

VINTON-SHELLSBURG COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

—WHERE CHARACTER COUNTS!

"The Mission of the Vinton-Shellsburg Community School District is to improve the quality of lives and assist individuals in becoming contributing members of society through the accumulation and application of knowledge."

Special points of interest:

- Feb. 9—2 Hr. Early Dismissal, Prof. Development
- Feb. 12— School Board Meeting @ Middle School, 7:00 pm
- Feb. 17—Voyager Spring Show, VSMS, 7:00 pm
- Feb. 23—2 Hr. Early Dismissal Prof. Development
- Feb. 27—ACT Testing Gr. 9-11, 8:00 am
- Feb. 28—2 Hr. Early Dismissal, HS, Prof. Development; PK-8 P/T Conf. 2:00pm - 8:00pm
- Mar. 1—NO CLASSES, 9-12Gr. Prof. Dev., K-8 AM PD & P/T Conf. 12-8PM

Class of 2022 High School Information Night

The high school staff and students will welcome the Class of 2022 (current 8th graders) and their parents to a high school information night on Tuesday, February 20th at the V-S High School. The agenda for the event, which starts at 6:30 PM, will include: a) the high school guidance department staff providing information on high school academic requirements and the course selection process for the 2018-19 school year; b) the opportunity for students and parents to interact with representatives from each academic department and tour the high school building; and c) informational tables, staffed by coaches and student participants, for each extra and co-curricular activity available to high school students. All current 8th graders and their parents are encouraged to attend this "orientation to high school" night! If you have any questions about this event, please contact VSHS Academic Advisor Sandy Hamilton (ph. 436-5708 or sandy.hamilton@vscsd.org).

What's going on at the Middle School?

Activities are in full swing at the Middle School. We are finishing up boy's basketball and play practice has begun. Middle School play this year is March 23rd and 24th. This is the one activity that every middle school student can participate in regardless of grade level. If you do not have anything scheduled that weekend you can choose one of those nights to come out and support the middle school students. Before you know it spring will be right around the corner and 7th and 8th grade girls and boys can participate in track and field.

What's up with the Middle School grade book? If you have a middle school student you may have noticed the teachers' grade books look a little different this year. The teachers at VSMS have been working the past few years on developing essential skills for their classroom using the Common Core. The essential skills are simple, they are skills we want all our students to know and do. We progress monitor these skills and we monitor how they are progressing toward meeting these skills.

If you have an opportunity to look at your child's grades in the grade book you will notice a combination of tests, quizzes, and projects that are all graded. These grades are based on student performance on each of the essential skills. Students turn in homework and are given feedback about their progress on a specific skill. A check mark is placed in the grade book as a way to show the student has completed the assigned task. Any test that is colored blue is a link to more information about the student's work. Your student has access to the grade book and can explain their scores.

To the Vinton-Shellsburg School Community,

We are just starting the 2018 calendar year and we are well underway into planning for the 2018-19 school year. We are spending time developing next year's calendar, the budget, staffing plans, summer building projects, and the list goes on!

We are working on developing the 2018-19 school calendar. We recently surveyed staff and community members with 145 staff surveys and 310 community surveys returned. Some of the results include:

The majority want school to start on August 23 (the first date that is allowable by Iowa law).

The majority want the Wednesday before Thanksgiving as a no school day (94% of staff and 60% of community responses).

The majority want to have the Friday before Christmas be an early out (63% staff and 63% community).

The majority want students to return from winter break on Thursday, January 3rd (83% staff and 44% community).

Spring break is always a question where we do not have as much consensus. Very few want to have a guaranteed one week off (18% staff and 20% community). We are trying to develop a calendar that would allow for four days (including the weekend) without any snow make-up days included.

Fridays seem to be the best day to have professional development (64% staff, 73% community); plus this provides the least disruption to our preschool schedule as they do not meet on Fridays.

The vast majority of both groups want to have snow days built into the schedule (90% and 82%).

