7th for the Soup Supper Fundraiser.

The committee is looking for more parents to get involved, with the goal to have a parent rep from each grade. If you are interested, the committee meets every fourth Wednesday of the month at 6:00 p.m. at the public library.

If you would like to be included in the email updates, please give your name and email address to Ronda Rathe, Julie Magee, or Cari Cox.

2nd grade Happenings

Which country has a Santa figure named Pere Noel? What about La Befana? Is there more than one Santa? This is something the second grade students learned while completing research projects in December. Students were placed in groups and selected Italy, Germany, France, or Mexico for the project. Each group researched where the country was located, how to say Merry Christmas in the native language, learned the celebration date(s), identified the Santa figure and what he/she wore, and when gifts were opened. Students learned about the holiday traditions in that country as well as foods prepared for that holiday. Each group created posters with pictures and information from the project. Finally each group was videotaped presenting what they had learned about Christmas in their country.

Spelling Bee Participants

On February 1st, several students represented Dunkerton at the Knights of Columbus Spelling Bee held at Columbus High School.

Ms. Gorman's fifth grade participants were Gabe Heideman and Savannah Swanson, as well as Tyler Baker and Madison Sebetka from Mrs. Keller's class.

Ms. Gahman's seventh grade class showcased five students: Julianna Neff, Brady Stone, Jehred Daniels, Jade Roquet, and Madysen Robinson.

Congratulations participants, and way to represent Dunkerton!

Dunkerton Education Coalition

DEC

Have you ever heard someone say "DEC" and wondered what that was? Well, it stands for the Dunkerton Educational Coalition, Inc. It's the umbrella organization that was created by the parents leading the Dunkerton PTO, the Athletic Boosters, the Four-Year Trip, Fine Arts Boosters, After Prom, and the Dunkerton Schools Foundation. Each of these groups still operate within the school just like they always have, but they are now part of a larger single organization instead of separate entities.

Why did they do this? Prior to 2012, each organization operated within the school without its own separate legal tax status. It actually made accounting a little more difficult for the school district, so in order to better serve each group and the school, each organization withdrew their funds from the school and worked together to form one separate organization. DEC incorporated and then obtained 501c3 status in January 2012.

What does this mean to you? The biggest change for you is donations made to any of our DEC groups are now tax deductible! You can also be assured that those funds are subject to a strict standard of accounting and expenditure. That means if you donate money for a specific cause, that money will ONLY be spent for that cause and nothing else. You will still write your check to each group like you always have, but your tax receipt will come from the DEC.

DEC now has their own website: www.dunkdec.com with pages for each group. Check it out for the latest news and activities!

Spiritware is now available online!

The DEC has created an online spiritware store with Dunkerton Raider products for you to purchase for yourself, your student, or as a gift for someone else! Several payment options are available, including credit cards. Please check back often as new products will be added regularly.

<http://www.dunkdec.com/spiritware-store>

Would you like to...



sing in a chorus of 400?



Display and compete with your prized photographs?



Entertain crowds?

...then get into the Fine Arts!

It's not just Band or Chorus Anymore.

Is your child a part of the Raider Band or Chorus? Has he or she had the chance to travel to contests due to participation in these groups? Built up a positive level of responsibility by practicing his or her music often? Increased self-esteem by performing in front of an audience? These play a big part in the Fine Arts program at Dunkerton Schools. However, Fine Arts encompasses even more than these two wonderful opportunities!

While band and chorus make up the bulk of the Fine Arts student body, there are great opportunities in the areas of Art, Drama, and Speech as well. Art students can take part in the annual Art Show; Drama students get to take the stage in the annual spring play; and Speech students can go solo or join a group for any number of events, such as Musical Theatre, Extemporaneous Speaking, Prose Reading, and Improvisation. If you or your child wants to know more about what is available, please contact the teacher/sponsor for the area of interest.

Art—Traci Wolfensperger

Band—Carla Ramsey

Chorus—James Healy

Drama—Johannah Nanke, James Healy

Speech—Johannah Nanke

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- TLC (Teacher Leadership and Compensation) – This is a newly legislated program that I have talked about many times before. It is designed to improve student achievement and delivery of instruction through developing teacher-leaders within the school, improving the mentoring and induction program for new teachers, improving professional development for all staff members, and increasing compensation for new staff. Many of these initiatives are designed to attract and retain quality teachers in the profession by improving pay, professional development, and improving the induction process. This program also holds a lot of promise as long as the state continues to fund the program at an appropriate level. If they fail to fund the program, it will probably mean reductions in the schools. If you have questions about any of these new programs, please stop in and talk to Mr. Hlas, Mr. Urbanek, or me.

If anyone is interested, we have a couple of openings on our School Improvement Advisory Committee (SIAC). The group has to reflect the demographics of the District, so we have some limitations of who can be on or who cannot. We need one adult male and one adult female who is the parent of at least one student in our District. The SIAC Committee is a very active group that meets at least three times per year and up to 15 times per year depending upon where we are at in our state visit cycle. This group makes recommendations to the Board on things like Mission, Vision, Goals, Student Achievement, etc. It is not easy, but it is also very rewarding. We also used our SIAC team this year to develop our TLC plan, and that kept us very busy. If you meet the demographic requirements above, and you are interested in helping out on the SIAC Committee, please contact me.

This may go down as one of the coldest winters on record and our heat bills, just like yours at home, will surely reflect it. If you use the school for any community activities, please make sure you keep all doors and windows closed, and all the lights are turned off when you leave. If it is too hot or too cold in an area that you are using, just contact me and I will see what I can do to help. Propping open windows and doors is not helpful, and it is very wasteful, especially on the cold days we have been having. Thanks for your help in this matter. If we all work together, maybe we can keep those bills in check.

Reminder—we will now have school on April 16th and May 23rd due to the NO SCHOOL days. It is always fun to get them, but it stinks to make them up.

Stay in touch,

jstanton@dunkerton.k12.ia.us

Purchase Gift Cards from the Dunkerton PTO

Dunkerton Schools Raider Rewards Order Form 2013-2014

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Date Submitted: _____

Retailer	\$	Quantity	Total
Applebees	\$25		
Barnes & Noble	\$10		
Bath & Body Works	\$10		
Best Buy	\$25		
Burger King	\$10		
Carlos O'Kelly's	\$10		
CVS Pharmacy	\$25		
Family Christian Stores	\$25		
Famous Dave's	\$10		
	\$20		
Fareway	\$50		
iTunes	\$15		
JCPenney	\$25		
Kohl's	\$25		
Kwik Star	\$25		
	\$100		
Longhorn/OG/RL	\$25		
Marcus Theatres	\$25		
McDonald's	\$10		
Menard's	\$25		
	\$100		
Other Place	\$10		
Panera	\$10		
Pizza Hut	\$10		
Subway	\$10		
Target	\$25		
	\$100		
Texas Roadhouse	\$25		
Walgreen's	\$25		
Walmart/Sam's Club	\$25		
	\$100		

*Make checks payable to:
Dunkerton PTO*

Ways to Purchase:

1. Send completed order form and payment to school
2. Stop into the high school office during normal hours.
3. Visit our local Dunkerton Farmer's State Bank during normal business hours.
4. and coming soon: online ordering!

Don't see the gift card you want? Check out our suppliers website at www.glscrip.com for a list of over 500 retailers. Just let us know what you want!

- Please call me when ready
 Please email me when ready
 Please send my order home with:

Signature

Questions? Contact the Dunkerton PTO at: DunkertonPTO@hotmail.com





509 S. Canfield St.
Dunkerton, IA 50626

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