Parent-teacher conferences will be similar PreK-12 and will fall where the quarters will be under the new semester (versus trimester) schedule.

Many people do not have a preference about when graduation is scheduled (52% and 47%). It would be difficult to move it off Memorial Day weekend without making that decision a year or two in advance to assist families in their celebration planning.

There were many comments included on the surveys. A few things I would respond to:

Why don't we have a year-round calendar? The short answer – because it's against the law. We considered developing one a few years ago and there are many advantages to having students attend on a year-round basis with more breaks built in but the same number of days overall. However, in a law that was passed last year, high schools can NOT be on a year-round calendar. At this time, it would be difficult to have one calendar for K-8 and another for 9-12 as it would increase our transportation, food service, and probably other expenses.

Why do you have ½ days for professional development? They really aren't half-days as when we dismiss at 1:30, it is about two hours early or closer to ¼ day. The time is necessary for teachers to work together in their teams. We have the days spread throughout the year as part of the work they do on these days is to bring in student work. The teams focus their discussion on clarifying what they are expecting all kids to know and do; how they are assessing that learning; and how they will respond if they already know it or don't know it yet. The research is clear that the best way to improve student achievement is to make sure schools have well prepared teachers who are working together on improving their students' learning.

Why don't you do all the professional development days before or after the school year? Because teachers are including student work in their discussions, they need to look at the students' work throughout the year and utilize current student data to adjust their instruction and design interventions. In August, they would only have the previous year's work and in June, they would only have the previous year's work.

Do we really need to have snow days scheduled? Don't we have "extra" days in our calendar because of going to hours? There are two different things we are dealing with. The first is that the state law sets the minimum number of days or the minimum number of hours each school must have. The state's minimum is 1080 hours; I am proud of the fact our district exceeds the minimum. And while the state has allowed us to develop a calendar based on hours, our contracts with staff all are based on a set number of days.

Can you change how parent-teacher conferences are arranged? Next year we will have conferences on the same days across the district (this year the high school had fall conferences in October and the elementary had theirs in November). We do not anticipate having conferences during Holy Week next year as that has created complications for both staff and parents. We also anticipate that there will be fewer (if any) conflicts with the activity schedule because we will be more aligned with other schools as we move from trimesters to semesters.

Many people would prefer the school year start in August but then have the Wednesday off before Thanksgiving, have two weeks off at Christmas, have a full-week of spring break and still be finished before Memorial Day. It is impossible to develop a school calendar that makes everyone happy! What we try to do is have a process that allows for input from all stakeholders and then communicate things to all. We are trying to have the 2018-19 year done for students prior to June 1 but it will be difficult to be done prior to Memorial Day as that would mean the last day with students would be on or before May 24.

Spring Testing– Thank you to all the parents who worked with us during the Iowa Assessment testing window and minimized student absences for doctor and dental appointments and other things that could be scheduled at a later time. All high school juniors will be taking the ACT test (at no expense) on February 27th. This will be a great opportunity for students to take the test at a convenience time and place while earning results they can share with post-secondary institutions. We will be anxious to get our testing results back and share them with parents and the community!

Weather Decisions – The extreme cold temperatures this winter have created concern and questions about when we start (or have) school. Providing for student safety is a rule we follow at all times. We also have some guidelines we generally follow although there are exceptions. They include:

Make the decision by 5:30 so everyone can be notified in a timely manner.

If we have a late start, we won't have an early out.

If we decide on a late start, we don't want to change it later to a no school day (unless absolutely necessary).







If we attend school, we want to serve our students lunch.

If we have an early out, we do not have school activities in the afternoon or evening.

If any student or parent has a question about the school district, I encourage him or her to give me a call, send me an e-mail or make an appointment. My phone number is 319.436.5685 and my e-mail is maryjo.hainstock@vscsd.org. I welcome the opportunity to visit about what is going well (or not so well) in our district.

Respectfully,
Mary Jo Hainstock, Superintendent

FEBRUARY 2018

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
 <div style="border: 2px solid blue; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Senior Citizen Activity Passes are available for Vinton-Shellsburg CSD <u>residents</u> who are age 55 or older; stop by the Superintendent's Office at 1502 C Ave., Vinton.</p> </div>			<p>1 Day 5 Iowa Assessments For Grades 3rd—8th</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ 7 B BB @ S. Tama MS, 4:15 pm ◇ 8 B BB vs. S. Tama, 4:15 pm 	<p>2 Day 6 Iowa Assessments For Grades 3rd—8th</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ ISU Honor Band ◇ 7th—9th ECICDA Honor Choir, Calamus Wheatland HS ◇ JV/V BOWL @ Central DeWitt (DeWitt Lanes), 4:00 pm ◇ 9/10/V B BB vs. Benton, 4:30/6:00/7:30 pm ◇ FS/JV/V G BB @ Benton, 4:30/6:00/7:30 pm <p style="text-align: center;">Groundhog Day</p>	<p>3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ V B SW Districts @ Linn-Mar, 12:00 pm ◇ ISU Honor Band ◇ Speech Large Group State @ Linn-Mar, 8:00 am ◇ V WR Sectionals @ Benton, 12:00 pm
<p>5 Day 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ 7 B BB vs. Center Point-Urbana, 4:15 pm ◇ 8 B BB @ Center Point-Urbana MS, 4:15 pm ◇ FFA Chapter Meeting, VSHS, 6:30 pm ◇ FAFSA Workshop, HS LMC, 5:00-8:00 pm 	<p>6 Day 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ FS/JV/V G BB @ Center Point-Urbana, 4:30/6:00/7:30 pm ◇ V WR Dual Team Regionals @ TBA, 6:00 pm <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<p>7 Day 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Band Boosters Meeting, VSHS, 6:30 pm 	<p>8 Day 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Festival of Bands @ UNI ◇ Central College Sing Fest Honor Choir ◇ 7 B BB @ Benton (Norway), 4:15 pm ◇ 8 B BB vs. Benton, 4:15 pm ◇ FR "B" Team/JV B BB vs. Benton, 6:30/7:30 pm 	<p>9 Day 5 2 HR. EARLY DISMISSAL Prof. Dev.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Festival of Bands @ UNI ◇ 9/10/V B BB vs. Solon, 4:30/6:00/7:30 pm 	<p>10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Festival of Bands @ UNI ◇ V WR Districts @ Independence, 12:00 pm ◇ B V SW State @ U of Iowa Recreation & Wellness Center; 12:30 pm ◇ V BOWL WaMaC Tourney @ Berry's Lanes, 2:00 pm ◇ V G BB 1st Round Regionals vs. Benton @ VS-HS, 7:00 pm
<p>11 Sunday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ G BB All-Conference Meeting @ Marion, 1:00 pm 	<p>13 Day 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ V BOWL Districts @ Rose Bowl, Muscatine, 12:00 pm ◇ 7 B BB vs. Clear Creek-Amana, 4:15 pm ◇ 8 B BB @ Clear Creek-Amana MS, 4:15 pm ◇ 9/10/V B BB vs. Center Point-Urbana, 4:30/6:00/7:30 pm 	<p>14 Day 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Booster Club Meeting, VSHS Commons, 6:00 pm ◇ V G BB 2nd Round Regionals @ Monticello 7:00 pm <p style="text-align: center;">Valentine's Day </p>	<p>15 Day 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ 7 B BB vs. W. Delaware, 4:15 pm ◇ 8 B BB @ W. Delaware, 4:15 pm 	<p>16 Day 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ 7 B BB vs. Benton, 4:15 pm ◇ 8 B BB @ Benton (Atkins), 4:15 pm ◇ West Division Boys Basketball All-Conference Meeting, VSHS, 7:00 pm 	<p>17</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Tallcorn Jazz Festival @ UNI ◇ U of I Band/Choir Honor Festival ◇ Speech All-State Large Group @ Ames ◇ V G BB Regional Finals @ Independence, 7:00 pm ◇ Voyagers Spring Show, VSMS, 7:00pm
<p>12 Day 6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ B/G V Track Practice may begin ◇ School Board Meeting @ Middle School, 7:00 pm 	STATE WRESTLING TOURNAMENT 2/14—2/17				
<p>18 Sunday</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ U of I Honor Choir 	<p>20 Day 6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Freshman Orientation (Class of 2022 & Parents) @ VSHS Auditorium, 6:30 pm <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<p>21 Day 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Sub-district FFA Leadership Events @ Hawkeye Comm. College, 9:00am 	<p>22 Day 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Coe College Jazz Band Festival ◇ V B BB 2nd Round Districts 	<p>23 Day 3 2 HR. EARLY DISMISSAL Prof. Dev.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Coe College Jazz Band Festival ◇ WPA Dance, HS Commons, 8:00—11:00 pm 	<p>24</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Coe College Jazz Band Festival ◇ Speech District Individuals @ Marshalltown <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>
<p>19 Day 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ V B BB 1st Round Districts, TBA, 7:00 pm ◇ V BOWL State @ Cadillac Lanes, Waterloo ◇ Individual Speech, WaMaC West Divisional @ S. Tama, 4:30 pm ◇ 7 B BB @ Clear Creek-Amana MS, 4:15 pm ◇ 8 B BB vs. Clear Creek-Amana, 4:15 pm <p style="text-align: center;">President's Day</p>	NATIONAL FFA WEEK 2/19—2/25				
<p>26 Day 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ V B BB Substate, TBD 	<p>27 Day 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ ACT Testing for Gr. 9th-11th, 8:00 am 	<p>28 Day 6 End of 2nd Trimester 2 HR. EARLY DISMISSAL HS Prof. Dev. PK-8 Parent/Teacher Conf. 2:00 pm—8:00 pm</p>	<p>March 1 NO CLASSES 9-12 Prof. Dev. K-8 AM PD & P/T Conf. 12-8PM</p>	<p>2 NO CLASSES</p>	<p>3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ NEIBA Jazz Festival @ Independence ◇ Chamber Choir Invite, C.R. Jefferson
GIRL'S STATE BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT 2/26—3/3					



The Vinton-Shellsburg 2018 Debate Team performed exceptionally well at the Iowa High School Speech Association's State Debate Tournament held on the DMACC Campus in Ankeny on January 5th and 6th. Each team debated five times over the weekend on the topic, Resolved: Spain should grant Catalonia its independence. These students represented V-S with style while competing with 86 other teams from schools across the State of Iowa.

Back Row: Joanna Hendrickson, Cassie Hazen, Taylor Lint, Lucille Lindsey, Sadie Mauer, Morgan White, Grace Petrzela. Front: Lexi Miller, Makayla Moeller, Alba Caballero.

VSMS Lego League teams participated in the State contest at the ISU campus in Ames.

Aquatic Alliance of Pufferfish received recognition from the judges for their strength in the Core Values category, earning Honorable Mention.



The H2O Frogs received an honorable mention in the Gracious Professionalism category.



District Equity Statement

The Vinton-Shellsburg Community School District provides equal educational and employment opportunities and will not illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Vinton-Shellsburg Community School District shall take affirmative action in recruitment, appointment, assignment and advancement of women and men, minorities and disabled. Inquiries regarding compliance with equal educational or employment opportunities and/or affirmative action shall be directed to Kim Meyer, Equity Coordinator, Vinton-Shellsburg CSD, 1502 C Avenue, Vinton, Iowa 52349. Inquiries may also be directed in writing to the Director of the Region VII Office of the United States Equal Employment Opportunities Commission, or the Director of the Region VII Office of Civil Rights, United States Department of Education in Chicago, IL.